

European IP Helpdesk Ambassador Scheme

Ambassador Summer Summit 2026

Split

FIELD REPORT

DATES

1-2 July 2026

VENUE

Technology Park Split, Croatia

IAM4RE at the IP Ambassador Summer Summit 2026

Navigating the future of innovation support

The Summer Summit 2026 was a first: the European IP Helpdesk opened its Ambassador gathering to an EU-funded project, IAM4RE.eu, to pilot a new Train-the-Trainer programme on intellectual asset management and standardisation. This report tells how those two days in Split went, in photographs and in the participants' own words.

A Summit with a Difference



Claire Fritz (Eurice / European IP Helpdesk) and Ivana Vuka (RISE / European IP Helpdesk) set the scene on Day 1

Twice a year, the European IP Helpdesk gathers its **IP Ambassadors**, the intellectual property experts embedded in the Enterprise Europe Network, for two days of peer exchange and capacity building. This time there was an addition: the Summit joined forces with **IAM4RE.eu**, and the Ambassadors became the first test group for the project's new **Train-the-Trainer programme**. The 2026 edition ran in a hybrid format on 1-2 July at Technology Park Split (Tehnološki park Split), the innovation hub where IAM4RE partner RISE has its offices.



Claire Fritz and **Ivana Vuka** opened the Summit with something new: instead of the usual overview of KPIs and publications, a live pilot of the training developed within IAM4RE, delivered by the people who created it. Alongside them were standardisation expert **Ivana Mijatović** (University of Belgrade) and **Claudia D'Onofrio** (Trust-IT Services), who presented the project's learning ecosystem on Day 2.



THE EUROPEAN IP HELPDESK AT A GLANCE

FREE-OF-CHARGE IP SUPPORT

First-line guidance on IP and intellectual asset management for EU-funded R&I projects, SMEs and research organisations

EU-WIDE CAPACITY BUILDING

Training, publications and practical tools supporting IP management, knowledge valorisation and innovation

A EUROPEAN MULTIPLIER NETWORK

IP Ambassadors embedded in the Enterprise Europe Network, bringing expertise closer to regional innovation ecosystems

"Learn today, apply tomorrow, and multiply afterwards."

CLAIRE FRITZ · EURICE / EUROPEAN IP HELPDESK

What is IAM4RE?

IAM4RE (Intellectual Asset Management for Research and Entrepreneurship) is an EU-funded project launched in April 2025 to help public research organisations and academic institutions maximise the value of their intellectual assets. Its starting point is a shift under way in European policy: from narrow IP protection towards broader intellectual asset valorisation, hand in hand with standardisation.

The project builds directly on two pieces of European Commission guidance: the **Code of Practice on the management of intellectual assets for knowledge valorisation** and the **Code of Practice on standardisation in the European Research Area**. The guidance exists; awareness of it is another matter.

When Claire asked a room of IP professionals at the opening who already knew the Codes, almost no hands went up. IAM4RE was set up to close that gap between awareness and practice through its learning ecosystem (summarised in the "IAM4RE at a glance" box).

IAM4RE AT A GLANCE

One learning ecosystem, four services (full story on page 10):

A MOOC of eight self-paced modules, open to all at learning.iam4re.eu

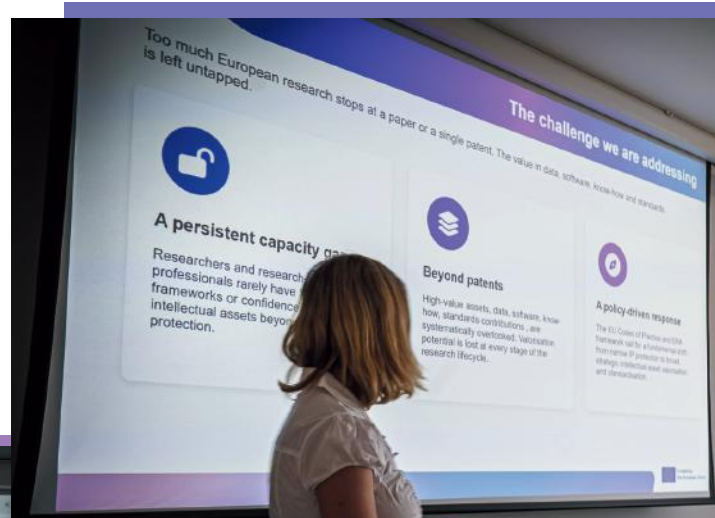
A Training Suite of twelve expert-led modules, already counting 200+ registered users

A Train-the-Trainer programme, launched live at this Summit

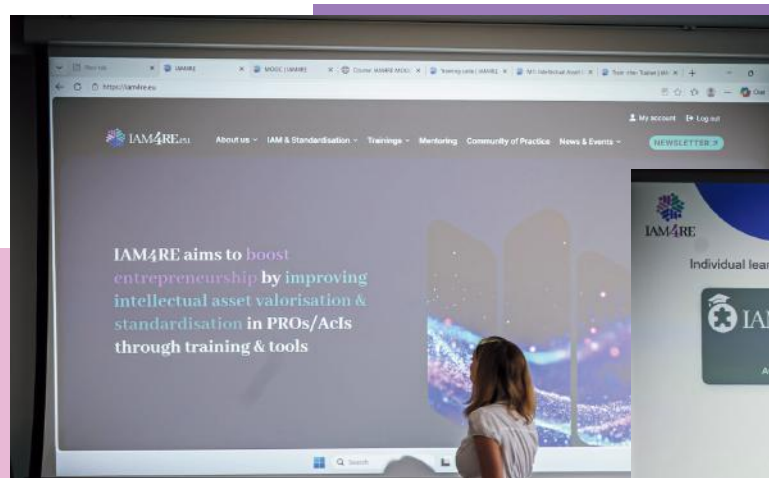
The Improved Services for TTOs, with pilots starting at 15 universities across Europe

*These three screens represent in the project's own words: **the challenge, the mission, and one connected journey.***

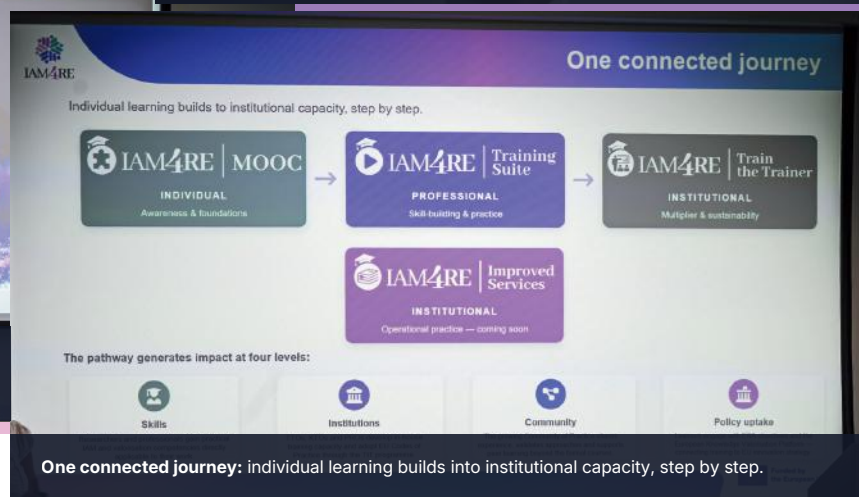
More about the project and all four services at iam4re.eu



The challenge: too much European research stops at a paper or a single patent.



The mission: boosting entrepreneurship by improving intellectual asset valorisation and standardisation through training and tools.



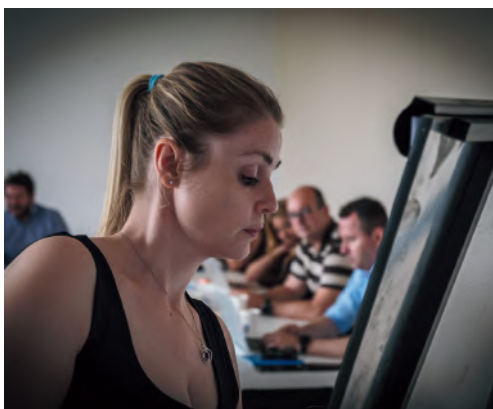
One connected journey: individual learning builds into institutional capacity, step by step.

From IP Output Logic to Intellectual Asset Thinking

The first session set the terms for the two days: what counts as an intellectual asset, and what it means to manage one consciously. A live word cloud collected the first reflexes (patents, trademarks, trade secrets, know-how, software, data), until the discussion settled on a single line: **any intellectual outcome that has value and is actively managed.**

The session's core message was a mindset shift. In what Claire calls the "IP output logic", whatever gets created is protected after the fact. **Intellectual asset thinking** moves the decisions earlier and makes them deliberate: what is an asset, whether it is worth protecting, and how it fits the institution's strategy. That means real dilemmas. Does value come from exclusivity or from adoption and network effects? Patent or standardise? Keep as a trade secret or publish?

The session closed the way it had opened, with a live word cloud, this time on the one word each Ambassador would take home. The answers: portfolio, lifecycle, governance, valorisation, impact and more...



47.9%

OF EU GDP FROM IP-INTENSIVE ACTIVITY

30.6%

OF ALL EU JOBS

78.3%

OF EU EXPORTS

+40.9%

WAGE PREMIUM IN IP-INTENSIVE SECTORS

"Intellectual asset management is conscious decision management: you have to be aware of the decisions you are taking, and of those you are not taking."

CLAIRE FRITZ · EURICE / EUROPEAN IP HELPDESK

AMBASSADORS ON AI & IP

Ambassadors compared notes on how AI already runs through their daily IP work: AI-assisted patent drafting, custom agents for due-diligence checks, and one colleague's AI matchmaking system, which he calls his "digital twin". Even the questions reaching the helpline are changing in the age of AI.

Why Would Someone Want You Not to Know About Standards?

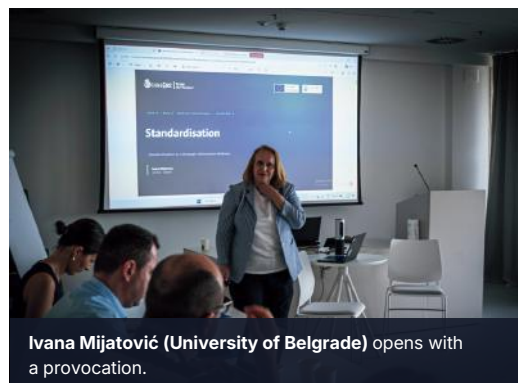
Ivana Mijatović of the University of Belgrade, who is also part of the team behind the Horizon Standardisation Booster (HSbooster.eu), opened her session with a provocation: why would someone prefer that researchers were not aware of standards and standardisation at all?

She answered with three examples. The A4 sheet of paper was standardised in 1922 and is identical worldwide. Printer cartridges never got there.

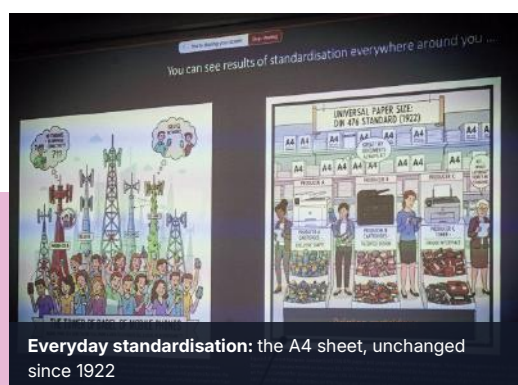
The market for graphene, a Nobel-winning material, filled with fakes until an ISO standard defined what graphene actually is. And EASI-STRESS, a Horizon 2020 project, turned research on residual stress measurement into a CEN Technical Specification (CEN/TS 18094:2024) that is now available to industry.

Standards sit behind roughly 80% of global trade, and standardisation turns research into usable specifications. The value comes from collective adoption rather than exclusive exploitation. Patents and standards can also be combined: Standard Essential Patents stay in force and are licensed on FRAND terms. A full standard takes three to six years to develop. The faster route is a **CEN-CENELEC Workshop Agreement**: a publicly available pre-standard in six months to a year.

Ivana closed with homework: contact your **National Standards Body** and test your project's potential with the **HSbooster.eu Standards Orientation Tool**. *"Please be aware"* she signed off, *"and start your journey."*



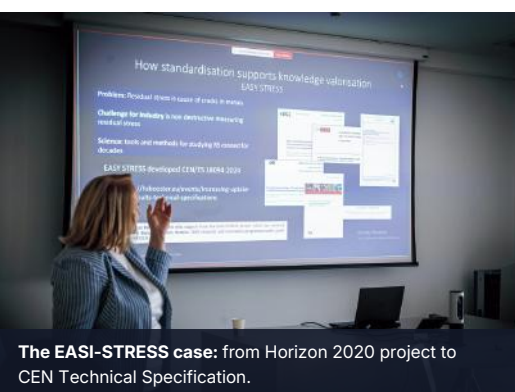
Ivana Mijatović (University of Belgrade) opens with a provocation.



Everyday standardisation: the A4 sheet, unchanged since 1922

>80%

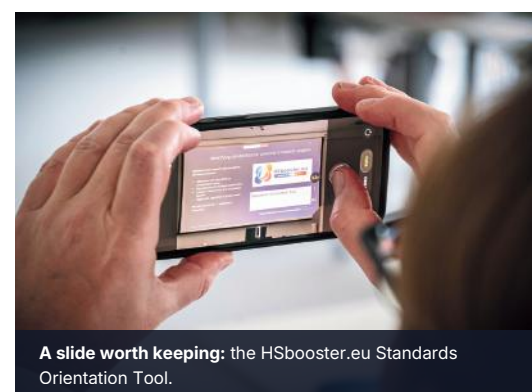
OF WORLD TRADE SITS ON STANDARDS



The EASI-STRESS case: from Horizon 2020 project to CEN Technical Specification.



The graphene case: an ISO standard rebuilt trust in a flooded market.



A slide worth keeping: the HSbooster.eu Standards Orientation Tool.

"Standardisation is a non-exclusive knowledge valorisation tool. It supports diffusion, impact and coordination, and it is an important bridge between research, industry and policy in Europe."

IVANA MIJATOVIĆ · UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE

Most Startups Don't Fail Because of the Technology



Ivana Vuka (RISE / European IP Helpdesk) opens with an uncomfortable truth: "no market need" tops the rankings of startup failure reasons.

Closing Day 1, Ivana Vuka of RISE moved the conversation from protecting knowledge to placing it on the market, and opened with a Mentimeter question for the room: why do most startups fail?

The session dismantled three common assumptions. *"If people need it, they will use it."* *"Our customer is obvious"*, when users and buyers are often different actors, especially in sectors like healthcare. *"Our biggest competitor is another technology"*, when the true competitor is more often the existing workflow.

Three anonymised cases from real advisory work followed. A deep-tech AI design startup shifted towards OEM integration and workflow compatibility. An EU agri-food project developed smart irrigation for smallholder farmers. Its market analysis opened an impact-licensing pathway and even a route for **reverse innovation**: knowledge created in Africa coming back to Europe as commercial value. And a 3D-printed solution for chronic wound healing got its decisive input not from the lab but from nurses in a focus group, prompting a rethink from product to platform.



Case study: smart irrigation for smallholder farmers in Uganda, and the impact-licensing pathway it opened.



Case study: 3D printing for chronic wound healing, where the decisive input came from nurses in a focus group.

"If your market analysis did not change anything about your development, maybe you are missing a piece of the puzzle."

IVANA VUKA · RISE / EUROPEAN IP HELPDESK

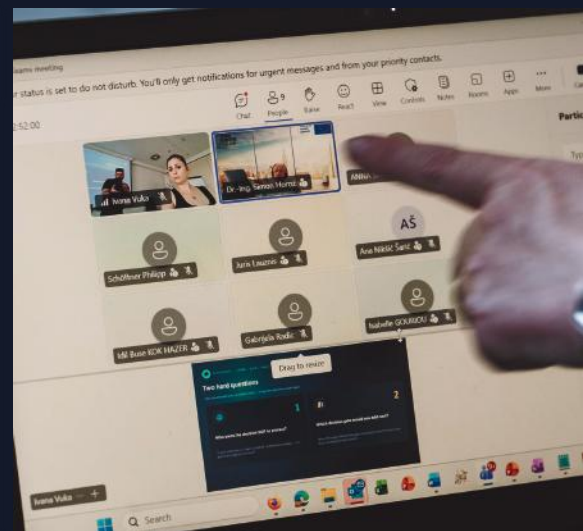
End of Day 1: concepts, standards and markets, ready to be put into play the next morning.

NEXT
DAY 2 · APPLY & MULTIPLY



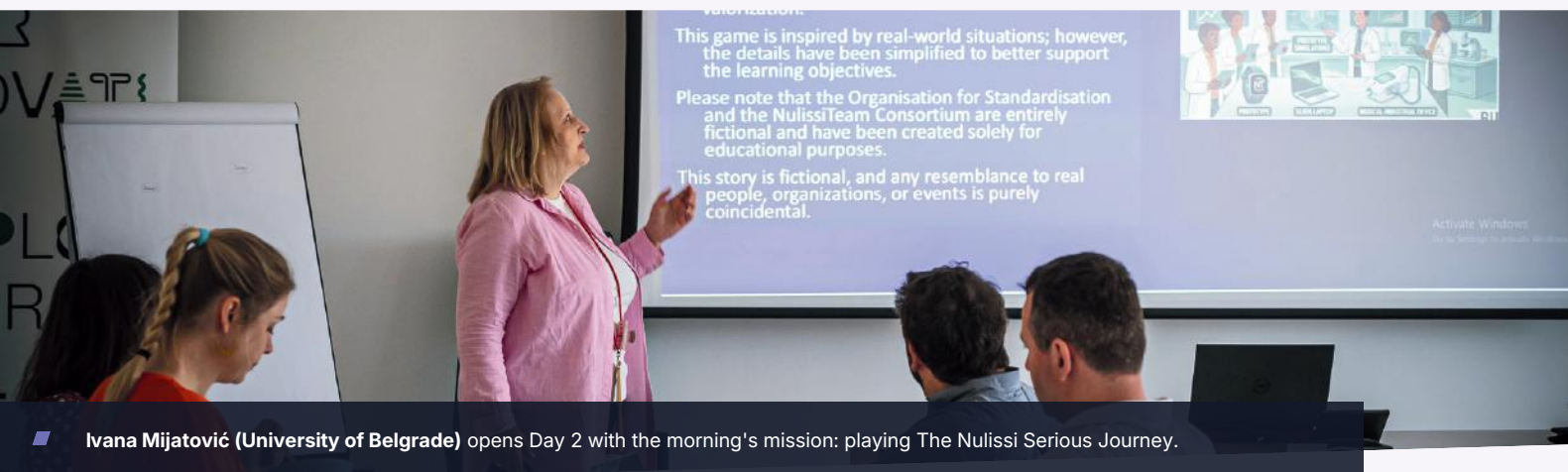
LEARN.

Day 1: foundations,
standards, markets.



The Nulissi Challenge: From Game to Playbook

"Today we have a very serious job: we have to play the game."

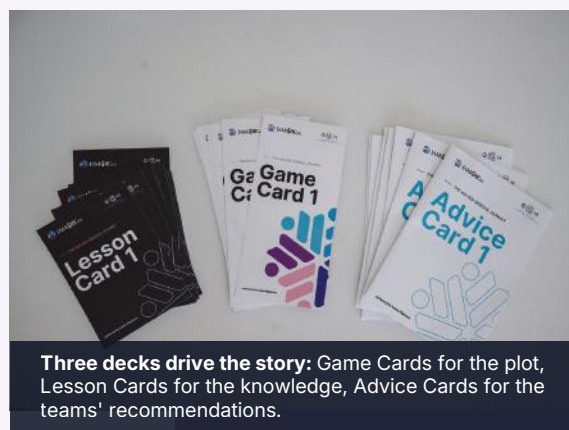


Ivana Mijatović (University of Belgrade) opens Day 2 with the morning's mission: playing The Nulissi Serious Journey.

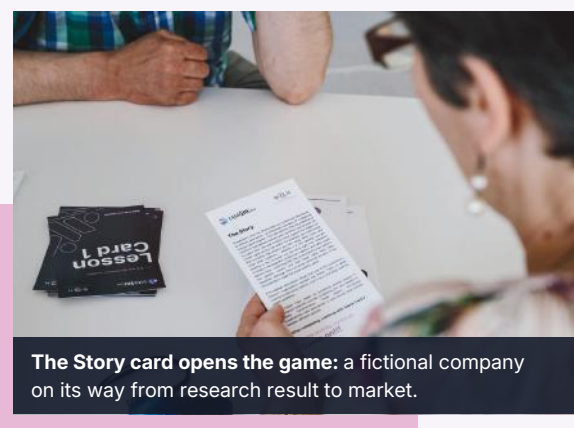
The Nulissi Challenge is built around an original serious game, **The Nulissi Serious Journey**, developed by Ivana Mijatović within IAM4RE. It follows Nulissi, a fictional company inspired by real events, from a breakthrough research result towards the market. A serious game has a purpose beyond entertainment, and laughter is part of the method: *"If you are laughing, that is a very good sign. When you are relaxed, learning is much easier. So please laugh."*

In teams of three or four, participants followed Nulissi's story card by card. Each twist ended in a discussion and a written piece of advice for the company. The decisions ranged from market readiness to intellectual assets and standardisation. Advising beyond your own expertise is "swimming in shallow water", said Ivana, and it is what real valorisation work feels like.

The lessons came in the debrief. "Rule number one", in her words: **never publish before talking to your IP officer, knowledge valorisation officer or TTO**. Another illusion to drop is "gathering the industry", because no one can reach a whole sector. Where competitors do sit down together is standardisation, when it is in their interest. **What to patent and what goes into standards?** On strategy, the core solution usually goes into a patent, and what helps others use it goes into standards. The Nulissi Challenge is a product of IAM4RE and will be **freely available for Ambassadors and trainers to download and reuse** in their own training activities.



Three decks drive the story: Game Cards for the plot, Lesson Cards for the knowledge, Advice Cards for the teams' recommendations.



The Story card opens the game: a fictional company on its way from research result to market.

3–6 years

TO DEVELOP A FULL STANDARD

~€20,000

AND UP TO ONE YEAR FOR A CEN-CENELEC WORKSHOP AGREEMENT

120 calls

IN EU FUNDING PROGRAMMES 2025–26
REFERENCING STANDARDS

"One of the fundamental tasks of standardisation is to prevent reinventing the wheel."

IVANA MIJATOVIĆ · UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE

Game on: the room, in pictures



APPLY & MULTIPLY.

Day 2: play, debrief, take home.



Inside the IAM4RE Learning Ecosystem



Claudia D'Onofrio (Trust-IT Services) closes the Summit with the key takeaways of the IAM4RE learning ecosystem: one ecosystem, four services.

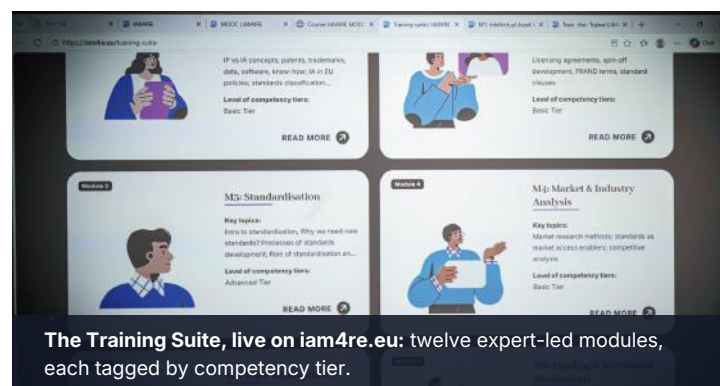
In the Summit's final session, Claudia D'Onofrio placed the two days in the bigger picture. *"Most of the time it's not that researchers don't know how to valorise their results, it's that they don't have the tools and the capacity to do it."*

Her map started from the **MOOC**, the entry point: eight self-paced modules with short videos, quizzes and a final certificate. It went live in April 2026. **The Training Suite** is the capacity builder. Its twelve expert-led modules run from IAM and licensing to standardisation, market analysis, funding and open innovation. It launched at the end of January 2026 and counts more than 200 registered users (by the time of the Summit). Standardisation is not confined to its own module: every module in the suite integrates it, from market analysis to legal and compliance.

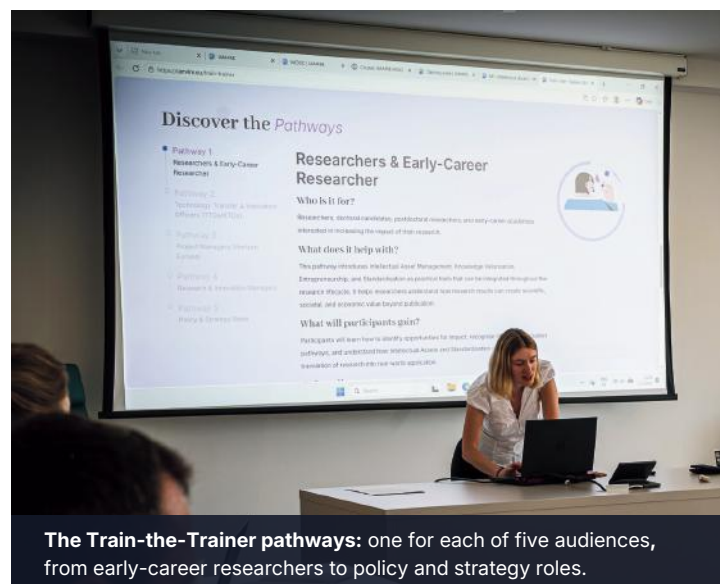
The day's news was the **Train-the-Trainer programme**, which made its official debut at the Summit with the IP Ambassadors as its first users. Built around five audience-specific pathways, with pathway guides, detailed notes for trainers and adaptable case studies, it is the piece designed to multiply the training beyond the project itself. The final layer, **the Improved Services for Technology Transfer Offices**, is being validated with pilot organisations and will be released publicly after the piloting phase.

"Never think of these as standalone platforms. It is a journey: from the MOOC all the way to the institutional level."

CLAUDIA D'ONOFRIO · TRUST-IT SERVICES



The Training Suite, live on iam4re.eu: twelve expert-led modules, each tagged by competency tier.



The Train-the-Trainer pathways: one for each of five audiences, from early-career researchers to policy and strategy roles.

Voices from the Summit



Kostas Vavekis

PRAXI NETWORK (FORTH)
EUROPEAN PATENT ATTORNEY

For Kostas Vavekis, the Summit's added value lay in the combination: *"I gained a lot of experience in how standardisation can be combined with the protection of intellectual property. This creates unique value for our clients, because it offers them a holistic approach to how their inventions go to the market, and how to best benefit the market and the community."*

The game format, he noted, is what will make it stick: *"Because it is in the form of a game, I will remember the outcome. What I learned is that we need to combine standardisation with IP protection, because this gives the most benefits to researchers and companies."*



Tina Mesarič

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER OFFICE
UNIVERSITY OF MARIBOR

Tina Mesarič left Split with a wider lens on her own institution: *"It was great that the workshop covered not only intellectual property, but also the intellectual assets we have at the university that we take for granted. Standardisation is something that is not spoken about a lot, and something we need to think about including in our work in the future."*

On the Nulissi Challenge: *"It was very interactive, which makes it easier to remember. What I learned is how important it is to think about standardisation very early on, and that it involves many different stakeholders. In real life it would be a much longer process than in the game, but it's a great method to bring into our technology transfer work."*

AND WOULD YOU USE THE IAM4RE PLATFORM?

The last question of both interviews. **Kostas:** *"It's definitely a very useful tool for everybody in this community. We have to use it to get better and faster results."* **Tina:** *"It's a great project, and it will benefit not only students but also technology transfer. It's well worth being part of this platform."*

AI & IP, FRIENDS OR FOES?

Both interviewees got the same quick-fire question. **Tina:** *"Friends, of course. AI is here to stay, so we have to learn to use it, but in a correct manner, and with caution."* **Kostas:** *"AI can promote IP and it can destroy it. It won't create new patents for us, but it can minimise the time we spend on bureaucratic work."*

Now Comes the Multiplying



For IAM4RE, Split was what a pilot should be: a real test with a real audience and feedback on everything, from the three Training Suite modules presented on Day 1 to the Nulissi Challenge and the newly launched Train-the-Trainer. The Ambassadors went home with the toolkit in hand. Now comes the multiplying.

NEXT STOP

IP Ambassador Winter Summit

December 2026 · Alicante, Spain



STAY CONNECTED

WEBSITE	iam4re.eu
LINKEDIN	IAM4RE.eu
BLUESKY	@iam4re.bsky.social
YOUTUBE	@iam4re_eu
ZENODO	zenodo.org/communities/iam4re-eu
CORDIS	cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101206372

Consortium partners: META Group · Eurice · RISE · Trust-IT Services · ASTP · UBFON (University of Belgrade, Faculty of Organizational Sciences) · Vilnius University · COMMpla

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