

**Nantes Innovation Forum**  
**Nantes Innovation Lab - Local Innovative Ecosystems in Crisis**  
**Cities overview**

### 1. City of Espoo - Support for local companies and R&D houses

Espoo provides support for local companies and R&D houses to overcome the COVID-19 crisis. The aid put forward differ among the type of company:

- the City of Espoo offers a onetime operating support to sole entrepreneurs (more than 10.000 in Espoo);
  - the Ely Center provides funding for operational costs to small companies experiencing temporary market and production disturbance (with 1-5 employees);
  - Business Finland offers funding for business development to companies (co-creation projects between research organizations) with 6-250 employees, SMEs and mid-cap companies.
  - Espoo's start-up community and hub, A Grid together with Maria 01 jointly organised a Startup Webinar for COVID-19 info.
- Further, in order to facilitate new investment, innovative business opportunities and co-creation, the City of Espoo owning Espoo Marketing organises a corporate startup event - a series of online pitching and matching events for big international corporations and startups. The event was organised together with Aalto University Startup Center and the biggest research house in Nordics -VTT's research incubator.

These initiatives have resulted into faster resilience, with a clear focus on innovation and business development.

### 2. City of Groningen - Local Corona Innovation Fund

The City of Groningen has launched a small fund to finance entrepreneurial COVID-19 related initiatives in order to overcome the crisis with creative solutions. The Corona Innovation Fund have been put in place with some simple criteria (multi-partner SME support, fast implementation, retention of employment) and a fast decision-making procedure (approval within one week). The fund has a size of € 250.000 and the main focus is on cooperation among entrepreneurs which can have a spillover effect and retain employment.

This has been the case of Warenhuis Groningen, a platform making the physical product lines of local shops available online, with the City of Groningen which pays for the climate-neutral bike used for the products' delivery.

### 3. Greater London Authority - London's data-centric

The London's data-centric response to COVID-19 lockdown aims to bring together multiple large-scale and heterogeneous datasets capturing mobility, transportation and traffic activity over the city of London to better understand "busyness" and enable targeted interventions and effective policy-making. The team from the Alan Turing Institute's Data Centric Engineering programme, sponsored by the Lloyd's Register Foundation, is working together with researchers from the University of Warwick, UCL and University of Cambridge to develop models, infrastructure and machine learning algorithms for understanding how and when busyness is changing across the capital in the wider context of COVID-19.

### 4. City of Hamburg - Emergency Lab and Professionalisation of Crowdfunding Campaigns

In the course of the immediate measures taken by the Federal Government, Hamburg as a Federal State had a complimentary protective shield for all corona-damaged companies and institutions, including cultural and creative industries - and with a special focus on solo independents and freelancers. But right from the start of pandemic action, the Ministry of Culture and Media and the Hamburg Kreativ Gesellschaft brought into action, not just a quick relief but a long-term perspective for transformation and collaboration:

1. [Emergency Lab](#) thanks to which small and medium-sized enterprises in crisis would develop individual immediate solutions together with selected experts from the cultural and creative industries, often specifically concerning the need for quick digitalization of their business.
2. [Professionalisation of Crowdfunding Campaigns](#) launched for all sectors which could apply for financial support of up to 5,000 € to prepare and implement their crowdfunding campaign. The grants may be used for creative business services such as photos, texts, videos, music, or graphic design commissioned by Hamburg's creative industries. A total of 250,000 € from the Culture Aid Package of Hamburg's Corona support umbrella are available for this programme, which is both increasing the chances of success for crowdfunding projects and at the same time provides economic impulses for Hamburg's creative workers.