Local Digital Twins for Smart Sustainable Communities

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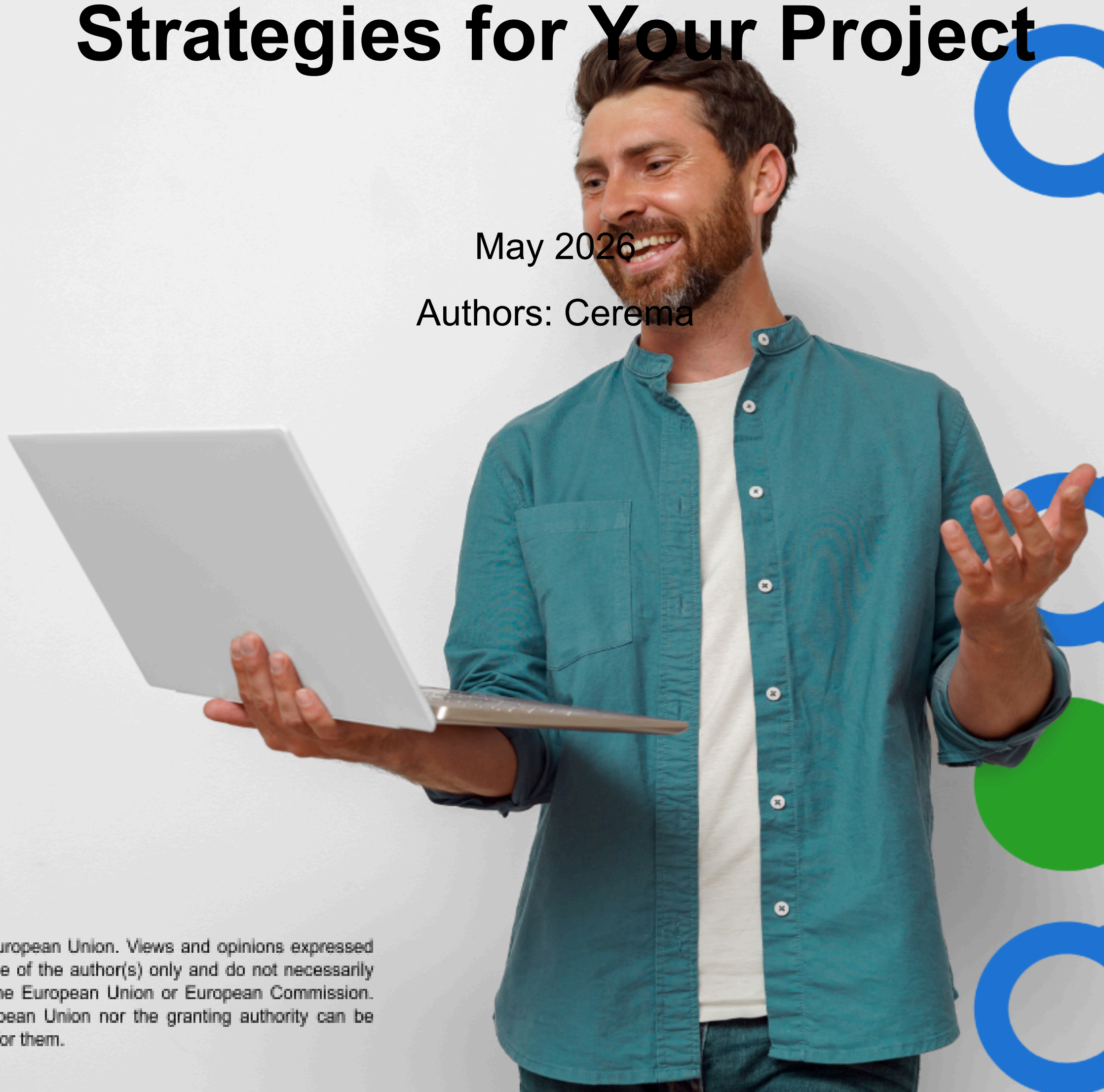
LDT4SSC Project Methodology

Step 4: IMPLEMENT (Deployment)

Workshop: Designing a Sustainable Business Model: Funding and Valuation Strategies for Your Project



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Document History

Date	Version	Edited by	Description
May 2026	v1	Marine Le Gall, Laura Riou, Sophie Houzet	First version adapted from the CAPACities program.

Workshop Overview

Title	Designing a Sustainable Business Model: Funding, and Valuation Strategies for Your Project
Methodological step	Step 4: IMPLEMENT (Deployment)
Duration	1 hour and 50 minutes
Number of Facilitators	1 for each group of 4 to 5 people
Equipment Needed	• One big sheet of paper (1m/2m) or a large (digital) whiteboard • Sticky notes • Pens and markers • Stickers
Expected outputs	• List of Identified and prioritised Funding Opportunities • Inputs on data and service value for the LDT's business model • Summary note produced after the workshop, outlining key findings and next steps that will help build the business plan

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1. Context and objectives

The **Designing a Sustainable Business Model** workshop is part of the **IMPLEMENT step (deployment)** of the LDT4SSC Methodology which is its final one, marking the transition **from experimentation to implementation**.

More information on the objectives, prerequisites and stakeholders to involve in the IMPLEMENT step can be found on the LDT4SSC Knowledge Hub[1].

The workshop is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- Help stakeholders identify and **structure the financial levers** that will support the sustainability of their project.
- Develop a **funding and valuation strategy** for the project.

2. Workshop

2.1. Workshop phases overview

Time spent	***Phase***	***Description***
15 mins	0. Framing and Icebreaker	Participants revisit the selected use case and project objectives to keep discussions grounded.
20 mins	1. Identifying and Categorising Funding Opportunities	Participants reflect on potential funding sources for sustaining the LDT.
30 mins	2. Assessing Data and Service Business Value	Participants evaluate the potential value of the LDTs data and services.
30 mins	3. Prioritising funding and valuation strategies	Participants collectively identify the most promising and sustainable solutions for project viability.
15 mins	4. Synthesising Findings and Defining Next Steps	Participants summarise the key findings and draft follow-up actions.

2.2. Workshop step by step guide

Phase 0: Framing and Icebreaker (recommended allocated time: 15 mins)

The facilitator orients the participants **towards the selected use case** and the overarching project objectives. They list all **relevant project factors** such as: goals, stakeholders, budget. This initial phase ensures that the subsequent discussions remain grounded in a **clear and concrete context**. It also serves to **align all stakeholders** on the purpose, scope, and expected outcomes of the workshop, fostering a shared understanding before diving into deeper phases.

[1] https://knowledgehub.ldt4ssc.eu/resources_content/methodology/

The facilitator also **organises an icebreaker** designed to foster mental and creative engagement by encouraging participants to adopt a playful, and open mindset. This initial interactive, game-like activity, stimulates imaginative thinking, reduces initial social tension, and prepares participants to engage fully in subsequent workshop phases.

Phase 1: Identifying and Categorising Funding Opportunities (recommended allocated time: 20 mins)

The objective of this phase is to **identify and categorise potential funding avenues** for sustaining the project after the piloting phase. Participants should explore a **comprehensive range of financial opportunities**.

The workshop begins with an **individual reflection period of five to ten minutes**, during which participants **brainstorm potential funding sources** based on their knowledge and experience.

Following this initial brainstorming, the group **pools their ideas collectively** on a **mind map**. They visually organise the suggestions into categories. This collaborative approach allows participants to **build on each other's insights** and identify **potential combinations** of funding mechanisms.

Examples of categories that may emerge include:

- **Grants**, such as those offered by **government bodies, the European Union, or competitive calls for projects**, which provide non-repayable financial support for eligible initiatives.
- **Pooling resources**, including the **shared use of equipment, human resources, premises, or joint investments**, which can reduce individual financial burdens while maximising collective impact.
- **Public-private partnerships**, where **private entities contribute equipment, space, or outsourced services** in exchange for mutually beneficial outcomes, such as enhanced service delivery or shared revenue streams.
- **Internal savings**, achieved through the **rationalisation of equipment usage, redeployment of existing staff, or optimisation of operational processes** to free up financial resources for the project.
- **Marketing of services**, whereby **data-driven offers or service packages** are developed, allowing profitable activities to **finance** the project as a whole.
- **Traditional funding mechanisms**, such as **union dues, per capita contributions, or direct taxation**.
- **Public-private consortia**, which facilitate **risk and cost-sharing arrangements** while offering **political and operational security** for long-term project sustainability.

The facilitator's role is to **guide participants through the process**. They can suggest **potential funding categories** based on the provided list when necessary. They also ensure that **all ideas are captured and logically grouped** on the mind map.

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Phase 2: Assessing Data and Service Business Value (recommended allocated time: 30 mins)

The objective of this phase is to **determine the potential value of the data and services generated by the LDT and its use cases** while considering the **legal, operational, and market constraints** that may influence its feasibility.

This phase involves a **structured group discussion** facilitated by the facilitator and centred on the following key questions :

- **Which data produced by your use case could hold significant value** (independently or in combination with other datasets), and **who would be the primary beneficiaries** of this data?

- **What services are (or could be) developed** based on this data, **which audiences would they target**, and **what pricing model (**direct, indirect, or subsidised) **would be most appropriate**?

It is important to note that, **depending on the local regulatory framework**, local authorities may face restrictions on **directly monetising data** ,charging for access at cost, particularly if they operate under **non-public operator status**. However, they can **develop and offer value-added services** built on this data, such as **mobility solutions, energy management tools, or land-use planning assistance**, which can generate revenue or deliver public value in compliance with legal requirements.

The facilitator's role is to **clarify the legal rules and constraints** specific to local authorities, ensuring that participants **remain focused on practical, feasible applications**. They must also assign the role of note taker to a participant that must write each distinct idea on a post-it note.

Phase 3: Prioritising funding and valuation strategies (recommended allocated time: 30 mins)

The objective of this phase is to **consolidate and prioritise the most viable funding strategy** for the project that will be the basis for **the business model**. This phase ensures that the insights from the two previous phases **translate into actionable outputs.**

To do this, all ideas from the previous phases are **pooled.** This pooling is followed by a **group discussion** to assess the **feasibility and alignment** with the project's goals of each item. To do so participants must place them on a two axis matrix. Each participant after another gets to place a post-it note, explaining and discussing the reasoning, until there are none left. The one placing it has the final word on its placement.

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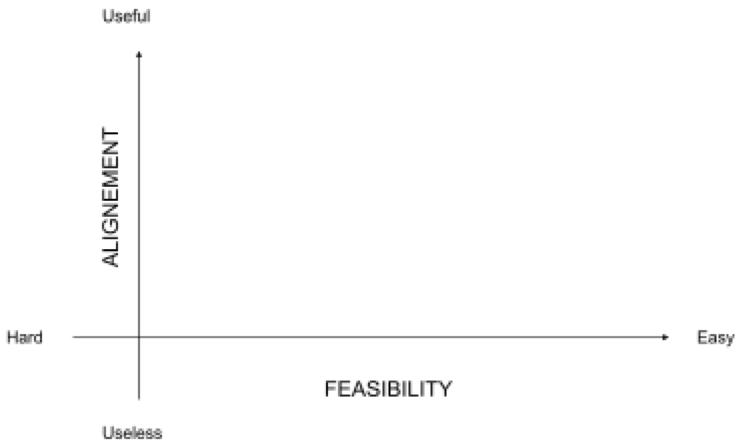

Participants will then **each select the most promising option from their perspective and place a sticker on the corresponding post-it notes.**

The group then discusses the results, ensuring that the chosen **strategies and the final business model** are both **realistic and impactful**.

The facilitator's role is to **guide the prioritisation process**, and **highlight solutions** that are not only **innovative** but also **practical and sustainable** within the given constraints.

Phase 4: Synthetising Findings and Defining Next Steps (recommended allocated time: 15 mins)

The facilitator **synthesises the workshop's key findings**, addressing any outstanding questions from participants to ensure clarity and alignment on next steps. Finally, the session concludes by **defining responsibilities, timelines, and follow-up actions**, ensuring accountability and momentum as the project progresses.

3. Next steps

The following workshops for the IMPLEMENT step are:

- *4.4 Refining the Business Model: Designing, Testing, and Refining Your Strategy with a Canvas*
- *4.5 Completing your Data Cooperation Canvas (DS4SSCC): Developing Multi-Stakeholder Data Cooperation*

Next Methodology steps:

- *Done: Complete the EXPLORE workshops*
- *Done: Complete the VALIDATE workshops*
- *Done: Complete the DEFINE workshops*
- *Ongoing:* Complete the IMPLEMENT workshops

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