Asturias50

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1. Asturias50 initiative

Asturias50 initiative is the first seed of the Innovative Territory Program to be transferred the out-of-the-box experience to other territories. Asturias50 is a pioneer activation and dynamization of the innovation-entrepreneurship ecosystem in Asturias region. The aim is to foster much more **collaboration** between the Asturian companies in order to achieve that the Asturian innovation-entrepreneurship ecosystem can be much more competitive by 2050 at regional, national, and global level.

The **specific objectives** are:

SO1. To activate, dynamize, and consolidate as ONE innovation-entrepreneurship ecosystem in Asturias.

SO2. Asturias region can be more competitive with a better business card of its ecosystem, mainly, thanks to the top 50 innovative products/services.

SO3. To increase real opportunities for the young people thanks to the different integrated accelerators and to the portfolio of the top 50 innovative products/services as a reference for their new market opportunities.

SO4. Asturias as a region of net zero emissions with two priorities: 1) Agreement between some of the top Asturian employers and key **innovative** companies for Asturias, and 2) top 50 innovative products/services.

1.1 **How?**

The first seeds are an initial cohort of **interconnected** accelerators for supporting the value chain of the Asturian innovators and entrepreneurs from Primary School to the labour market. So, four accelerators will cover mainly the entrepreneurship as key ingredient: Collaborative Entrepreneurship Community, Unemployment Youth, Blue Entrepreneurship, and University Entrepreneurship. Additionally, a fifth accelerator, innovative products/services will cover the innovation as main ingredient: 50 products and/or services from 50 different Asturian sectors with the net zero emissions in 2050 as the initial proposal and meeting point to be a real ecosystem. Finally, the "Asturias50 Zero" is the first **agreement** for net zero emissions between the top Asturian employers, and the best example for the innovative products/services as well (more details in point 5).

1.2. **Management Team**

Asturias50 initiative is totally led by **private** actors such as All4Zero as the best mirror of Asturias50 at national level. The non-profit GSC (Global Startup Cities) initiative is the neutral umbrella behind Asturias50 to support the personal commitment of his founder from Asturias. The founder will be the coordinator (see Annex) who is creating an initial management team that will be leading each of these first group of accelerators. The confirmed entities behind the first steps in some of the accelerators are: University

Entrepreneurship (University of Oviedo), Training (Cancomar), Collaborative Entrepreneurship Community (maréaTE, mareate.es), and Unemployment Youth (private associations). Asturias50 is the umbrella and maréaTE is its executing arm.

2. Main benefits

The main benefits are highlighted at regional, national, and global level:

2.1 Regional level

2.1.1 For the first time in Asturias, the innovation-entrepreneurship ecosystem will be **ONE** with GSC initiative as neutral entity leading without any business in Asturias, totally independent, and non-profit. Asturias50 will act as a neutral umbrella and glue of the fifth accelerators and future ones. So, Asturias50 belongs to all the Asturian innovation-entrepreneurship ecosystem but no one owns Asturias50.

2.1.2 The entrepreneurship accelerators are interconnected. For example, let's do a real example of a **value chain** of the Asturian innovators and entrepreneurs from Primary School to the labour market: the Collaborative Entrepreneurship Community will be creating mainly local entrepreneurs under 30 with projects impacting at local and/or national level, in parallel the Asturian companies are solving their own needs of talent by helping to unemployment youth in different sectors to be more motivated and to have more possibilities of joining the market in these sectors at least. The community of entrepreneurs plus motivated unemployed are connected with mainly non-tech entrepreneurs coming from the University to create multidisciplinary teams with potential to set-up a startup. Moreover, the whole community of entrepreneurs (collaborative, unemployed, university) are plug-in with potential needs for the Asturian startups (e.g. unexpected talent, out-of-the-box ideas, etc.).

2.1.3 The innovation accelerator is the "icing on the cake" and reflexes which are the **champions** (products and/or services) in the Asturian ecosystem in the mature level of 50 sectors in 2050. In ONE ecosystem as Asturias50, the Asturian startups must collaborate with these top products and/or services, and vice verse.

2.2 National level

2.2.1 These top products/services will be the business card of the Asturian ecosystem as a **competitive** advantage to sell/attract better (new investment opportunities, new talent, etc); for example, these business card can be included in the website of investinasturias or in each main chambers of commerce (Oviedo, Gijón, Avilés).

2.3 Global level

2.3.1 The innovative products/services will be showcased as ONE ecosystem during the **Unique Summit** as global meetup in a different continent every year.

3. Budget

It will be needed to fundraise annually **€25k** in order to have a senior coordinator (see Annex) to act with different roles: coordinator of Asturias50 (follow-up meetings, moderating brainstorming sessions, monthly sessions, innovation strategy advisor for the selected innovative products/services, community manager of the entrepreneurship ecosystem). The Asturias50 initiative can be coordinated with an average estimation of 2 hours per day (3 months per year).

Another, €5k will be fundraised for communication issues (e.g. website, marketing, social media).

4. 2026

In 2026, the main **implementation** to achieve the four SOs are based on:

- 28 follow-up monthly meetings with the four entrepreneurship accelerators,
- Minimum 7 brainstorming sessions,
- At least 4 innovation strategy advisory meetings per selected innovative products/services.

Following is included the SOs in each of the key annual actions:

Co-creation, Selection, Interviews, Scalability	**Co-creation** (SO2-SO3). The process is: - Online scouting. The top innovative Asturian Products/Services from different sectors (key support of some superheroes). - Brainstorming sessions lead by maréaTE (the collaborative entrepreneurship Community) created in Asturias50's first year. - Monthly follow-up meetings with the leading collaborators in each accelerator. Each accelerator will have a contact point for following the progress with the Asturias50 coordinator. **Selection** (SO2-SO3). The process is: - Ranking list based on the innovation in the sector, market scalability, and economic impact in Asturias. Better quality than quantity for the first group of innovative products/services (the goal of 50 is by 2050). **Interviews** (SO2-SO4). The process is online/on-site. Personal interviews with the team leaders in each innovative product/service to understand better the priorities to scale their product/service at national and mainly at global level. **Scalability** (SO2-SO4). Depending on each case the process, TBD by Asturias50 coordinator, at global level with the support of the pioneer GSC's Ecosystem Builder Program, and to support with innovation strategy when ever it is needed by Asturias50 coordinator (SO2-SO4). - KPIs. The process is lead by the Asturias50 coordinator in order to review the KPIs achievement (defined with the leaders in each accelerator), to analyze any improvement, and new inputs from iterative process for the following year with the key annual actions (four SOs), and one year term as maximum framework. - The Unique Summit as global **showcase** of Asturias50 initiative. Every year, the Unique Summit is jumping from one continent to another (SO2). The process is that the Asturias50 coordinator will be the ambassador during the Unique Summit.

5. Superheroes

We have identified the superheroes role in Asturias50 initiative which are some of the current largest **employers** and key **innovative** companies in the Asturian economy: ArcelorMittal, Alimerka, Masymas, Lacera, CAPSA, TK Airport Solutions, Daorje, Izertis, Seresco, Caja Rural Asturias, Windar Renovables, EDP, Enagás, and Volotea. These superheroes have the historic opportunity to work as a group and set-up the "Asturias50 Zero" agreement to commit in zero emissions by 2050. It is historic the collaboration between them, and a real symbol for Asturias as natural paradise with the top 50 Asturian innovative products to be part as well.

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The current business model to sustain Asturias50 initiative is to have a "zero budget" strategy and to ask support as donators/sponsors to the identified superheroes in tickets of: €10k, 2 of €5k, and 2 of €2.5k for supporting the senior coordinator as minimum resource. Every year, the idea is to have for example one different Asturian **superhero** as leader with the only ticket of €10k.

Any other complementary or different **business model** is more than welcome to be co-created as well.

6. Results

- 2025. maréaTE is created as a collaborative entrepreneurship community, powered by Salinas parish, as a first case in Spain.

- 2026. in**V**isibles is the new Asturias50's product to promote entrepreneurship between young people, mainly secondary students.

- 2026. First pool of nearly 25 innovative products/services (official announcement): Acupet Health, Agrolinera, Aritium, Blucó, drivenyou, H2Vector, i4life, Imageryst, Immersive Oasis, Microviable Therapeutics, MUSH Mycotechnology, Naeco Technologies, Nanovex Biotechnologies, Neoalgae, NEUROSTECH, PlaBiTe, Plexigrid, Pragmatech, Room2030, Sialtrónica, Sunthalpy, and TheNextPangea. To be understood by any person, imagine that Asturias is a giant workshop building the future. To make everything work, these innovative products/services are split into 4 superhero teams that help each other out:

1) **The Magic Eyes & Brains (Software & AI)**: [**Imageryst**] looks at Earth from space using satellites, and [**Immersive Oasis**] creates magical portals into virtual worlds so you can experience new places without leaving your room!

2) **The House & Energy Builders (GreenTech & Industry)**: [**Room2030**] builds rooms out of giant Lego blocks. [**Sunthalpy**] invents smart walls that catch the sun so you never get cold, while [**H2Vector**] saves extra green energy inside invisible hydrogen bottles. To make sure no button runs out of power, [**Plexigrid**] acts as the traffic cop, safely sending electricity down the wires. [**Agrolinera**] cleans up the countryside by gathering leftover whey from local cheese makers and turning it into green fuel.

3) **The Doctors of Nature (Biotech & Health)**: They take care of humans, puppies, and plants. [**Pragmatech**] trains lightning-fast computers to spot bad bacteria and cure infectious diseases instantly, [**Aritium**] puts magic sensors inside hospitals so doctors know exactly what patients need right away, [**Microviable**] protects the good bugs inside our tummies, [**Nanovex**] and [**PlaBiTe**] make microscopic healing capsules, and [**NEUROSTECH**] helps brains stay happy. [**Acupet Health**] heals pets, while [**Neoalgae**] and [**MUSH**] use magic seaweed and mushrooms to make healthy food and clean materials.

4) **The Smart Movers & Gadget Inventors (IoT & Logistics)**: [**i4life**] makes smart walking sticks so grandparents don't trip. [**Sialtrónica**] makes crosswalks light up so cars stop for you. To ship toys worldwide, [**drivenyou**] specialized training for mobility, [**TheNextPangea**] uses sci-fi technologies to build invisible digital tools that power future industries, and [**Naeco**] makes the recycled plastic boxes they travel in. Finally, [**Blucó**] builds online shops to sell them across the globe!

- 2026. The 0.01 movement IA YAYA is born, launched from maréaTE (iayaya.es).

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Annex

Coordinator of Asturias50

Family name: Villar Menéndez
First name: Arturo
Nationality: Spanish
Education: PhD, MS, MSc

Qualifications and Skills:
PhD, Energy Engineering Master's Degree, Innovation and Business Management Master of Science Degree, Industrial Engineering Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Engineering
General Professional Experience:
Mr Arturo Villar has **18 years of professional experience** advising, managing and leading innovation projects with the culmination being the leader in the **GiA - Global innovation Area** (**Ref. 0**). **With 9 years of experience as Expert Evaluator**, assessing **European Commission's programmes (H2020, Horizon),** he possesses solid skills in evaluating innovation, scientific and **technological proposals (Ref. 4).** His abilities in evaluating and assessing the technological potential of startups is demonstrated by the fact that he evaluated and nominated over 400 proposals under the **EiA - European innovation Area (Ref. 2) as well as he served as Jury member and currently as Panel member within the EIC Accelerator where he undertook assessments** to elevate the most promising **EU technologies and startups (Ref. 6)**. He is the founder and is coordinating the non-profit GSC (Global Startup Cities) initiative under **the New European Innovation Agenda**. The non-profit GSC initiative, under Mr Villar's management is **interconnecting innovation ecosystems** outside the big hubs for accelerating new economic opportunities through the matchmaking between **startups, investors, and corporates in Europe and globally (Ref. 3).** Mr Villar has extensive experience in advising companies on **innovation, scalability, commercialization of technology**, as well as in **managing innovation projects with deep-tech components (Ref. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11).**
Specific Professional Experience:
Mr Villar has **over 12 years of experience of delivering advisory services** in innovation both in the private sector **(Ref. 7, 9-11)** and in **EU Programmes (EIC, Horizon, H2020) Ref. 4, 6**. Within the non-profit GSC (Global Startup Cities) initiative, he has a strong track record **directing startup accelerator operations, providing resources and mentorship to early-stage ventures** as well as **scaling operations and enhancing business models** to prepare startups for **market success**. Additionally, he supported startups and scaleups by developing entrepreneurial ecosystems and **connecting ventures with other startup and global investors**. Mr Villar is the creator of the **Unique Summit concept**, a **groundbreaking global meetup** for facilitating **co-investment opportunities between investors and prospective ventures (Ref. 3)**. This role emphasizes his expertise in facilitating investments and supporting high-potential enterprises. Innovation projects led by Mr Villar cover sectors such as **agrifood, cleantech, mobility, digital health**, **games**, **energy, circular economy, manufacturing and industrial automation.**
Over the past 8 years, Mr Villar **coached and advised hundreds of startups in product development, innovation strategy, finding the right market, internationalization, growing a business and investment attractions.** Selected projects in which served as innovation **adviser and coach include projects with deep-tech components**: **CleanTech's pilot project; Mobility project; Digital health project; Cross-bording's pilot project; Gaming industry's pilot project (Ref. 3). Previous experience with DeepTech, IoT, Artificial Intelligence components.**
Fluent in English with more than 11 years of experience working in multicultural environments.

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Date	Location	Company	Position	Description
04/2025 – present **(Ref. 0)**	Remote	**Global innovation Area (GiA)**	**Leader**	Collaborative framework for **pioneer innovation Programs** with the Ecosystem Builder House as one of the core Programs lead by non-profit GSC (Global Startup Cities) initiative.
01/2024 – present **(Ref. 1)**	Remote	INVXT	**Startup leader**	Establishing short- to long-term vision for the **Ciclo startup** aimed at facilitating green mobility and job creation in Mozambique; Coordinating private **investment attraction, identifying investors, partners** to support the development and implementation of the startup.
01/2020 – 04/2025 **(Ref. 2)**	Remote	**Global innovation Area (GiA)**	**Project manager/ Evaluator**	Evaluated, assessed the technological potential and nominated over **400 proposals** submitted by **innovators and entrepreneurs** from **42 countries** under **the EiA - European innovation Area** aiming to **scale-up deep-tech EU innovations;** Monitoring and coordinating the selection process of the proposals which covered five **iAreas: AgriFood iArea, Climate iArea, Health iArea, Games iArea and mobility iArea**. Defined the **criteria and keywords as technical filtering** on a case-by-case basis. Selected projects include: ○ **GreenTech Smart Home: Nano Garden;** ○ **Food Supply Chain: Robotic fresh-fruit harvester;** ○ **eHealth: Blind glasses (AI, neuroscience & robotics);** ○ **CleanTech: Liquid waste disposal;** ○ **New Synthetic Materials: Nanotech (cement, concrete);** ○ **CleanTech: Solar water desalination systems (high saline & polluted water resources).**
05/2018 – present **(Ref. 3)**	Global	**GSC (Global Startup Cities) initiative**	**Founder & Coordinator**	Founded non-profit GSC (Global Startup Cities) initiative under the New European Innovation Agenda. The initiative has the aim of **interconnecting innovation ecosystems** outside the **big hubs** for **accelerating new economic opportunities** through the matchmaking between **startups, investors, and corporates;** Organized **five Unique Summits** which is the **flagship activity** of the global initiative, bringing together **ecosystem builders, investors, startups, and policymakers** to turn visions into reality. The last Summit took place in South Africa and brought together **participants from countries** around the world who develop/advise/invest in **startups covering deep-tech innovation, digital transitions, green tech, med-tech, eHealth, new materials, e-commerce, AI, etc**; Assessing the **technological potential** of **global startups** by assessing their **potential for political and logistical scalability on a global level and their commercial scalability** through demonstrated customer willingness to pay; **Coaching innovative startups** both at **European level and globally on innovation**, **investment attraction**

Date	Location	Company	Position	Description
				and connecting them with other startups; scaling operations and refining business models to prepare startups for market success; Supporting the **development of sustainable future technologies** through extensive mentoring and resource allocation; **Selected projects** in which served as innovation adviser and coach include: ○ **Cross-bording's pilot project**. The goal and innovation was to interconnect innovation ecosystems from Bulgaria and Romania based on deep-tech strategies IoMT related to health, and blockchain to tourism. ○ **Gaming industry's pilot project**. The goal and innovation was to interconnect gaming startups from Southern and Centern Europe based on software development using any deep-tech technology. ○ **CleanTech's pilot project**. The goal and innovation was to accelerate cleantech startups based on corporate innovation challenges with the used of deep-tech components. ○ **Mobility project**. The goal and innovation was to identify and interconnect startups with solutions for urban, airport, and port as strategic mobility assets. ○ **Digital health project**. The goal and innovation was to accelerate health startups based on deep-tech solutions to be more competitive in the global market.
09/2017 – present **(Ref. 4)**	Belgium, Spain	**European Commission**	**Expert Evaluator**	Assessing applications for funding related **to innovation ecosystems, deep-tech, startups, SMEs, scaleups, resilience, digitalization, etc. submitted under H2020 and Horizon;** Monitoring of innovation projects and contracts.
06/2012 – present **(Ref. 5)**	Global	JCR Journals	**Reviewer of scientific and innovation publications**	Reviewing **scientific and innovation publications** with a focus on technologies in the sustainability and cleaner production sector; Writing articles and offering feedback on innovative ways of **adapting deep-tech technologies to increase startup innovation and R&D.**
05/2026 - present 08/2019 – 02/2021 **(Ref. 6)**	Belgium, Spain	**European Commission/ European Innovation Council**	**Panel Member and Jury Member, EIC Accelerator Programme**	Currently as Panel Member and he served as Jury Member under the EIC Accelerator (SME Instrument) programme - part of the European Innovation Council pilot that supports top class **innovators, entrepreneurs and small companies with funding opportunities and acceleration services;** Spearheaded holistic evaluations encompassing **financial viability, human resources, technological/IP assessments, market analysis, and sales potential.** Focused on conducting 360° diagnostics and evaluations aligned with the core criteria of the **European Innovation Council** to elevate the most promising **EU technologies and startups**.
10/2013 –	Spain	Asac Comunicaciones/	**Open Innovation**	Developed, implemented and monitored a **Research & Development (R&D) strategy** and set up **R&D partnerships** with companies and suppliers; Supported development of **innovative**

Date	Location	Company	Position	Description
10/2018 **(Ref. 7)**		ArcelorMittal	**Advisor**	**mechanisms** such as **3D printing processes** and integration of **technology and artificial intelligence** and **advanced automation** throughout company's operations; Defined and implemented **the first IT tool for monitoring Research & Development projects globally,** enabling **C-level management and project managers to track progress;** provided **coach and training** to ensure proficient usage; Utilized **deep-tech solutions and technologies** from various energy-intensive industrial sectors (e.g. aluminium, cement, zinc), ensuring their adaptation and integration into global **R&D initiatives** focused on energy.
02/2017 – 02/2018 **(Ref. 8)**	Spain	Labcities	**Innovator**	Developed an **innovative governance model called CITIZENScube**. This model aims to explore the contribution of advanced data analytics to the UN Decision-Making System (DMS) by leveraging insights generated through the UN Global Pulse platform within the Global Challenges Prize 2017. Utilized data mining, machine learning, and predictive analytics to generate actionable insights from data collected through the UN Global Pulse platform.
01/2013 – 07/2014 **(Ref. 9)**	Spain	University of Oviedo	**Innovation Manager**	Defined an international network of partners, suppliers and **innovative technologies** on energy efficiency and environmental engineering in **continuous process industries**; Conducted successful and **multidisciplinary R&D projects** and served as external technical advisor on energy efficiency **technologies** and business development; Led initiatives focusing on deep-tech innovations, entrepreneurship, and investment, aiming to secure a sustainable future through advanced technological solutions.
09/2011 – 01/2013 **(Ref. 10)**	Spain	Audentis Network	**Innovation Project Manager**	Coordinated multidisciplinary projects in the field of **IT tools, technology, with coaching and R&I components** within the Audentis Network – which comprises companies, independent professionals and research institutes in the IT/deep-tech, technology sector; Served as Project Manager of collaborative projects with IT experts to implement **technological solutions in sectors such as health, e-mobility, gaming, fintech, energy, etc.**
09/2008 – 08/2011 **(Ref. 11)**	Spain	Intermark Technologies	**Innovation Engineer**	Served as researcher on **R&D&i issues in European Projects** on IT tools for real-time monitoring of industrial production. Examples include the **EUREKA project UES Ubiquitous Oriented Embedded Systems for Globally Distributed Factories of Manufacturing Enterprises;** Integrated **innovation aspects** in the daily work of the company such as automation and technological advancements; Project management and industrial management on process improvements including the **implementation of UNE 166002 aimed at systematising the R&D&i activities**.