

NOTES overall

Workshop:

Roundtable of Funders and Funding Bodies

Date: Wednesday, November 15th, 2023

The round table of funders and funding bodies focused on finding pathways forward for better cooperation between funders to achieve better projects results. Group discussions in the first session emphasised the desire for closer communication between funders and grantees, with calls for "softer" granting frameworks, longer funding horizons, and more core funding, discussed challenges related to the lack of awareness about projects from other funders, and advanced suggestions for the establishment of a common database.

Multiple action points emerged from the second session. The first one suggested the creation of a funders' network, encouraging dialogue and collaboration between private and public entities to streamline funding efforts and address implementation gaps. The second proposed piloting topic-specific networks, emphasising practical and solution-oriented approaches. Thirdly, in response to a lack of data within the funders' community, participants echoed the suggestion advanced in the first half to establish a common database and facilitate the sharing of basic but important project information (duration, project design, project plan, stakeholders involved), for Mission Ocean related projects. Moreover, on the side of project design improvements, some participants underscored the importance of avoiding excessive top-down approaches and encouraging funders to focus on completing the puzzle rather than dictating solutions. Further strategies for project design were explored, with a focus on promoting co-funding based on common interests and asserting the need to highlight and spotlight higher-quality past projects.

The session concluded with concrete action points. Firstly, the need to enhance communications between funders, as well as funders and project was reiterated. In connection to this, the intention to have a follow-up session at the second Mission Arena conference in Tallin was underlined, with the intention to pilot topic-specific networks to intensify discussion and agreements round concrete topics in this setting. Next, participants called for the sharing of project data to establish smoother continuations of projects and actions, and for the institutions of 'seals of excellence', that can emphasise the significance of calls for projects with proven results, building on existing successful initiatives.