



SMART EUROPE Café

Veneto

METHODOLOGY:

- A preliminary meeting (Veneto Region + Veneto Innovazione) needed to decide which topics are more in line with the chosen focus¹.
- Institutions and key stakeholders active in the field selected and invited to participate (incubators, intermediaries, public administrators, services providers).
- Multidisciplinary and horizontal approach is pursued (private and public representatives);
- 3 parallel round tables organised in parallel:
 - FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS
 - ENTREPRENEURSHIP CULTURE
 - ACCESS TO MARKETS
- 3 facilitators and 3 rapporteur in charge of the discussion animation of each topic
- Everybody is free to intervene and to debate its own experience but facilitators rule the discussion around the focus and make sure that all the participants bring their contribution to the table (we followed the methodology of the World Café²)
- 30 minutes discussion per topic and then the facilitator moves to another table
- 15 minutes for warm up and 15 minutes for follow up at the end



¹ Our SMART focus is: **how to boost the creation of new innovative companies.**

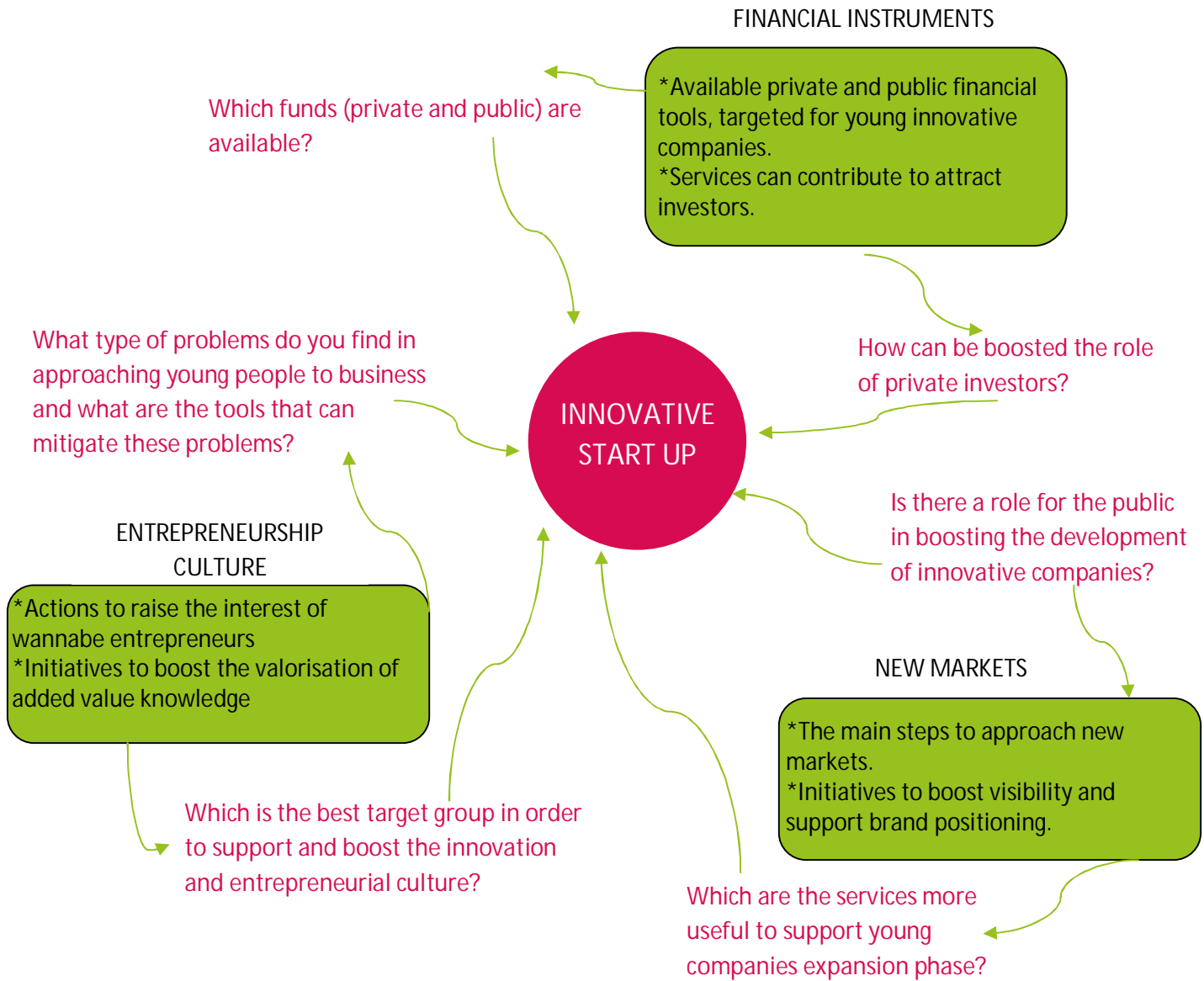
² <http://www.theworldcafe.com/>

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED:

- **Veneto Region – Industry and Craft Directorate:** it manages the Industrial development policies of the region supporting the productive sector through European, National, Regional aids (in particular for SMEs); including the schemes for innovative SMEs and for young and female entrepreneurs.
www.regione.veneto.it/La+Regione/Struttura+Organizzativa/Segr.+Regionale+per+il+Bilancio/Commissario+Sviluppo+Economico/Direzione+industria+e+artigianato.htm
- **Veneto Region – Employment Directorate:** it is in charge of employment policies, outplacement interventions, training, ESF management.
www.regione.veneto.it/Servizi+alla+Persona/Formazione+e+Lavoro/Lavoro/
- **Veneto Innovazione:** the Veneto regional innovation agency and its aim is to promote and develop applied research and innovation within the regional production system. www.venetoinnovazione.it/?q=eng
- **Veneto Sviluppo:** the Veneto regional financial agency. It manages funds and measures to support SMEs of all the productive sectors. <http://www.venetosviluppo.it/portal/portal/vs/Home>
- **Veneto Lavoro:** the regional agency for the employment of the Veneto Region. It is active in advising the Region on the labour policies and monitoring the labour market through the Observatory of the Labour Market and the Regional Labour Market Information System (RLMIS). www.venetolavoro.it
- **PST Galileo:** is the science park of the Padua province. Galileo activities aim to boost the companies competitiveness reinforcing the links among business and universities. www.galileopark.it/en.html
- **La Fornace dell'Innovazione:** it is a business incubator located in Asolo (Treviso). Its mission is to encourage the setting up of new innovative companies. www.fondazionefornace.org/en_default.asp
- **H-Farm:** it is a venture Incubator located in Treviso and its mission is to accelerate the development of hi-tech start-ups via a combination of seed investment and incubation services. www.h-farmventures.com/en/
- **Municipality of Venice-Productive activities sector:** it manages several services for city, taking care of the development of the municipal area and boosting the creation of new entrepreneurial activities. The Municipality moreover manages the two business incubators of Venice.
www.comune.venezia.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/EN/IDPagina/1?4f915e77c28cc
- **Treviso Tecnologia:** it is the agency for Technological Innovation established by the Chamber of Commerce of Treviso. It aims to foster an innovation-oriented corporate culture and in this frame it has set up Neroluce (the Service Centre in support of creativity and industrial design) at the La Fornace di Asolo incubator premises. www.tvtecnologia.it/index_eng.asp
- **M31:** company which core business is supporting the creation and rapid growth of new technology ventures focused mainly on the ICTs. www.m31.com



TOPICS DEEPENED:



ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE:

FROM THE DATA there is evidence that:

- The overall number of young enterprises decreased in the last years because of the crisis, but it is still performing considering the national average.
- The percentage of young firms compared to the whole number of companies registered in the Venetian provinces is definitely lower than the national average.

EDUCATIONAL system do not stimulate yet entrepreneurial attitude

- The University does not often offer concrete basics on how to start a business.
- Targeted courses should be included in all the students curricula

→ BUT

- There is a gap between scholastic/didactic subjects and competences required by the companies.

→ GIVE A LOOK TO

- To stimulate young people entrepreneurial mindset, specific courses should start from high school (first information on what to do to start a business)

→ GIVE A LOOK TO

- The students interest in technical culture has had a significant decline. A good information campaign synergistically shared on the territory could be a useful tool to boost the young people's interest in these expertise.

- The University offers courses on project management. They are also open, free and voluntary, for PhD students.

- See: Interreg Central Europe project ETSTRUCT (www.etstruct.eu) that aims to improve the connection of the educational system to the leading edge of technology and business practices.

- "Start Cup Young" an initiative addressed high school students actually working in Friuli Venezia Giulia

Some GOOD PRACTICES exist

BUSINESS PLAN competitions
are a good tool

- The business plan competition Start Cup, offers the applicants (around 100 per year) a training course on how to create a business plan and on project management, giving the basic tools to start a sustainable business.

→ **EVEN
THOUGH**
Concerning
BUSINESS PLAN..

- The current credit system does not valorise a system based on the quality of business plans.

- evaluators do not have the necessary expertise to evaluate the business plans with a long term view. They should be trained in order to identify innovative, sustainable and successful ideas. Even if an idea is eligible does not mean that it is fruitful in the long term.

Some **PUBLIC
INITIATIVES** are
available **BUT**

- Taking into account that the budget available in the region to finance new companies is limited, the public authorities have to define clear sectors and areas that they want to support and make them grow. There is the need of a clear regional strategy visible in the call focus.

- The calls for proposals' descriptions are not so clear. Through the call it should be clear what will be funded and what are the priorities.

- When a call focus on innovation, it should be expressed clearly what innovation is or better what innovation is not.

A wannabe entrepreneur would NEED...

- Basically what the potential young entrepreneur are looking for are the market niches in which start a new business and in fact in the last period the spontaneous applications in innovative sectors are significantly increased.

BUT

- To answers such requests on entrepreneurship, a contact point at institutional level is missing

Support services are available

- Informagiovani: an infrastructure giving support and guidance for young people entering in the job market.

- For young entrepreneurs such intermediaries, and also municipalities, are the first reference point looking for support and information to grow up a new business.

- It is important matching who has ideas and who already gain experience. So the old entrepreneur, with capitals and experience, could understand the new entrepreneur business potentiality and invest on it. At the same time the new entrepreneur could find a capable support in terms of knowledge and capitals.

AND

- The Incubators could represent a favourable place for this matching.

- It is also important to valorise the intermediaries role (trade associations, incubators, professional order, CITT and chambers of commerce) in order to inform the aspirant entrepreneurs about guidelines, initiative and relevant actors that can support their starting businesses.

But should be linked and reinforces

- This is the reason why these intermediaries have to work together in an integrated and synergistically way and to be well-informed and aware about the instruments and actors that can answer to the their needs.

The culture of INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

THE CONDITION ARE FAVOURABLE?

- In the past the Veneto Region boasted the birth of a large number of new businesses. These new companies were mainly founded by department heads that, thanks to their experience and expertise and to the favourable regional conditions, embarked on an entrepreneurial carrier.
- The analysis of the context in that years could help us to understand which are these favourable conditions and try to recreate them in the current scenario facilitating new start-ups.

WHAT ABOUT GENERATIONAL CHANGEOVER?

- The generational changeover is an opportunity, not to start a new business, but to make it continue with new ideas and methodologies. The weak point of this opportunity is essentially that the outgoing entrepreneur prefer to leave the company to a family member.

- Entrepreneurs still utilize a traditional approach to grow up their business but this is becoming obsolete for the market and for the new innovative businesses concepts.

BUT

- There could be worth the organization of workshops / meetings during which potential entrepreneurs have the possibility to learn from the experiences of well-known entrepreneurs stimulating the entrepreneurial mindsets of young people.

THE STIMULATION OF CREATIVITY

- See: Organza (Interreg IVC) that aims at improving policy-making in the field of creative industries

AND

- the event "Festival Città Impresa" (www.festivaldellecittaimpresa.it) has the objective of empathizing and enhancing "ideas factories" that are already following new business paths and who represent the future of the area.
- During the Festival the 1000 winners of the prize "Premio Città Impresa" will be awarded for their experience in innovative products/services and for their commitment in supporting innovation. The prize has a symbolic value, without any economic or monetary compensation, but is an opportunity to show and share the regional experiences and to learn from each other.

USING THE REAL EXPERIENCE

- EU initiative Mini-companies. The objective of "mini-companies run by students" is that of developing on a small scale a real economic activity, or of simulating in a realistic way the real firms operations. In this way the entrepreneurial mindsets of young people will be stimulated linking the theoretical concepts with the practical activities.
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/education-training-entrepreneurship/mini-companies/index_en.htm

AND

- A relevant example coming from abroad is the Deshpande Center, established at the MIT School of Engineering to increase the impact of MIT technologies in the marketplace. Deshpande Center funding enables faculty and their students to pursue exciting new avenues of market-driven research and participate in partnerships and programs that will help accelerate the process towards commercialization. The center offers two types of financing. One focus on turning ideas into inventions and the second one on transforming these inventions into sellable innovations.
<http://web.mit.edu/deshpandecenter/>.

HOW CAN BE DONE :

- Voucher or flexible contract to facilitate the keen students access to a working experience in activities related to their studies. Some difficulties related to the contract type incurred, a proposed solution is a stage focussed on specific activities with scholarship;

- extracurricular work activities in the summer or during the evening hours in the field of interest. Several students already work as waiters or similar jobs and this could be a valuable alternative to build up also their expertise and entrepreneurial mindsets;

- the realization of training sessions at University to show the experiences of successful entrepreneurs and introduce students to the practical environment of a company.

BUT

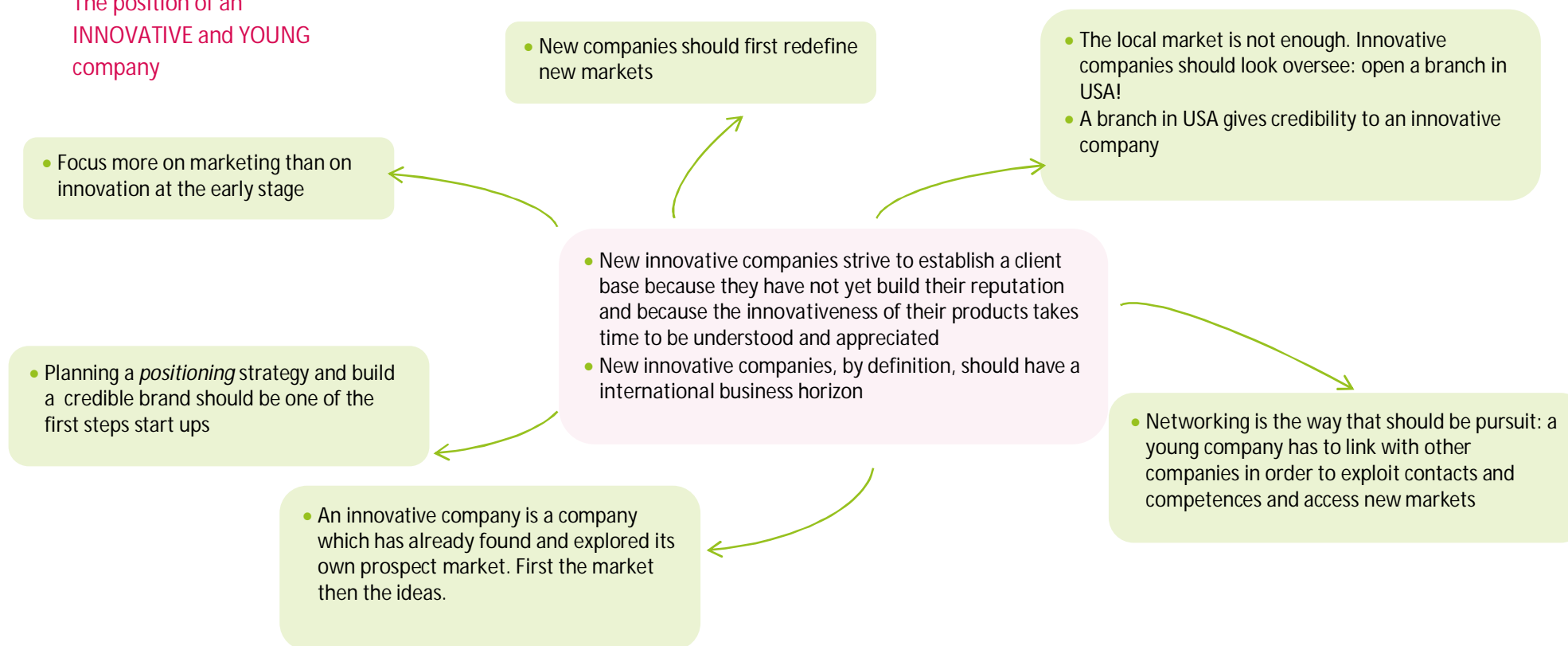
- It was launched an initiative aimed at PhD students of Computer Engineering that offered a contribution of 20.000 euros to start the best business ideas. Unfortunately only a few PhD responded to this opportunity, and, maybe, this is related to low interest in starting a business..

OPEN UP NEW MARKETS FOR INNOVATIVE COMPANIES

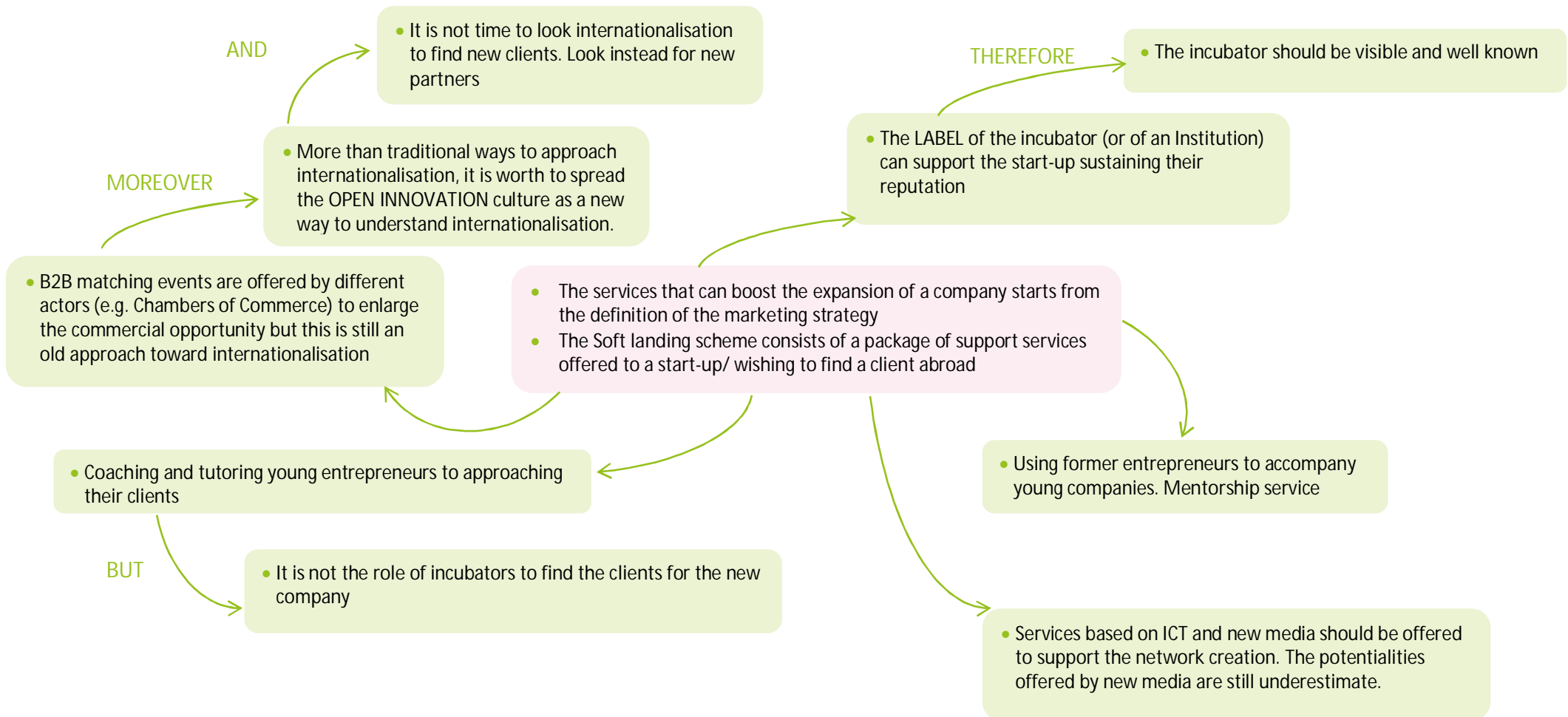
FROM THE COPENHAGEN DECLARATION (27 April 2012- TII/Proton Europe Annual Conference:

- For an innovative SME, finding a first client remains a critical milestone to success
- Member States, regional and local authorities are invited to consider the wider use of support to first client schemes with the objective of promoting smart growth based on the creativity and innovation potential of regional SMEs and innovative start-ups.

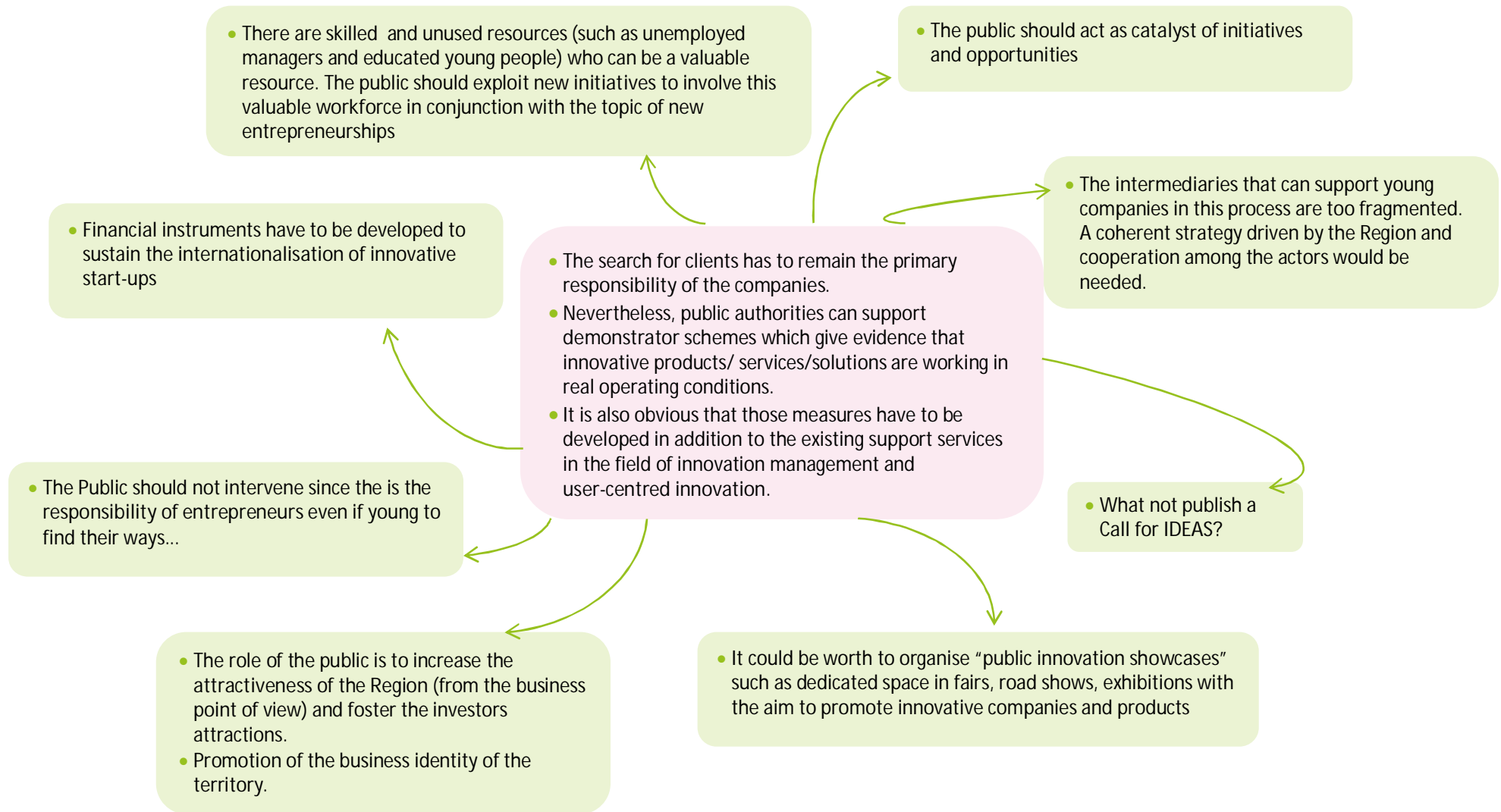
The position of an INNOVATIVE and YOUNG company



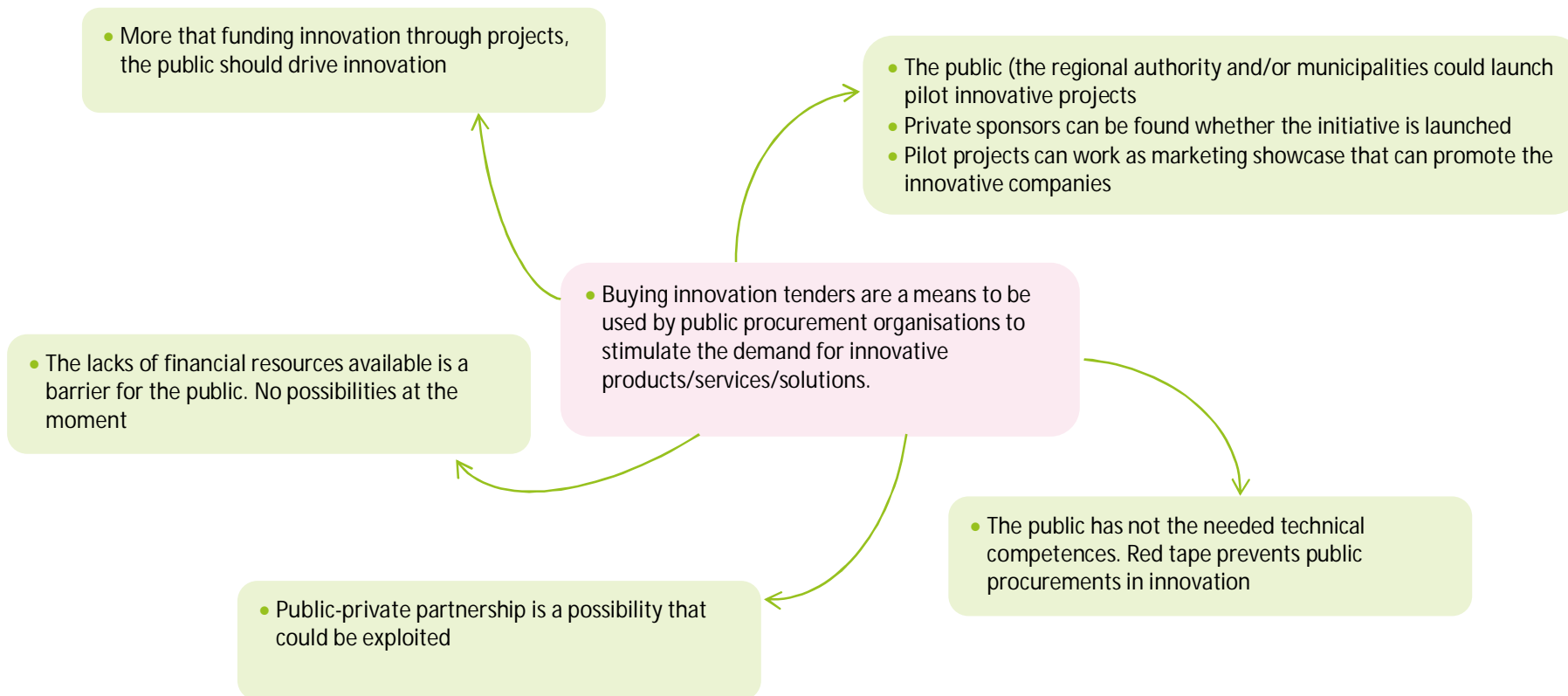
THE SUPPORTING SERVICES



The PUBLIC can do or cannot do



PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

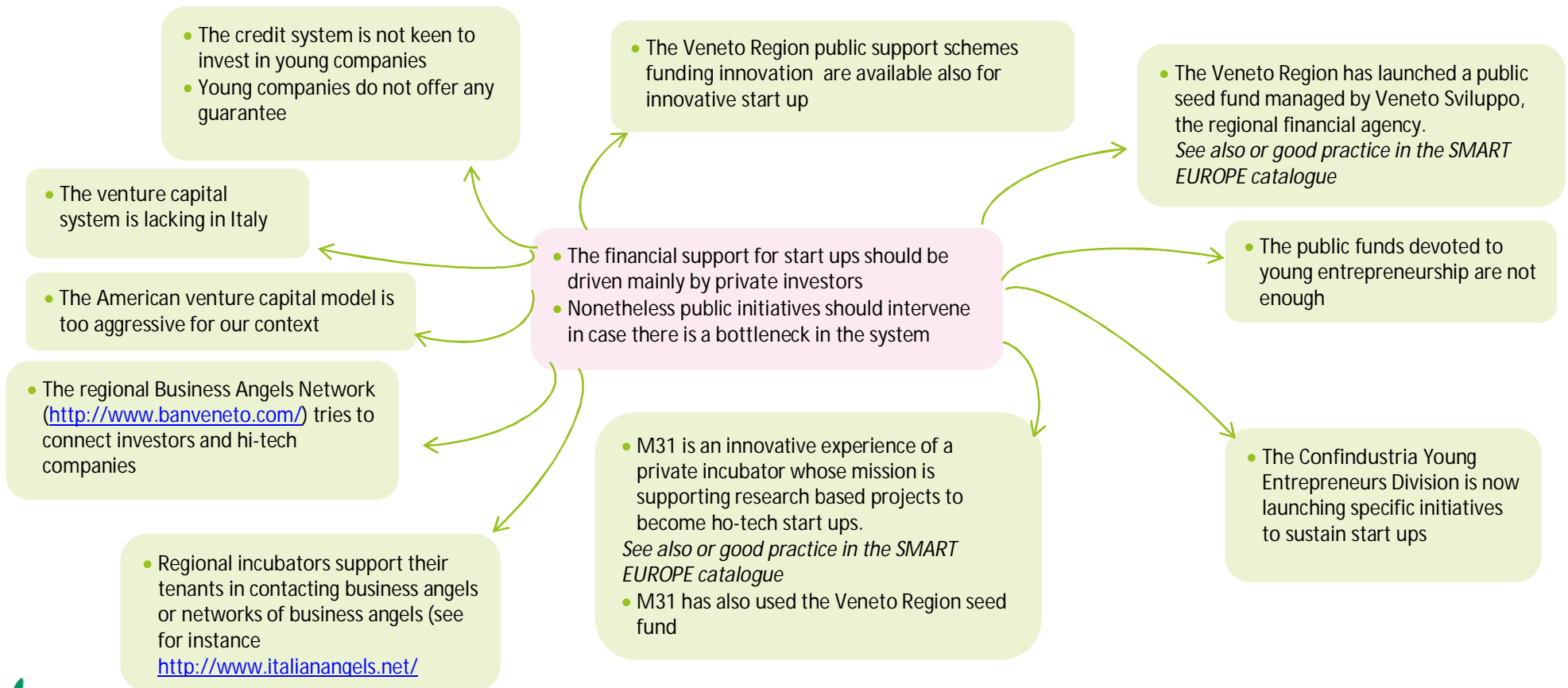


FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS FOR INNOVATIVE YOUNG COMPANIES

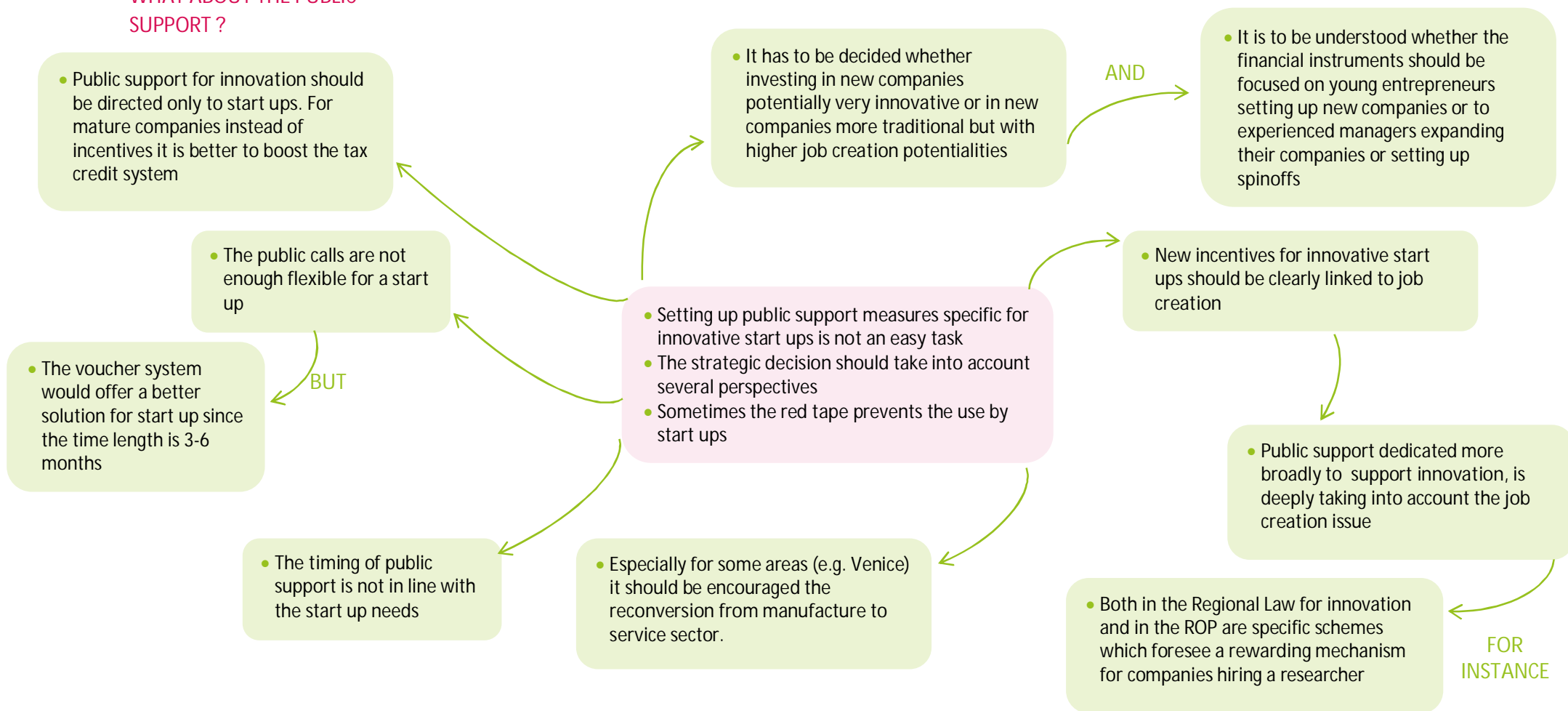
THE STATE OF ART

INVESTORS SAY THAT:

- It takes money to make money” applies to start-up and early stage enterprises as much and more than to other businesses—large or small.
- From “day one” start-up and early-stage entrepreneurs risk falling into “the valley of death” if they do not secure adequate funds to cover negative net cash flow in their early months and years of new business creation and growth.



WHAT ABOUT THE PUBLIC SUPPORT ?



SOME PROPOSALS

