

ICT-BIOCHAIN: Digital Innovations Hubs in Ireland (South-East) and Spain (Andalusia)

- ***ICT BIOCHAIN has recently launched the Digital Innovation Hubs for the bio-based sector, bringing together established Model Demonstrator Regions (biochemical hubs), including biomass suppliers and bio-industry with digital technology experts and other multi-actors***

One year after the ICT BIOCHAIN Kick-Off meeting, the project has managed to execute one of its main objectives: the implementation of the Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) in Ireland and Spain. Having the consortium meeting scheduled for June in Ireland, it seemed fitting to coordinate the launch event of this first DIH of this Model Demonstrator Region, alongside it. In the same way, one month later, the DIH of Spain (Andalusia), was launched. Both events were successful with good acceptance and attendance. The presentations and workshops that took place at both events addressed ICT-BIOCHAIN's main scope. This was to present the DIH as the main contact point for the region, as well as an explanation about its objectives, its structure, the main benefits of joining, its actions and next events, the knowledge transfer strategy as well as the promotion of new business opportunities.

The Hubs involve the so called "Hub's Competence Centre", whose members include STR, IML and VTT (global leaders in areas of ICT and biomass resource modelling), which will provide access to the best knowledge, information and technology to promote opportunities for ICT, IoT and Industry 4.0. The main objective for this is to integrate technologies into high potential biomass value chains.

ICT-BIOCHAIN, through its competence centres, will offer the best know-how on assembly and financing of biomass supply chain-related equipment and solutions. In parallel, ICT-BIOCHAIN "regional facilitators" (ITT in South-East Ireland and CTA in Andalusia) will support the structuring of local ICT scientists that would take over the competence centre role at the end of the project. ITT and CTA will also work to ensure smooth communication at local and regional levels, facilitating effective Knowledge Transference from the competence centre to the two newly established DIH's in Andalusia and South-East Ireland, represented in ICT-BIOCHAIN by CAPDER and IBF, respectively.

Together with the launch event, a knowledge transfer day was organised to introduce modern technologies with a high potential to increase efficiency, competitiveness and reduce biomass losses across specific value chains. Apart from these events, many activities will be carried out in the next months to support the awareness of the potential of ICT within biomass supply chains, including;

- A demonstration day of ICT tools for biomass value chains; an on-site exhibition in which tools for supply chain enhancement are demonstrated to members of the newly established DIH groups.
- An investment day with business opportunities for cross-sectorial value chains involving suppliers, end-users and ICT specialists along specific value chains supported by regional facilitators and model demonstrator partners. With support of the competence centres, newly established business opportunities will receive technical and business support and mentoring to consolidate regional innovations, understand technical implementation, identify barriers and develop business models following the concept of CANVAS (considering biomass resource and market, supply chain relations, revenue streams, key activities, key partnerships, cost structure). To allow these innovations to progress to the next level the regional facilitators along with MDR partners will co-host an investment day as explained below. Consolidated business models will pitch for funding at the investment day using regional funds or private investors. (e.g. through CTA, Sustainable Nation, Enterprise Ireland etc.).

If stakeholders would like to keep up to date with these events and more activities organised by the ICT-BIOCHAIN DIHs, stay tuned to the project website and its social media channels. (<https://ictbiochain.eu/> | @ictbiochain on LinkedIn and Twitter).

