



D6.3 Strategic Network Development – 1st period

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Executive Summary

FIERCE is a Horizon Europe project supporting startups and SMEs in leveraging downstream space data to accelerate green and digital innovation across sectors such as raw materials, environmental monitoring and circular economy. Within this framework, the Strategic Partnership Network (SPN) was established to expand FIERCE's outreach capacity, foster collaboration with key ecosystem actors, and maximise the visibility and impact of its open calls and support services through structured engagement with relevant intermediaries, investors, clusters, and innovation networks.

Deliverable 6.3 reports on the implementation of Task 6.3 – Strategic Partnership Network (SPN) during the first reporting period of the FIERCE project. The objective of this task is to establish, activate, and leverage a structured network of strategic partners in order to maximise outreach, strengthen ecosystem engagement, and enhance the impact of FIERCE open calls and support services.

During the first period, the consortium successfully set up and operationalised the Strategic Partnership Network, establishing a structured nomination and scoring process to ensure alignment with FIERCE objectives and maximise collaboration potential. A continuously updated SPN repository was developed, supported by nomination guidelines and internal coordination mechanisms. By the end of the reporting period, 49 organisations had been identified and engaged across diverse stakeholder categories, including innovation intermediaries, clusters, investors, public bodies, and sector-specific networks relevant to downstream space data applications.

In parallel, the consortium implemented a structured outreach programme combining dedicated FIERCE Roadshows, participation in strategic partner events, and online joint activities. Three official roadshows were organised during the period, engaging approximately 250 participants, alongside seven online joint activities reaching 374 participants. In addition, consortium members participated in selected high-level ecosystem events for targeted networking and promotion. These activities collectively strengthened awareness of FIERCE objectives, promoted the project's open calls, and facilitated direct engagement with SMEs, innovation intermediaries, and investors active in sectors such as raw materials, environmental monitoring, circular economy, sustainable infrastructure, and digital innovation.

The SPN has proven to be an effective multiplier mechanism, supporting dissemination, cross-network collaboration, and stakeholder mobilisation. Coordination with other work packages, particularly WP2 (monitoring and KPIs) and WP3/WP5 (ecosystem building and advisory services), ensured alignment between outreach efforts and project implementation objectives. The foundations laid during the first period position the Strategic Partnership Network as a central instrument for sustained engagement, open call promotion, and ecosystem strengthening in the subsequent project phases.

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List of Terms and Definitions

Table 1 Terms and Definitions

Abbreviation	Definition
KPI	Key performance indicator
LEI	Local entrepreneurship initiatives
SME	Small or medium sized enterprise
SPN	Strategic Partnership Network
WP	Work package

1. Introduction

The FIERCE project (Financing and Innovation Ecosystems for SMEs to innovate for Raw Materials and Circular Economy solutions using downstream space technologies) is a Horizon Europe Coordination and Support Action that aims to strengthen the capacity of European SMEs to develop, scale, and commercialise space-enabled solutions contributing to the green and digital (twin) transition. By mobilising a broad ecosystem of innovation intermediaries, investors, industrial stakeholders, and business support networks, FIERCE addresses key market, financing, and innovation gaps that currently limit SMEs' uptake of downstream space data and technologies.

Over its 36-month duration, FIERCE provides integrated technical, business, and financial support to SMEs, start-ups, and scale-ups active in areas such as circular economy, critical raw materials, environmental monitoring, and corporate sustainability. The project combines open calls for financial support with tailored advisory services, access to innovation infrastructure, capacity-building activities, and investment-oriented support. In parallel, FIERCE engages innovation intermediaries through Local Entrepreneurship Initiatives (LEIs) to foster regional ecosystems and strengthen connections between SMEs and industrial, research, and market actors. These activities are complemented by the FIERCE Digital Toolbox, which hosts learning resources, practical tools, and a curated pool of qualified service providers, contributing to the creation of a vibrant and sustainable community around space-enabled green innovation.

Within this framework, Work Package 6 (WP6) focuses on dissemination, communication, and ecosystem building at European level. WP6 aims to amplify the visibility, impact, and sustainability of FIERCE outcomes by engaging strategic networks, fostering synergies with existing EU and international initiatives, and supporting the outreach of FIERCE open calls and opportunities. In this context, Task 6.3 (Strategic Partnership Network) plays a central role in structuring and operationalising collaborations with key stakeholders that can extend the reach and long-term value of the project.

The purpose of Task 6.3 is to establish, activate, and maintain a Strategic Partnership Network (SPN) composed of EU-wide and international networks, industry associations, clusters, investment communities, and support organisations relevant to the FIERCE objectives. These partners are engaged to create mutually beneficial collaborations that enhance the project's ability to reach high-potential SMEs, innovation intermediaries, and investors, in designated Roadshows and online activities, while also offering added value to the partners' own members and stakeholders. Through these events, FIERCE seeks to align its activities with existing innovation and financing ecosystems, inform about FIERCE and its Open Calls in the 1st Project period, and reinforce complementarities with other EU-funded initiatives and market-driven platforms for maximum impact.

The importance of the Strategic Partnership Network is particularly evident in relation to the FIERCE open calls, which constitute a core mechanism for delivering financial and non-financial support to SMEs. By leveraging trusted networks and intermediaries, the Roadshows and online activities enhance the credibility and visibility of the calls, support targeted dissemination to high-potential or underrepresented segments, and facilitate access to diverse geographical and sectoral ecosystems. Beyond outreach, strategic partners also act as multipliers by promoting FIERCE results, supporting

follow-up opportunities for SMEs, and contributing to the sustainability of project outcomes beyond the funding period.

Task 6.3 is closely linked to several other work packages and activities within the project. In particular, it provides input to WP2 and supports WP3, which are responsible for the design and implementation of FIERCE open calls and SME support actions, by broadening outreach channels and increasing awareness among relevant target groups. The FIERCE Strategic Partnership Network contributes to disseminating information about open calls, eligibility criteria, and support opportunities, thereby improving both the quantity and quality of applications received.

The SPN complements WP3, which focuses on advisory services, investment readiness, and access to finance. Strategic partners, including investor networks, innovation hubs, and sectoral platforms, contribute to cross-fertilisation activities and joint events that strengthen SMEs' exposure to funding opportunities, strategic partners, and knowledge exchange. In this way, Task 6.3 acts as a horizontal enabler, reinforcing the effectiveness and coherence of FIERCE support across its different thematic tracks.

Deliverable 6.3 Strategic Partnership Network – 1st period documents the implementation and outcomes of Task 6.3, providing an overview of the Strategic Partnership Network, the collaboration Roadshows and online activities, and the contribution of these partnerships to the overall objectives of the FIERCE project. It highlights how strategic engagement at ecosystem level supports effective open call implementation, strengthens SME participation, and reinforces FIERCE's role as a catalyst for space-enabled green and digital innovation in Europe.

2. Strategic Partnership Network – Approach and Implementation Framework

The Strategic Partnership Network activities were designed to respond to the dynamic nature of innovation and investment ecosystems and to maximise the visibility, relevance, and impact of FIERCE across diverse stakeholder communities.

The Strategic Partnership Network implementation adds to the achievement of the FIERCE project strategic objectives and KPIs that concern the overall impact of the project:

- **Objective 5 (O5):** Forge strategic partnerships with key networks, communities and stakeholders to create international opportunities for SMEs and widen outreach through dissemination and exploitation

Given the diversity of target audiences, geographical contexts, and thematic priorities addressed by the project, a flexible yet structured approach was adopted to enable timely engagement with relevant networks, alignment with high-impact events, and continuous identification of new collaboration opportunities. The methodology prioritised early activation, shared ownership across consortium partners, and systematic monitoring in order to ensure that strategic partnerships effectively support the outreach of open calls and reinforce the sustainability of FIERCE activities.

2.1 Planning and Coordination

The implementation of Task 6.3 was initiated through a dedicated planning phase involving regular coordination meetings among the partners contributing to dissemination, communication, and ecosystem engagement activities. This phase focused on aligning expectations, clarifying roles, and defining operational procedures for engaging strategic partners in line with the purpose of the SPN.

Key planning activities included the development of common communication templates to support consistent messaging towards external networks, the identification of suitable physical and online events for roadshows and joint dissemination activities, and the definition of internal workflows for partner collaboration. Particular attention was given to identifying events and platforms with strong relevance to FIERCE thematic priorities and target audiences, including SMEs, innovation intermediaries, investors, and EU-wide networks.

2.2 Identification and Nomination of Strategic Partners

A central element of the methodology was the establishment of a shared repository enabling all consortium partners to nominate organisations for inclusion in the Strategic Partnership Network. This repository was designed as a living, open document, allowing continuous updates throughout the project duration. Partners were encouraged to nominate organisations that could contribute to the objectives of Task 6.3, including dissemination of open calls, cross-fertilisation with other initiatives, joint activities, or enhanced access to relevant stakeholder communities.

To ensure coherence and relevance, guidance on the nomination process was developed and shared with consortium partners in the form of a dedicated presentation. This guidance outlined the purpose

of the SPN, eligibility considerations, expected added value, and practical examples of suitable partner profiles. The open and collaborative nature of the nomination process allowed the SPN to grow organically while maintaining alignment with the strategic goals of the project.

2.3 Implementation of Roadshows and Joint Activities

The methodology foresaw a combination of onsite roadshows and online joint activities as key instruments for activating the Strategic Partnership Network. While the Description of Action foresees roadshow activities at specific project milestones, the consortium adopted a pragmatic approach to timing in order to maximise impact and visibility.

In this context, one roadshow was implemented earlier than initially foreseen in the DoA (M7 instead of M12), at the PODIM conference, organised by EMNP. This decision was taken to leverage a high-visibility event with strong relevance to the FIERCE target audience and to attract early attention to the project and its upcoming opportunities.

In parallel, 2 roadshows originally foreseen for the 2nd reporting period were transferred to the 1st reporting period in order to synchronize them with the launch of the 1st round of the FIERCE Support Programs. This change in timings aimed to reinforce the objective of the roadshow events to establish strategic partnerships while also enable us to identify and directly engage promising candidates to participate in our open calls.

These changes were communicated to the Project Officer well before being implemented, and the Project Officer confirmed via email. The detailed reporting of these roadshows is presented in the subsequent implementation chapter of this deliverable.

2.4 Reporting, Monitoring, and Quality Assurance

To ensure consistency and traceability, standardised reporting templates were developed for Strategic Partnership Network activities. Separate templates were defined for onsite and online activities, capturing key information such as objectives, partner organisations involved, audience reached, key messages disseminated, and links to FIERCE open calls or services. These templates support structured documentation of activities and facilitate aggregation of results at deliverable and work package level.

Continuous monitoring of the SPN is an integral part of the methodology. As of the reporting date, 51 organisations have been identified and engaged through the Strategic Partnership Network. The status of nominations, engagement, and activity implementation is regularly reviewed, ensuring alignment with Task 6.3 objectives and allowing for timely adjustments where needed. Monitoring of SPN-related indicators is coordinated with WP2, where the achievement of key performance indicators (KPIs) related to outreach, dissemination, and engagement is consolidated and tracked by TTG. This linkage ensures coherence between ecosystem-building activities and the wider monitoring framework of the project, particularly in relation to open call outreach and SME engagement.

Overall, this structured yet flexible implementation framework enables the Strategic Partnership Network to evolve dynamically, support the effective dissemination of FIERCE opportunities, and contribute meaningfully to the project's ambition of strengthening European innovation and financing ecosystems around space-enabled green solutions.

3. Implementation of Strategic Partnership Network Activities – 1st Period

During the first reporting period, the implementation of Task 6.3 focused on the activation of the Strategic Partnership Network and the execution of targeted outreach activities to maximise visibility and engagement across relevant ecosystems.

Table 2 Current achievement of T6.3 KPIs

Achievement indicator	Overall project target	Value on 30 April 2026
Strategic partnerships with EU networks	≥15	49
Roadshows / total participants	4/150	3/252
Online joint activities / total participants	10/200	7/374
Participation in Strategic Partners' Events	n/a	3
Online Knowledge Exchange Sessions with participation of SPN	n/a	1/22

A total of **49 organisations** (Annex 1) were identified and engaged within the Strategic Partnership Network, contributing to dissemination, cross-fertilisation, and outreach objectives. In parallel, **three (3) roadshows** were successfully implemented, reaching an overall audience of **approximately 252 participants**, alongside **seven (7) online activities** engaging **374 participants** (Tab. 2). Additionally, the consortium engaged in three (3) events organised by Strategic Partners to strengthen outreach, expand the Strategic Partnership Network through new stakeholder engagement, and facilitate knowledge exchange across relevant innovation ecosystems in one dedicated session (22 participants). All activities were organised and delivered through the joint efforts of **TTG, QPL, NOVA, EIT RM, and EMNP** reflecting a coordinated consortium-wide approach to ecosystem engagement. The following sub-chapters provide a detailed overview of the SPN formation process, as well as the roadshows and online activities implemented during this period.

3.1 Formation and Operational Use of the Strategic Partnership Network

The Strategic Partnership Network (SPN) was established as a structured yet flexible mechanism to support the outreach, dissemination, and ecosystem-building objectives of the FIERCE project. Its formation was guided by the need to engage organisations that could effectively extend the project's reach beyond the consortium, support the promotion of open calls, contribute to ecosystem-building activities, and reinforce links with innovation, investment, and policy communities relevant to space-enabled green and digital innovation.

The identification and onboarding of SPN entities followed a partner-driven nomination process, enabling all consortium partners to propose and engage 49 organisations to date, based on their

existing networks and strategic relevance. Nominations were collected through a shared and continuously updated repository, ensuring transparency, inclusiveness, and adaptability over time. This living document allows the SPN to evolve in line with project needs, emerging opportunities, and feedback from ongoing activities.

To ensure coherence and quality, nominated organisations were assessed using a common scoring scale, designed to evaluate their adequacy and potential contribution to the project. The scoring framework covered three main dimensions:

- the organisation's profile and influence within the EU or international ecosystem;
- its alignment with FIERCE objectives, including SME support, innovation ecosystem strengthening, and internationalisation; and
- its potential for mutually beneficial collaboration, particularly in terms of SME outreach, promotion of FIERCE opportunities, cross-fertilisation with other networks, and engagement as beneficiaries or service providers.

This structured assessment supported prioritisation while remaining sufficiently flexible to accommodate diverse organisational profiles.

The resulting SPN reflects a high degree of specialisation and diversity, encompassing European and international networks, innovation and investment platforms, clusters, digital and space innovation hubs, policy-oriented organisations, financial institutions, media outlets, accelerators, and technology providers. These organisations cover a broad spectrum of expertise, including Earth observation and space data applications, SME and startup support, access to finance, venture capital and business angel networks, policy analysis, digital transformation, cybersecurity, and sustainable innovation. This diversity is essential to address the multifaceted challenges targeted by FIERCE and to support SMEs operating at different maturity levels and across multiple sectors.

Each SPN organisation was associated with specific FIERCE activities or tasks where its contribution could add the most value. These include, among others, promotion of FIERCE open calls to targeted SME and startup communities; identification of external service providers; engagement of innovation intermediaries for the Ecosystem Building Programme; support to policy-related activities, replication efforts, and recommendations; and facilitation of access to finance and investment-oriented networks. In several cases, organisations also serve as multipliers by disseminating information through newsletters, dedicated info sessions, member communications, or participation in joint events.

Overall, the formation of the Strategic Partnership Network was not conceived as a static listing of stakeholders, but as a functional instrument embedded in the project's implementation logic. By aligning partner specialisation with concrete FIERCE activities and maintaining continuous monitoring and nomination processes, the SPN supports effective open call outreach, strengthens ecosystem linkages, and enhances the long-term sustainability and impact of the project's results.

3.2 FIERCE Roadshows – 1st Period

During the first reporting period, FIERCE roadshows were implemented as a key instrument to activate the Strategic Partnership Network and to promote the project and its opportunities within relevant innovation and industry ecosystems. The roadshows were organised in the framework of high-impact European and international events, enabling direct engagement with SMEs, startups,

innovation intermediaries, investors, and other stakeholders aligned with FIERCE thematic priorities (Table 3).

Table 3 Participation of stakeholders in FIERCE 1st Period roadshows & partners' events

Roadshow	Number of participants/ established contacts	Venue, country	Type of outreached stakeholders/industry sectors
1 st Roadshow event within PODIM Startup and Tech Conference	57 + 1000*	Maribor, Slovenia	startups, scale-ups, investors, corporates, innovation intermediaries
2 nd Roadshow event within Ecomondo	1850/50	Rimini, Italy	aerospace, earth observation, circular economy, innovation intermediaries, sustainability, recycling, raw materials and ESG
3 rd Roadshow event alongside Tech Tour Bio-based industries	145	Wuppertal, Germany	startups, investors, industry experts, institutional representatives

*As a follow up, 1000 participants were contacted through direct mailing, informing FIERCE project and calls' opening date

Through a combination of presentations, dedicated dissemination actions, and one-to-one meetings, the roadshows supported awareness-building, open call promotion, and the identification of potential applicants and partners. The following sub-chapters provide an overview of the individual roadshows implemented during this period.

3.2.1 PODIM Conference Roadshow, 12-14 May 2025, EMNP

The FIERCE roadshow organised by EMNP took place in the context of the PODIM Startup and Tech Conference in Maribor, Slovenia, a major regional event bringing together startups, scale-ups, investors, corporates, and innovation intermediaries. The choice of PODIM allowed FIERCE to engage with a diverse and international audience at an early stage of the project, maximising visibility and awareness of the initiative and its upcoming opportunities.

During the roadshow, FIERCE was presented to 57 participants through dedicated dissemination actions and direct interactions (Figure 1). The event enabled engagement with a significant number of participants from Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Slovenia, Switzerland and the UK, as reported by EMNP, reflecting PODIM's strong international reach.

Several one-to-one meetings were held with startups, SMEs, and ecosystem stakeholders to discuss the objectives of the FIERCE project, open calls' eligibility conditions, and potential participation in the forthcoming open calls. The roadshow also served as an opportunity to position FIERCE within broader innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems, particularly among early-stage companies and innovation intermediaries active in green, digital, and technology-driven sectors. Dedicated communication materials were used to ensure consistent messaging and to highlight the value proposition of FIERCE support services.

The PODIM roadshow provided early, high-impact exposure for FIERCE and enabled direct engagement with a broad and international innovation audience, supporting awareness-building and early pipeline generation for future open calls.



Figure 1: FIERCE at PODIM 2025

On May 12th, FIERCE hosted a session titled “How Space Data Can Fuel Your Business Growth”, focusing on how downstream space data can be leveraged for real-world business applications. The session attracted high interest from SMEs, start-ups, and innovation stakeholders.

As a follow up of the event participation, it was agreed with the PODIM organisers to forward a promotional email to 1000 SMEs registered in PODIM 2025 to announce the launch of the 1st Advisory Service Open Call. This collaborative action aimed at ensuring that promising candidates would be re-engaged during the application stage.



Figure 2: FIERCE Roadshow alongside PODIM.

3.2.2 Ecomondo 2025 Roadshow, 3-7 November 2025, EIT RM

The Ecomondo 2025 Roadshow was organised by EIT RM within one of Europe's largest trade fairs dedicated to sustainability, circular economy, and environmental technologies (1850 participants at the live event in total). This setting enabled FIERCE to reach a broad and diverse audience of 50 participants spanning industry, SMEs, innovation intermediaries, and solution providers active in green and digital transformation.

The roadshow engaged a wide range of participants from multiple countries and facilitated several direct exchanges and one-to-one meetings. These interactions focused on presenting the FIERCE project, clarifying open call opportunities, and discussing how space-enabled solutions can contribute to sustainability and circular economy challenges addressed by Ecomondo participants (Figure 5).

The roadshow capitalised on the cross-sector nature of the event, allowing FIERCE to connect with non-space SMEs and organisations that could benefit from downstream space technologies. This contributed to expanding the project's outreach beyond traditional space ecosystems and supported awareness among potential first-time users of space data.

The Ecomondo roadshow successfully broadened FIERCE outreach to sustainability-focused and non-space stakeholders, reinforcing the project's cross-sector positioning and supporting engagement with new potential applicant communities.

A range of tailor-made promotional material (e.g. tailored expo wall, informative 1-pagers, etc.) was produced by Q-PLAN for this Roadshow to ensure that our message is visible, prominent and coherent.



Figure 3: FIERCE Roadshow at Ecomondo 2025

3.2.3 Roadshow at Tech Tour Bio-based Industries, 13 November 2025, TTG

The FIERCE roadshow at Tech Tour Bio-based Industries (TTBBI) 2025, held in Wuppertal, Germany, was organised on the side of the Tech Tour Bio-based Industries event, a flagship investment and networking programme dedicated to advancing sustainable, bio-based solutions and connecting innovative companies with investors, corporates, and ecosystem intermediaries.

The event brought together a curated set of 40 companies, over 45 investors and stakeholders working across circular economy, bio-based materials, biomanufacturing and related technology

domains, providing a fertile environment for promoting the FIERCE project and its open call opportunities.

During the roadshow, participating representatives from FIERCE engaged with attendees through dedicated engagements and dissemination activities designed to raise visibility of the 1st FIERCE Open Call eligibility criteria, and advisory support offerings.

The roadshow facilitated valuable interactions with a broad audience of 145 participants, including startups and SMEs at



Figure 4: FIERCE Roadshow alongside Tech Tour Bio-based Industries event 2025 in Germany.

various stages of development, investors, and innovation intermediaries, drawn from diverse geographic backgrounds. The structure of the roadshow included both general presentations (prepared by Q-PLAN and adapted by TTG) and targeted one-to-one exchanges, enabling deeper discussions on how FIERCE support services could address specific challenges faced by companies exploring space-enabled and sustainability-oriented innovation pathways.

The TTBBi roadshow complemented the consortium's wider outreach strategy by situating FIERCE within a high-calibre investment-oriented forum, enhancing access to potential applicants and strategic partners. By leveraging the dynamic format and networks cultivated by Tech Tour, the activity contributed to expanding the project's reach into bio-based and circular economy communities, aligning with the broader FIERCE goal of mobilising SMEs across green and digital innovation landscapes.

The TTBBi roadshow in Wuppertal successfully strengthened FIERCE's engagement with a diverse and innovation-driven audience, supporting open call awareness and ecosystem connectivity within the bio-based industries and sustainability investment space.

3.3 FIERCE Online Joint Activities

During the first reporting period, online joint activities were implemented as a complementary outreach mechanism to onsite roadshows, enabling FIERCE to engage with geographically dispersed stakeholders and to leverage established partner networks in a flexible and cost-efficient manner.

These activities were organised in cooperation with selected Strategic Partnership Network members and relevant ecosystem initiatives, allowing the project to reach SMEs, startups, innovation intermediaries, investors, and other stakeholders aligned with FIERCE thematic priorities.

Table 4 FIERCE joint online activities

Online event	Number of targeted participants	Type of outreached stakeholders/industry sectors
Sure 5.0	22	sustainability, manufacturing, electronics, and AI sectors
S34I, hybrid	70 (20 online + 50 onsite)	Mining companies, research institutes, SMEs service providers to the mining sector
DiLiCHANCE	19	Raw materials
NOVA - EMNP EBP Info Session I	44	1:1 meetings with companies, associations and consultancies
Online Venture Academy	48	startups, investors, industry experts, institutional representatives
FIERCE Webinar: Space data for mining	100	Mining companies, Junior mining companies, SMEs service providers
NOVA - EMNP EBP Info Session II	71	SMEs

The online format facilitated targeted dissemination of FIERCE objectives, open call opportunities, and support services, while also enabling interactive exchange and follow-up discussions with interested participants. By integrating these activities into existing digital events, webinars, and community sessions, FIERCE strengthened its visibility across diverse innovation ecosystems and reinforced links with complementary European initiatives. The following sub-chapters present an overview of the individual online joint activities implemented during the first reporting period.

3.3.1 Sure 5.0, 3 June 2025, Q-PLAN

The online joint activity organised in cooperation with the Sure 5.0 Project, MANTRA and AI REDGIO 5.0 Project took place on 3 June 2025 and targeted SMEs and stakeholders interested in sustainability-driven innovation and Industry 5.0-related topics. The activity was delivered as part of a broader event on funding opportunities for SMEs (Figure 7).

The session reached participants active in sustainability, manufacturing, electronics, and AI sectors, with geographical representation from Italy, Spain, and Greece. A total of 22 participants attended the online activity. The FIERCE project presented tailored applications of downstream space technologies for the industry sector to familiarize participants with the potential and then pitched the FIERCE Support Programs.

The activity generated expressions of interest for further contact and follow-up and was supported by online dissemination, project presentation, and screenshots. It positioned FIERCE within an Industry 5.0 and sustainability-focused context and supported engagement with SMEs interested in advisory support.

More information about the event can be found in the corresponding news item available on the fierce website here: <https://project-fierce.eu/fierce-at-sure-5-0-promoting-sme-support-for-sustainability/>

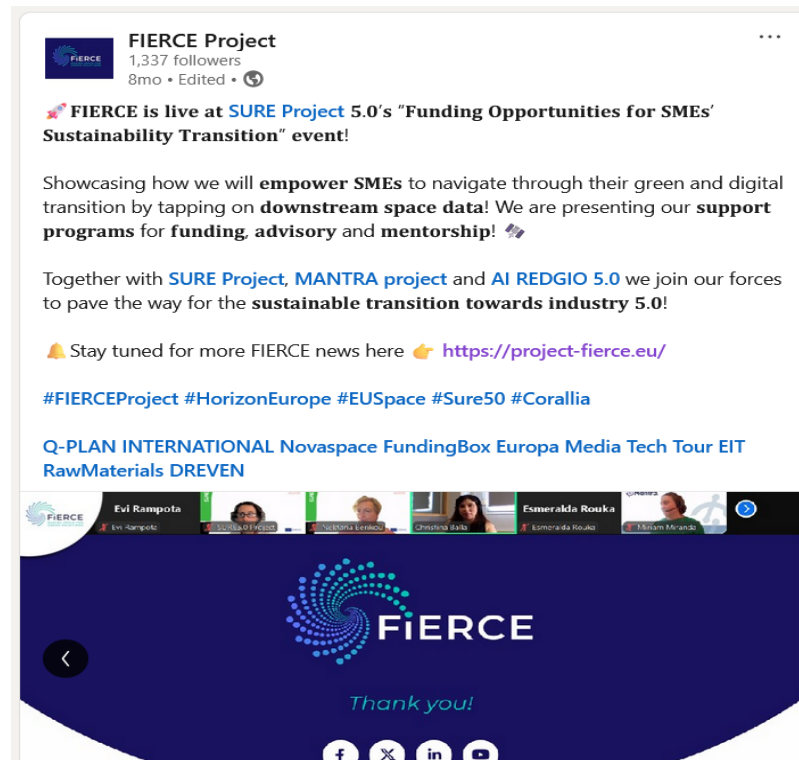


Figure 5: Promotion of FIERCE's online joint activity with SURE 5.0, MANTRA and AI REDGIO 5.0

3.3.2 S34I, hybrid, 12 June 2025, EIT RM

This hybrid joint activity was implemented in the framework of the S34I Final Conference, organised by the S34I Project on 12 June 2025. The activity aimed to introduce FIERCE to a broad audience attending a large-scale digital event focused on innovation, sustainability, and industrial transformation.

The FIERCE presentation was delivered online to 20 attendees and in front of 50 stakeholders of the conference audience, with participants originating from across Europe and representing sectors including mining companies, research institutes, and SMEs.

While the event format did not allow for precise tracking of attendance specific to the FIERCE session, the activity benefited from high visibility within an established innovation forum.

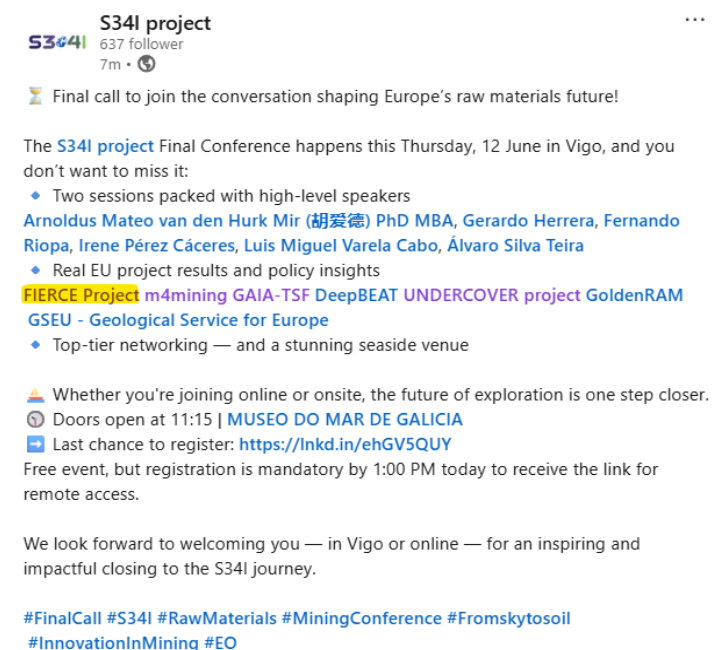


Figure 6: Promotion of the joint online activity with S34I project

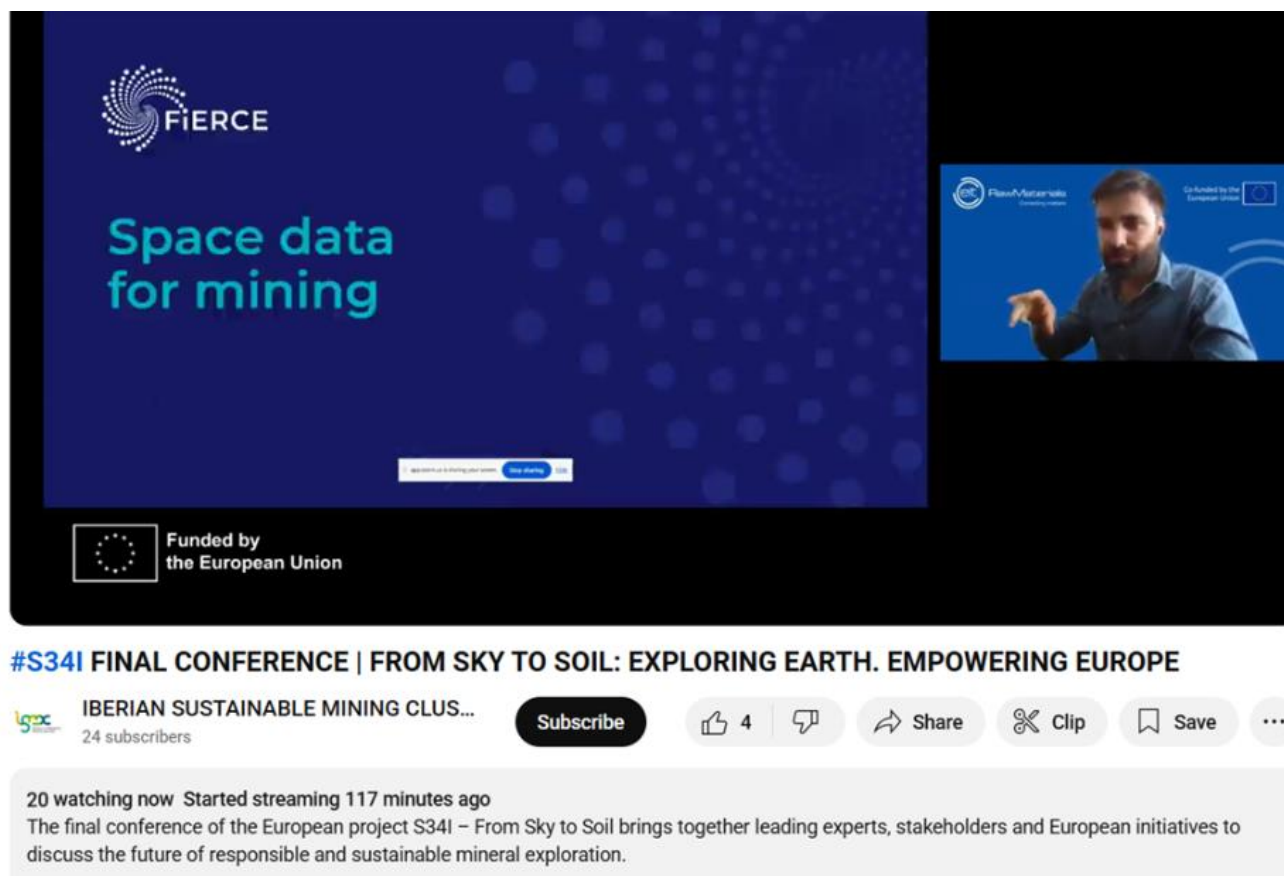


Figure 7: EIT RM presenting FIERCE and its opportunities at the joint online event with S34I

Supporting materials, including presentations and screenshots, were produced and archived for reporting purposes. The S34I online activity enhanced FIERCE visibility within a large European innovation conference and supported outreach to a diverse, cross-sectoral audience.

3.3.3 DiLiCHANCE, 08 July 2025, Q-PLAN

The online joint activity organised with the DiLiCHANCE Project took place on 8 July 2025 and targeted stakeholders active in raw materials, mining, and due diligence related domains. The activity was delivered as an online session and focused on presenting FIERCE objectives and advisory services.

The activity engaged participants from Greece, Belgium, and Spain, with a total of 19 participants attending. The session generated expressions of interest for follow-up contact and supported interactive exchange with SMEs and ecosystem stakeholders interested in innovation support.

Supporting materials, including presentations and screenshots, were produced and archived as part of the reporting process. The DiLiCHANCE online activity enabled targeted engagement with raw materials and mining stakeholders and supported awareness of FIERCE advisory opportunities among a specialised audience.

3.3.4 EBP Info Session, 9 September 2025, NOVA - EMNP

The online joint activity organised as the NOVA – EMNP EBP Info Session took place on 9 September 2025 and targeted 44 companies active in raw materials, mining, and related innovation domains

(Figure 8). Delivered as an online session, the event focused on presenting the FIERCE project objectives and the available advisory services, with particular emphasis on opportunities relevant to SMEs and innovation actors in these sectors.

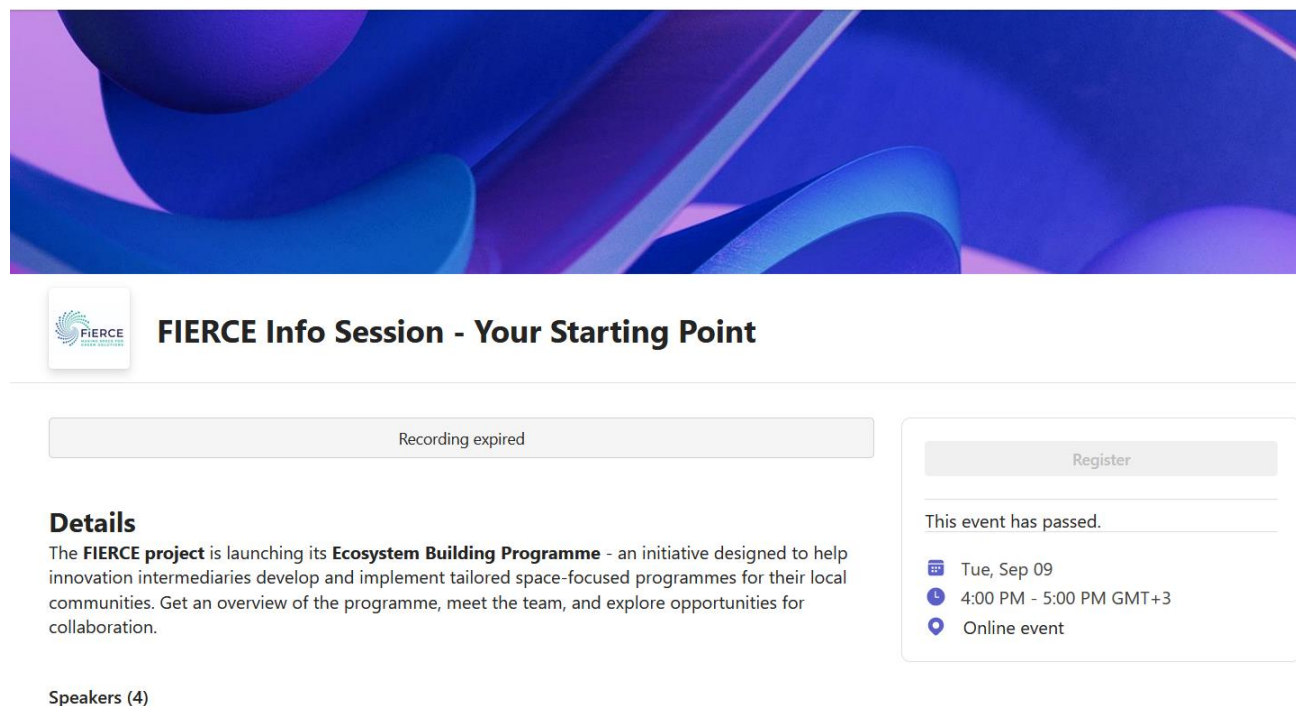


Figure 8: Screenshot from the disseminated recording of NOVA-EMNP EBP Info Session

The session enabled interactive exchange and generated expressions of interest for follow-up engagement, supporting awareness and understanding of FIERCE support mechanisms among a specialised audience. A recording from the session was shared with the attendees and all registered participants.

3.3.5 Online Venture Academy, 23 October 2025, TTG

The online joint activity organised in collaboration with the Tech Tour Bio-Based Industries (TTBBI) network took place on 23 October 2025 and was coordinated by TTG (Figure 9). The activity aimed to introduce the FIERCE project and its advisory services to an audience active in sustainability, manufacturing, electronics, and AI-related sectors.

The session engaged 48 participants (24 investors + 24 companies). The online format enabled direct interaction with stakeholders interested in innovation support and facilitated expressions of interest for follow-up engagement with the FIERCE consortium.

The activity focused on presenting FIERCE objectives and pitching the first Advisory Services Open Call, allowing participants to explore potential alignment with their innovation needs.

Dissemination was supported through dedicated online communication and the availability of presentation materials and screenshots documenting the activity.

The TTBBi online activity enabled targeted engagement with SMEs and innovation stakeholders from Southern Europe and supported early expressions of interest in FIERCE advisory services.



Figure 9: Screenshot from online joint activity at Online Venture Academy

3.3.6 FIERCE Webinar: Space data for mining, 17 November 2025, EIT RM, Q-PLAN

The FIERCE webinar “Space data for mining”, organised by EIT RM on 17 November 2026 (Figure 10), was designed to raise awareness of how downstream space data can support innovation, sustainability, and efficiency across the raw materials and mining value chain.

The webinar targeted a broad audience of industry stakeholders, SMEs, researchers, and innovation intermediaries interested in Earth observation, environmental monitoring, and digital solutions for mining applications.



Figure 10: Screenshot from FIERCE online joint activity Webinar: Space data for mining

The event demonstrated strong interest and outreach, with 140 registrations, and 100 attendees effectively joining the session.

The webinar provided a platform to present FIERCE objectives, relevant use cases, and opportunities for engagement, while fostering discussion around the role of space data in environmental risk monitoring and responsible mining practices. Overall, the activity contributed significantly to disseminating FIERCE opportunities within a highly relevant and specialised community.

3.3.7 NOVA - EMNP EBP Info Session, 26 January 2026

A second NOVA – EMNP EBP Info Session was delivered as an online joint activity (Figure 11) to further promote the FIERCE project and its support opportunities to a broad audience of business support organisations, innovation intermediaries, and SMEs. The session was structured to provide an overview of FIERCE objectives, open call details, and engagement pathways, while offering participants the chance to ask questions and explore collaboration opportunities. It leveraged the established networks of NOVA and EMNP to reach stakeholders actively involved in European innovation ecosystems.

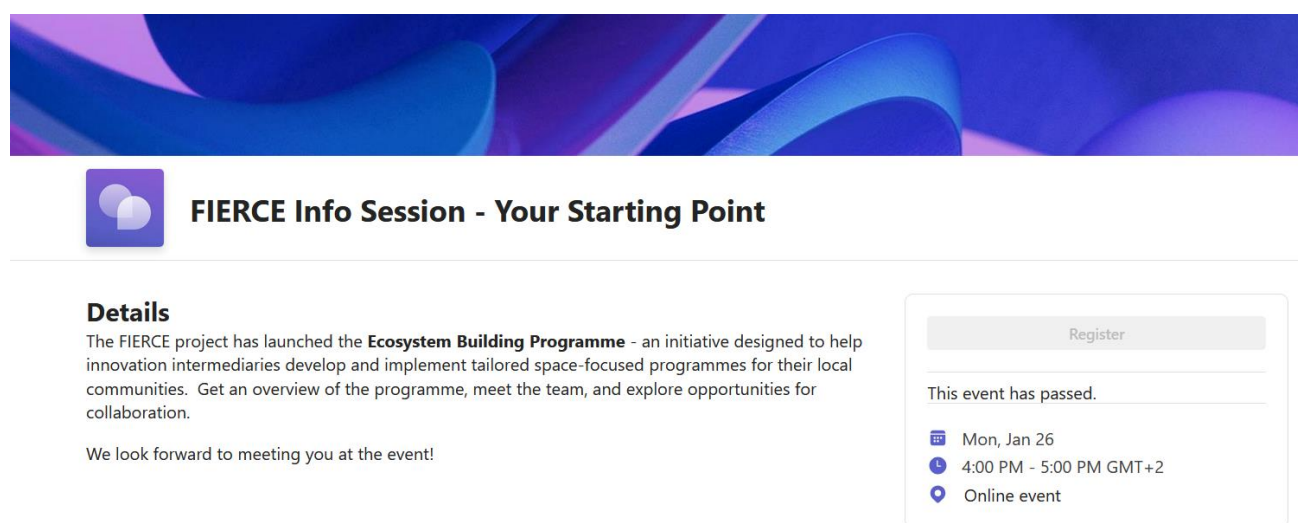


Figure 11: Screenshot from the invitation to Info Session online joint activity

The activity contributed to strengthening FIERCE visibility by building on earlier dissemination efforts and engaging additional participants interested in advisory services and project participation. Through live interaction and follow-up engagement, the session supported awareness of FIERCE’s offer among key intermediary organisations, enhancing the potential for outreach and future engagement with innovation communities across Europe.

3.4 FIERCE Participation in Strategic Partners’ Event

In addition to the dedicated FIERCE Roadshows and joint online activities, the consortium also engaged in a number of high-level ecosystem events organised by Strategic Partners and related initiatives. In these cases, participation focused primarily on networking, informal promotion, and targeted outreach to relevant stakeholders, without the structured format, dedicated sessions, or branded visibility associated with official FIERCE Roadshows. These activities nevertheless contributed to strengthening ecosystem connections and raising awareness of FIERCE opportunities among specialised audiences.

3.4.1 Raw Materials Summit, 13-15 May 2025, EIT RM and NOVA

EIT RawMaterials and NOVA participated in the Raw Materials Summit in Brussels, Belgium, a key European event focused on raw materials, circular economy, and sustainable industrial value chains (Figure 2). The event provided a highly relevant setting for engaging stakeholders aligned with FIERCE thematic priorities, particularly those working on raw material resource efficiency, sustainability, and space-enabled solutions.

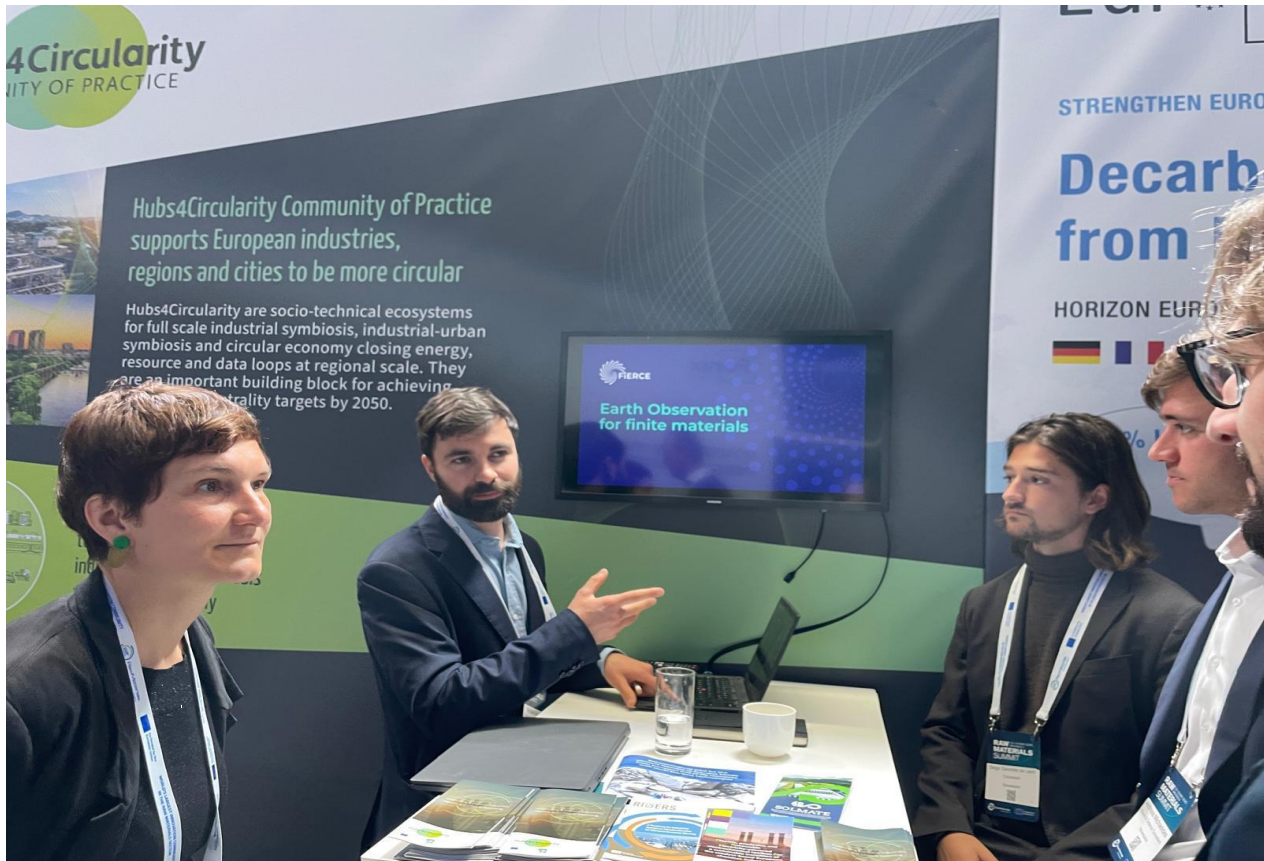


Figure 12: EIT RM and NOVA at Raw Materials Summit in Belgium

The partners promoted FIERCE and its open calls to a broad audience representing SMEs, industry actors, innovation intermediaries, and policy-related organisations from several countries. The directly engaged with 15 participants (13 startups and 2 EU projects) and one-to-one meetings allowed for in-depth discussions on FIERCE objectives, open call opportunities, and the potential role of space technologies in supporting innovation in the raw materials sector.

By leveraging the Raw Materials Summit ecosystem, the roadshow facilitated cross-fertilisation with existing European initiatives and networks connected to EIT Raw Materials. This contributed to strengthening links between FIERCE and sector-specific communities, while also identifying potential candidates for further engagement in ecosystem-building and advisory activities.

The Raw Materials Summit effectively connected FIERCE with specialised European stakeholders in raw materials and circular economy, reinforcing sectoral outreach and creating synergies with established innovation networks.

3.4.2 Networking at EBN Congress, 18-20 June 2025, Q-PLAN

During the EBN Congress held in Barakaldo from 18–20 June, Q-PLAN supported the promotion of the FIERCE open calls to a broad range of business support organisations and ecosystem actors attending the event (Figure 3). The direct outreach to 40 attending stakeholders focused on raising awareness of FIERCE funding and advisory opportunities and encouraging intermediaries to relay this information to relevant SMEs and startups within their networks.



Figure 13: FIERCE at EBN Congress in Bilbao

The activity generated some leads and expressions of interest, which were followed up by QPL after the event. This targeted engagement at a high-level investment and business support forum contributed to strengthening FIERCE visibility within investor-connected ecosystems and expanding the project's outreach potential.

3.4.3 Lario Space 2025 Event, 11 September 2025, EIT RM

During the Lario Space 2025 event, EIT RM focused on engaging stakeholders from the space and advanced technology ecosystem. The event provided a targeted platform to present FIERCE to companies and organisations with direct interest in space-enabled applications, innovation, and downstream services.

The event attracted participants from different countries and backgrounds, including SMEs, technology providers, and ecosystem actors. One-to-one meetings with 8 participants (2 space associations with a large network of Italian start-ups and SMEs, and 6 companies) enabled tailored discussions on how FIERCE support mechanisms could address specific innovation and market challenges faced by space-



Figure 14: FIERCE at Lario Space 2025

related companies, particularly in relation to sustainability and industrial applications, as well as benefiting on FIERCE services.

FIERCE's participation at the Lario Space 2025 strengthened the project's visibility within specialised space innovation communities and supported targeted engagement with SMEs and technology actors relevant to the project's objectives.

3.5 Mobilising SPN for Knowledge Exchange Sessions in Period 1

During the first reporting period, the Strategic Partnership Network (SPN) was actively mobilised to support the **implementation of online knowledge exchange sessions** aimed at engaging innovation intermediaries and strengthening local entrepreneurship ecosystems in line with Task 3.3. In particular, the FIERCE Knowledge Exchange Event on Space-Based Innovation on 24 April 2026 served as a dedicated platform to connect SPN members, including clusters, innovation hubs, accelerators, business associations, and regional ecosystem actors with the project's ecosystem-building activities. The session facilitated the exchange between 22 participants, including 13 intermediaries, of best practices, challenges, and solutions related to the integration of space-based data into regional support initiatives, while fostering cross-regional and cross-industry collaboration among strategic partners. This activity directly contributed to T3.3 objectives by supporting the design and adaptation of Local Entrepreneurship Initiatives, strengthening intermediary engagement, and creating pathways for open call dissemination, international cooperation, and future participation as external service providers within the FIERCE SME support framework.

3.6 Other joint online and offline activities

3.6.1 European Health and Digital Executive Agency - HaDEA

FIERCE was invited by the European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA) to participate in Web Summit 2025, held from 10–13 November 2025 in Lisbon, Portugal, within the framework of HaDEA's official presence at the event. In the context of HaDEA's programme of activities, the Project Coordinator contributed to the Masterclass entitled "*Investing in Future Technologies: How to Secure EU Funding for Your Project?*". The intervention provided practical insights into how European Union funding instruments foster technological advancement, support market uptake, and strengthen Europe's innovation ecosystem.

During the session, the FIERCE support schemes were presented as concrete pathways for SMEs and start-ups to leverage space-derived data, access innovation vouchers, and benefit from tailored expert mentoring. Particular emphasis was placed on facilitating the integration of space technologies into sustainable and digital transformation strategies, thereby enhancing competitiveness and scalability. In parallel, HaDEA allocated a dedicated two-hour time slot at its exhibition stand to FIERCE. This provided a strategic platform for direct engagement with innovators, prospective applicants, and potential partners, enabling in-depth discussions on collaboration opportunities and the practical application of space technologies across sectors. It also provided an opportunity to display our promotional video to a wide range of prospective applicants.

Beyond the on-site activities, HaDEA further reinforced FIERCE’s visibility by promoting its participation through [its website](#) and official social media channels, significantly broadening outreach and amplifying the project’s key messages to a diverse and innovation-oriented audience.



Figure 15: FIERCE at Web Summit 2025, invited by HaDEA

3.6.2 The European Union Agency for the Space Program - EUSPA

The European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA) supported the broad dissemination of FIERCE’s open calls for both the Advisory Services Support Programme and the Financial Support Programme by featuring them in its official newsletter. This visibility significantly enhanced outreach to relevant stakeholders within the European space and innovation communities, ensuring targeted communication towards potential applicants and ecosystem actors.

In parallel, the Project Coordinator is in discussions with selected external contractors collaborating with EUSPA to explore mutually beneficial synergies. The objective is to establish a two-way dissemination framework whereby these partners continue to promote FIERCE opportunities through their established communication channels, while FIERCE, in turn, facilitates access to its beneficiary network as a platform for sharing complementary initiatives and information of strategic relevance. This reciprocal approach aims to strengthen ecosystem connectivity, maximise outreach efficiency, and foster long-term collaboration within the EU space innovation landscape.

3.6.3 The European Enterprise Network - EEN

Q-PLAN actively supported the promotion of the FIERCE Support Programmes through the European Enterprise Network (EEN) by mobilising EEN advisors across diverse geographical regions and thematic groups to disseminate the FIERCE Open Calls within their respective SME ecosystems. This structured outreach ensured targeted engagement with innovation-driven enterprises operating in relevant sectors.

To facilitate effective communication, a dedicated presentation was developed specifically for EEN advisors. The objective was to provide a clear overview of the FIERCE Open Calls, eligibility conditions, value proposition, and practical guidance on how to position and communicate these opportunities to SMEs. The presentation was shared with several key EEN groups, including the

Thematic Group Sustainability, the Thematic Group Research & Innovation, the Sector Group Aerospace & Defence, and the Sector Group Digital.

Following dissemination across these thematic and sectoral communities, multiple EEN advisors from various countries, including Belgium, Ireland, Germany, and Portugal, engaged directly with Q-PLAN to request tailored promotional materials for their SME networks. These materials were developed and provided accordingly.

Although this outreach required substantial coordination and effort, it resulted in an expansion of the applicant pool, strengthening the geographical and sectoral diversity of the FIERCE Support Programmes and enhancing the overall quality and competitiveness of submissions received.

3.6.4 The European Business and Innovation Centre Network – EBN

Q-PLAN facilitated the promotion of FIERCE's Support Programmes through its active engagement with EBN (European Business and Innovation Centre Network), of which it is a member. Through this channel, FIERCE was featured in EBN's official newsletter circulated to its member organisations, thereby ensuring targeted visibility among business support organisations, innovation centres, and incubators across Europe.

In addition, FIERCE was promoted during the EBN Congress 2025, providing a strategic opportunity to engage directly with representatives of the innovation support ecosystem. This presence enabled the dissemination of information on the FIERCE Support Programmes to organisations that are well-positioned to cascade opportunities to high-potential SMEs and start-ups.

To further strengthen this outreach, Q-PLAN developed a dedicated one-page promotional brief tailored specifically to EBN innovation intermediaries. The document clearly outlined the objectives and benefits of the FIERCE Support Programmes, enabling intermediaries to efficiently communicate the opportunity to their beneficiary companies. This tailored material was disseminated to EBN members, facilitating consistent and accurate messaging across the network.

Collectively, these actions contributed to expanding FIERCE's outreach through established innovation intermediaries, reinforcing ecosystem-level engagement, and enhancing the programme's visibility and accessibility across diverse European regions.

4. Conclusions and Next Steps

The activities implemented under Task 6.3 during the first reporting period successfully established and operationalised the Strategic Partnership Network as a key mechanism for outreach, dissemination, and ecosystem engagement within the FIERCE project. Through a structured approach combining partner nominations, targeted roadshows, and online joint activities, the network enabled effective promotion of FIERCE objectives, open calls, and support services across multiple European and international innovation ecosystems. The level of engagement achieved with SMEs, innovation intermediaries, investors, and sector-specific stakeholders confirms the relevance of leveraging established networks and high-visibility events to maximise project impact and reach.

Next Steps

During the second project period, Task 8.3 will build on the established Strategic Partnership Network in T6.3 to further expand outreach, reinforce collaborations with key intermediaries, and sustain dissemination efforts supporting the FIERCE open calls and subsequent project activities. Additional roadshow and online joint activities will be implemented in coordination with consortium partners, targeting priority ecosystems and stakeholder groups aligned with the project's thematic focus. The Strategic Partnership Network will continue to serve as a multiplier for visibility and engagement, while being updated and monitored to reflect new partnerships and contributions.

In the second project period, the activities for the Strategic Partnership Network development will be implemented in Task 8.3 will remain closely aligned with the project objectives, building on the initial momentum of T6.3 with roadshows and events:

- 1 Roadshow will further support the creation of additional opportunities for SMEs with strategic partners, while fostering good practice sharing, and wider uptake of FIERCE approaches
- 5 additional online joint activities will be organised to engage diverse EU networks and showcase opportunities for space-enabled green entrepreneurship, providing FIERCE SMEs and innovation intermediaries with guidance on participation through tools, funding programmes, knowledge exchange, and expert discussions
- 4 (physical) investment tracks will be organised alongside Tech Tour or strategic partners' events for FIERCE SMEs
- 3 (online) pitching academies will be organised in support to SMEs to build their pitching skills with business experts, meet investors and find funding
- Knowledge Exchange activities in Period 2 with innovation intermediaries for cross-regional / cross-industry collaboration, leveraging our network of Strategic Partnership Network

The results feed into WP2 for monitoring and impact assessment, providing input on outreach performance and stakeholder engagement, and will support WP4 in facilitating access to SMEs, innovation intermediaries, and service providers relevant to ecosystem building and advisory services delivery. These activities will directly contribute to forthcoming project milestones related to open call promotion, ecosystem engagement, and stakeholder mobilisation, ensuring continuity between dissemination actions and the effective implementation of FIERCE support mechanisms in the second project period.

5. Annexes

Annex 1 List of Organisations in Strategic Partnership Network

Table 5 List of Organisations in the Strategic Partnership Network

#	Organisation	Country	Specialisation
1	EARSC (European Association of Remote Sensing Companies)	Belgium	Platform that connects private sector companies involved in Earth observation
2	ESA BICs	N/A	Focuses on supporting the commercialization of space technologies and business ideas that use space. Helps startups develop innovative space-enabled products & services by offering funding, business advice, and technical support.
3	CASSINI	N/A	Covers all areas of the EU Space Programme to support entrepreneurs, startups, SMEs with multiple initiatives that increase awareness, facilitate matchmaking, ensure investment readiness, provide business & technical training, access to finance and funding
4	European Business Angels Network (EBAN)	Belgium	Connects business angels and startups. Launched EBAN Space, a network of early-stage space investors, to promote Europe's ecosystem for entrepreneurship, innovation and investment in the space sector.
5	European Space Policy Institute	Austria	Specializes in policy research and analysis concerning European space activities
6	Fondation Européenne de la Science (ESF)	France	Support throughout the entire research lifecycle – from conception and implementation to evaluation, sustainability, and impact
7	Stara Zagora Regional Economic Development Agency	Bulgaria	A regional development agency in one of the two regions eligible under Just Transition EU Programme, also coordinating the European Digital Innovation Hub Zagore
8	EDIH Zagore	Bulgaria	European Digital Innovation Hub EDIH Zagore supports small and medium-sized enterprises, public institutions, and start-ups in their digitalization process.
9	ESNA (European Startup Nation Alliance)	Portugal	Founded as a direct result of the EU's "Startup Nations Standard". ESNA is committed to transforming Europe's startup landscape by fostering a robust, interconnected, and competitive entrepreneurial environment across the continent.
10	Geenovate!Europe	Belgium	Network of organisations supporting sustainable innovation

11	European Digital Innovation Hubs Network	Belgium	EDIH Network is a community of tech experts that work together to help and assist Europe's businesses and organisations on their path towards digital transformation.
12	SpaceWatch.Global	International	SpaceWatch.Global is a digital magazine and portal providing insights, news, and analysis on global space industry developments, policy, and innovation.
13	Expansion Venture Capital	France	Early-stage venture capital firm investing in deep tech, including space-related startups.
14	European Investment Bank	Luxembourg	EU bank supporting innovation and sustainability-focused investments.
15	European Commission – EIC	Belgium	Manages space-related funding and innovation programmes under the European Innovation Council (EIC).
16	European Investment Fund	Luxembourg	Provides financial instruments supporting SMEs and startups in high-tech sectors.
17	Satlantis	Spain	Develops high-resolution Earth observation and microsatellite technologies.
18	Telespazio	Italy	Provides Earth observation, satellite communication, navigation, and localisation services.
19	Indra Espacio	Spain	Develops advanced space technologies, including satellite systems and ground control solutions.
20	Snowpack	France	Specialises in cybersecurity and secure communications for sensitive applications.
21	Krakow Technology Park	Poland	Specialises in different fields of technologies, including space-related companies, engaged in ESA technology broker programme, Cassini hackatons
22	ESA BIC Poland	Poland	Biggest Polish Incubator for Space Industry
23	European Startup Network	Belgium	Network of European Startup Associations
24	PODIM	Slovenia	Periodic/annual tech and startup event
25	ERMA	European	ERMA is an open and inclusive alliance that provides an open and independent forum for discussion and analysis, as well as a mechanism for translating potential projects into actual activities and infrastructures that will contribute to creating long-lasting added value and jobs for Europe. It is integrated within EIT-RM
26	AIPAS - Italian Associations of Space Industries	Italy	AIPAS is a non-profit Association founded in 1998 with the aim of protecting the interests of Italian Space SMEs. Since 2007, AIPAS has also allowed large enterprises to participate in its activities, becoming an example of successful collaboration between SMEs and large companies to foster an ecosystem favorable to all sector companies

			regardless of their size. AIPAS MEMBERS operate both in the upstream and downstream segments of the space sector value chain. They are active in the main technological domains, including Earth Observation, navigation, telecommunications, space transportation, science and exploration, integrated applications, services, and ground segment.
27	EBN	EU	Space special interest group
28	EIT Digital	EU	Access to a wide database of SMEs
29	Geosystems	Greece	Greek company with very wide network and influence in earth observation
30	EEN - Thematic Group Research & Innovation and Sector Group Aerospace & Defence	EU	SME support
31	EEN - SG DIGITAL	EU	SME support
32	EEN Flanders	Belgium	SME support
33	ENVOLVE GREECE	Greece	SME support
34	EEN Portugal	Portugal	SME support
35	EEN Ireland	Ireland	SME support
36	EEN Cz	Czech Republic	SME support
37	Association of Hellenic Information Technologies enterprises	Greece	SME support
38	EEN Advisor - The Regional Development Agency Centru	Romania	SME support
39	Basque Space Data		SME support
40	EEN	EU	SME support
41	Sure 5.0 project	EU	HE project
42	Dilichance project	EU	HE project
43	RawMatHub greek magazine about raw materials	Greece	Greek magazine for raw materials
44	S34I project	EU	HE project
45	EIT RM Greece	Greece	

46	Alexander Innovation Zone	Greece	Strengthen and promote the innovative activity of the wider area of Thessaloniki, with an emphasis on public benefit purposes.
47	SEPE -The Federation of Hellenic ICT Enterprises	Greece	Strengthen the ICT sector and create strong ties of cooperation and communication among its member companies.
48	ok!Thess	Greece	Thessaloniki's startup hub
49	SETPE	Greece	Strengthen the ICT sector and create strong ties of cooperation and communication among its member companies.



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