

*ZERO-enabling Smart networked control framework for Agile cyber
physical production systems of systems*

D7.1 - Engagement package & microsite.R1

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
DIH	Digital Innovation Hub
DWG	Digitalization Working Group
EDIH	European Digital Innovation Hub
Eoi	Expression of Interest
EU	European Union
KERs	Key Exploitable Results
SME	Small- to Mid-size Enterprise
T	Task
WP	Work Package

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Executive Summary

The D7.1 “Engagement Package and Microsite.v1” presents the actions that will be performed in the engagement of external stakeholders to involve them in the project’s exploitation strategy. This document fits into the “WP7 - Impact Maximization: Exploitation, Communication, Dissemination & Standardization”, and comes to complement the dissemination, communication and exploitation strategy and activities described in D7.2, 7.3 and 7.5.

This document provides an introduction to the project’s engagement aim and scope, a description of the target stakeholders and the actions that will be performed to engage them into the Zero-SWARM exploitation actions, and specially the Expression of Interest (Eoi).

1. Introduction

This document focusses on the different actions that will be performed under “T7.2: Community building, DIH connection and EU clustering” to engage and interact with a rich ecosystem of potential adopters and beta testers of the project’s solutions. To achieve these desired goals, it is crucial to design and implement the adequate strategy to guarantee the exploitation of the Zero-SWARM solutions beyond the lifetime of the project.

The ultimate goal of the exploitation strategy is to involve potential adopters of the technologies to collect valuable feedback and validate the market fit of the solutions. For this, T7.2 has the following objectives:

1. **Identify potential early adopters** of the Zero-SWARM solutions. This activity is performed jointly with the different accelerations modules that take place under the “T7.3: Exploitation, early adopter uptake through EoI and PEDR” and detailed in the “D7.2 - Plan for exploitation and dissemination of results (PEDR)”.
2. **Engage with the identified early adopter.** For this, a dedicated call for early adopters will be launched through the EoI.
3. **Collect feedback.** The ultimate goal of these actions is to validate the progress on the development of the Zero-SWARM solutions and make sure that their technical features and the business approach correspond to the market needs.

Figure 1 illustrates the funnel process implemented in the communication, dissemination and exploitation actions and how the different actions from “T7.1 Dissemination & communication” and T7.2 are particularly dedicated to attract external stakeholders to take part in the EoI.

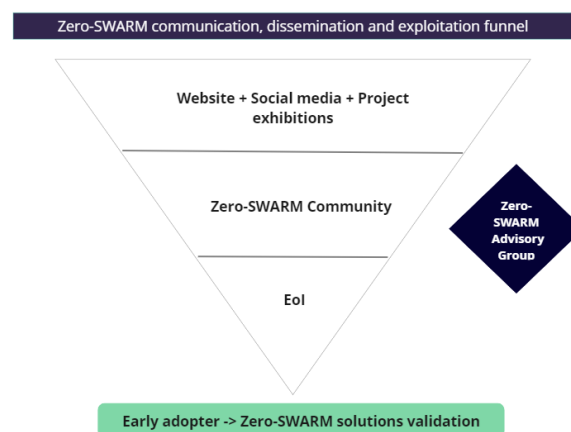


Figure 1. Zero-SWARM communication, dissemination and exploitation funnel

Figure 2 showcases the communication, dissemination and exploitation actions, and how the EoI fits in the process of defining the Zero-SWARM go-to-market plan.

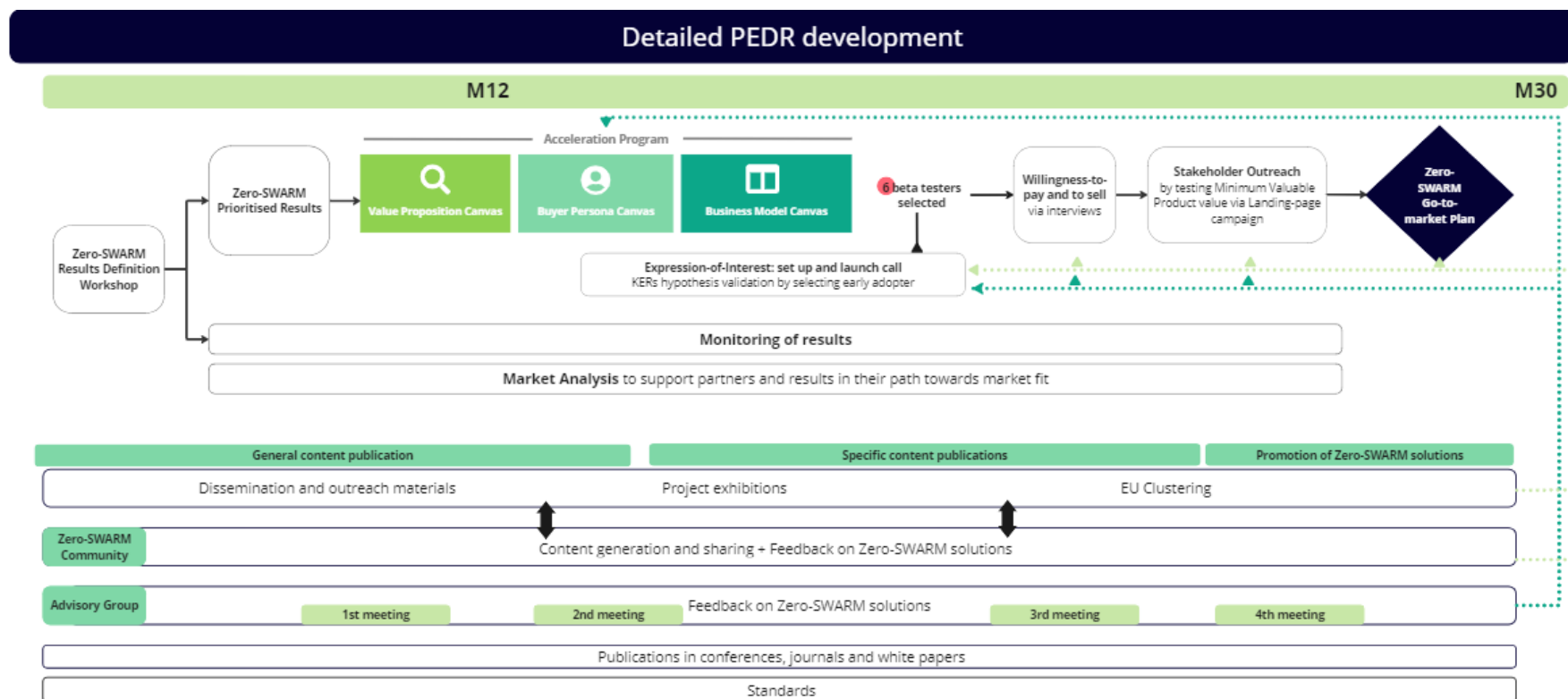


Figure 2. Communication, dissemination and exploitation actions

The following sections describe the process of engaging with external stakeholders and the launch of the EoI and the strategy and tools (i.e., microsite) that will be implemented.

2. Zero-SWARM EoI

The EoI will serve to invite external end users to test some of the Zero-SWARM solutions emerging from the exploitation and invite these potential clients to the exploitation activities, to start implicating them in the product development, collect valuable feedback and adapt the Zero-SWARM solutions to the market needs. The value for these prospects is that they will have the opportunity to apply and test the first solutions of Zero-SWARM.

The EoI call will select the most suitable end users to test the Zero-SWARM solutions and it will be opened to all interested entities across Europe. A selection process will be established, and the beneficiaries will be matched with a specific Zero-SWARM solution.

This live test of a minimum viable product will give a live assessment of the technologies and their market fit, as well as the customer readiness level. The feedback gathered in this step will contribute to the definition of the Zero-SWARM go-to-market plan.

2.1. EoI: Aim & Scope

Zero-SWARM will select 6 early adopters through this call who will gain from the project's outcomes. The selection criteria of the 6 early adopters will be published in the EoI microsite.

The EoI is dedicated to identify any weaknesses in the developed technology; by enlisting early, unbiased, external early adopters, the project can gather meaningful input and allowing to avoid the wasteful production of products that don't satisfy actual, confirmed customer wants thanks to this feedback loop. The innovation process improves as a result, becoming more effective and customer-driven, increasing the success rate of technology adoption as a whole.

2.2. Target entities

The selected early adopters will be manufacturing European SMEs and midcaps willing to implement eco-design and operations of CPSoS on real-life applications in their manufacturing processes by receiving Zero-SWARM services.

The project aims to attract these target groups towards the EoI, and as such, it is important to also define the benefits for each potential party.

Target group	Sector	Their benefit from the project
SMEs	Manufacturing	Enhanced productivity, decreased expenses, decreased waste, improved quality, and higher revenue potential.
Midcaps	Manufacturing	Efficiency improvements, cost reductions, a broader selection of current items and the introduction of new ones, as well as an indirect increase in profit margin. Also achieving sustainable production goals with the help of digital technologies.

Table 1. Zero-SWARM's EoI target audience

2.3. Services offered to the early adopter

The early adopters selected through the EoI will have the opportunity to select the most suitable solution for them to test. They will then receive dedicated assistance from the solutions' owners to test them in the production processes. The final list of the solutions will be elaborated during the acceleration actions described in T7.3 and D7.2.

2.4. EoI engagement plan & microsite

The communication and dissemination efforts so far have been focused on the diffusion of the benefits and the provision of relevant content to the different stakeholders. For the engagement strategy, however, the focus will be on engaging and attracting the target groups towards Zero-SWARM's EoI.

2.4.1. Microsite

Zero-SWARM EoI online platform will be provided by the project partner FundingBox. The microsite will gather all the features of the Zero-SWARM solutions offered for testing.

It's worth noticing that whilst the website of the project (<https://zero-swarm.eu/>) is dedicated to the general communication on the progress of the overall project, the EoI microsite will focus exclusively on the Zero-SWARM solutions, by developing a compelling value proposition and creating a dedicated message to position the solutions and which resonates with the target audience.

The microsite will be created through Gear, a dedicated FundingBox's tool, specifically developed to manage EoI processes. This microsite will include critical information and resources to assist candidates effectively through the EoI process.

To begin, the platform will clearly identify the application deadline, ensuring that potential candidates are aware of the time constraints associated with participating in this effort. A direct link to the online application form will be readily accessible. With a single click, potential applicants will be directed to the appropriate page, allowing them to begin their application process.

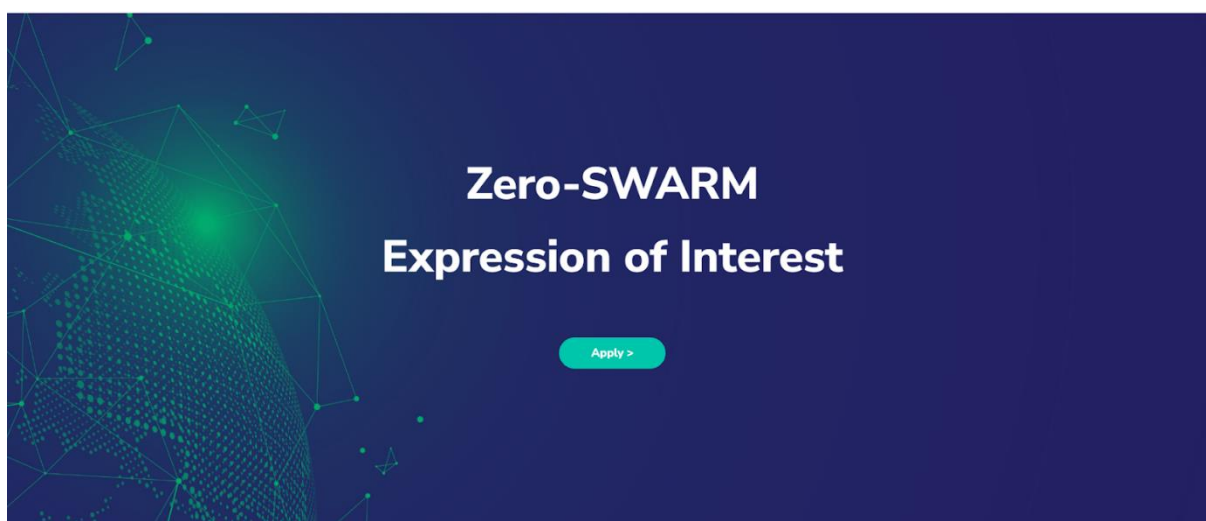


Figure 3. Preview screenshot of the Zero-SWARM microsite page

The Zero-SWARM microsite will present a comprehensive description of the project with its overarching goals and objectives, allowing applicants to get a thorough knowledge of the project's purpose and scope.

Furthermore, the platform will delve into the details of the EoI and its associated requirements. A clear understanding of these requirements will allow potential applicants to connect their capabilities and ambitions with the project's vision, improving overall application quality.

To give applicants with a more seamless experience, the Zero-SWARM EoI online platform will also include access to important documents containing critical information. Applicants will have access to the guide for applicants, a reference document that provides thorough instructions, recommendations, and best practices to help applicants throughout the application process. A helpdesk will be available where applicants can seek additional explanation or assistance, ensuring that any questions and issues are handled as soon as possible.

2.4.2. Dissemination of the EoI

To guarantee the efficient dissemination of the EoI, a thorough and versatile communication toolkit has been elaborated: <https://fundingbox-25868650.hs-sites-eu1.com/zero-swarm-expression-of-interest-communication-toolkit>

The toolkit has been created to include a wide range of activities that must be carried out by all project partners at different phases of the EoI process in recognition of the importance of strategic communication in ensuring the success of any venture. The measures that each partner must take in order to maximize the reach and impact of the EoI across various channels and platforms are outlined in this resource, which also acts as a roadmap.

Partners will find a variety of useful resources in this all-inclusive toolkit, including a well drafted briefing document that methodically outlines instructions to be published on social media platforms, community spaces, and several other platforms.

The toolkit also offers carefully designed newsletters that can be distributed to specific audiences in order to promote a feeling of community and long-term engagement with the project. Recognizing the influence of the written word, the toolkit also includes expertly crafted press releases, giving project partners, the tools they need to interact with media outlets successfully and raise awareness of the Zero-SWARM project.

The toolkit contains a variety of visually appealing banners and copies that are specially designed for social media platforms to further increase the impact of the project's communication efforts. This gives partners the ability to increase the project's visibility and draw in a wide-ranging online audience.

The following channels described below will also serve to disseminate the EoI to the general and targeted audience.

2.4.2.1. Owned media channels

Website

The Zero-SWARM website, reachable at <https://zero-swarm.eu/>, acts as an essential online resource devoted to achieving a number of key goals. The website assumes the crucial role of persuading relevant users to not only apply for the EoI, but also actively participate in and contribute to the vibrant Zero-SWARM community. It does this by acting as the project's dynamic and interactive hub of information for its target audience.

In order to provide an even more focused and comprehensive presentation of the project's EoI, the plan is to integrate a dedicated section that serves as a showcase for this important component of the project. This call to action will serve as a gateway, directing interested parties to the specific EoI

microsite, where they may learn more about the EoI's timeline, the project, its goals, specifications, and application processes of the program. This strategy will speed up the application procedure and instill a sense of excitement and urgency among prospective applicants.

Zero-Swarm Online Community

The Zero-SWARM Community (<https://spaces.fundingbox.com/spaces/smart-manufacturing-zero-swarm-1>) is hosted on the FundingBox Communities platform, specifically in Smart Manufacturing Ecosystem. It is designed to be a dynamic and interactive web-based platform that fosters collaborative work, encourages resource sharing, promotes easy communication between stakeholders and allows members to stay updated on the project's latest developments.

In order to take advantage of the community reach, we will leverage this platform by starting to reference the EoI procedure in their material about 1 month before its launch. Members are made aware of the approaching EoI well in advance by integrating mentions of it in various mailings and discussions, allowing them adequate time to prepare and partake.

When the EoI begins, the Zero-SWARM community will take proactive steps to promote it on their platform. A special publication will be published in the community, outlining the aim of the EoI, the application process, and the specific conditions for prospective candidates. This article will be a helpful resource, leading prospective members through the application process and highlighting the benefits of involvement.

Midway through the EoI, a fresh publication is issued within the community in order to sustain momentum and attract additional interest. This article tries to go deeper into the EoI idea and provide more insights on the project. Through this, the Zero-SWARM community will encourage and inspire new applicants to apply and participate in the program.

Furthermore, the community's weekly regular content delivery strategy will aid in the spread of the EoI. The EoI will be deliberately embedded into these material updates, ensuring maximum visibility and reaching a larger network of potential participants.

By leveraging this interactive web-based platform, publishing instructive articles, and employing a complete content distribution strategy, the Zero-SWARM community intends to actively promote the project's EoI through a diversified strategy.

Zero-SWARM social media channels

The Zero-SWARM consortium uses social media to ensure global awareness and involvement, connecting with individuals, organisations, and communities through a variety of platforms. With a focus on constant and strategic dissemination, the consortium commits to showcasing the EoI at least once per month for the life of its existence.

LinkedIn serves as a strategic platform for the Zero-SWARM consortium to specifically target industry experts, researchers, and organisations who have a common desire to further technical advancements. With a strong emphasis on providing meaningful and thorough content, the project will use this platform to provide extensive updates, thought leadership pieces, project-related insights, and timely announcements about the EoI: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/zeroswarm/>

Zero-SWARM intends to use Twitter's fast-paced nature to deliver bite-sized updates, critical announcements, and important milestones relating to the EoI. This way the material reaches a wider audience, including industry experts, influencers, and possible partners, by strategically using hashtags and mentions: <https://twitter.com/ZeroSwarm>

Zero-SWARM newsletter

The Zero-SWARM newsletter, along with other owned media outlets, is critical in raising awareness about the project and enticing many stakeholders. Recognizing the importance of information dissemination, Zero-SWARM newsletter is a critical instrument for promoting the project's mission and garnering support for our planned EoI drive.

Aiming to reach a wide range of individuals and organisations who share a common interest in sustainable solutions and transformative technologies, the newsletter will serve as a conduit to deliver compelling content, updates, and insights regarding the progress and impact of the Zero-SWARM project.

Furthermore, this platform will be used to inform our audience of the EoI, providing thorough information regarding the EoI process's aims, objectives, and potential benefits.

2.4.2.2. *Shared & Earned media channels*

Consortium & supportive partners' channels

With the help of the communication toolkit previously mentioned, during the EoI, the Zero-SWARM consortium will post about the EoI in their own social media platforms and continue posting throughout until the deadline.

Utilising the communication toolkit as previously mentioned, the partners involved in the Zero-SWARM consortium will actively publish in their channels during the EoI period. The partners will have access to a strategic combination of content forms, including visually appealing visuals, engaging videos, useful captions, and pertinent hashtags. Regular updates, reminders, and key highlights about the program will be published across platforms.

This will increase the EoI's reach and the continuous posting and interaction will promote and inspire potential participants to actively participate and express their interest in taking advantage of the opportunity.

Furthermore, Zero-SWARM will actively engage with a varied range of supportive partners to increase the reach and influence of our dissemination efforts. These partners will be critical in magnifying the project's effect, highlighting the EoI on a larger scale. Ultimately, the Zero-SWARM consortium and the project's supportive partners' combined efforts will contribute to a comprehensive and impactful dissemination plan.

Webinars & events

Zero-SWARM will actively participate in a variety of physical and virtual events across the continent in order to raise awareness about the project's goals and garner support. These events provide an important venue for spreading project information, allowing individuals and organisations to obtain a better understanding of the EoI's goals and aims.

In addition to these events, throughout the EoI period, the project intends to offer a series of webinars. These webinars will not only provide participants with valuable insights and information, but they will also play an important role in marketing the project's EoI and attracting potential applicants.

FundingBox's social media platforms & Communities

The information about the EoI will also be published in several communities in Spaces, [FundingBox's Communities platform](#) with over 30.000 members registered based in Europe. The project also will leverage FundingBox's social media platforms, in which we have over 10.000 followers spread across platforms, to disseminate and attract SMEs to Zero-SWARM EoI. The project will also leverage on

FundingBox's newsletters and use their large subscriber base, which presently surpasses 27,000 people.

2.4.2.3. Paid media channels

The EoI will be launched concurrently with an ongoing social media and Google Ads campaign that will target midcaps and SMEs. The campaign's main goal will be to raise awareness of the EoI application process, while also informing the target audience about the project, the value of green manufacturing options and the possibilities of 5G technology.

Campaign Goals	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Platforms	Advertisement Format	Budget Allocation
Generate leads/applications Increasing brand awareness	- Conversion Rate - Reach - Click-through rate (CTR) - Engagement rate	LinkedIn	Sponsored posts + Sponsored inMail	15%
		Facebook	Carousel ads	15%
		Display networks	Banner ads	15%
		Video networks	Video ads	15%
		Twitter	Promoted tweets	15%

Table 2. Paid Media channels budget for EoI promotion

The Zero-SWARM project has identified 2 main campaign objectives, each with specific KPIs, target audience, platforms, ad formats, and budget allocations. The objectives include generating leads, and increasing brand awareness.

As referenced before, the selected platforms include social media platforms, such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. In terms of search engine marketing, the project plans to employ display and video networks in order to draw attention to the EoI and the project itself.

	1 st Phase	2 nd Phase
Budget Allocation	75%	25%
Goal	Dissemination and promotion of EoI	Reinforce the most effective paid channels

Table 3. Budget Allocation per EoI phase

The strategy is to allocate 75% of the existing budget to paid media channels during the first phase to successfully promote the EoI and increase project awareness. By consistently monitoring the results, the project can identify the most successful channels. To increase the outreach and draw in more

applicants, the remaining 25% of the money will be allocated to these top-performing channels in the following phase.

Monitoring

In order to ensure a seamless and effective implementation of the EoI process, regular reports will be delivered to the consortium members. Through continuous monitoring and analysis of the evolution of applications and submissions, gaining real-time insights into the overall performance of the EoI and its dissemination efforts.

This data-driven approach enables us to discover patterns, trends, and potential setbacks, allowing to make educated decisions and implement essential steps in a timely manner. Furthermore, if necessary, this monitoring procedure allows to strategically plan and execute additional dissemination efforts. These actions may include increased advertising campaigns, as explained before, focused outreach initiatives or even personalised communication techniques to further market the EoI and attract a larger pool of possible applicants.

3. Stakeholders' engagement

To succeed in the involvement of external early adopters and to guarantee to long term adoption of the Zero-SWARM solutions beyond the lifetime of the project, T7.2 has established a sound strategy to involve stakeholder to mobilise their local companies to test the Zero-SWARM solutions during the execution phase (via the EoI) and ultimately adopt the final solutions once the project is over.

For this task the project engages with different local stakeholders such as DIHs and regional authorities.

3.1. Regional authorities

The engagement with the regional authorities cannot be conceived as a punctual and isolated action, instead, a sound strategy has been deployed to build a solid and direct communication channel to consolidate a long-term collaboration with regional authorities that ensures a consolidated channel of exchange.



Figure 4. In orange, the country members of EURADA and the DWG

To implement the regional outreach task, the project leverages on the connection that FundingBox has with the European regions through the Digitalisation Working Group (DWG). FundingBox coordinates the DWG which gathers over 70 Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) from across Europe. This mobilisation of RDAs is done thanks to the partnership with relevant EU associations such as EURADA (European Association of Regional Development Agencies) which helps to reach over 65 European regions covering 21 European countries. EURADA co-leads the DWG together with FundingBox.

The goal of the DWG is to facilitate partnerships and mutual learning among regional economic development practitioners and to foster the dialogue between projects funded by the European Union and the regional authorities. The DWG focuses its activities on the area of digital transition and industry 4.0. This is as one of the key pillars of the future competitiveness of the European industry, as facilitator of economic growth, and one of the priorities of the twin transition of the European Union.

The DWG provides an appropriate scenario where all involved regions, and their local entities such as RDAs and DIHs, can explore collaborations among them.

The ambition of this DWG is also to cluster related technologies tackling similar challenges to deliver an aligned and common message to the European regions. Joining different European initiatives can be an effective approach to better capture the attention of target entities.

The main activities of the DWG are the organisation of regular meetings and the release of periodic newsletters. Zero-SWARM will be involved in both activities as it is described in the following sections.

In short, the main activities of the DWG are:

- Several workshops are organised each year. These meetings aim at sharing experiences, good practices, offering the opportunity to listen and converse with experts on the matter.
- The DWG also publishes a periodic “Digitalisation Newsletter”, containing relevant updates for regional economic development practitioners with the latest news and testing opportunities.

3.1.1. Activities performed under the DWG

On May 25, 2023, Zero-SWARM participated in the DWG workshop on “Circularity and human-centricity aspects in European manufacturing solutions”. Dr. Pouria Sayyad Khodashenas (HWE) represented the project’s vision in this session as well as presented the future testing opportunities that will be offered in the EoI. Zero-SWARM participated in the session together with other EU-funded project tackling similar challenges in the European industry; R3GROUP and ZDZW projects.



Figure 5. Participation of Zero-SWARM in the DWG workshop

A full description of the event can be found here: <https://www.eurada.org/news/detail/first-meeting-of-the-eurada-digitalisation-wg-in-2023> and the entire session can be watched here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1T8pQl4pW8>

The involvement of Zero-SWARM is foreseen for future activities of the DWG.

3.2. DIHs

The DIHs, acting as a one-stop-shop, are in a privileged position to understand the technology solutions developed within a European project, to offer these solutions as part of their services for test before invest. They are also a relevant player that has the responsibility of identifying the funding gaps of their local companies for digital transformation. They are key actors collecting the needs from their companies and helping them continue their digitalization journey with technology support and access to funding, among other services.

To implement the regional outreach task, the project will also leverage on the connection that FundingBox has with a wide network of DIHs across Europe to involve them in the exploitation actions and mobilize their local companies to participate in the EoI. DIHs will also play an important role when it comes to guarantee the long-term adoption of the solutions beyond the lifetime of the project.

4. Conclusions & next steps

The engagement strategy and microsite provided are essential resources for promoting active engagement and EoI communication and to succeed with the Zero-SWARM's exploitation objectives. The engagement strategy offers a detailed action plan for interacting with the various stakeholders and target audiences, making it possible to successfully disseminate and promote materials. Additionally, the microsite offers a dynamic and interactive online platform that serves as a centralised hub of information, resources, and updates, while also providing direct access to the application form. Together, the engagement approach and the microsite give stakeholders the tools they need to actively spread Zero-SWARM's EoI, entice applications, and ultimately drive the project towards success, ensuring a positive impact on the European manufacturing landscape.

The next steps will focus on the following actions:

- Identify, together with T7.3, the solutions that will be featured in the EoI and redaction of the term of selection of early adopters.
- Building the EoI microsite and launch of a dedicated communication action to attract applicants to the EoI.
- Engage and involve stakeholders in the exploitation process, with particular focus on the involvement of their local companies on the EoI. Also, to inactivate stakeholders to take an active role in promoting the uptake of the Zero-SAWRM solutions by the European industry beyond the lifetime of the project.

An updated version of the D7.1 will be included in the "D7.6 - Engagement package & microsite.R2"