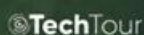
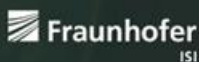


Deliverable D3.2:

Good Practice Guidelines - Elaborated good practice guidelines for future events in bio- based sectors and food-systems

Submitted version

Report awaits European
Commission approval



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Project details

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full name
Fraunhofer ISI	Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research
ART	Agriculture Research Troubsko, Ltd
BBEPP	Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant
APRE	Agency for the Promotion of the European Research
TTG	Tech Tour Global
TTE	Tech Tour Europe
SUBNET	SUBMARINER Network
FBCD	Food & Bio Cluster Denmark
WP	Work Package
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
MAA	Multi-actor approach
R&D	Research and Development

1. Executive Summary

Deliverable 3.2, as a part of Work package 3, summarizes the key learnings obtained through the implementation, validation, and evaluation of good practices for stakeholder engagement events within the [ShapingBio project](#).

This document builds upon the groundwork laid in Deliverable 3.1, which presented initial methodological approaches for stakeholder involvement.

These activities enabled the project to validate engagement formats—such as workshops, networking sessions, matchmaking and one-to-one meetings, pitching sessions (some of them held during fairs and conferences), and participatory networking events—assess coordination mechanisms, and generate actionable recommendations to enhance governance and integration within the bioeconomy.

The events addressed four main thematic areas: policy and governance, applied R&D and technology transfer, collaboration, and financing. Evaluation methods included satisfaction surveys, structured interviews with key stakeholders, and internal partner reviews. Results highlighted the value of participatory approaches, strong networking opportunities, and the effectiveness of in-person and hybrid formats.

Building on the foundation laid in Deliverable 3.1 and enriched by insights gathered during the implementation and validation events, as well as through stakeholder feedback, ShapingBio has consolidated a comprehensive set of 11 good-practice principles to guide effective and inclusive stakeholder engagement across bioeconomy and food system initiatives. This refined guideline is intended to serve as a practical resource for future initiatives beyond the ShapingBio project, supporting more inclusive, collaborative, and effective stakeholder engagement across the European bioeconomy and food systems.

2. Introduction

The overarching objective of the ShapingBio project is to enhance governance and coordination within the bioeconomy and food systems, primarily through the validation and application of effective good practices. The guidelines developed in the project aim to support the formulation of bioeconomy visions and facilitate the implementation of coherent actions, with an emphasis on continuous stakeholder engagement.

Work Package 3 (WP3) plays a critical role in this endeavour by focusing on the practical implementation, testing, and validation of good practices and guidelines developed initially in Work Package 2 (WP2). As a core component of WP3, and specifically Task 3.2, ShapingBio partners have organised numerous networking, implementation, and matchmaking events throughout Europe. These events are designed to promote dialogue and collaboration among diverse stakeholders and sectors within the bioeconomy and food systems. In support of these implementation efforts, Task 3.3 plays a key role in evaluating and consolidating findings from the events, ensuring that feedback is systematically integrated into refined methodologies and recommendations by conducting numerous stakeholder interviews.

The present deliverable, D3.2 titled “Good Practice Guidelines - Elaborated good practice guidelines for future events in bio-based sectors and food-systems” is a key output within WP3 and provides detailed good practice guidelines for future events.

D3.2 builds on the foundation established by the preceding document, D3.1, titled “Synthesis of insights of good practices that will be of high relevance for networking, matchmaking and validation events in Task 3.2” that serves as an initial and preliminary guide for stakeholder engagement activities within Task 3.2, which focuses on testing methodologies such as surveys, workshops, focus groups, and networking events.

Communication and stakeholder engagement experts were involved in validating key methods derived from ShapingBio research and helping to shape future bioeconomy projects to ensure better communication and stakeholder engagement strategies.

This validation process, along with other WP3 activities, gathered valuable feedback from stakeholders, which was used to refine the events, tools, and the good practices document itself. The evaluation of the impact of the events and D3.1 is a key element in the development of the final deliverable.

The main objective of D3.2 is to synthesize the insights gained from the testing and validation activities in Task 3.2 and Task 3.3, building on the preliminary work documented in D3.1. By leveraging this practical feedback and evaluation, D3.2 provides a refined and elaborated set of guidelines that are applicable and tested, designed to inform and optimize the planning and execution of future collaborative initiatives and events in the bio-based sectors and food systems. Additionally, D3.2 will be a public dissemination deliverable, ensuring the knowledge and findings are shared with a wider audience for broader impact.

These processes are summarized in the figure below, which indicates in which section more information is presented (Figure 1):

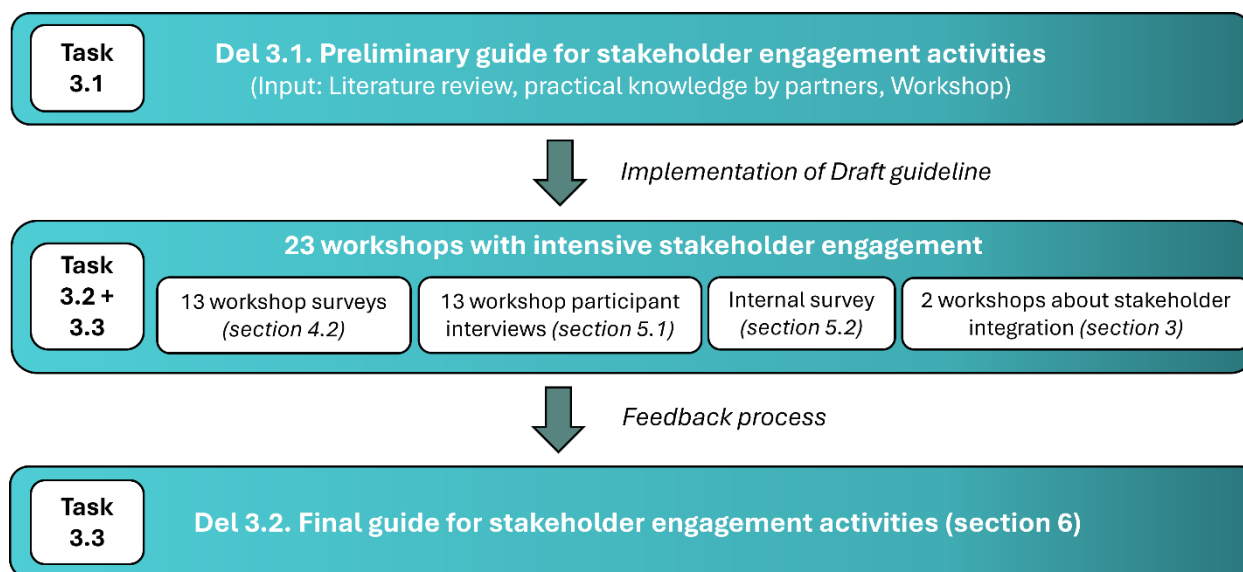


Figure 1: Process of Developing Stakeholder Engagement Guidelines in WP3

Deliverable D3.2 is directly aligned with this objective. By providing elaborated guidelines based on practical experience, it offers a tested and refined methodology for organizing effective events and facilitating stakeholder interactions, key mechanisms within the project for fostering dialogue, collaboration, and the validation of practices. By ensuring that future events are guided by proven methods, D3.2 maximizes their effectiveness in promoting better coordination and governance, thus directly contributing to the core mission of the ShapingBio project.

3. Methodology

The methodology which was used to assess and report on WP3 activities was designed to ensure a coherent evaluation of stakeholder engagement approaches, matchmaking formats, and coordination mechanisms drafted, appraised, and tested throughout the various WP tasks. In the following sections, we provide a summary of the key activities and steps implemented by the ShapingBio consortium to fulfil the specific goals relating to this WP.

Task 3.1: Development and Fine-tuning of the Implementation Approach

Throughout the project, ShapingBio partners leveraged the stakeholder engagement guidelines and best practices established in WP2, along with the overall implementation strategy from Task 1.1 to design and affirm effective methods aimed at enhancing governance within the bioeconomy and food sectors.

Under Task 3.1, Deliverable 3.1, “Good Practice – Preliminary Guide”, laid the foundation for identifying effective stakeholder engagement practices in the bio-based sectors and food systems. It mapped the current engagement landscape within the bioeconomy and provided strategic, actionable guidelines to strengthen participation and support the transition toward sustainable models. The document highlighted the importance of continuous, inclusive collaboration, with particular attention to the role of bioeconomy

clusters and the need for coordinated strategies at both national and regional levels. A variety of methods (such as workshops, consultations, meetings etc.) were reviewed, with emphasis on clarity of purpose, adequate resourcing, mutual learning, and trust-building. The guidelines also included practical examples to illustrate their application in real-world contexts and to support the formulation of regional bioeconomy visions through coherent and aligned actions.

A key success factor in this process was the engagement of a wide variety of stakeholders (with a particular attention to whose voices are often underrepresented) to ensure a richer, more balanced perspective in the shaping of bioeconomy strategies. Crucial was the organization of an in-person workshop with environmental NGOs in December 2024, that allowed for an inclusive discussion on the bioeconomy through the lenses of one of the less engaged stakeholder groups. The format of the workshop reflected some of the main takeaways from the discussion held with other EU projects' experts on communication and stakeholders' engagement held online in October 2024. According to the feedback received in the workshop that underlined, among others, the importance of tailoring each activity to the specific needs and expectations of its target audience and organizing in-person meetings that allow for the creation and the strengthening of meaningful interactions, stronger connections with participants, and ultimately more valuable and actionable outcomes.

Building upon the importance of a wide and diverse stakeholders' engagement, ShapingBio conducted over 40 dedicated workshops during its implementation, mainly under T3.2 (see below) focusing on policy, applied R&D and technology transfer, collaboration, and financing. These workshops engaged stakeholders across various sectors and regions, contributing to:

- a comprehensive understanding of the bioeconomy innovation ecosystem, and, on the other hand,
- the design and implement of the European and regional networking and matchmaking events shaped on the insights and lessons from the interaction with the stakeholders engaged in the project
- reducing fragmentation across bio-based sectors and food systems by promoting cross-sectoral and cross-governmental exchange.

Task 3.2: Networking, Matchmaking and Validation Events

Building on the groundwork laid in Task 3.1, Task 3.2 focused on operational testing aimed to organize 10 thematic European-level events to promote collaboration and knowledge exchange among stakeholders in the bioeconomy and food systems. However, this target was surpassed, with a total of 11 thematic events organized. These events aligned with the themes identified in WP1 and incorporated topics based on the input from both WP1 and WP2. They addressed key challenges and explored strategies and instruments at the European level.

To complement the European dimension and align with the objectives of this task, 12 regional events were held as planned, ensuring targeted outreach to national, regional, and local actors, addressing specific challenges, opportunities, and needs unique to each territorial context.

Events covered the main 4 topics identified in previous work packages (Policies and Governance; R&D Application and Technology Transfer; and Collaboration and Financing) and were often organised in collaboration with third-party initiatives or projects with similar interests, frequently taking place alongside in the framework EU-level activities such as other EU projects, fairs and conferences in order to attract a significant number of strategic stakeholders for the project.

While the project was conceived in the post-pandemic context and anticipated that approximately half of the events would be conducted online to enhance accessibility and facilitate broader stakeholder engagement, the majority of WP3 events were ultimately held in person.

The step-by-step methodology used for the organization and coordination of these events is detailed in Appendix 1: Guidelines for Networking, Matchmaking and Validation Events: Ensuring Consistency and Impact Evaluation. This well-structured guide was created to support the successful execution of these events and ensure that all events were aligned with our project's objectives.

The organization of each event followed a standardized methodology designed to ensure consistency, quality, and effective coordination across all activities. All project partners were provided with a common set of document templates developed by project partner AseBio (Appendix 2: T3.2 Event Concept Form; Appendix 3: T3.2 Event Report Form; Appendix 4: T3.2 Satisfaction Survey Report Form), along with a template invitation email to support the communication efforts. This process aimed to provide a coherent framework for the design, implementation, and evaluation of the 23 events held across Europe under Task 3.2.

To ensure a seamless and successful execution, a clear timeline was established providing structure and facilitating coordination among project partners, shown in Figure 2.

According to the established timeline, each responsible partner was expected to define and select the event's objectives and themes three months in advance and report them accordingly. Two months prior to the event, the Event Concept Form had to be completed and shared with the WP5 leader to enable proper promotion. The invitation email template was used to facilitate contact with moderators, speakers, and participants, and was to be sent no later than six weeks before the event. Following the event, the organizing partner was responsible for distributing a satisfaction survey to participants through the SurveyMonkey platform, completing the Satisfaction Survey Report Form and measuring final KPIs.

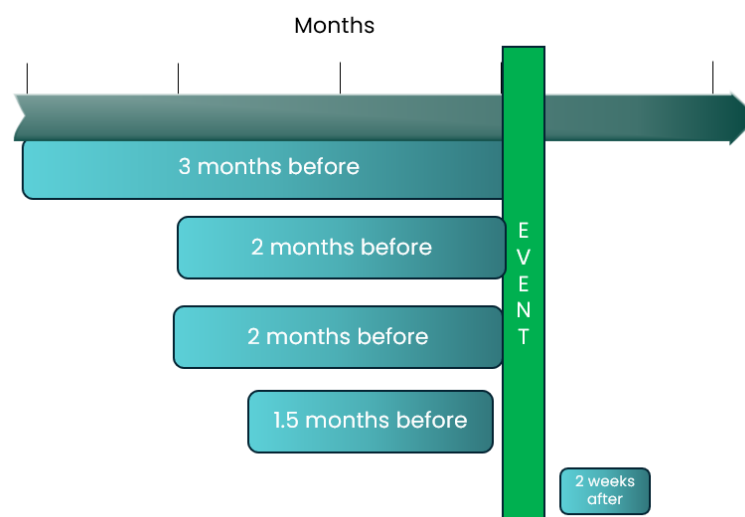


Figure 2: Timeline for the Implementation of Stakeholder Engagement Activities in WP3

To gather detailed feedback on the quality and usefulness of the workshop, the survey was designed consisting of a total of 13 questions (Appendix 5: T3.2 Participant's feedback survey). The structure of the questionnaire combined closed-ended questions with scaled response options and open-ended questions to allow participants to freely express their perceptions and suggestions. The survey content is detailed below:

- Overall, how satisfied were you with the session?
(Answer choice: excellent, good, average, below average or poor)
- What did you like about the session? (Open-ended response)
- What did you not like about the session? (Open-ended response)
- Was the event helpful for your bioeconomy-related work?
(Answer choice: extremely helpful, very helpful, moderately helpful, slightly helpful or not helpful at all)
- Was the event well organized?
(Answer choice: excellent, good, average, below average or poor)
- How would you rate the networking/matchmaking part of the event?
(Answer choice: excellent, good, average, below average or poor)
- How would you rate the session?
(Answer choice: excellent, good, average, below average or poor)
- Did the session meet your expectations?
(Answer choice: exceeded my expectations, met my expectations, partly met/partly did not meet my expectations, did not meet my expectations or I did not have expectations)
- How likely are you to attend another event hosted by us?
(Answer choice: extremely likely, likely, neutral, unlikely or extremely unlikely)
- What do you suggest how we can improve future workshops? (Open-ended response)
- Would you recommend this type of workshop to others? (Answer choice: yes or not)
- Would you like to receive information about future events/workshops from ShapingBio? (Answer choice: yes or not; If yes, could you provide your email)
- Do you have any other comments? (Open-ended response)

Finally, the organizing partner was responsible for preparing a concise Event Report including major conclusions and recommendations. Insights gathered from the feedback and evaluation surveys served as a critical foundation for the qualitative and quantitative analysis of WP3 results, are detailed in Section 5 of this deliverable.

Task 3.3: Evaluation through Stakeholder Feedback and Internal Review

Lastly, to further assess the efficacy of the good practice document and the engagement formats used for the workshops described in Task 3.2, Task 3.3 employed structured qualitative interviews targeting key stakeholders from across the bioeconomy ecosystem. Thirteen interviews were conducted, each lasting between 15 and 30 minutes. Each project partner selected two to three interviewees among the participants in the workshops they had organized. The consortium coordinated the overall selection to ensure a balanced and diverse representation across bioeconomy sectors (e.g., food, bioenergy, agriculture, aquaculture/fisheries, forestry), organizational affiliations (e.g., public authorities, private enterprises, academia/research institutions, industry associations), and gender.

The interviews followed a standardized format with open-ended questions, allowing for the collection of insights into participants' experiences and perceptions. To ensure clarity and to minimize potential language barriers, participants were given the opportunity to conduct the interview either in English or in their native language, where shared with the interviewer. This approach not only facilitated more open and nuanced dialogue, but also enhanced the overall quality of the data collected and strengthened the engagement of those involved in the process. In particular, questions strived to gain participants' overall satisfaction with the event, as well as more detailed feedback on the event's structure, networking and matchmaking opportunities, knowledge transfer and practical use, and recognition and integration of their input. All project partners were provided with the same interview form to ensure comparability of the results (**Appendix 6: T3.3 Interview Form**). Responses were analyzed through qualitative thematic analysis, identifying recurring themes and highlighting any differences in perspectives from actors involved in different bioeconomy sectors or belonging to a specific stakeholder domain (i.e. academia vs. private sector).

Alongside the interviews, an internal survey was distributed, this time amongst project partners, to evaluate the usability and applicability of the good practice document developed in Task 3.1 (Appendix 7: Survey on Good Practice Document).

4. Networking, Matchmaking and Validation Events

Task 3.2 of Work Package 3 was designed to test, through the organization of European and regional events, the structures, instruments and initiatives mapped in WP 1 and WP 2, to identify opportunities for new collaborations both with each other and between the different sectors of the bioeconomy and food systems at European level. Additionally, the task sought to use these events to showcase good practices, pilot newly developed engagement formats, and, in some cases, gather further input to inform policy recommendations.

In general terms, the results of this task are shown through the following indicators:

- Number and type of events held.
- Number of participants.
- Event format: in-person or online.
- Location of in-person events.
- Stakeholders involved.
- Specific activities carried out at the event.

In total, 23 events were organized by all consortium members, of which 11 were events with a European focus and 12 with a regional focus. These results not only met the values envisaged in the proposal but exceeded them. In terms of number of participants, there were a total of 1,692 attendees, with 71% attending European thematic events and 29% regional events, even though the number of regional events was higher than thematic events.

Moreover, the consortium has always tried to boost interaction between attendees for better and more efficient networking, resulting in 78% of physical events (and 22% of online events).

The physical events covered a large part of Europe, with events held in the following cities and countries: Brussels, Leuven and Ghent (Belgium), Barcelona, San Sebastian and Pamplona (Spain), Maribo and Herning (Denmark), Gothenburg (Sweden), Budapest (Hungary), Dijon (France), Bodø (Norway), Wuppertal (Germany), and Amsterdam (The Netherlands).

Regarding the stakeholders, there was a wide diversity of participants in the events, including EU and international scientific institutions from Academia group, primary producers, clusters, hubs, networks, associations, investors, multinational companies, SMEs and Start-ups from Industry group, policy makers, officers and advisors (local, regional, national and European level), public bodies and agencies and civil servants from public sector group, along with citizens, societal groups and NGOs from civil society group, among others. Participants were identified through targeted desk research and stakeholder mapping, complemented by invitations circulated via the consortium's networks, newsletters and social media. This three-pronged approach guaranteed both thematic breadth and geographical balance, ensuring that every discussion benefitted from a representative spread of expertise and perspectives.

Finally, these events were organized using the types of activities described the good-practice document in Deliverable 3.1.

Drawing on Creswell's participatory guidelines¹, every session followed a common seven step framework:

1. Define clear objectives aligned with ShapingBio's overall goals.
2. Craft an interactive agenda (icebreakers, group work, case studies).
3. Issue tailored invitations and confirm attendance.
4. Prepare backup materials, logistics and a realtime chat for facilitators.
5. Open with contextsetting, then moderate discussions, flexing the agenda to emerging themes.
6. Capture insights through notes, recordings and visual tools; synthesise main messages.
7. Collect feedback and share next steps to sustain collaboration.

This blueprint fostered a welcoming atmosphere, encouraged equal participation and created a sense of ownership among attendees.

The events adopted a wide range of facilitation formats and engagement tools, as outlined in the good-practice framework of Deliverable 3.1, such as: pitching corners; keynote impulses; moderated roundtables; discussion panels; breakout "tourdetable" groups; cocreation exercises on concept boards; study visits and live demonstrations; plus dedicated partnering tools that enabled 1to1 matchmaking and informal networking spaces (30% of the events held had a partnering tool that allowed attendees to hold one-to-one meetings, registering a total of 413 meetings).

¹ Creswell, John W., & Plano Clark, Vicki L. (2017). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/designing-and-conducting-mixed-methods-research/book241842>

This rich mix mirrored stakeholders' stated preference for dynamic, face-to-face engagement and proved particularly effective for sparking crosssector collaborations and testing emerging ideas.

Across all events, the structured yet flexible methodology delivered:

- actionable recommendations feeding directly into WP level research;
- new cross-regional contacts later formalized in joint pilot activities;
- real-time validation of ShapingBio's good practice catalogue;
- participant feedback loops that continuously refined subsequent sessions. By combining rigorous stakeholder centered planning with a diverse toolbox of interactive formats, the networking and matchmaking events not only generated valuable data for the project but also strengthened the community that will carry ShapingBio's results forward.

5. Main Conclusions from Events

In order to address the issues (gaps, coordination aspects, etc.) consistently in the project through mapping, analysis, implementation and communication ShapingBio defined four key topics that will be consistently handled and specified throughout the CSA, based on the call outline, existing literature and studies and the profound experiences of the project consortia:

- **Policy and governance**, including policy strategies, instruments and structures on different vertical (across EU, national, regional, and local level levels) and horizontal (across sectors, policy, domains, territories) policy levels and linkages of bioeconomy to other relevant policy domains.
- **Applied R&D and effective technology transfer** including the interaction of relevant stakeholders (research, industry and policy for different important activities, e.g. scaling up, etc.).
- **Collaboration** across all stakeholders, in particular cross-sectoral and cross-country collaboration.
- **Financing**, including the interplay of the (public and private) financial institutions community, research and industry in various stages of the bioeconomy innovation developments and value chains.

In each event under task 3.2, at least one of the four topics mentioned above was identified. It is important to highlight that these four topics are closely interconnected, with significant overlaps. In the conclusions extracted and categorized by these main topics from the event reports, an attempt has been made to explain them separately as much as possible, although in some cases the interconnection between several conclusions has been reflected.

Below are the main common conclusions drawn from these event reports.

5.1 Policy and Governance

1. Need for Policy Update and Coordination:

- There is a general consensus on the need to update policies related to the bioeconomy, especially to address the lack of alignment with the pace of technological advancements and new production models. Policies must evolve in line with developments in the "green" and "blue" sectors, focusing on simplification and regulatory clarity.

- Coordination between policies and sectors is crucial for the success of the bioeconomy. Overcoming policy "silos" through greater inter-institutional cooperation at the European, national, and regional levels is recommended.

2. Lack of Regulatory Harmonization:

- There is a disparity in licensing systems across different regions in Europe, which poses an obstacle to bioeconomy development. For example, the regulation of the marine sector and the lack of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) for seaweed farming need to be addressed. The development of a digitalized licensing platform is proposed to streamline and make these processes more flexible.

3. Impact of Regulation on Innovation:

- Excessive and outdated regulation is a barrier to experimentation and innovation, particularly in the early stages of developing new products and technologies. "Regulatory sandboxes" are seen as useful tools to foster innovation without excessive regulatory constraints. Moreover, they provide a useful mechanism to assess the potential impact of a regulation before its implementation.
- Regulations should be designed to facilitate the transition between sectors, ensuring that emerging industries do not face unnecessary barriers.

4. Involvement of Stakeholders and Transparency in Governance:

- It is essential to engage a variety of stakeholders from the early stages of decision-making, including citizens, NGOs, and marginalized groups. Failing to involve these actors early on can impact the effectiveness and legitimacy of policies.
- A participatory and transparent approach in policy formulation is emphasized, where NGOs play a key role by sharing alternative perspectives and promoting transparency.

5. Supporting Innovation and Consumer Education:

- Educating and raising awareness among consumers is crucial to promoting the acceptance of bio-based products and the concept of upcycling. Institutional campaigns, modifications in labeling, and the use of standardized methodologies to assess environmental impact (such as carbon footprint) can increase public awareness and acceptance.
- Tax incentives, such as reductions, are also suggested to support education and communication about sustainability.

6. Development of Regional and Local Strategies:

- National bioeconomy strategies should take regional and local realities into account. In many cases, regions play a significant role in implementation policy, and coordination between regional and national levels is essential to ensure policies are effective and responsive to local needs.
- Regional collaboration also allows local voices to be heard at the European level, amplifying the concerns and needs of smaller or less represented communities.

7. Sustainability and Biodiversity:

- Policies should be clear and enforceable to ensure that bioeconomy strategies respect environmental limits and biodiversity goals. Sustainability must be a central pillar of policies, both in terms of production and consumption, ensuring the preservation of natural resources.

5.2 Applied R&D and effective Technology Transfer

1. Collaboration and Innovation Networks

- Cooperation among stakeholders (industry, academia, governments, startups) is essential to strengthen applied R&D and accelerate the market entry of technological innovations.
- Programs like Horizon Europe serve as effective platforms to connect various actors in the innovation ecosystem.

2. Infrastructure and Access to Resources

- Mapping and centralising information on pilot/demo infrastructures, technological capabilities, and available side streams is key.
- A centralized and accessible platform, supported by the EU, could enhance knowledge transfer and cross-sector collaboration.

3. Funding and Scaling Up

- Access to adequate funding remains a major barrier. Increased investment is needed, especially in applied research and the scaling of innovative technologies.
- Support schemes for startups and SMEs are crucial for turning concepts into real-world applications.

4. Policy and Regulation

- Policies must be regularly updated to keep pace with technological development, including legislation that supports innovation.

- Promoting sustainability and circular economy standards should be embedded in R&D policies.

5. Availability and Transparency of Information

- A lack of reliable, transparent data hinders effective policy-making and collaboration.
- Better communication of existing resources, capabilities, and results is needed, particularly from innovation clusters and public institutions.

6. Territorial and Participatory Approaches

- Local engagement, including citizen science, strengthens ownership of innovation and contributes to relevant data generation.
- Involving regional actors helps identify available raw materials and address specific local needs.

7. Valorization of By-products and New Value Chains

- There are significant opportunities in converting agricultural, forestry, and urban waste into high-value products.
- Existing biotechnologies and solutions should be explored and adapted for new applications and sectors.

8. Strategic Communication

- Authorities and scientists must lead communication efforts to ensure credibility and counter misinformation, especially on technical topics.

5.3 Collaboration

1. Collaboration is essential for the bioeconomy

- Transitioning towards a more sustainable economy requires collaboration across sectors, regions, and institutional levels. The bioeconomy, by nature, demands cross-sectoral approaches to succeed.

2. Barriers exist but can be overcome

- Challenges such as misaligned goals, bureaucracy, trust issues, resource constraints, and communication breakdowns are common. Overcoming them requires political will, structured dialogue spaces, and practical cooperation mechanisms.

3. Communication and knowledge sharing are key

- Open exchange of information, experiences, and best practices among public, private, and civil society actors is fundamental. Digital platforms, discussion papers, and face-to-face meetings help create real synergies.

4. Trust and personal relationships matter

- Effective collaboration is rooted in trust, equal and constructive interactions, a problem-solving mindset, and willingness to compromise.

5. Strategic networking strengthens collaborative ecosystems

- Building strong networks (such as regional hubs or thematic forums) facilitates coordination, enhances policy influence, and promotes mutual learning and joint innovation.

6. A Multi-Actor Approach (MAA) is indispensable

- Engaging diverse stakeholders—governments, businesses, academia, NGOs, and citizens—enriches solutions and strengthens the legitimacy of decision-making processes.

7. Small steps are effective to start with

- Launching collaborations through pilot projects or small-scale initiatives builds trust and demonstrates value before forming larger consortia.

8. Policy and funding play enabling roles

- Legislation, national strategies, and financing mechanisms must be designed to support and incentivize cross-sectoral and cross-regional collaboration.

9. Social and territorial inclusion is key to collaborative success

- Involving local communities, NGOs, and non-environmental sectors (such as social or humanitarian organizations) ensures more equitable and impactful collaboration.

10. Collaboration is a tool for systemic change

- Beyond individual projects, effective collaboration drives shifts in economic models, supports the circular economy, creates green jobs, and strengthens long-term sustainability.

5.4 Financing

1. Financial Support and Infrastructure

- **Tailored Financial Products and Administrative Simplification:** Startups and SMEs require customized financial products and shared infrastructure. Simplifying administrative processes is essential to improve access to funds and efficiency.
- **Role of European Funds:** European funds are crucial for larger projects. Regions should make the most of European funding opportunities, complementing national and regional funds.

2. Investment Challenges

- **Investment Challenges:** There is a lack of investment, adequate infrastructure, and clear regulatory policies, which hinder the growth of bioeconomy-related projects.
- **Public and Private Financing Challenges:** Access to financing, both public and private, remains a barrier for bioeconomy projects. Improved cooperation between regional, national, and European levels of financing is needed.

3. Policy and Regulatory Support

- **Balancing Investment, Policy, and Facilitation:** To grow, bioeconomy companies need a balance between investment, clear policies, and efforts to boost regional production. Appropriate legislation and market development are critical.
- **Promoting tax incentives and public education on sustainability and innovation is key.**
- **Disparity in Access to Funds Between Regions:** Less developed regions face challenges in accessing funds due to bureaucracy. Simplifying application processes can improve access to financing, especially in these regions.

4. Startup and Business Development

- **Ongoing Support for Startups:** Startups need continuous support to grow sustainably, especially during scaling stages. Balancing initial funding with long-term support is crucial for their success and competitiveness.
- **Lack of Standardized Methodologies:** The lack of standardized methodologies to evaluate aspects like carbon emissions makes accessing public funds more difficult. Standardizing these frameworks is necessary to improve financing access and transparency.

5. Sustainability and Innovation

- **Need for Technology and Innovation:** Investment in technologies with a focus on sustainability is essential. Strong teams are needed to lead companies in the bioeconomy sector toward sustainable models.
- **Importance of Sustainability in Investment:** For investment in agri-food companies, key evaluation elements include sustainability, responsible agricultural practices, innovation, financial stability, and the sustainability and health of the final product.

6. Overall Satisfaction and Improvement Proposals

Task 3.2. included checking the degree of satisfaction of event attendees by using a satisfaction survey through the SurveyMonkey platform. In addition to finding out the degree of satisfaction of the participants, the survey had the objective of compiling the proposals for improvement reflected in the form.

Regarding the 23 events held, survey responses have been collected from 14 events, no survey responses were obtained from the remaining 9 events for two reasons; no participants responded to the survey, or the survey was not carried out by the organizer.

Regarding the surveys conducted and from which responses were collected, the response rate was 9.8%, which is in line with the usual average for this type of surveys of around 10%, and the results obtained were considered adequate. Among the responders, 34.5% rated the events as 'good'. In addition, 5.5% of the participants rated the events as 'average' and the remaining 1.2% rated them as 'low average'.

6.1 Positive aspects highlighted in the surveys

- **Variety of topics discussed** during the events, with a focus across bioeconomy and possible key solutions for future challenges. The **technicity of the content** was at the right level.
- The **dynamics** and the **exchange of experiences** and **direct interaction**.
- There are **different points of view, content, and perspectives** shared regarding bioeconomy solutions.
- The **organization and design of the events** were considered a good source of information, insights, and learning.
- **Interactions, exchange of ideas and experiences, and networking.**
- The interactions fostered **problem-solving and co-creativity**.
- Participants had the opportunity to **share different experiences**.
- There was a **real exchange of ideas and information**.
- **Partnering opportunities**
- The **panel discussions, speakers, and moderators** added great value, contributing to a **comprehensive perspective on the topics addressed**.

6.2 Areas for improvements according to the survey's results

- There was a suggestion to **leave more time for the networking events and for Q&A sessions**, potentially by shortening the presentations.
- Some participants felt that they would have liked **more in-depth detail to be provided on some conclusions** and wished that **some topics had been delved into more**.
- The **duration** of some events were **too short** and didn't allow enough time to cover all topics thoroughly.
- The **online format** and **limited attendance** were perceived as constraints across different events
- **Mentimeter** is an interactive tool that allows users to conduct live surveys, questions, quizzes, and polls, displaying the results in real time. However, certain Mentimeter questions were perceived as too closed, **restricting the range of responses**.

6.3 Proposals for improvement collected in the surveys

- **Increasing the time** allocated for **networking** and **extending the overall event duration** would enhance participant interaction, foster collaboration, and enable more in-depth discussions and learning.
- Given the importance of networking, a **networking platform** could be established where participants can opt to share their email addresses and **facilitate collaborations** beyond the workshop. This list, along with useful links shared during the event, could be made available at the end of the workshop.
- **Incorporating more interactive elements** into the sessions would engage participants more effectively and encourage active involvement.
- It would be beneficial to **use a mix of Mentimeter question types**. In addition to multiple-choice questions, incorporating open-ended questions, rating scales, and other formats would enrich the participation experience.
- While the online format offers convenience, the experience could be significantly enhanced with **in-person or hybrid formats**. These formats would **encourage greater engagement and interaction**.
- **Expanding the invitation list and actively following up with registered participants** can ensure **better attendance**, fostering more inclusive discussions and enhancing the overall event experience.

Regarding engagement, 93% of the attendees showed their interest in attending another event organised within the framework of ShapingBio. On the other hand, 57% of the attendees expressed that they would like to be kept informed of the progress of the ShapingBio project by adding their contact email address in the survey.

7. Evaluation through Stakeholder Feedback and Internal Review

Task 3.3 of Work Package 3 was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement formats and the usability of the good practice guidelines developed in Task 3.1 through direct feedback from participants in ShapingBio workshops and networking events.

7.1 Interviews with Workshop participants

Thirteen structured interviews were conducted with European bioeconomy stakeholders representing diverse bioeconomy sectors, organizational affiliations, and gender profiles. **Table 1** provides an anonymized summary of the interviewed stakeholders.

ID	Gender	Country	Sector	Affiliation
Interviewee 1	M	IT	Policy and Governance	Civil society
Interviewee 2	W	IT	Stakeholder Engagement/Youth	Private sector
Interviewee 3	M	ES	Biotechnology	Industry associations
Interviewee 4	M	ES	Agriculture	Public sector
Interviewee 5	M	NL	Biofuels/Formal Policy	Civil society
Interviewee 6	W	DE	Research	Private sector
Interviewee 7	M	DE	Forestry	Private sector
Interviewee 8	W	HU	General Bioeconomy	Private sector
Interviewee 9	W	FR	Blue and agri food ingredients	Private sector
Interviewee 10	W	FR	Food Ingredients	Private sector
Interviewee 11	M	BE	Aquaculture/Fisheries	Academia/Research
Interviewee 12	W	EE	Aquaculture/Fisheries	Academia/Research
Interviewee 13	W	LT	Aquaculture/Fisheries	Industry associations

Table 1: Overview of stakeholders interviewed for T3.3 (W = woman ; M = man). Table References/Source: Data collected by ShapingBio partners.

7.1.1 Overall Satisfaction and Event Structure

Interviewees consistently expressed high satisfaction with the events, particularly highlighting professional moderation, thematic relevance, and structured facilitation. Several participants praised the diversity of perspectives and quality of exchanges that emerged from many of the sessions, especially during sessions that included panel or roundtable discussions, as well as breakout group sessions. The events were perceived as well-organized and conducive to open dialogue.

Nonetheless, some interviewees indicated that they would have liked more time allocated for deepening discussions. In some cases, participants suggested having shorter presentations to give more time to extract findings and reflections from participants. Interviewees also highlighted that additional time would have allowed discussions to better clarify follow-up actions and the long-term use of the outputs generated.

7.1.2 Recognition and Integratuon of Stakeholder Input

The majority of interviewees confirmed that their input was actively solicited, recognised, and reflected in the workshops' outputs. This perception was particularly strong among participants involved in co-creation formats, roundtables, and smaller group sessions. Several stakeholders explicitly mentioned that their feedback was included in event summaries, synthesis documents, or workshop reports, which they either reviewed post-event or discussed with organisers. In some cases, input was reflected in how the session itself was dynamically adapted. In one instance, suggestions shared during early plenary exchanges were picked up by moderators and reshaped into breakout discussions. In another workshop, contributions regarding the importance of mutual learning and reward for engagement were later echoed in the summary document as a core takeaway for future governance models.

However, a few interviewees indicated that while input was received and integrated during the session, they were unsure of whether it was taken further in project deliverables or policy recommendations. Hence, it **might be important for future workshops to pursue a more systematic and transparent communication of how stakeholder contributions are incorporated into project deliverables and other outcomes.**

7.1.3 Networking and Matchmaking Experiences

Participants' experiences with networking varied significantly depending on the event format. In-person formats were consistently rated more effective for establishing meaningful connections with other bioeconomy stakeholders and facilitating informal exchanges, particularly during breaks or social segments. One interviewee also highlighted the importance of hosting in-person workshops in broader conferences, as this gives more opportunities to connect with speakers and/or other workshop participants in the context of other sessions. In several interviews, attendees praised workshop organizers for engaging high-level stakeholders (i.e. EU Commission representatives), citing that their insights and reflections added value to the discussions taking place.

While online sessions were praised for their accessibility and convenience, especially by participants with limited travel capacity, they were widely viewed as less effective in enabling spontaneous or informal exchanges. To address these limitations, **suggestions included implementing structured matchmaking tools (i.e. B2Match), sharing participant profiles in advance, and integrating interest-based breakout sessions.** Despite their constraints, online formats were still evaluated positively, especially for collecting structured knowledge exchanges and thematic presentations.

7.1.4 Knowledge Transfer and Practical Use

Participants generally found the knowledge and insights gained during the events to be relevant and applicable to their work. Those involved in research or policy-oriented roles particularly appreciated the alignment of the workshop topics and discussions with ongoing projects, strategies, or proposal development processes. Others, especially those working in the private sector or newcomers to the field, particularly appreciated the workshops' support in expanding their understanding of the bioeconomy sector and having the opportunity to connect with key actors. One participant from the public sector highlighted that the event they attended allowed their small company to meet, interact and exchange with more prominent industry players, providing them with a better idea of their role in the bioeconomy ecosystem.

A sectoral split was quite evident when evaluating participants' opinions on the practical use of the sessions. **Interviewees from academia and civil society often focused on policy relevance and knowledge uptake, while industry actors highlighted the value of visibility, networking, and matchmaking.** For instance, a representative from a civil society organisation highlighted the value of learning about upcoming EU policy consultations and how other NGOs are engaging in advocacy, and a university interviewee appreciated the insights provided in another session by an EU Commissioner on blue bioeconomy policy coherence. Meanwhile, a food ingredient company valued the opportunity to pitch their solution and connect with technical stakeholders they had no success in reaching previously, noting that the event structure directly facilitated these exchanges.

7.2 Results from Internal Survey

To complement the findings captured in the qualitative interviews with external stakeholders (Task 3.3), an internal survey was distributed among ShapingBio project partners to gather feedback on the **relevance, clarity, and applicability** of the preliminary Good Practice Guidelines developed under Task 3.1. The aim was to assess the document's perceived usefulness for stakeholder engagement in bioeconomy governance and identify any areas requiring refinement or further elaboration. A total of nine responses were received, including all project partners except the principal authors of the report, APRE. Respondents were asked to rate the document's overall applicability and to provide feedback on whether they perceived any gaps or areas needing further elaboration.

The document was widely seen as highly relevant and applicable, with five out of nine partners giving it the highest rating (5 out of 5) and three others rating it positively with a 4. Only one respondent provided a more moderate score of 3, indicating a generally strong level of endorsement across the consortium. Nonetheless, while the document was recognized as thorough, several respondents found it difficult to navigate, especially when trying to locate connections between challenges encountered during events, the mitigation measures applied, and how these informed revisions to the guidelines. Partners recommended a more transparent narrative structure to improve readability and track continuous improvement, better section mapping or visual anchors to aid quick navigation and including a summary or key takeaways section to improve accessibility, especially for newcomers or time-constrained readers.

Additionally, one comment noted that while the document contains essential insights, such as challenges encountered during ShapingBio workshops, mitigation measures, and lessons learned, this information is scattered across various chapters and challenging to synthesize. They recommended improving the navigability and logical flow of the document, especially for readers seeking evidence of continuous improvement. The feedback also called for logistical learnings (e.g., workshop invitation timing, high online

drop-out rates, and overbooking strategies) and more precise terminology around what is defined as a “tool” within the document.

Overall, these insights provide essential feedback to revise the preliminary guidelines and allow the establishment of new good practices that can support not only ShapingBio partners but also the broader community of stakeholders working toward promoting more inclusive and effective governance frameworks for the European bioeconomy.

7.3 Evaluation of Good Practice Document

7.3.1 Input from Preliminary Guidelines and Workshops

Deliverable D3.1 “Good practice – Preliminary Guidelines” represents a first attempt to present the overall ShapingBio engagement strategy. For convenience, the following chart synthesizes the main dimensions covered in the document.

Dimension	Key observations	Evidence
Strategic alignment	The guide translates ShapingBio’s multi-actor, co-creation philosophy into clear operational steps—stakeholder mapping, early communication, iterative feedback loops and diversified formats.	Sections 3 and 4 outline the design of participatory processes and engagement techniques .
Comprehensive toolbox	It catalogues a wide range of tested formats—validation workshops, multi-actor groups, matchmaking, surveys, interviews—together with success factors and common pitfalls.	Stakeholder engagement techniques (pp. 13-15) and the WP-based examples (pp. 19-26) .
Evidence-based guidance	Good practices are not theoretical; they are derived from real project activities (WP1–WP3) and are supported by quantitative and qualitative feedback from more than 20 events and 160+ contributors.	Feedback figures for multi-actor groups, validation workshop pictures and lessons learnt .
Inclusiveness focus	The document systematically addresses cultural, gender and generational diversity, data-privacy compliance, trust-building and reward mechanisms.	Sections 8.1–8.4 on GDPR roadmap, diversity-adapted communication, trust and rewarding .

Table 2: Overview of Main Dimensions Addressed in Deliverable D3.1 – Good Practice Preliminary Guidelines.

Among all the events organized throughout the project implementation, Three flagship events enabled the consortium to stress-test and refine the preliminary guidelines:

Event	Date / Format	Contributions to Guidelines
“The Power of Communication for Engagement” (Validation workshop, Budapest)	March 6th, 2024 – hybrid	Confirmed that reciprocity and visible returns drive participation; distilled five core principles endorsed by mainstream and under-represented actors.
“Powering Stakeholder Engagement and Communication for Bioeconomy” (APRE online workshop)	October 29, 2024 – virtual, 13 experts	Highlighted the importance of: 1) deep customisation to stakeholder interests, 2) trust built through clear take-aways, and 3) balanced time for networking.
“Integrating NGOs’ Needs in Bioeconomy Policy and Governance in Europe” (NGO workshop, Brussels)	December 11th, 2025 – 8 NGOs	Provided valuable perspectives and concrete insights on how to ensure meaningful engagement of underrepresented stakeholder groups, such as civil society organizations and NGOs.

Table 3: Main Events Supporting the Development of the Guidelines.

The **validation workshop “The Power of Communication for Engagement”** (Budapest, 6 March 2024) gathered together practitioners from seven EU projects and communication specialists that reviewed the draft guidelines. Interactive Slido polls, a Pictionary exercise and peer-to-peer discussions confirmed that stakeholders value *reciprocity* and *tangible returns* from participation. The workshop—combined with a series of virtual multi-actor groups—generated a concise set of priority principles endorsed by both mainstream and under-represented actors (grass-roots NGOs, regional farmer networks, youth initiatives):

1. **Early-stage and regular engagement** – involve stakeholders from proposal design through to exploitation phases.
2. **Trust-building and direct outreach** – personalize invitations, use familiar channels and demonstrate follow-through on feedback.
3. **Tailored activities and concrete take-aways** – design sessions that deliver immediate value (policy briefs, matchmaking leads, learning resources).
4. **Support and enlargement of networks** – leverage existing clusters and EU platforms to widen participation, especially across less-represented regions.
5. **Recognition of marginalized stakeholders as knowledge brokers** – position community actors as co-designers, not merely consultees, in technical debates.

The results of the workshops were integrated in the Preliminary Good Practice Guidelines in Deliverable D3.1. Deliverable D3.1 directly supported WP3 Task 3.2 (“Testing & Implementation Events”) and fed back into the projectwide stakeholder engagement plan established in WP1 and WP2. The document’s recommendations also align with the multiactor and cocreation principles defined in Deliverable D1.3, ensuring methodological coherence across work packages.

On October 29th, 2024, APRE hosted the **online workshop “Powering Stakeholder Engagement and Communication for Bioeconomy”**. The event engaged 13 experts working on stakeholders’ engagement and communication in EU funded projects and aimed at exploring how to better engage stakeholders in bioeconomy projects and activities. After a detailed presentation round aiming at sharing stakeholder engagement experiences, the participants first responded to Mentimeter poll questions, then shared their feedback in an active discussion, offering diverse perspectives and practical experiences on effective

stakeholder engagement, providing valuable guidance for fostering impactful engagement in bioeconomy projects. In particular, the discussion touched upon some of the main points that were reported in the guidelines (among more specific topics related to the type of activities to best involve stakeholders), highlighting the importance of:

- **Customization:** Tailoring workshops to each stakeholders' group's background and interests ensures participation and significant results (For example, practical workshops were recommended for groups like farmers, who may respond better to clear, practical activities than theoretical discussions). Moreover, identifying and pursuing a clear and specific objective that interests the participant is crucial for active participation (once this has been settled, the type of workshop or activity is of secondary importance).
- **Trust and Takeaways:** Building trust is a complex yet fundamental task that runs throughout the entire project. It begins even before the activities commence, continues to support their implementation, and extends through to the project's conclusion. Trusting the organizer, partners, and the project means participating with the confidence that the event will offer tangible benefits. Participants should feel assured that they will gain value from their involvement, that their contributions will be recognized, and that their insights will inform future actions.
- **Networking:** Importance of fostering meaningful connections among diverse stakeholders through a mix of engaging activities and initiatives that keep participants active and involved. Events that blend networking opportunities with knowledge-sharing sessions are particularly appealing, as they provide both social interaction and knowledge exchange. It is important, though, to allocate the right amount of time per activity in order for people to have enough time to socialize and share their ideas beyond their presentation. In this regard, stakeholders suggested to include ample and regular breaks during the events to allow for informal networking and to help maintain focus and enhance participant involvement throughout the event.

Another key milestone in the discussion on best practices for stakeholder involvement in bioeconomy projects was the in-person workshop **“Integrating NGOs’ needs in bioeconomy policy and governance I Europe”** held in Brussels on December 11th, 2025. The event brought together 8 environmental NGOs, who contributed valuable perspectives and concrete insights on how to ensure meaningful engagement of underrepresented stakeholder groups, such as civil society organizations and NGOs.

The final session of the workshop focused on developing recommendations to enhance the integration of NGO needs into bioeconomy, highlighting the importance of inclusive approaches, adequate funding, and demonstrating value to decision-makers.

In particular, the **“Understanding NGOs’ needs and obstacles”** and **“Identifying strategies to increase collaboration opportunities”** sessions were proven particularly useful to further reflect on the good practices guideline, including a new perspective.

As for the first session (**“Understanding NGOs’ needs and obstacles”**) it provided insights and recommendations on improving stakeholder representation, communication, and collaboration. Participants highlighted the importance of:

Early and Continuous Engagement:

- Stakeholders, particularly NGOs and citizens, should be involved from the initial stages of strategy development. Late-stage involvement undermines the democratic process and reduces the impact of their contributions.
- A participatory approach is often hindered at the EU level due to inconsistent involvement of ministries and experts from Member States. Efforts must be made to include all relevant parties early in the process.

Collaboration and Capacity Building:

- Collaboration among NGOs is critical to creating a unified voice capable of counterbalancing powerful industry lobbies. Strong networks and shared goals can generate the critical mass needed to influence policy effectively.
- However, NGOs face challenges in maintaining independence while securing resources for their work, necessitating accountability frameworks to ensure transparency and effectiveness.

Tailored Approaches for Member States:

- Not all aspects of the bioeconomy are equally relevant to every Member State, necessitating customized strategies to engage less-involved regions. This requires extra effort to ensure inclusion and address specific local needs.
- The “**Identifying strategies to increase collaboration opportunities**” session highlighted the importance of:

Cross-Sector Collaboration:

- The bioeconomy is inherently crosscutting, requiring a wide and diverse group of actors, particularly in exporting countries.

Multi-Actor Approach (MAA):

- A layered, multi-actor approach is crucial for addressing the complexities of the bioeconomy through dialogue and collaboration among different sectors.

Scaling and Localizing Solutions:

- A one-size-fits-all approach is insufficient given the varied impacts and applications across regions: recognizing the diversity within the bioeconomy—referred to as “bioeconomies”—is essential for developing locally tailored solutions.

Knowledge Sharing and Communication:

- Developing discussion papers that explore the varied impacts of bioeconomy can help engage a wider range of stakeholders and provide a foundation for informed decision-making.
- Citizen science and participatory approaches were highlighted as effective tools for increasing local involvement and fostering ownership of bioeconomy initiatives.

7.3.2 Final Good Practices Guidelines

Building on the foundation laid in Deliverable D3.1 and enriched through the insights gathered during the validation events as well as the feedbacks presented in the chapters presented above, ShapingBio has consolidated a comprehensive set of good-practice principles to guide effective and inclusive stakeholder engagement across bioeconomy and food system initiatives. These guidelines are designed to support meaningful, transparent, and impact-oriented participation throughout the project lifecycle.

- 1. Integrate engagement from the outset**
Stakeholder involvement should begin at the proposal development stage and continue through to the exploitation of results, ensuring early ownership and sustained collaboration.
- 2. Conduct structured stakeholder mapping**
Identify, segment, and prioritise stakeholders to guarantee balanced representation across sectors, geographical areas, governance levels, gender, and generational groups. This mapping may also contribute in the customization of the activities.
- 3. Tailor outreach strategies**
Design communication and invitation approaches that reflect the specific context, interests, and communication habits of each stakeholder group, using trusted and accessible channels.
- 4. Employ a mix of engagement formats**
Combine diverse methodologies—such as plenary sessions, interactive breakout groups, hands-on demonstrations, and digital collaboration tools—to accommodate different learning styles and preferences.
- 5. Ensure the delivery of tangible benefits**
Clearly articulate and fulfil stakeholder expectations by offering relevant outcomes (e.g., policy briefs, matchmaking opportunities, and access to targeted resources). Moreover, a more systematic and transparent communication of how stakeholder contributions are incorporated into project deliverables and other outcomes should be ensured.
- 6. Foster and maintain trust**
Build trust through transparent planning, inclusive facilitation, compliance with data protection standards, systematic follow-up on feedback, and formal recognition of contributions.
- 7. Facilitate meaningful networking opportunities**
Allocate sufficient time within events for informal interaction and peer exchange, enhancing the potential for collaboration and deepening stakeholder relationships. At the same time, existing

networks, matchmaking platforms (e.g., B2Match) and EU platforms should be leveraged to reach a wider audience while proactively engaging stakeholders from underrepresented or less-connected regions. In addition, sharing participant profiles in advance, and integrating interest-based breakout sessions could help foster networking opportunities.

8. Recognise and empower marginalised stakeholders

Actively include NGOs, youth groups, local communities, and grassroots organizations as co-designers and knowledge holders, valuing their insights equally alongside institutional actors.

9. Adapt engagement to local contexts

Ensure that materials, discussions, and objectives reflect the specific bioeconomic realities of each region or Member State, avoiding generic or centralized approaches. Shorter presentations and Q&A are strongly encouraged to give more time to extract findings and reflections from participants, and to better clarify follow-up actions.

10. Adopt a multi-actor, multi-level approach

Facilitate layered interactions that bring together policymakers, researchers, industry actors, and civil society across local, national, and European governance level.

11. Monitor and evaluate inclusiveness

Implement indicators to assess the diversity, frequency, and perceived impact of stakeholder participation, and use this data to adapt strategies and close engagement gaps.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1: Guidelines for the Networking, Matchmaking and Validation Events: Ensuring Consistency and Impact Evaluation

• Introduction

Creating and adhering to a well-structured coordinating guide is of paramount importance for the successful execution of our project. By having a comprehensive plan in place, we can ensure that all events align with our project's objectives and convey a consistent message to our diverse audiences throughout Europe.

This guide aims to act as a roadmap that streamlines processes, minimizes discrepancies, and optimizes resources, ultimately leading to a more cohesive and impactful project outcome.

Key Points to Remember

ShapingBio needs to organize twenty-two events across Europe within the framework of **WP3: Testing and implementation Event performed to promote the dialogue and collaboration among different stakeholders and different sectors of the bioeconomy and food-systems.**

There are two types of events foreseen, ten at European level and twelve at regional level.

An important aspect of this work package is to achieve an important mass of strategic stakeholders for the project. Therefore, events can be organized in collaboration with other third-party events taking place in Europe that share similar objectives and interests with the project. Additionally, for the same reason and to facilitate broader reach, half of the events can be organized online.

- The partners involved are Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research ISI (FH-ISI), Agency for the Promotion of the European Research (APRE), The Agriculture and Food Development Authority (Teagasc), Agriculture Research (ART), Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant VZW (BBEPP), Tech Tour Global EOOD (TTG), Vitagora (VITA), SUBMARINER Network for Blue Growth EEIF (SUBNet), Food & Bio Cluster Denmark (FBCD), and the Spanish Bioindustry Association (AseBio) as the lead partner for this WP.
- In conclusion, this guide aims to bring together our diverse events under a unified strategy, ensuring a consistent and impactful experience for participants across Europe. By adhering to common directives and implementing robust monitoring and evaluation procedures, we can create meaningful and enduring outcomes that contribute significantly to the success of our project.

- **The rationale for adhering to these guidelines.**

These guidelines offer a common directive for organizing multiple events across Europe to:

1. **Achieve consistency:** A common set of directives will establish a unified identity for our project across all events. Consistency in branding, messaging, and event format will strengthen our project's visibility and credibility among participants and stakeholders.
2. **Ensure efficient resource management:** Coordinating events can be resource-intensive, and having a shared set of guidelines will help us allocate resources effectively, avoiding duplications and unnecessary expenses.
3. **Enhance collaboration:** A standardized guide will foster collaboration and effective communication among all stakeholders involved in the project. It will ensure that everyone is on the same page and working towards the same goals.
4. **Simplified logistics:** Organizing events in multiple European locations can be challenging. A coordinating guide will provide clear steps and procedures for logistics, making event planning more straightforward and less prone to oversights.

- **How to identify themes and priorities for events**

The organization of events to promote the bioeconomy is an exciting and strategic challenge that requires careful consideration of relevant topics and priorities. Based on the project's objectives, the topics for the events we will develop in WP3 should take into account the ideas and needs identified in the mapping and analysis.

The events to be developed should be framed within the four main themes:

- **Policies and Governance:** These events will take into account recommendations regarding the integration of governance and innovative governance models and best practices identified, such as which stakeholder groups should participate. Therefore, these events may include discussions on harmonizing policies across Europe or improvements identified in the implementation of strategies and policies, among other topics.
- **R&D Application and Technology Transfer:** Research and technology transfer are essential for innovation in the bioeconomy. Events should explore topics related to scientific advancements, applied research, and the diffusion of innovative technologies. This can include an event for presenting and matching pilot equipment facilities and open innovation and open access demonstrations of successful projects, demonstrations of cutting-edge technologies, or challenges related to technology transfer.
- **Collaboration:** One of the fundamental pillars of the bioeconomy is collaboration among various sectors. Therefore, it is essential to identify topics that promote intersectoral collaboration. This can include sectoral collaboration workshops, for example, on diversifying

agricultural products into biobased sectors beyond food, sessions and panels that highlight successful collaboration in bioeconomy projects or present innovative approaches to bringing different actors together.

- **Financing:** Financing is a critical component for the development of the bioeconomy. Events should focus on topics such as investment opportunities, funds available for bioeconomy projects, and sustainable financing strategies. Sessions can be organized in which investors, financial institutions, and entrepreneurs share their perspectives or workshops related to financing that combine recommendations to improve access to capital and its implementation, along with elements that promote greater awareness of the bioeconomy among investors."
- **Organizing ten European-level events**

The ten European-level events addressed thematic approaches and incorporate a matchmaking component, and they need to involve **at least 35 participants**.

The European-level events provide a perfect setting to address the main challenges of the bioeconomy in the European Union, engage in cross-cutting discussions, and showcase the initiatives and instruments flourishing across Europe.

Key Points to Remember

European events need to incorporate a **matchmaking, technology transfer or networking component**.

The scope will cover **challenges, topics, strategies or instruments at European level**.

If it's a third-party event, it must always be of interest to Shaping Bio, and our logo should be prominently displayed on promotional materials.

1. How to identify themes and priorities for European-level events

Identifying the themes and European initiatives we want to highlight can indeed be challenging due to the heterogeneity and diversity of ecosystems within Europe. That's why, for the selection of topics and the identification of initiatives and instruments, organizing such events relies on the outcomes of Work Packages 1 and 2.

2. How to promote collaboration and dialogue among our stakeholders

One of the main goals of ShapingBio overall and the events is to build bridges and foster dialogue among the various stakeholders within the European bioeconomy ecosystem. In this context, the European-level events must incorporate components that facilitate this connection.

There are several tools and methodologies for matchmaking that can be used to facilitate connections among participants and promote collaboration and dialogue opportunities. Some of the most common ones include:

- **Partnering Platforms** to create profiles, search for relevant contacts, and schedule meetings based on shared interests.
- **Structured Networking Sessions** where participants can interact with like-minded individuals through brief one-on-one or small group meetings.
- **Connection Corner** to designate a specific table or area during the event where participants can meet others and promote informal interactions.
- **Elevator Pitch Sessions** that allow participants to briefly present their projects or interests in pitch sessions to attract the attention of potential collaborators.
- **Social Events** such as dinners or cocktails for participants to interact in a more relaxed setting and strengthen professional relationships.
- **“Speed dating”** as a networking activity where participants have quick encounters with other professionals to get to know each other and establish connections within a short period of time.

- **Organizing twelve regional events**

The twelve regional events allow participants to address specific challenges, opportunities, and needs that are unique to the local and regional context. These types of events need to involve **at least 20 participants each**.

This approach ensures that discussions and solutions proposed are tailored to the region's challenges. Moreover, by focusing on the regional and local level, events can attract stakeholders who have a direct impact on the area's bioeconomy development. This targeted engagement fosters meaningful interactions and connections.

Regional events can also help us to **showcase the diversity** of the bioeconomy sector in Europe since **each macro -region may have distinct natural resources, bio-based industries, and cultural heritage**.

Key Points to Remember

Regional events should focus on **challenges, topics, and issues related to the macro-region**.

Regional events can address challenges related to **the natural resources of the region or the characteristics of its bioindustries**.

1. Who organizes the regional events?

The regional events in ShapingBio are organized by the five macro-regions (MR). Each MR will play an essential role in planning, coordinating, and executing the events within their respective territories.

MR 1 Central and Eastern Europe BG, HR, CZ, HU, PL, RO, SL, SK	3 events
MR 2 Baltic Sea Region EE, LV, LT, DK, FI, SE, PL, Northern DE, NO – EFTA country	3 events
MR 3 Western Europe BE, FR, DE, LU, NL IRL, AT	3 events
MR 4 Southern Europe CY, GR, IT, MT, PT, ES	3 events

2. How will choose the macro-regions topics for the events?

The macro-regions will utilize the feedback provided by WP1 and WP2. Each of the events may be focused on the barriers and drivers that exist for the development of the bioeconomy in their region

Incorporating the feedback from WP2 will allow the macro-regions to leverage valuable insights and data related to the bioeconomy's specific challenges and opportunities within their respective territories.

- **Selecting Third-Party Organized Events: Considerations and Guidelines**

When exploring opportunities to participate in events organized by third-party entities within the bioeconomy landscape, it is essential to approach the selection process thoughtfully and strategically. Attending such events can be a valuable means of networking, knowledge exchange, and exploring potential collaborations.

- **Why should we consider organizing our event within a relevant third-party event?**

Organizing our event in conjunction with a relevant third-party event offers numerous advantages and opportunities that can significantly enhance the impact and success of our initiative. Some key reasons to be considered include:

- **Leveraging networks:** Collaborating with other events provides an opportunity to tap into their established networks and reach a broader audience. By joining forces, the project can gain access to new stakeholders and potential partners, increasing its overall impact.
 - **Shared resources:** Partnering with other events allows for the pooling of resources such as finances, venues, promotional efforts, and expertise. This can lead to cost savings and a more efficient use of available resources.
 - **Enhanced expertise:** Collaborative events bring together diverse expertise and perspectives from different organizations. This can enrich the event program, offering attendees a comprehensive and well-rounded experience.

- **Increased visibility:** By aligning with other events that share similar objectives, the project can benefit from increased visibility and credibility. This, in turn, can attract more participants and stakeholders, leading to a higher level of engagement.
- **Synergistic impact:** Combining efforts with other events creates a synergy that amplifies the collective impact. The shared focus on common goals can lead to greater outcomes, further advancing the project's mission.
- **Learning and knowledge exchange:** Collaboration fosters an environment for learning and knowledge exchange between different organizations. Participants can benefit from diverse perspectives and best practices, generating new ideas and innovative solutions.

- **Guidelines for Collaborative Event Organization:**

When selecting a third-party organized event, it is essential to take into account several key aspects to ensure that the chosen gathering aligns seamlessly with our objectives and offers optimal opportunities for engagement:

- **Identify compatible events:** Look for events that share similar themes, objectives, or target audiences with your project. Assess how collaboration can mutually benefit both events and align with their respective goals. Here you can find a list of events identified in WP5: [ShapingBio - events.xlsx](#)
- **Establish common objectives:** Clearly define the shared objectives and desired outcomes of the collaborative effort. This will guide the planning process and ensure that the events complement each other effectively.
- **Coordinate logistics:** Coordinate logistics and timelines with the collaborating event organizers. Agree on key aspects such as dates, locations, agenda, and resource allocation to ensure a seamless and coordinated approach.
- **Promote cross-event engagement:** Encourage cross-promotion of both events to leverage each other's networks and increase attendance. Utilize various communication channels to spread the word about the collaborative effort.
- **Foster networking opportunities:** Identify events that facilitate networking and interaction between participants.
- **Ensuring free access:** while many of the events we organize in collaboration, which include a matchmaking component, often require payment, our goal is to offer these events free of charge. As organizers, we are mindful of this aspect and will endeavor to negotiate the best possible arrangements with our partners. Organizers can explore the use of promotional codes to provide complimentary access for our attendees.

- **Brand identity and communication material: ensuring consistency across events.**

Creating a brand identity and ensuring consistency in communication material across the twenty-two events is of paramount importance. It fosters ShapingBio brand recognition and builds trust among participants and stakeholders. A cohesive brand identity unifies messaging, enhances the event's perceived value, and sets it apart from others. Being consistent with the brand identity will elevate the ShapingBio's profile across Europe, leading to widespread recognition and enhanced public value among innovators, policy makers investors, researchers, companies and journalist that operate in the bioeconomy landscape.

How can we build our brand identity thought our events?

To ensure a consistent brand identity, it is important that **our logo** is prominently featured in all event communications, ranging from invitations to post-event satisfaction surveys. Our logo serves as a visual representation of ShapingBio's brand and values, and its consistent use reinforces our project's identity and recognition among attendees and stakeholders.

In addition, we will need a **ShapingBio brochure**, either virtual or physical, to accompany the events. **Roll-ups** will also be present at each of the events we organize or co-organize. Furthermore, we'll require audiovisual material, such as **presentations or digital banners**.

- **Methodology for Organizing and Coordinating 22 Events across Europe**

The following table presents a step-by-step guide, along with templates (if needed) and assigned responsibilities/validations, to ensure a seamless and successful execution of each event.

- **PREPARE THE EVENT**

STEP	TASK	RESPONSIBLE	INPUT	VALIDATION	TEMPLATE	Deadline
1	Define and choose objectives and themes. Report it to WP3.	Organizer partner	WP1 and WP2 List of topics	WP3	N/A	Latest three months before the event
2	Assess if your event aligns with a third-party event	Organizer partner	ShapingBio-events	Consortium in the meetings	N/A	N/A
3	Identify and define the resources	Organizer partner	WP3 + help of consortium member in the country or the MR leader	WP3	N/A	N/A
4	Prepare the concept form of the Event and sent it to WP3.	Organizer partner	N/A	WP3	WP3 Concept form	Very latest two months before the event
5	Send the event review to WP5 leader to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote the event on SoME 	Organizer partner	N/A	WP5	WP3 Concept form	Very latest two months before the event

STEP	TASK	RESPONSIBLE	INPUT	VALIDATION	TEMPLATE	Deadline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put the event on SB website Create a registration link 					
6	Contact the moderator and the speaker	Organizer partner		N/A	Invitations Email template	Very latest six weeks before the event
7	Identify the participants, send invitations and assistance confirmation	Organizer partner	Help of consortium member in the country or the MR leader. Also, you can contact Fran/APRE for access to the latest get involved list	N/A	Invitations Email template	Very latest six weeks before the event

• BEFORE THE EVENT

STEP	TASK	RESPONSIBLE	INPUT	VALIDATION	TEMPLATE
1	For online meetings: Validate the platform in where the event will be developed: Zoom, Teams or equivalent	Organizer partner	Organizer partner + WP5	WP3	N/A
2	For presential meetings: Ensure that ShapingBio materials are in the right place	Organizer partner	Organizer partner + WP5 (Laila)	WP3	N/A

• DURING THE EVENT

STEP	TASK	RESPONSIBLE	INPUT	VALIDATION	TEMPLATE
1	Ensure active participation, co-creation, and interaction among the main stakeholders	Organizer partner	Organizer partner	WP3	N/A

STEP	TASK	RESPONSIBLE	INPUT	VALIDATION	TEMPLATE
2	Gather all possible evidence as you can. (e.g.: List of participants, agenda with ShapingBio Logo, Pictures of the event, recording of and screenshots of the online meeting,)	Organizer partner	Organizer partner	WP3 / WP5	N/A
3	Ask attendees to fill out the satisfaction survey	Organizer partner	Questions about the event	WP3	WP3_Survey

- AFTER THE EVENT**

STEP	TASK	RESPONSIBLE	INPUT	VALIDATION	TEMPLATE	DEADLINE
1	Prepare the event report	Organizer partner	Evidence of the event + Participation and satisfaction survey answers	WP3	WP3_Event Report	Two weeks after the event

- Internal documents coordination**
 - The topic and the objectives of the event:
 - The dates and topics are tentative, but we need to try to update them with the final ones when available to ensure that all events happen on time.
 - [List of topics](#): The topics are just a suggestion, we need to complete with WP1 and WP2 leader.
- Promotion**: Each event must be **promoted and disseminated according to our communication plan**. The impact report will include all the communication actions taken to promote the event. Inform Laila (lda@foodbiocluster.dk) and **WP5**, when you know of your event, they will schedule time for it on social media and create it on the event section on website.

8.2 Appendix 2: T3.2 Event Concept Form

1. **TOPIC:** Clear topic to stimulate multi-actor dialogue (connection to WP1 and WP2)
2. **REGIONAL LEVEL:** Indicate if regional, national, Macro-Regional or European.
☐ Regional ☐ National ☐ Macro-Regional ☐ European
3. **TYPE:** In person or on-line
☐ In person ☐ On-line ☐ Hybrid
4. **THIRD EVENT:** In case the event will be organized in relation to a third event
5. **EVENT DATE:**

Tentative date:	Duration:	Place of the event
6. **EVENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:** What is expected to be obtained from the celebration of the event.
7. **EVENT DESCRIPTION:** Provide a brief description of the event and its purpose.
8. **EVENT ORGANIZERS:** List the organizations or individuals responsible for organizing the event.
9. **TARGET AUDIENCE:** Specify the intended audience for the event. For example: "Researchers, students, investors, policy makers, start-ups who can be interested in bioeconomy sector".
10. **SPEAKERS AND PARTICIPANTS:** List the confirmed or potential speakers and participants.
11. **NETWORKING:** In case apply, define the networking/matchmaking dimension (tools, spaces...)
12. **PROMOTION AND MARKETING:** Describe the strategies and channels to promote and market the event. This information will be used by the WP5 for the disseminations and promotion activities.
13. **CONSORTIUM PARTNERS PARTICIPATION:** Indicate how the consortium partner can be involved in the event and if you need something from them.
14. **RESOURCE:** The resource that you will need.
15. **REGISTRATION PROCESS:** Explain how attendees can register for the event
16. **AGENDA:** Provide a tentative agenda for the event.
17. **ADDITIONAL RELEVANT INFORMATION**

Note: This document should be communicated to WP3 leader and then with the WP5 leader

8.3 Appendix 3: T3.2 Event Report Form

OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this document is to effectively capture and document the outcomes of the organized event, as well as recommendations for future events. These recommendations will serve as input for the development of the final best practices guide.

1. **EVENT TITLE:**

2. **PARTICIPATION:**

Number of people invited	Number of participants at the event	Number of matchmaking sessions

3. **OBJECTIVE:** Event goal

4. **STAKEHOLDERS:** type of stakeholders involved and targeted audience.

5. **OUTCOMES:** What outcomes were obtained from the celebration of the event.

6. **KPI:** Measure the final KPI.

KPI	Description	Event result
Attendance:	This KPI measures the number of people and stakeholder involved who attended the event. It is a good indicator of the level of interest in the event and can help measure the success of the event.	
Engagement:	This KPI measures the level of engagement of attendees during the event. It includes metrics such as the number of questions asked, comments made, and social media posts shared during the event.	
Number of one-to-one meetings:	This KPI can help us understand if the event is successfully connecting the stakeholders of the bioeconomy ecosystem in Europe. Note: this KPI only apply for events that include partnering.	
Impact media:	This KPIs provides insight into the audience reached by the event can be used to demonstrate the value of an event: number of impressions on social media and number of press impressions	

7. **RECOMMENDATIONS: RELEVANT INFORMATION**

Note: This document should be shared on the event folder under WP3.

8.4 Appendix 4: T3.2 Satisfaction Survey Report Form

Note: The WP3 leader will provide the link to the survey, these template will contain the questions and the result of the satisfaction survey.

Survey link:

1. **Overall, how would you rate the event?**

Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Poor

2. **What did you like about the event?**

3. **What did you not like about the event?**

4. **Was the event helpful for your bioeconomy-related work?**

Extremely helpful	Very helpful	Moderately helpful	Slightly helpful	Not helpful at all

5. **Was the event well organized?**

Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Poor

6. **How would you rate the networking/matchmaking part of the event?**

Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Poor

7. **How would you rate the venue?**

Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Poor

8. **Did the event meet your expectations? Why?**

Exceeded my expectations	Met my expectations	Partly met/partly did not meet my expectations	Did not meet my expectations	I did not have expectations

9. **How likely are you to attend another event hosted by us?**

Extremely likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Extremely unlikely

10. **What do you suggest how we can improve future events?**

11. **Would you recommend this type of event to others?**

12. **Would you like to receive information about future events from us?**

Yes	No

13. **Is there anything you want to comment on that have not been asked yet in this form?**

Note: This document should be shared on the event folder under WP3.

8.5 Appendix 5: T3.2 Participants' feedback survey

ShapingBio ShapingBio - Investment and financing in bioeconomy in Spain
The bioeconomy of the future

AssBio Investor Day – 15th may 2024 (Spain)

ShapingBio
The bioeconomy of the future

Shaping the future bioeconomy across sectoral, governmental and geographical levels

1. Overall, how satisfied were you with the service?

☐ Excellent
☐ Good
☐ Average
☐ Not enough
☐ Poor

2. What did you like about the service?

3. What did you not like about the service?

4. What did you most benefit from your bioeconomy-related work?

☐ Business model
☐ New market
☐ Innovation market
☐ Market place
☐ New business

5. Was the event well organized?

☐ Excellent
☐ Good
☐ Average
☐ Not enough
☐ Poor

6. How would you rate the networking/participating part of the event?

☐ Excellent
☐ Good
☐ Average
☐ Not enough
☐ Poor

7. How would you rate the service?

☐ Excellent
☐ Good
☐ Average
☐ Not enough
☐ Poor

8. Did the service meet your expectations?

☐ Exceeded my expectations
☐ Met my expectations
☐ Pretty much met my expectations
☐ Did not meet my expectations
☐ Exceeded my expectations

9. How likely are you to attend another event hosted by us?

☐ Very likely
☐ Likely
☐ Neutral
☐ Unlikely
☐ Not sure

10. What do you suggest how we can improve future workshops?

11. Would you recommend this type of workshop to others?

☐ Yes
☐ No

12. Would you like to receive information about future events/workshops from ShapingBio?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If you would you provide your email?

13. Did you have any other comments?

0 de 13 respuestas

8.6 Appendix 6: T3.3 Interview Form

Please fill in the interview form for each interview conducted and upload to Teams under T3.3.

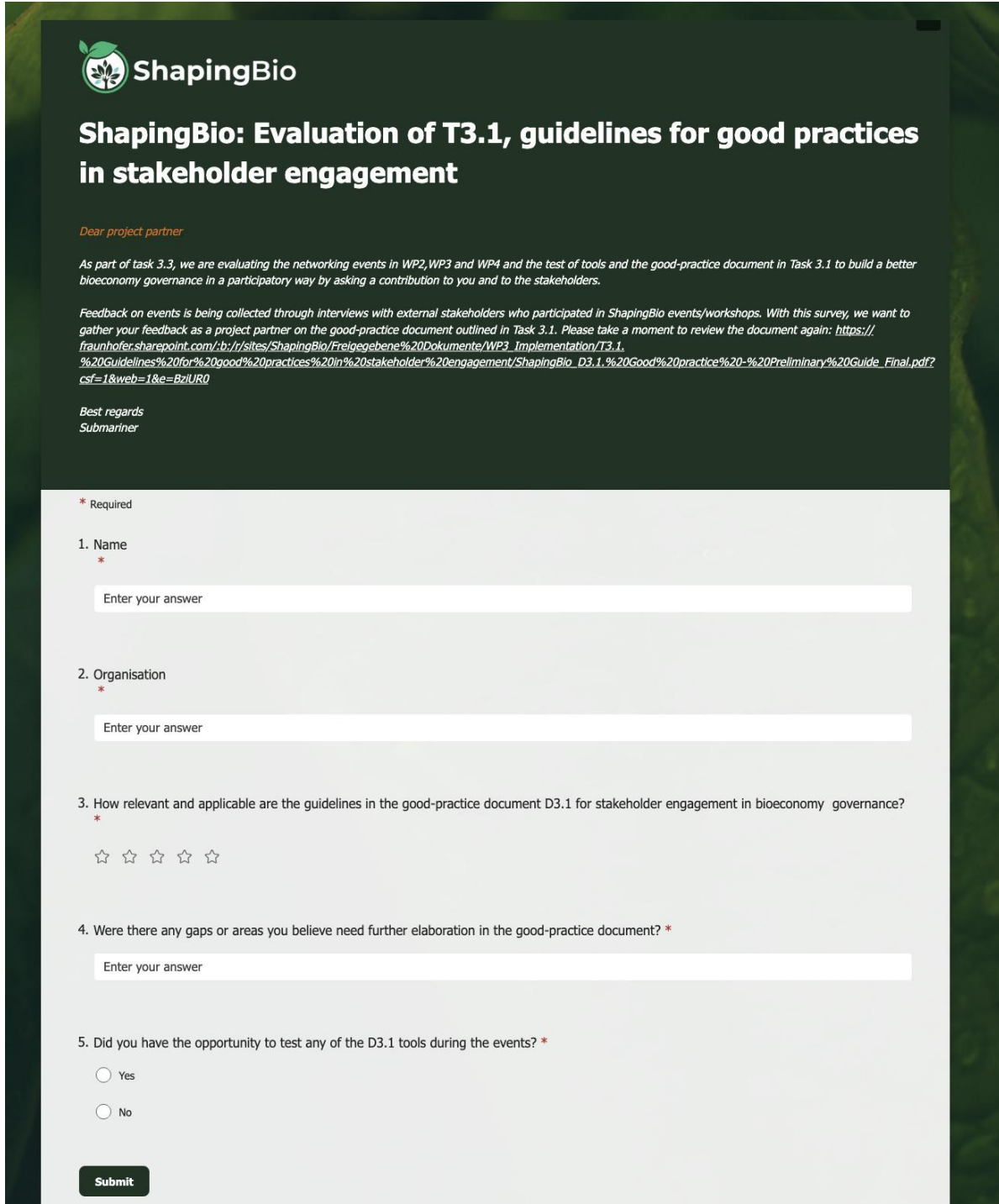
Name of the interviewee	
Name of the organisation	
Which bioeconomy sector	
Date	
Permission to record	
Sending the interview notes	
Name of the interviewing partner	

Evaluation of Stakeholders Engagement: Interview Questionnaire

Networking Events / WP2 workshops

- How would you rate your overall experience participating in the event? What were the highlights?
- Were your expectations met regarding the structure and content of the event?
- Did you find that your input was used in the co-development output?
- How effective was the networking component of the event in connecting you with relevant stakeholders or experts?
- Were there any particularly valuable collaborations or connections that emerged from the networking sessions? Could you give an example?
- Did the events offer sufficient opportunities to form meaningful connections with other stakeholders? If not, what could improve it?
- Were the formats (workshops, in-person events, etc.) appropriate for the content provided? Which format worked best for you?
- How likely are you to use the knowledge gained from these events in your daily work?

8.7 Appendix 7: Survey on Good Practice Document



ShapingBio

ShapingBio: Evaluation of T3.1, guidelines for good practices in stakeholder engagement

Dear project partner

As part of task 3.3, we are evaluating the networking events in WP2, WP3 and WP4 and the test of tools and the good-practice document in Task 3.1 to build a better bioeconomy governance in a participatory way by asking a contribution to you and to the stakeholders.

Feedback on events is being collected through interviews with external stakeholders who participated in ShapingBio events/workshops. With this survey, we want to gather your feedback as a project partner on the good-practice document outlined in Task 3.1. Please take a moment to review the document again: https://fraunhofer.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/ShapingBio/Freigegebene%20Dokumente/WP3_Implementation/T3.1.%20Guidelines%20for%20good%20practices%20in%20stakeholder%20engagement/ShapingBio_D3.1.%20Good%20practice%20-%20Preliminary%20Guide_Final.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=BzIUR0

Best regards
Submariner

* Required

1. Name *

Enter your answer

2. Organisation *

Enter your answer

3. How relevant and applicable are the guidelines in the good-practice document D3.1 for stakeholder engagement in bioeconomy governance? *

☆☆☆☆

4. Were there any gaps or areas you believe need further elaboration in the good-practice document? *

Enter your answer

5. Did you have the opportunity to test any of the D3.1 tools during the events? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Submit

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