Consultancy and Matching of Interests and Expertise

Working Group Charter

Introduction

The RESTART Foundation Working Group on Consultancy and Matching of Interests and Expertise brings together the needs of businesses and public institutions and the capabilities of the RESTART community. It provides a framework for identifying relevant expertise and translating shared interests into consultancy, research and innovation collaborations.

Nicola Blefari Melazzi, University of Rome Tor Vergata and President of the RESTART Foundation, chairs the Working Group. The Group comprised 18 members as of 21 October 2026.

Shared contacts and workspace

Mailing list: restart.wg.matchmaking@fondazione-restart.it

Repository: RESTART Working Group shared workspace

Initial priorities

- Contribute to the RESTART Annual Event on 17–18 February 2027.

1. Scope and Areas of Work

The Working Group connects the R&D and innovation needs of businesses and public institutions with the scientific, technological and professional expertise of the RESTART community. Its scope covers the pathway from identifying a need to defining a collaboration and assessing its results, including consultancy, feasibility studies, experiments, pilot projects and technology transfer.

Mapping capabilities and identifying demand

The Group maps expertise, exploitable research results, laboratories, experimental infrastructure and willingness to collaborate. It collects interests and needs through surveys, interviews and targeted meetings. Together with the thematic Working Groups, it assesses technology trends and the research landscape to identify results and facilities that can address emerging industrial needs.

Qualifying and matching opportunities

For each opportunity, the Group helps clarify the problem, objectives, constraints, timescales, required technology readiness and success criteria, taking market and regulatory constraints into account where relevant. It matches complementary capabilities using transparent criteria, including technical relevance, availability and potential conflicts of interest.

Activities may include reverse-matchmaking sessions in which businesses and public institutions present practical challenges and the community proposes potential solutions.

2. Mandate, Purpose and Objectives

The Group provides a recognisable, qualified access point to the capabilities of the RESTART network, including combinations of expertise that individual organisations could not offer alone. Its objectives are to:

- Make expertise easier to discover and access and reduce the time from a stated need to a qualified collaboration proposal.
- Support SMEs and organisations with limited access to research, promote academia–industry collaboration and encourage reuse of RESTART results, tools and infrastructure.
- Help partners define activities, responsibilities, expected results and resources, including multidisciplinary teams assembled around a specific need.
- Pilot consultancy and technology-transfer services, including links to active projects, exchange knowledge and assess lessons learned.
- Recommend a sustainable operating model that distinguishes community engagement and initial guidance from professional services governed by specific agreements.

3. Expected Outputs, Deliverables and Milestones

Expected outputs

- A common description model for expertise, infrastructure and needs, with named owners and update arrangements, and an initial directory with appropriate access levels.
- A procedure for handling requests, selecting expertise and supporting collaborations, alongside an initial service catalogue covering technology assessments, feasibility studies, laboratory access, independent analysis and experimental design.
- Pilot collaborations and a year-end report on results, issues and recommendations for a sustainable service.
- A proposed contribution to the RESTART Annual Event: a matchmaking session presenting challenges, available capabilities and non-confidential pilot outcomes.

Initial milestones

The slides set out the following relative milestones. The starting date for Month 1 is to be confirmed when the charter is approved.

Timing	Milestone
End of October 2026	Define the Working Group charter.
17–18 February 2027	Contribute to the RESTART Annual Event.
Month 3	Complete the information model, initial mapping and request-handling procedure.
Month 6	Make the initial directory usable, prepare the service catalogue and select pilot cases.
Month 9	Launch at least three pilots, subject to partner commitment and available resources.
Month 12	Evaluate pilots, propose a sustainable service model and review the charter.

Indicators and assessment

The Group tracks directory updates, qualified requests, response times, collaborations launched and participant satisfaction. The annual assessment uses these indicators and lessons learned to recommend service improvements and define the next implementation roadmap.

4. Membership, Governance and Participation

Membership and participation

Membership is proposed to include interested RESTART members contributing relevant expertise, needs or operational capacity. The Group seeks balanced academic and industrial participation, including SMEs. External stakeholders, end users and specialist experts may be invited for defined activities, subject to appropriate information-sharing arrangements.

Leadership and coordination

The Chair is Nicola Blefari Melazzi (RESTART). Additional Co-Chairs are to be identified. The proposed coordination team comprises the Chair/Co-Chairs, a coordination contact and deliverable owners. Appointments, responsibilities and available effort are to be confirmed when approving the charter.

Contributions and decisions

Members use the established mailing list and shared workspace to contribute, review drafts and document decisions. The Group agrees a regular meeting schedule. The Chair/Co-Chairs assess substantive consensus and record significant objections. Each deliverable is assigned an owner and a deadline.

Authority and commitments

Operational, contractual and financial commitments remain with the authorised decision-makers of the Foundation and participating organisations. Professional services are governed by specific agreements; participation in the Working Group does not itself establish such commitments.

5. Coordination and Working Method

Knowledge sharing and deliverable review

The Group works through its established mailing list and shared workspace, using versioned drafts, an agreed meeting frequency and a final review period for deliverables. Meeting frequency and review arrangements are to be agreed by the Group.

Progress monitoring and reporting

A shared action and milestone tracker records owners, deadlines and dependencies. Regular meetings review progress, results and constraints. Periodic progress summaries to RESTART coordination are proposed, together with an annual assessment of outputs, indicators, lessons learned and recommendations. The reporting cadence is to be agreed.

Coordination across RESTART

- Involve thematic Working Groups in the technical assessment of needs and potential solutions.
- Coordinate with the Opportunity Scouting group when a collaboration requires competitive funding.
- Coordinate with the Standardisation group when results may contribute to standards.

Charter review

After 12 months, the Group reviews results, remaining needs and available resources, and proposes either completion of the mandate or a revised charter. The review also informs the next implementation roadmap.

Items to confirm at approval

- Additional Co-Chairs, coordination contact, deliverable owners, responsibilities and available effort.
- Starting date for the relative milestone schedule, meeting frequency, deliverable review periods and reporting cadence.
- Pilot partner commitments and the resources available for implementation.