



DesAlps project

DesAlps is a new European project working on supporting the use of Design Thinking (DT) for innovation by testing DT methods for SMEs to encourage innovation and supporting its integration into support policies in the Alpine Space ecosystems.

It aims at spreading a new kind of innovation approach: focused on improving knowledge management, customers' relationship, strategic networking, better collaboration and cross-fertilization actions.

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What can we learn from designers or why is design thinking so important?

Design thinking transfers the processes, methods, and mental settings of designers to problems in a design-alien context. This is exactly where we can learn from designers: How do designers deal with the uncertainty which arises when the path is not clear? How do they manage to bundle the excess of information in order to focus on the relevant? How do they know if they are on the right path?

In order to understand complex facts, designers look at these from different angles.

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Who are innovative people in SMEs, and what do they need for Design Thinking?

Interviews with more than 50 people in more than five countries in the EU were conducted. What do innovation actors need, and what are the required competences needed for supporters and DesignThinking facilitators to assist SMEs in the Alpine Space innovation environment?



The results show that SMEs lack:

- customer-oriented innovation
- innovation-friendly settings
- prototyping
- tool for measuring innovation
- true open-innovation
- co-creation

= eminent need for DT training and services.

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