

The SymCubator

Abstract

The SymCubator¹ will be an *open non-profit incubator for Innovation, Collaboration, Education and Solidarity - ICES* - related undertakings, which aim at contributing to the progress of Society and more generally of Humanity, hereafter called **symVentures**². SymCubator will empower (groups of) *intrinsically motivated individuals* to incubate such symVentures by providing:

- ◆ a virtual “place” for intrinsically motivated participants, who become members of the SymCubator Community, to meet and exchange with others in view of incubating symVentures, across different organisations and / or different units within larger organisations
- ◆ a community of people sharing fundamental values and the belief that humanity and societies can be progressed through ICES, thus providing the potential of a network of contacts to help or even co-incubate
- ◆ a framework in form of a SymCubator Charter, laying out the purpose of the SymCubator as well as the rules for members and
- ◆ a legal entity able to act as partner of other organisations to progress the objectives of the undertaking, as well as to prepare future (for profit or non-for-profit) start-ups and to provide the “missing link” in practitioner-led research and development innovation centred collaboration projects or networks where a “natural coordinator” is missing (specially to provide the coordination of the “technical partners” and facilitating the collective governance by the involved practitioners)
- ◆ a SymCubator label, which will provide credibility as the SymCubator gains visibility
- ◆ a network of third party organisations, which work with the SymCubator and possibly sponsor it and / or symVentures in incubation.

The SymCubator will provide a range of services which symVentures *may* need, including

- ◆ electronic support collaboration and exchange between venture participants, but also to interact with third parties, provision of an online collaboration platform with dedicated tools
- ◆ expertise and capabilities to incubate symVentures, e.g. consulting and management services to support the financing through national and EU subsidies, the operations of collaborative undertakings (management, communication and dissemination services), legal advice etc., by sourcing in respective capabilities from the SymCubator’s partners
- ◆ bootstrap support to allow symVentures to get more effectively off the ground, by supporting the temporary employment of staff and in-house consultants needed at some stage symVenture; in case the symVenture later on adopts its own legal identity, these contracts can then be transferred to the new venture
- ◆ help with IPR³ management, by hosting jointly foreground IPR, owned by the individuals working on the symVenture, and in well-defined cases, the sponsoring organisations
- ◆ a “protected space” in form of a “structure outside the structure”, so that organisations can set up and facilitate “autonomous” in-house collaborative undertakings with volunteers from their ranks

The SymCubator will be set up as the combination of an international association and a network of national associations, which will be able to operate locally, amongst others to employ staff in the country and receive subsidies.

¹ “Sym-“prefix comes from the Greek “together”. SymCubator is a contraction of “Sym” and “Incubator”.

² By “SymVenture” is understood any undertaking involving and combining some aspects of innovation, collaboration, education and / or solidarity, but not necessarily all of them

³ IPR stands for Intellectual Property Rights.

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The SymCubator's reasons for being

WHAT DOES SYMCUBATOR STAND FOR?

The acronym “*SymCubator*” is composed of “*Sym*”, the Greek prefix standing for “*together*”, and “*Incubator*”. The SymCubator aims at supporting the incubation of ventures involving **Innovation, Collaboration, Education and Solidarity - ICES**. ICES undertakings are essential means, in all areas of life and society, to make progress Societies and Humanity. They are interdependent and need each other to deliver progress. We already can look back at a long history of making life and society better through different mixes of ICES undertakings; altogether they have enabled progress in well-being, health, life expectancy, personal development, peace, beauty, security, cultural heritage New challenges have emerged – overpopulation, ageing, social and economic insecurity, climate change, biodiversity, epidemics, terrorism, organised crime and new opportunities to further improve the life of humans by eradicating or at least significantly mitigating many of the shortcomings of our current societal set-ups. We can and should aim at going much further in enabling, stimulating and supporting new ICES undertakings.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTRINSIC MOTIVATION OF INDIVIDUALS

Most ICES undertakings, often before anything else, require the collaboration of willing - intrinsically motivated - and creative individuals in small groups, whose members trust each other to come, brainstorm and try to develop a joint undertaking. Their individual capabilities, combined with the intelligence of the group, make innovation, collaboration, education and / or solidarity happen. But to make an impactful difference, in the complex world, in which we live in interdependence of others, these initiatives also need to be taken up by organisations and institutions that at some stage transform these ventures into undertakings owned and carried out by partner *organisations*, with dedicated resources, mobilising larger groups of people, taking decisions, making agreements and sticking to them.

THE TENSION BETWEEN ORGANISATION AND INNOVATION

Organisation and innovation are poor bedfellows: people, who work as employees in organisations, often face difficulties to participate effectively in innovation related collaborative undertakings. This is conditioned by the very same employment status: “innovation is not part of their “job description”; instead they have an operational responsibility and “represent” a unit within their organisation. Innovators often must face organisational attitudes, conveyed by both management and peers, ranges from low incentives to “this-is-not-your-job”.

Innovation and creativity require intrinsic motivation and protection from negative feedback to failure; alas, often the intrinsic motivation is reduced as the compensation arrives for an overview of major scientific findings in this sense) and innovators get the blame for venturing into directions that may turn out to be impasses.

Inversely, organisations exist because they create the stability and structure which are necessary for performant operations. Innovation comes as – a potentially threatening - change. However, organisations that are no longer able to change, end up dying. It is difficult, though not impossible, to design “learning” organisations, which are able to deal dynamically with their own change; such learning is necessarily exploratory and failure prone and must hence be protected against the natural mechanisms to optimise performance in the short term.

Innovation is at the nexus of the tension between stability and change. Organisations need innovation, but their very structure makes it difficult to incubate and support ICES undertakings throughout the organisation – and not only in dedicated “research and innovation” departments, which often are not fully connected to where innovation starts: people, solving everyday problems, trigger innovation by changing their understanding of the problems they face.

Also, when organisations try to cooperate with each other on ICES undertakings, the people representing them often – quite naturally - focus more on promoting and protecting the respective

interests of their organisations; even more specifically, often they focus on specific performance related objectives set by their units. This distracts them from the matters that are central to success in the broader context. Repeated experience shows that these habits influence negatively the quality of project concepts and the efficiency of collaboration. The framework of an organisation is hence in many cases an obstacle to ICES undertakings by their employees.

This analysis is corroborated by the practical experience of the SymCubator instigator from over 30 years in multiple EU funded collaboration research & innovation undertakings.

THE “MISSING LINK” IN PRACTITIONER-LED ICES UNDERTAKINGS

Many societal challenges require ICES-focused cooperation of different types of organisations: on one hand, practitioner-organisations look for solutions to address these challenges; on the other hand, technologists and researchers, who develop solutions and try to promote research topics. Traditionally, such partnerships have been mostly technology-push oriented, with technologists and / or researchers proposing solutions, which often seek a problem to solve, rather than to respond to a new problem understanding. To ensure that the innovation is challenge driven, increasingly practitioners-users take the initiative and lead of collaborative innovation projects and networks. However, this new coordinator role also brings its load of difficulties, especially when these practitioners are public institutions. Public institutions often face a hard time to mobilise, the necessary competent resources for such cooperation and innovation undertakings, in line with timelines and project specific needs; specific obstacles are public rules for creating new temporary positions and hiring processes. This is not only a problem during the project, but also during the consortium formation and the proposal phase.

Also, the organisational logic of cooperative projects raises further structural challenges. The first challenge concerns the relations between different practitioners: in many cases where different national and / or organisational interests are at stake, the governance of the group of involved practitioners should be ensured by a neutral body to minimise potential conflicts of interest and concerns about the transparency and impartiality of processes to develop ideas, deliberate and take decisions. The second challenge is that often the scientific and technical coordination is beyond the competencies of practitioner organisations.

There is hence a “missing link”, which can in many cases not be filled by one the partners in the ICES undertaking.

The SymCubator concept

The SymCubator is / will be an open non-for-profit incubator and university for collaboration, innovation, learning and solidarity focused ventures. hereafter called **SymVentures**. Such symVentures can for instance include collaborative research and innovation projects in the Horizon 2020 programme (or simply their initiation); networks for innovation procurement and / or innovation assessment; think-tanks; commercial start-ups; scientific networks of excellence; humanitarian undertakings; cultural initiatives; projects of social entrepreneurs; etc.

The SymCubator’s reason of being is to provide incubation support, at both the levels of motivated individuals and of sponsoring organisations, as well the interaction between these levels. The SymCubator will:

- ◆ be an **open non-for-profit noble cause-centred and value driven meeting place and infrastructure** to support the emergence and implementation of collaborations, exchanges and educational material outside of the structures and constraints of organisations
- ◆ be **driven by volunteering** and facilitate both entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship in the largest sense
- ◆ be a **partner and a leader of collaborative research and innovation undertakings**, especially publicly funded ones, where a coordinator does not naturally emerge
- ◆ provide, when necessary, a legal entity to allow a venture to bootstrap and raise funding (public funding, venture capital, crowd funding etc.) until it can operate on its own

The SymCubator will

- ◆ help to **stimulate** collaborative idea development and learning, by connecting and supporting the collaboration of motivated and competent people, often creating synergies across different fields of expertise
- ◆ cover **both non-profit and profit undertakings** (however the SymCubator itself will reinvest potential profits in new ICES)
- ◆ support all forms of **collaborative entrepreneurship**, and so help to make “my” idea become “our” idea
- ◆ provide a common **SymCubator Charter**, stating the vision and philosophy of the SymCubator and specifying the duties and rights of its members, including the governance structure
- ◆ issue a SymCubator **label**, which will provide credibility (as the SymCubator takes up and develops its own visibility)
- ◆ constitute a **community** based on shared values, volunteering and co-entrepreneurship
- ◆ be structured into **SymVentures** of teams, associated or not with organisations, cooperating on specific ventures and connecting and exchanging between themselves
- ◆ have as virtual backbone an **online community management platform**, which allows each symVenture to collaborate effectively between incubating members and with third party “outside” stakeholders
- ◆ provide a range of **resources and services** to symVentures through selected partners (e.g. for subsidies, venture capital, legal advice, political support etc.)

To co-incubate selected symVentures, participants must be *intrinsically motivated* to participate. They can have one of three roles in a SymVenture: *(co-)lead* (responsible of the symVenture), *contributor* (committing to providing results and / or capabilities during a period of time) and *supporter* (no commitment other than interest and goodwill). All participants in SymVentures must first adhere to the SymCubator Charter and thus become members of the SymCubator Community. Participants, who are bound by an employment contract with an organisation must obtain an authorisation by their employers, depending on the venture they can be paid or not by their employer and / or the SymCubator. The SymCubator Executive Board will select the symVentures that will be hosted and supported by the SymCubator, based on criteria reflecting the purpose of the SymCubator and in accordance with the SymCubator Charter.

Organisations, which want to partner with the SymCubator and / or sponsor selected SymVentures, will create so-called **SymCubator Partner Labs**: a protected space where (certain of) their employees can incubate ICES related symVentures. The persons volunteering in these Partner Labs will both commit to the SymCubator Charter and to their employer (if they are employed) to respect constraints regarding confidential information and IPR issues. Furthermore, organisations can **sponsor** symVentures of their choice, by providing financial resources, making available staff on a temporary and part-time basis and providing logistic resources for free.

In certain cases, the SymCubator will be able to **participate as partner in selected collaborative undertakings** to provide an administrative backbone to symVentures, e.g. to networks and think-tanks. It will also be able to serve as an auxiliary structure for organisations, which cannot recruit in time resources for carrying out symVentures or other ICES related projects, which they want to participate in whilst or after they have been incubated in the SymCubator. This may occasionally include a participation of the SymCubator as coordinator / co-coordinator for selected funded research & innovation undertakings, where neutral governance facilitation is critical.

The SymCubator can also act as **legal entity** to support administratively symVentures and financially (e.g. to employ / remunerate temporary employees working on a symVenture). Thereby for instance it can support membership organisations and networks, which cannot or do not want to set up a dedicated structure.

In the special case, where such a financially supported symVenture decides to become an independent for-profit organisation, the SymCubator will by default trade its **support and IPR rights** against a small stake in form of licensing revenues and / or a share of profits generated through the respective symVenture; this will have to happen in compliance with contracts that may affect this IPR, such as shared foreground from consortium projects.

Sometimes, this approach may be unacceptable for the initiators / leads / organisational sponsors of a symVenture requiring the SymCubator's administrative and financial support. Possible – but exceptional - exemptions to the profit sharing with the SymCubator must be explicitly stated and justified at the time of the set-up of the symVentures and be approved by the SymCubator governance bodies. Typical justifications will include issues related to the common good and / or commitments to organisational sponsors having contributed significant financial resources to the SymCubator.

When a part of the SymCubator's IPR are generated through the involvement of public bodies, this approach to IPR management will facilitate the protection of the common good. It will also empower the SymCubator to sponsor certain symVentures, which its members find particularly worthy.

Organisation and governance of the SymCubator

COSTS AND FUNDING OF THE SYMCUBATOR

The SymCubator will strive to work with a very light structure. Costs of the SymCubator will correspond to two types of activities:

- ◆ Resources to manage the different SymCubator associations. Until the first national associations will have first stable revenues, these resources will be provided (in kind or monetary form) by by sponsors and individual volunteering founding members. Then a permanent light structure (accounting, minimal administration, communication expenses, marginal event organisation costs etc.) will be set up and funded.
- ◆ Resources invested in dedicated symVentures. Here the SymCubator will only dedicate funds, which will have been secured previously.

The SymCubator will be initially funded in kind and resources by sponsors interested to push forward the concept.

The SymCubator looks forward to revenues and resources from several sources:

- ◆ Subsidies from participating as partner in publicly funded research and innovation projects such as the current EU programme H2020. Most of these resources will “pushed through”, i.e. be used to recruit temporarily or subcontract third party volunteers and cover their expenses. It is however expected that part of the collected *indirect costs* will be available to support the SymCubator structure as a whole
- ◆ Revenues from support activities such as consulting, membership and event management fees for selected symVentures, recruiting and managing temporary resources for other organisations partnering with the SymCubator. Again, most of the revenues will be pushed through, to SymCubator partners, temporary employees and / or in-house consultants, but a share of indirect costs should be available to fund the costs of the structure
- ◆ Revenues from sponsorships by third party organisations
- ◆ Revenues from the return on investment in commercial ventures incubated and supported, using SymCubator resources
- ◆ Revenues from services to sponsoring organisations

SYMCUBATOR ONLINE PLATFORM

The SymCubator will use the online community platform developed by ARTTIC. This platform allows members to form easily groups and subgroups, organise discussion forums, share resources. The platform is in permanent development to provide new collaboration and innovation supporting features and will probably be spun off by ARTTIC in collaboration with OMYG. The undertaking to realise this project is itself a symVenture with the (provisional) code name SymPlace.

LEGAL FORM AND GOVERNANCE

The SymCubator will be set up as a **non-profit organisation**. More specifically it will be set up as an **network of national SymCubator associations**. Such local associations will be set up in countries where

the SymCubator will either employ staff and / or receive revenues. The network will itself take the form of an association, **SymCubator International**, whose members will be the members of the national SymCubator associations. All national SymCubator associations will have agreements with the SymCubator International association, which encompass the following principles:

- ◆ By being part of the network, the national associations can use the SymCubator brand, which is owned by SymCubator International
- ◆ The members of the national associations are also members of SymCubator International
- ◆ All national SymCubator associations abide to the same rules and principles and in particular to the same SymCubator Charter
- ◆ All strategic decisions regarding symVentures taken by the Executive Board of SymCubator International will be binding for the national SymCubator associations (there will be a recess procedure).
- ◆ Intellectual property rights resulting from activities will be transferred by the national SymCubator Associations to SymCubator International, except if contractual constraints related to such rights impede such a transfer. The right to such transfer will be sought systematically.
- ◆ The national SymCubator associations will contribute to the financing of the operations of SymCubator International
- ◆ Excess financial resources of national SymCubator associations, which can be freed for investments, will be pooled in form of donations to SymCubator International to allow the SymCubator to fund selected symVentures

The first national SymCubator association will be SymCubator France.

Can become an **active member** of any SymCubator any physical person, who commits to the values of the SymCubator by signing the SymCubator Charter and who pays an annual subscription. The initial amount of the annual subscription will be fixed by the first General Assembly; it is estimated that initially an annual subscription of EUR 20 would be sufficient. Members joining any national SymCubator association will automatically also join SymCubator International.

The **SymCubator Charter**, which will be the base of (and annexed to the statutes) of all SymCubator associations, will rule the functioning of the SymCubator (see Annexes). It defines in particular the rights and duties of members and of sponsoring organisations, the role of the Executive Board.

Status of the SymCubator

The SymCubator is currently in the incubation stage itself and, so to speak, self-incubating. The association has been founded the 29th of May 2017. A quickly growing group of founding members have expressed their willingness to join the association. First symVentures have been identified.

First sponsors have already committed resources or are doing so. OMYG (the one-man company of Christian Baumhauer) has started to invest. The European management services firm ARTTIC has agreed to let the SymCubator, during the initial start-up phase, use for free its Community Management Tool to operate the SymCubator's online platform. VICESSE, an Austrian think-tank, has committed to provide funding.

SymCubator Charter

PREAMBLE

- §1. The **purpose** of the SymCubator is to progress Humanity / Society through ICES, i.e. Innovation, Collaboration, Education and Solidarity, in line with the United Nations charter of fundamental rights of 1948.
- §2. The SymCubator supports the incubation and realisation of so-called **SymVentures**, which can be any undertaking related to ICES, as long as it contributes to the well-being of Humanity/ Society in the broadest sense, encompassing notably but not only causes related to fundamental rights and political liberties, science, social cohesion, security, health, education, ecology, culture, the arts and / or economic development. A symVenture brings together physical persons, who are volunteers and intrinsically motivated by the purpose of the undertaking, called the members of the symVenture; members can have one of three roles: leader, contributor or support. SymVentures can be for-profit, non-for-profit or simply not generating revenues and costs.
- §3. The group of all members of symVentures is called the **SymCubator Community**. The SymCubator Community is a community of values, notably the *unconditional dignity* of all human beings (and the rights and obligations resulting from it) and *universal solidarity* across borders and generations⁴.
- §4. The SymCubator supports symVentures by providing a **protected space** for collaboration, innovation, education and / or solidarity between its members, including an online platform, the access at favourable conditions to selected partner resources, expertise and services as well as the access to the advice and support from the SymCubator Community.
- §5. The SymCubator is an **international open non-for-profit incubator**. Legally it has the form of a network of national non-for-profit SymCubator associations; this network will itself have the form of a non-for-profit association, SymCubator International, whose members are the members of the national SymCubator associations. Both the national SymCubator and the SymCubator International association have individuals as members and organisations as partners.
- §6. Both individual members and organisations can choose to sponsor the a national SymCubator association of SymCubator International. The SymCubator is itself a symVenture, which will be subject to continuous ICES efforts of its members. All individual members and sponsors commit to the purpose and values of the SymCubator Community.
- §7. Exchanges and communication in the SymCubator primarily happens through the SymCubator Online Platform.

MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS AND INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

- §8. For a person to participate as lead, contributor or supporter in a symVenture, it is mandatory to join one the national SymCubator associations or SymCubator International as a member and to sign the SymCubator Charter. By becoming a member, s/he also commits to the SymCubator's values and to participate - as lead, contributor or supporter - in the symVenture dedicated to progressing the SymCubator's purpose. SymCubator values and purpose are stated in the Preamble of this Charter. By joining a national SymCubator Association, a member also becomes automatically a member of SymCubator International. A member can join several national SymCubator associations.
- §9. A SymCubator member, who wants to propose or join any symVentures, as leader, contributor or supporters, must sign a declaration specific to this symVentures stating that their role is free of any conflict of interest related to parallel commitments with other organisations and that they are intrinsically motivated, either by personal interest or due to their personal convictions, to lead, contribute or follow the symVenture.
- §10. Members register and communicate through the SymCubator online platform, under their legal identity and provide evidence that they are whom they claim to be. The confirmation of the validation of this information is archived. By adhering to the SymCubator Charter, members also provide the informed consent that allows the SymCubator Online Platform to store and use their

⁴ For a comment on these two fundamental values, c.f. **Erreur ! Source du renvoi introuvable.**

data (the adherence to EU data protection rules is monitored by the SymCubator Executive Board (see below).

- §11. By adhering to the SymCubator Community, members commit to respect the dignity of other members and to keep exchanges – both physical and online - courteous and constructive.
- §12. When members join a symVenture, they clearly specify the level of involvement they propose to have. There are three levels:
- **lead**, i.e. the responsibility for driving the incubation and interacting with the SymCubator
 - **contributor**, i.e. a commitment to make significant efforts to address significant needs / issues of the symVenture
 - **supporter**, i.e. a declaration of interest to receive information about the symVenture, provide feedback
- §13. Roles of participants in a symVenture can change, subject to communicating this change to the SymCubator. However, a symVenture without at least one lead will be suspended, if the sole / last lead is no longer involved.

GOVERNANCE OF SYMCUBATOR INTERNATIONAL, THE NATIONAL SYMCUBATOR ASSOCIATIONS AND OF SYMVENTURES

- §14. All active members will have one vote in the General Assembly of SymCubator International and one vote in each of the General Assemblies of national SymCubator associations s/he is a registered member of. To be active, members must have paid their membership fee to one the SymCubator associations or to SymCubator International. It is not necessary to pay membership fees for more than one SymCubator association. Decisions will be taken by a simple majority. In case of a hung vote, the president of the respective association casts two votes.
- §15. To be valid both the General Assembly and the electronic vote must be notified which must be convened at least three weeks beforehand by postal mail or email. In the case of an electronic vote, if all active members have cast their vote, the vote can be considered valid.
- §16. It will be possible for all members to attend the general assemblies by conference call and through the online platform of the SymCubator.
- §17. The SymCubator International Association will be ruled by the SymCubator Executive Board which will be composed of 3 to 10 members. The **SymCubator Executive Board** will be elected at each Annual General Assembly meeting. Each active member will have a vote. The Executive Board will elect amongst its members a President, a Treasurer, a Secretary and an Ethical Advisor.
- §18. The national SymCubator associations will be ruled by their own management board which will be composed of 3 to 10 members. This management board will be elected at each Annual General Assembly meeting. Each active member will have a vote. This management board will elect amongst its members a President, a Treasurer, a Secretary and an Ethical Advisor.
- §19. The statutes, including the SymCubator Charter, can be changed subject to either a vote of all members at a physical General Assembly or an electronic vote, submitted by at least half of all active members.
- §20. SymVentures will set up and maintain their own governance structures and rules. These will be independent of the governance structures of the SymCubator. The lead(s) of a symVenture are the representatives of the symVenture to the SymCubator.

SELECTION OF SYMVENTURES. SYMCUBATOR LABEL. MONITORING.

- §21. The SymCubator Executive Board will select the initiatives that will be hosted by the SymCubator and what support they will receive on the basis of previously established and communicated criteria. All symVentures are expected to make a positive contribution to the advancement of society. Proposers of symVentures will provide a short form, which will provide the necessary information about purpose, requested support and initial commitments to the SymCubator. The Executive Board of SymCubator International will consult the management boards of the national SymCubator associations regarding such decisions, before taking a final decision.
- §22. SymVentures, which have been selected by the SymCubator Executive Board, will receive the SymCubator label and be entitled to use this label for their communications.
- §23. The SymCubator Executive Board will monitor symVentures for adherence to initial commitments and standards. Either periodically or in line with the roadmap of the symVenture, the Executive

Board will receive a short progress report. Non-compliance with the initial commitments and / or the purpose of the SymCubator can result in a decision by the SymCubator Executive Board to ask a symVenture to leave the SymCubator within a fortnight.

RELATIONS WITH SPONSORING ORGANISATIONS

- §24. Third party organisations can choose to enter a sponsoring relationship either with the SymCubator as a whole or with selected symVentures. Sponsoring organisations must fully adhere to the present SymCubator Charter. The sponsor will provide resources in kind (labour, infrastructure, IPR...) and / or monetary. Subject to the approval of the leaders of a symVenture, in exchange the sponsor can receive a defined stake in symVentures. All Sponsoring Organisations must be approved by the ESG and the SymCubator Board.
- §25. Sponsors can also propose the initiation of symVentures, to create a space of freedom for members of their organisation or third parties.
- §26. All agreements and contracts with sponsors at the level of the SymCubator are subject to a preliminary approval by the SymCubator Executive Board.
- §27. Agreements and contracts with sponsors at the level of the individual symVentures will be primarily handled by the governance structure of the respective symVentures, but will also have to be approved by the governance structure of the SymCubator as only the SymCubator will have a legal identity and hence the possibility to take contractual and / or financial commitments.

SYM CUBATOR SERVICES, REVENUES AND INVESTMENTS

- §28. The SymCubator will provide services to support the incubation of symVentures, which have been accepted and hence labelled by the SymCubator. These services will be preferentially delivered through partnerships with third party organisations, so-called **SymCubator Partners**. Such partners will be selected through an open public procurement process. Candidate partners will be screened by the SymCubator Executive Board, in coordination with the national SymCubator associations.
- §29. Agreements and contracts with SymCubator Partners at the level of the individual symVentures will be primarily handled by the governance structure of the respective symVentures, but will also have to be approved by the governance structure of the SymCubator as only the SymCubator will have a legal identity and hence the possibility to take contractual and / or financial commitments. Inversely, the SymCubator will only take contractual commitments on behalf of a symVenture in coordination with its leaders.
- §30. The SymCubator can also offer incubation support services to sponsoring organisations, if the respective activities are in accordance with the overall purpose of the SymCubator (see §1). Commercial contracts for such services will be screened by the Executive Board. Whereas possible, these services will be delivered by mobilising the SymCubator members and the SymCubator Partners. Resulting undertakings can, but do not need to become symVentures.
- §31. Profits resulting from such services and / or the return on investment into symVentures, can be used by the SymCubator to invest in promising symVentures. The SymCubator Executive Board will nominate, amongst the SymCubator members, an **Investment Committee**, which will recommend a selected of symVentures for investment, based on criteria related to both societal impact and potential return on investment for the SymCubator (notably considering the success chances / risks of failure).

PUBLICATIONS OF AND APPEAL AGAINST DECISIONS OF THE SYM CUBATOR EXECUTIVE BOARD

- §32. All decisions of the SymCubator Executive Board, regarding the selection or exclusion of symVentures, the relations with sponsors and SymCubator Partners or investment in selected symVentures, are published and communicated to all SymCubator members and in particular the national SymCubator associations.
- §33. Within a week after publication, members can challenge the decisions of the Executive Board. In this case, within a month, a contradictory debate is organised, facilitated by a third-party mediator proposed by the SymCubator Executive Board. Once the debates contribute no more new elements they will be closed and the SymCubator Executive Board will take a final and binding decision.