

MP01

EU Project Design & Innovation Lab

From Idea to Fundable Project Concept

Trainer Delivery Manual - Revised Edition

5-Day International Training Programme

Monday-Friday | 09:00-13:30 | 30-minute coffee break | 20 guided learning hours

Learning-by-doing | Workshops | International teamwork | Real project development

Positioning statement

A five-day learning-by-doing programme for educators, adult education and VET staff, NGO and civil society professionals, international officers and emerging EU project coordinators. Participants work on a real organisational challenge and progressively transform it into a structured European project concept including needs, target groups, evidence, EU relevance, objectives, partnership, activities, results, impact, resources and next steps.

A clearer course promise

Project design first; programme-specific proposal writing comes later.

The revised course makes an explicit distinction between EU project design and programme-specific proposal writing. In 20 guided learning hours, participants can realistically learn to structure a strong project concept, test its logic, identify the right partnership, build an implementation architecture and prepare it for a later call-specific development process. The course does not claim to make participants experts in the detailed application rules of Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, CERV, Interreg or other programmes.

Five-day outcome

From idea to fundable European project concept. Participants leave with a structured European Project Starter Package that can subsequently be adapted to a suitable funding programme and call.

Revised project-design sequence

Need -> Target group -> Evidence -> EU relevance -> Objectives -> Partnership -> Activities -> Results -> Outcomes -> Impact

MONDAY - DAY 1

From Challenge to Evidence-Based Project Concept

Turn a real organisational need into a preliminary European project concept with evidence, target-group clarity, EU relevance, objectives and first partner logic.

Time	Session	Format	Participant evidence
09:00-09:25	Welcome, diagnostic share and project expectations	Interactive opening	Personal challenge statement
09:25-10:05	Need, target group and evidence	Mini-input + problem lab	Need statement + evidence gap
10:05-10:30	European relevance: first orientation	Guided mapping	Initial EU relevance hypothesis
10:30-11:00	Coffee break	Break	-
11:00-11:35	Priority mapping without decorative alignment	Workshop	European Priority Map
11:35-12:10	From problem to objectives	Input + writing sprint	Main objective + two specific objectives
12:10-12:45	Finding the right partners	Case + partner mapping	Partner competence map
12:45-13:20	Project Concept Lab	Individual/team production	One-page concept v1
13:20-13:30	Rubric self-check and reflection	Debrief	One priority revision

Theoretical essentials

- Fundable idea vs interesting idea: A promising project begins with a real and evidenced need, a defined target group, a realistic change and a reason for European cooperation.
- Target group before activities: The people affected by the problem must be visible before the solution is chosen. Their barriers and context should influence objectives and delivery.
- Evidence before enthusiasm: Use statistics, research, internal data, stakeholder feedback or professional observation to show the problem exists.
- European relevance: Do not add priorities artificially. Explain what becomes better, transferable or more effective because organisations cooperate across countries.

DAILY PRODUCTION GATE - Day 1

Concept v1 + evidence note + partner map. Minimum acceptance: specific problem, defined target group, at least one credible evidence source or evidence gap, European rationale, meaningful objective, partner roles by competence and preliminary activities linked to an expected result.

TUESDAY - DAY 2

From Concept to Project Architecture

Convert the Day 1 concept into a coherent intervention architecture linking objectives, activities, responsibilities, timeline, results, outcomes, impact and risk.

Time	Session	Format	Participant evidence
09:00-09:25	Rubric-based concept review	Peer review	Revised concept notes
09:25-10:05	Project logic and intervention architecture	Mini-input + logic exercise	Project logic chain
10:05-10:30	How to start writing one coherent argument	Guided analysis	Writing preparation checklist
10:30-11:00	Coffee break	Break	-
11:00-11:40	Sharing responsibilities between partners	Who Does What? simulation	Responsibility matrix
11:40-12:25	Activities, work packages and timeline	Design workshop	12-24 month architecture
12:25-13:00	Results, outcomes, impact and indicators	Impact lab	Results-indicator chain
13:00-13:20	Risk, quality and sustainability	Scenario exercise	Mini risk register
13:20-13:30	Rubric re-check	Debrief	One architecture improvement

Theoretical essentials

- Project logic: Need -> Target Group -> Evidence -> Objectives -> Activities -> Results -> Outcomes -> Impact.
- Writing coherence: a proposal is one argument written in several sections; terminology and logic should remain consistent.
- Consortium responsibility: work follows competence, capacity and accountability rather than equal division for its own sake.
- Timeline: sequence activities so outputs exist before dependent activities begin.
- Impact: distinguish what the project produces from what changes because results are used.

DAILY PRODUCTION GATE - Day 2

Project architecture + responsibility plan + preliminary timeline. Participants should finish with a coherent logic chain, named responsibilities, early indicators, a timeline and a short risk register.

WEDNESDAY - DAY 3

Implementation, Resources and Smart Budgeting

Build work packages, quality arrangements and a preliminary budget that reflect project activities, partner responsibilities and value for money.

Time	Session	Format	Participant evidence
09:00-09:25	Implementation realism and work packages	Interactive input	WP design principles
09:25-10:05	Understanding EU funding models	Comparative explanation	Funding-model comparison notes
10:05-10:30	Building resources from activities	Resource mapping	Activity-resource list
10:30-11:00	Coffee break	Break	-
11:00-11:40	WP-resource and quality architecture	Guided design	WP-resource-quality map
11:40-12:25	Budget simulation workshop	Team simulation	Defended budget allocation
12:25-12:50	Common budget and implementation mistakes	Error analysis	Quality checklist
12:50-13:20	Build your own mini-budget	Project lab	Mini-budget
13:20-13:30	Rubric/resource check	Debrief	One resource revision

Theoretical essentials

- Realistic budgeting: resources should be sufficient for the planned work without inflation or hidden gaps.
- Value for money: the scale of resources should be proportionate to objectives, activities and expected results.
- Funding models: introduce lump-sum, unit-cost, actual-cost and co-financing logic, while emphasising that exact rules depend on the programme and call.
- Activity-based logic: ask "What resources are needed to achieve the objectives?" rather than "How much money can we obtain?"
- Quality: budgets, work packages, staffing and risk controls should all reinforce implementation credibility.

DAILY PRODUCTION GATE - Day 3

Mini-budget + WP/resource plan + quality checks. Assumptions remain clearly marked for later validation against the relevant call.

THURSDAY - DAY 4

Innovation Lab - From Activities to European Innovation

Replace the one-theme STEM module with a transferable innovation methodology that can be applied to different participant profiles.

Time	Session	Format	Participant evidence
09:00-09:30	What counts as innovation in a European project?	Interactive input	Innovation criteria notes
09:30-10:05	From activity to intervention: redesign for change	Barrier-to-design lab	Redesigned activity
10:05-10:30	Select an innovation track and define test question	Track briefing	Chosen track + test question
10:30-11:00	Coffee break	Break	-
11:00-11:55	Innovation Prototype / Intervention Workshop	Team challenge	Prototype/intervention + test evidence
11:55-12:35	Cross-country adaptation and pilot design	Transferability lab	Multi-country pilot plan
12:35-13:10	From innovation to European project component	Reverse-design sprint	Innovation project sheet
13:10-13:20	Two-minute innovation pitch	Pitch + feedback	Transferability feedback
13:20-13:30	Reflection and rubric check	Debrief	One improvement note

Theoretical essentials

- Innovation is relative to context: A project may be innovative because it introduces a new method, combination, transfer, process, participation model or implementation approach - not only because it uses advanced technology.
- Innovation should solve a defined problem: Novelty without a clear need is weak. The intervention should improve how the target group experiences, accesses or benefits from services or learning.
- Pilot before scale: European cooperation can be used to co-design, test, compare and refine an intervention across contexts before broader transfer.
- Transferability matters: A strong innovation explains what is core, what can be adapted and what conditions must be present for another organisation or country to use it.

DAILY PRODUCTION GATE - Day 4

Innovation/pilot concept + transferability plan. STEM may be used as one track, but the methodology must remain transferable to social innovation, digital inclusion, employability, community development, adult learning and sustainability.

FRIDAY - DAY 5

Project Clinic, Quality Review and Next Steps

Integrate the week, apply the common quality rubric, strengthen project logic, communicate the concept and define a realistic pathway to a programme-specific application.

Time	Session	Format	Participant evidence
09:00-09:20	Week review and rubric self-assessment	Interactive retrieval	Self-assessment map
09:20-10:30	Project Clinic	Trainer coaching + peer review	Revised starter package
10:30-11:00	Coffee break	Break	-
11:00-11:35	Choosing the next funding step	Programme-fit clinic	Next-step funding hypothesis
11:35-12:25	European Project Pitch	Presentations + feedback	3-minute pitch
12:25-12:50	Building future European cooperation	Networking design	Cooperation matches
12:50-13:15	30-day action planning and course evaluation	Reflection	30-Day Action Plan
13:15-13:30	Certificates and closing reflection	Closing	Certificate + final commitment

Theoretical essentials

- Relevance: Is the problem real, evidenced and meaningful for a defined target group and for European cooperation?
- Coherence: Do objectives, activities, responsibilities, resources, results and impact tell one story?
- Feasibility: Can the proposed partnership realistically deliver within time, resources and capacity?
- Transferability: Can the intervention or result be adapted, used or sustained beyond one local context?

FINAL PRODUCTION GATE - Day 5

European Project Starter Package + 3-minute pitch + 30-Day Action Plan. The package should be coherent enough to support a follow-up partner discussion, call-screening exercise or programme-specific application-development process.

COURSE INFORMATION

Expected Learning Outcomes

Six competence areas

Competence area	Participants will be able to...
1. Problem, target group and needs analysis	Define a challenge, identify affected groups, distinguish evidence from assumptions and formulate a clear need.
2. EU relevance and project logic	Explain transnational added value, connect priorities authentically and maintain a coherent intervention logic.
3. Objectives and intervention design	Formulate objectives and design activities, outputs, results and outcomes that support them.
4. Partnership and responsibilities	Identify complementary partners and assign accountable roles by competence and capacity.
5. Implementation, resources, risk and quality	Structure work packages, timeline, preliminary budget, resource plan, risk response and quality checks.
6. Results, impact, sustainability and communication	Define indicators, expected change, sustainability logic and communicate the concept clearly to partners.

Course Methodology

The course is organised around a progressive learning-by-doing cycle. Theory is introduced only when it can immediately support a project decision. The trainer structures the decision process, challenges assumptions, demonstrates examples and helps participants make project logic visible without taking ownership away from them.

Final Participant Output

1. One-Page Project Concept	9. Mini-Budget and Resource Allocation Plan
2. Need, Target Group and Evidence Canvas	10. Risk and Quality Notes
3. European Relevance and Priority Map	11. Innovation/Pilot and Transferability Canvas
4. Partner Map and Competence Logic	12. Results, Indicators, Impact and Sustainability
5. Objectives and Intervention Logic	13. Project Concept Quality Rubric
6. Activity Structure and Work Packages	14. Short European Project Pitch
7. Responsibility Plan	15. 30-Day Personal Action Plan
8. Preliminary Timeline	