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INFUSSE

Digital eNtrepreneurial Skills For UniverSity Education

COOPERATION PARTNERSHIPS (KEY ACTION 2)

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Activity	PR8: Pilot Test the Transnational pillar of the INFUSSE Virtual Incubation Programme
Deliverable lead	UoM
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Authors	UoM
Abstract	The present public report is produced to present the results and the outputs of PR8 implementation. The report describes in detail the event structure to enhance replication, and transferability for other digital learning programmes or similar thematic areas.



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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Connection with PRs	5
Transnational Virtual Incubation Programme.....	6
Aim & Objectives.....	6
Participants.....	6
Event Structure	10
1st Day: Co-creation & Open Innovation Day.....	11
2nd Day: Hands-on experience & Mentoring.....	14
3rd Day: GRANT FINAL - Demo Day.....	16
Software, Digital Tools and Technical Support	18
Supporting documents, Partners’ Responsibilities and tasks.....	19
Quality Review	22
Pitfalls and Learnings.....	23



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Introduction

The present document is implemented under PR8: Pilot Test the Transnational pillar of the INFUSSE Virtual Incubation Programme, in the context of the ERASMUS+ funded project, INFUSSE. The objective of PR8 is:

- To virtually incubate further digital entrepreneurial ideas by bringing diverse teams with different backgrounds together.
- To test, adapt, if needed, and validate the proposed approach and Training Programme from A to Z.
- To recommend learning processes that will increase the effectiveness and participation of a virtual incubation approach.
- To help coaches and participants gain experiences in a virtual environment.

The present public report is produced to present the way the consortium structured the INFUSSE TRANSNATIONAL VIRTUAL INCUBATION PROGRAMME and the outputs of its implementation. Therefore, the report describes in detail the event structure to enhance replication, and transferability for other digital learning programmes or similar thematic areas.

The present document consists of 8 core sections as described below: introduction, connection with previous and future PRs, an overview of this activity, a detailed description of the event structure, a list of the software and digital tools that may be used, all the supporting documents that will be needed to replicate the program, a short quality review, and pitfalls and learnings.



Connection with PRs

This PR is the final learning activity of the INFUSSE Project and relates to previous and future PRs. The lessons learned from previous PRs will be utilized to improve our efforts during the implementation of this PR. More specifically, the knowledge created from PR4, PR6, and PR7 will be used to design the structure of this activity and source coaches and participants.

During the event, participants can use the INFUSSE Platform (PR4) which is an Open Educational Resources Hub as a reference and to seek information about the various activities that will participate. In the platform, they will have access both to the English and translated versions of the material that are uploaded. An important part of this PR is the coaching and mentoring sessions that will be held during the first two days. As the partners have successfully completed the PR6 they have access to a pool of educators, coaches, and mentors that can be utilized in PR8. In addition, the material developed for PR6 courses will be used by the coaches as a reference for their presentations or coaching sessions. The participants from this activity will be sourced from PR7. More specifically, from each local INFUSSE INCUBATION PROGRAMME partners will select the 5 best projects ideas that will participate in this PR. These 15 teams will have the opportunity to co-create new ideas and compete in a TRANSNATIONAL VIRTUAL INCUBATION PROGRAMME.

On the other hand, this activity will collect data that will be used in PR5 and fulfill the assessment purposes of the project. The questionnaires developed in PR5 will be used to collect participants' feedback before the end of the last training day (day 2 of the Transnational Virtual Incubation Programme).

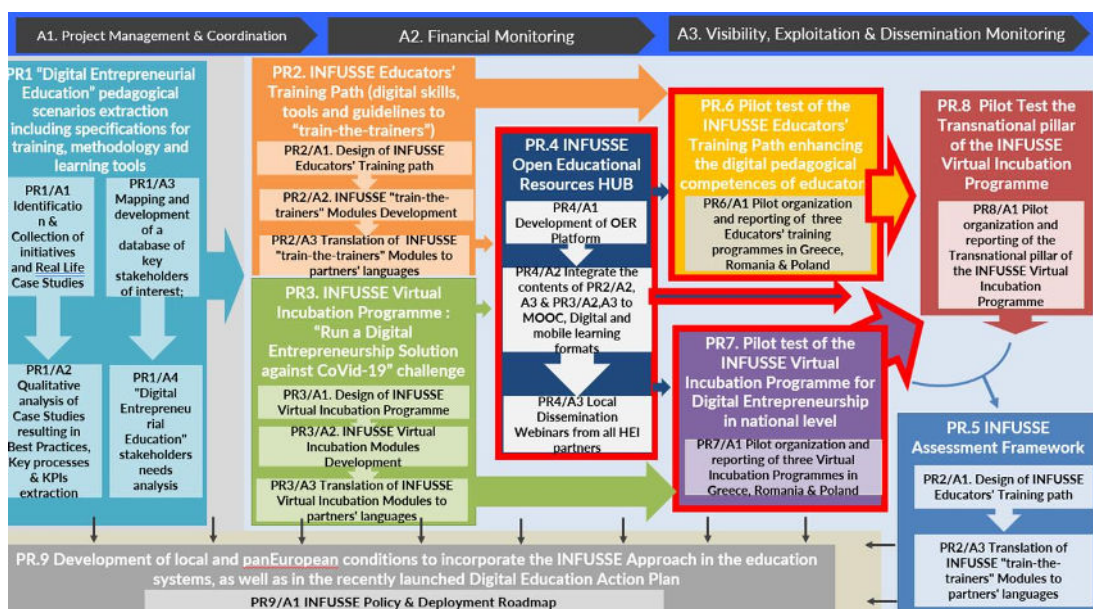


Figure 1: PR8 interrelation with other PRs.



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Transnational Virtual Incubation Programme

The TRANSNATIONAL VIRTUAL INCUBATION PROGRAMME is the transnational learning activity of the INFUSSE PROGRAMME that aims to virtually incubate students' ideas developed in Project Result 7 during the national INFUSSE INCUBATION PROGRAMMES held by HEIs. In addition, it tries to validate the proposed approach and develop a 100% virtual training program that utilizes multiple digital tools and combines transnational resources.

Aim & Objectives

The aims and objectives of this activity are:

- To virtually incubate further digital entrepreneurial ideas by bringing diverse teams with different backgrounds together. This aim will be achieved during the 1st day of our event, which is dedicated to co-creation and open innovation activities. By the end, of this day we plan to create at least 7 novel transnational concept ideas.
- To test, adapt, if needed, and validate the proposed approach and Training Programme from A to Z. At the end of the 2nd day participants will be asked to rate their experience of the activity. In addition, consortiums, coaches, and mentors' observations will be considered. This two-way input will be analyzed and incorporated into the final deliverable which will be a public report aiming to propose an approach and transfer the lessons learned.
- As teams will create novel new ideas from the beginning, we will test the effect that our virtual approach which combines coaching and mentoring sessions, digital tools, and platform use, will have on their learning process and outcome. This way, in the final deliverable we will be able to recommend learning processes that will increase the effectiveness and improve participants' digital skills.
- To help trainees of PR6 gain training and educational experience in a virtual environment by using them as coaches or mentors, according to their expertise. As the majority of PR6 participants are educators who want to improve their entrepreneurial knowledge and adopt new educational methods, through this activity we allow them to validate their knowledge and test a virtual teaching environment.

Participants

The participants in this activity are students or graduates. Each HEI organization should bring in this activity the 5 best projects that have successfully completed the national INFUSSE INCUBATION PROGRAMME. Consequently, in this PR should participate 15 teams that will create at least 7 novel transnational project concepts. One partner couldn't source the 5 best projects and brought the best 3 teams that were more relevant to the implementation and scope of the Project. Consequently, 13 teams participated in this PR (Table 1). This, however, did not affect the final outcome of the PR since more than the 7 initially projected transnational teams were



outnumbered by 10 final ones. To achieve this, the project ideas were separated into different topics (health, manufacturing, mobility, improving everyday life, etc.) to simplify the matching process that will be held on the 1st of the event. Each HEI will share with the consortium key information about each project idea.

As far as the thematic criteria of the participating projects, they have been set in a previous PR (PR7). More specifically, the project ideas could solve challenges like:

- Ideas on new products/digital solutions that use technology to support business continuity and innovation in companies affected by Covid-19 (such as consumer protection products, digital labels, etc.)
- Ideas on new services/digital services that use technology to help Business continuity and innovation in companies affected by Covid-19 (such as digital product collection and distribution services, digital brokerage platforms, digital certifications, etc.)
- Ideas on solutions that have a social dimension (Non-profit) and aim to improve consumer habits after the advent of Covid-19 (such as training elders on the use of digital tools, training on the “new normal” consumer behavior, measuring the impact of the pandemic, etc.).

However, to be relevant with the time the consortium had agreed that during the national INCUBATION PROGRAMME we would also accept project ideas that that were not directly related to the aftermaths of the pandemic but instead can be evaluated as contribution to the broader context of recovering from the pandemic.

Consequently, for teams to participate they must fulfill the following criteria:

1. Meeting thematic criteria that have been set in PR7.
2. The idea must be innovative to meet INFUSSE Project objectives.
3. Having a chance of being implemented.

	Partner Name	Project Name Idea	Brief Description	Thematic Field
1	UoM	YES	Our idea is about an app for students who want to participate in the student exchange project called Erasmus. The app will help undergraduate students to organize their trips to other countries.	Improving everyday life
2		NicoFree	NicoFree is a mobile app that will help people reduce their nicotine intake and eventually quit it with the help of a personalized algorithm.	Healthcare
3		Univice	The idea is to develop an application that will include information about universities, skills, and personality tests using gamification and communication with a	Improving everyday life



	Partner Name	Project Name Idea	Brief Description	Thematic Field
			specialized consultant of our company. This will provide a one-stop shop for young people to explore their career options and get personalized advice through their mobile devices.	
4		FitMatch	Our goal is to build an application to promote communication between users and purchase clothes through suggestions based on the personal style of each consumer.	Improving everyday life
5		Refood/FitiTeens	The application represents a classic but greener food delivery app that handles the distribution of food and products while also redistributing ready-made food and goods at significantly lower prices, which would otherwise end up as waste or expire.	Environment
1	UMFST	Profit Plant	Our business idea focuses on the cultivation of non-genetically modified corn. Given that the corn market is at least 92% occupied by hybrid corn, a small number of competitors can be identified for the non-hybrid, natural corn market.	Bio food
2		KJoy	The business idea is to open a food store with Asian specifics, based in Târgu Mureș. Initially, the business will be carried out in a physical format, then also in the online environment.	Asian food
3		BiteBack Steakhouse	The business idea would be a restaurant where the waiters are rude, no respect is given to anyone, be it old or young. Regardless, they operate within a limit, every customer gets what they ordered, and the quality of the food/drink is what we would expect in any restaurant. The restaurant aims to take customers out of their boring and stressful lives and give them some fun, even during a meal.	Improving everyday life
4		Players' haven	The main purpose of the proposed service is to develop teamwork and entertain and relax people. Specifically, it is a place where people can try to learn different board games, and its main topic is that they can discover interesting escape rooms, either in couples or in teams of up to 8 people. It will be a game where a group of players are in an enclosed space or room where they have to find clues, solve puzzles, and engage in certain activities for a certain amount of time, usually 60 minutes.	Improving everyday life
5		POP Attic	The business idea is to open a physical and online store with POP Culture products (figures from popular series, videogames, and personalities, books/manga, vinyl and CD albums, t-shirts with a specific design,	POP Culture



	Partner Name	Project Name Idea	Brief Description	Thematic Field
			etc.), especially from the Asian scene. The store will have a quiet atmosphere and an area with sofas/tables for those who want to relax and read quietly.	
1	CUE	WorkRoad	WorkROAD - Work around the world! Free application that allows young people to discover enticing seasonal job opportunities in Europe	Environment
2		MeetMe	Application allowing people to meet each other ensuring good fun with the help of animators. Unforgettable memories for participants are the goal of the project.	Improving everyday life
3		Develop your passion	My idea is to create a platform for gifted youngsters from small towns, from broken families, or with any other problems, that are stopping them from achieving the dreams	Improving everyday life

Table 1: Participating Project Ideas (National Level).

From these 13 project ideas, 10 transnational teams were created with at least 1 participant from each country. The list of the transnational project ideas is presented below:

1. YES
2. Develop your Passion Agency
3. Players' heaven
4. NicoFree
5. Univice
6. MeetMe
7. WorkRoad
8. FitMatch
9. ReFood/FitiTeens
10. POP Attic



Event Structure

The TRANSNATIONAL INCUBATION PROGRAMME is a 3-day intensive virtual incubation programme (Table 2). The first two days are devoted to coaching and mentoring sessions that will help students and graduates identify potential joint opportunities by combining their unique value propositions (1st day) and gaining hands-on experience (2nd day). The last day will be the demo day where participants will pitch their project ideas to a diverse group of experts. The Communication language of the event is English, and each day will last approximately 4 hours (2-hour theory & 2-hour practice).

Event Structure	Objective of the Day	Thematic Context of the Day
1st Day Co-creation & Open Innovation	Create transnational teams Co-creation by bridging similar concepts	Creativity, Mind mapping & Design thinking Group facilitation & Group dynamics
2nd Day Hands-on Experience & Mentoring	Identify the new market Create a successful business model Preparing for GRAND FINAL Mentoring	Customer validation Business model Selling your idea-pitching
3rd Day GRANT FINAL – Demo Day	Organize a virtual demo day Announce the best projects that will participate in the Multiplier Event	Welcome & Introductions Demo day Announce winners

Table 2: Event structure, objective, and thematic context of each day.

To better organize, manage participation, and help coaches, moderators, experts, and mentors understand the event, specific roles have been created. These roles are:

- **Moderators** are responsible for the hands-on experience sessions (marked in blue) and the matching sessions on the 1st day of the event. For the hands-on experience sessions, moderators will be assisted by a coach. They will help the teams prepare each session's required slides.
- **Coaches/Coaches** are responsible for the theoretical sessions of the event (marked in red). In addition, they will assist moderators and help participants create the pitch presentation slides. The theoretical part will last 20 minutes, including a Q&A session.
- **Mentors** are responsible for preparing teams for the GRANT FINAL and helping them fine-tune their pitches. They are requested to provide short feedback for the assigned teams.
- **Experts** will participate in the GRANT FINAL. They will evaluate each project idea based on the criteria defined in this form. During pitching, they will use the evaluation sheet form.



- **Project Leader** is the leader of each project idea. They will pitch the business idea in the GRANT FINAL.

As mentioned above, before the event, partners were asked to register their teams in an internal registration file. In this file, HEI partners state the team name or business idea name, a brief description, thematic field, total number of members, affiliated organization, project leader, contact information of all team members, and a 1-minute pitch presentation video. Collecting this information was a necessary managerial action. Firstly, it helped the event organizer to know beforehand the total number of participants and better design the 1st session of the first day. Secondly, an email list was created and specific information about the team’s name, a short description, and a link to the 1-minute pitching video was shared to participants. Finally, all the partners were asked to recommend mentors, coaches/trainers, and experts to participate in the mentoring or coaching sessions, respectively.

1st Day: Co-creation & Open Innovation Day

The 1st day is a Co-creation & Open Innovation Day. The main objective of this day is to create transnational project teams and start working on their ideas. Therefore, this day’s sessions are planned to introduce teams, present their ideas, and organize activities that will bridge similar ideas or points of view. For this purpose, 3 hands-on experience sessions (marked blue) and 2 theoretical sessions (marked red) were created. To moderate the sessions of this day 2 coaches were used and 3 moderators. An overview of the day is presented in this Table and more details are provided in the next section.

Session	Description – Guidelines	Moderator/ Trainer
1st 15:00-15:15 (15 minutes)	Welcome & Introduction The objective of this day is for participants to present their ideas, create transnational teams, and co-create new ideas by bridging similar concepts.	Event Organizer
2nd 15:15-16:15 (60 minutes)	Presenting ideas, and team members – Creating transnational teams Each team will have approximately 5 minutes to present their idea & team members. During the idea presentation, participants can sign their names in the idea that they find more interesting. However, specific rules are applied.	Moderator
3rd 16:15-16:45 (30 minutes)	First date Participants will meet each other, share information about their educational backgrounds, and discuss their ideas. In case some participants want to change teams, this is the last chance.	Moderator
Break – 16:45-17:00 (15 minutes)		



Session	Description – Guidelines	Moderator/ Trainer
4 th 17:00 – 17:40 (20 minutes per coach)	Bridge concepts – Create new ideas Providing theoretical foundations and practical examples of how teams can combine their ideas and create new value propositions.	Coach
	Group Dynamics & facilitation Providing theoretical foundations on how teams can work together.	Coach
5 th 17:40-18:45 (65 minutes)	Co-creation The newly created teams will start working on their joint business ideas. The Pitch Presentation template will be presented and each slide will be explained. Participants are called to prepare the Problem , the Product , and the Team & Management Slides .	Moderator & 2 Coaches
6 th 18:45-19:00 (15 minutes)	Closing 1st Day/ Recap and instructions for the 2nd day	Event Organizer

Table 3: Overview of Day 1 sessions.

Welcome & Introduction to the event & 1st day's session

In this session, the event organizer sets the tone of the day and presents the program. More specifically, participants will be informed about the day's objective and the expected outcomes. As this session is a roadmap for the day, the organizer should share key information and links with participants. Some important links that could be shared during this introductory session are:

- The communication platform (in this case the Slack Workspace)
- The participants guidebook that presents all participants responsibilities and links to the documents that will be used during the session.
- G-drive folder where participants will store programs' files.

In case participants are not familiar with the video conferencing software, the organizer should present how it works and the features that will be utilized, for example, breakout rooms.

Presenting ideas, and team members – Creating transnational teams

The objective of this session is for teams to present their ideas and create transnational teams. Project Leaders have an important role as they represent each team by pitching team's idea, and introducing team members. They can utilize PowerPoint presentations to further explain their ideas and better introduce team members. A specific timeframe must be allocated to each team. In our case, each project leader had approximately 5 minutes to present their idea, and team members. Participants were aware beforehand of the participating ideas as the event organizer had shared the ideas and the guidebook a few days before the event.



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An important aspect of this session is the creation of transnational teams (at least 7 transnational teams). This objective is directly related to the total number of participants. In the INFUSSE TRANSNATIONAL INCUBATION PROGRAMME we had 31 participants, and we were able to create 10 transnational teams; 2 teams had 4 participants, 1 team had 2 participants, and the rest teams had 3 participants. To achieve these results, the moderator set some general rules such as:

1. All team members except for the Project Leader are obligated to choose another idea from another country. The creation of a new team is mandatory.
2. Project Leaders cannot choose their team members.
3. First come, first serve rule is applied.
4. The new teams must include at least 1 participant from each country. Each team must have at least 3 members (1 of each country).
5. New project ideas can be created, or existing process ideas can be combined or expanded.
6. If a Project Leader is unable to create a new team, then, she/he will join another team as a team member.

A Google Sheet can be utilized in this session to help the moderator manage and monitor the session's outcome. In this sheet, participants are called to sign their names in the idea that find more interesting. The sheet could include information like the project idea name, short description, country of origin, and 3 extra columns for participants to sign. The 3 columns represent each of the participating countries in the project. To make sure that no participants from the same country will be on the same team, in this case, the moderator marked some cells with "X" to inform participants that no sign-ins were necessary in this case. For example, in the Polish project idea, only participants from Greece and Romania can sign in. As the process involved, the moderator had colored specific cells to let participants know about open slots or to announce a team creation.

First date

The second hands-on experience session of this day is a 30-minute session, where participants have the chance to meet each other, share information about their educational backgrounds, and discuss their ideas. In case some participants wanted to change teams, this was their last chance. However, to avoid a general restructuring, an additional rule was set that new participants could only join teams with open spots. Once again, the moderator should share the rules for creating transnational teams.

A main element of this session is the Breakout rooms, a feature provided by the video conferencing software. The organizing team created 15 open breakout rooms so participants and moderators to join freely in every room they wanted. For the organizing team to have a clear picture of the transnational teams. The Project Leader was asked to fill in a Google form to state their team members. This is an important task that ensures that the organizing team will have up-to-date information on each team's composition.



Bridging concepts, Creating new ideas, Group Dynamics & facilitation

These two sessions are the only theoretical sessions of the first day. However, they are very important sessions because they define the event’s successful implementation. Therefore, in these two sessions, 2 important thematic fields are tackled. The gap between the concepts and the perception that each member has for the idea and how different team members with different backgrounds can collaborate and handle conflicts. For the theoretical sessions, the pool of coaches that participated in the INFUSSE TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAMME was utilized. Each thematic field was assigned to one trainer. To improve interactivity and encourage participation each session closes with a Q&A session.

Co-creation

Before teams join their breakout rooms and start working on their pitch presentation the moderator should present the Pitch Presentation template, and explain each slide and what is expected. Also, it is important to guide participants to create a copy of the pitch presentation template and make sure that all pitches will be uploaded to the G-drive Folder. Saving the pitch presentation in the G-drive folder lets every participant work on the presentation at the same time. In this session, participants are working on 3 slides The Problem, The Product, and Team & Management.

After clarifying all this information, participants should join their breakout room and start working on their pitches. To support participants during this session, the 2 coaches should split the teams and join each room to answer questions and provide any necessary help. During the session, teams had the opportunity to ask questions to both coaches as two rounds were conducted.

Closing 1st day, Recap & Instructions for day 2

In this short session, the moderator summarized the sessions and day’s objective, shared INFUSSE social media accounts, and briefly introduced tomorrow’s agenda.

2nd Day: Hands-on experience & Mentoring

The purpose of the 2nd day is for teams to work on their ideas and finalize their pitch presentation (Table 4). To enable participants to create and finalize their pitches on this day 3 theoretical sessions about Customer validation, Selling your idea, and Pitching are included. Each theoretical session is complemented by a hands-on experience (marked with blue) to utilize the acquired knowledge and draft their pitches.

Session	Description	Moderator, Coach & Experts
1st 15:00-15:15 (15 minutes)	Welcome & Introduction The objective of this day is to identify customers, define your value proposition, and prepare for the GRANT FINAL.	Event Organizer



Session	Description	Moderator, Coach & Experts
2nd 15:15-15:35 (20 minutes)	Customer validation Identifying new customers and aligning the value proposition to fit customer expectations. In this session, a digital tool like Canva.com can be introduced.	Coach
3rd 15:35-16:20 (40 minutes)	Hands-on Experience Teams will work on their ideas, with assistance from the moderator and the coach. In this Hands-on experience, the participants are called to prepare the Market and the Competition Slides.	Mentor & Trainer
Break - 16:20-16:35 (15 minutes)		
4th 16:35-16:55 (20 minutes)	Business modeling Presenting the elements of the business model canvas. In this session, a digital tool like Canvanizer (the business model canvas template) can be introduced.	Coach
5th 16:55-17:35 (40 minutes)	Hands-on Experience Teams will work on their ideas, with assistance from the moderator and the coach. In this Hands-on experience, the participants are called to prepare the Value Proposition and the Product Slides .	Mentor & Trainer
Break – 17:35-17:50 (15 minutes)		
6th 17:50-18:10 (20 minutes)	Selling your idea – Pitching Present the key elements of a pitch presentation.	Coach
7th 18:10-18:50 (40 minutes)	Breakout rooms - Mentoring session Teams will work on their ideas or practice their pitching. Mentors will provide them with valuable feedback. The experts will assist participants in fine-tuning their pitches.	4 Mentors
8th 18:50-19:00 (10 minutes)	Closing 2nd Day/ Recap and instructions for the 3rd day	Event Organizer

Table 4: Schedule of the 2nd Day: Hands-on Experience & Mentoring.

Welcome & Introduction to the 2nd day session

In this session, the event organizer sets the tone of the day and presents the program. More specifically, participants are informed about the day's objective and the expected outcomes. The organizer shares key information and links with participants.

As in the previous welcome session, some important links that could be shared during this introductory session are about the communication platform (in this case the Slack Workspace), participants guidebook, and G-drive folder. In case participants are not familiar with the video



conferencing software, the organizer should reintroduce the software and present how it works and the features that will be utilized, for example, breakout rooms.

Theoretical Sessions

On this day, 3 theoretical sessions were included to help participants identify their customers, define their value proposition, and key elements of their product, and learn how to pitch their idea. Coaches may introduce to participants various digital tools to help them improve their final presentation. The coaches of these sessions are former participants of the PR6 activity TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAMME. More details for each session are provided below.

1. **Customer validation.** The purpose of this session is to provide all the necessary theoretical information to participants to identify new market options and create an upgraded value proposition.
2. **Business modeling.** The business model canvas is an essential tool that summarizes all the necessary elements that should be included or mentioned in a pitch presentation.
3. **Selling your idea-Pitching.** In this session, participants will learn how to sell their ideas and themselves.

Hands-on experience

After each theoretical session, participants are called to join the assigned breakout rooms and start working on their pitches. For each session, specific slides must be prepared. For the hands-on experience after the Customer validation participants will prepare the 2 slides regarding the Market and the Competition. In the next hands-on experience, they will prepare slides about the product and the business model.

The last hands-on experience session is a mentoring session (marked with green) that provides participants the opportunity to receive valuable feedback from the mentors about their idea and their presentations. The 4 experts will be called to join specific rooms, assess the team's progress and provide feedback.

Closing 2nd Day/ Recap and instructions for the 3rd day

In this session that closes the 2nd day, the moderator summarized the sessions and day's objective, shared INFUSSE social media accounts, and briefly introduced tomorrow's agenda. Also, she/he will share the link to let participants rate their experience in the program.

3rd Day: GRANT FINAL - Demo Day

The GRANT FINAL is the main event of this program and will be moderated by the event organizer. The day will start by welcoming participants, and experts. Then a short introduction to the project will be held following the introduction of the 8 participating experts. The event organizer will remind participants to rate their experience at the program.



The main session of this day will be the Pitch presentations where each team will have 8 minutes to present their ideas, and 3 minutes to receive questions from the experts regarding their ideas. For evaluating the pitch presentation an Evaluation sheet has been drafted that will help experts decide and announce the 3 best projects. Experts will evaluate each pitch presentation by rating from 1 to 5 specific criteria set by the organizer. The criteria are about the problem or need, market, solution, value proposition, competition, and team.

On completing the presentation experts will be moved to a breakout room where they will decide the INFUSSE bet project ideas. In this session, the event organizer will present the way the evaluation sheet works and will list the 5 prevailing projects. Then each expert will have the chance to express their views and opinions.

The Event organizer will announce the 4 best ideas that will participate in the Multiplier Event.

Session	Description	Moderator & Experts
15:00-15:20	Welcome to the GRANT FINAL Introduction to the day's schedule. Briefly presentation of the INFUSSE project and its objectives Introducing experts	Event organizer
15:20-16:45	Pitch & Q&A Session Each team will have 8 minutes in total to present their pitch to the experts followed by a Q&A session. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 minutes will be dedicated to the pitch presentation. • 3 minutes will be the Q&A session. Experts will utilize the Expert Evaluation Sheet to assess each team.	Moderator & Experts
16:45-17:15	Break to increase tension and decide the 3 best projects	Experts and INFUSSE members
17:15-17:30	Announcing the 4 best projects & Closing of GRANT FINAL	Event organizer

Table 5: Schedule of the GRANT FINAL-Demo Day.



Software, Digital Tools and Technical Support

Multiple software and digital tools should be used during this 3-day event to implement the event, enhance participant collaboration, and simplify the communication between coordinators and consortium members. To implement the activity the event organizer utilized the equipment purchased as part of the project. Event organizers, moderators, and coaches must encourage participation by presenting and urging the use of software features such as Raise a hand, interactions icon, or use the recommended digital tools to enable transnational collaboration.

Software that could be used to enable event implementation is:

4. **Zoom.** As it is a virtual event, conference software should be used. To hold our sessions the organizer chose the video conference software ZOOM. During the event, participants, coaches, mentors, and coordinators could use various features provided by the software to interact and exchange their thoughts during the event. The Breakout Room features were utilized the most during the 3-day event as participants joined their breakout rooms during the hands-on experience sessions to work on their project ideas. Session coordinators or organizers can urge participants to use the reaction feature, the message section, to increase interactivity.
5. **Slack.** It was the main communication technology of the event for participants. A new workspace was created called Transnational INFUSSE, and all participants were called to sign in. Each team had a separate channel for their internal communication. In addition, the organizer and the technical support team utilized the personal message option to communicate and solve problems. However, the Slack workspace was not used for the communication between the organizer with the local coordinators. They mainly utilize the private message option in ZOOM.

In addition, digital tools were recommended to be used by participants to enhance their collaboration efforts and improve pitch presentations. The digital tools that are mentioned below are learning material from a previous project result (PR7), meaning that participants are familiar with these tools and have previous experience.

6. **Canvanizer.** Participants can use this tool during the 5th session on the 1st day to co-create the joint business idea by using the brainstorming canvas that is available on this platform. In addition, they can use another canvas the “Business model canvas” during the working/coaching session on the 2nd day that is focused on business model elements.
7. **Canva.** Participants can use the templates offered in this platform to visualize personas’ information. This tool will be useful during the 1st session of the 2nd day when participants will be asked to validate their market. This digital tool has not been introduced to participants during previous PRs, but its functionalities and interface are similar to already introduced platforms.
8. **Trello.** As it is a visual work management tool, participants can utilize its feature to simplify the collaboration and management process of this activity.



9. **Proto.io.** This prototype tool can be used during the pitch preparation session to better present their product idea.

Supporting documents, Partners' Responsibilities and tasks

For implementing this 3-day the event organizer (PR Leader) prepared a list of documents that enable the event organization and management. Documents 1 to 3 can be used for internal organization and documents 4 to 11 can be used during the 3-day event.

1. **Excel Sheet to register project ideas.** This is an internal document that will collect all the contact information of each participating team. More specifically, it will collect information like the team or business idea name, a short description of the business idea, and each member's full name and contact information (email). This way, the event organizer will cluster business ideas to specific topics, and will create a participant's emailing list to share instructions, the event schedule, etc.
2. **Excel Sheet to recommend coaches, moderators, mentors, and experts.** For the theoretical and hands-on experience sessions will be needed coaches, mentors, and experts. The coaches will lead the theoretical sessions and will assist mentors in the hands-on experience sessions. Coaches could be the only participants in PR6 activity TRAIN THE TRAINER. The coaches are provided by HEIs because they run this activity. On the other hand, the innovation organization recommends moderators or mentors for the hands-on experience sessions and experts. Also, HEIs must be proposed by HEIs. For coaches, moderators, and mentors' partners need to provide contact information and for the experts a short description.
3. **Excel Sheet to collect contact information of local coordinators and technical support.** Even though the programme was organized by UoM partners were asked to propose a team member who would be the local coordinator. The local coordinator would be cc-ed in all emails (communication material about team participation, participants' guidelines, contacting experts, coaches, mentors, etc.). Localized platforms can be used during the program so the organizer requested each partner to name a technical support in case local teams would need support.
4. **Project idea list.** Before the event a list including all the project ideas and the 1-minute video was emailed to participants to enable the team creation process as team members would have the opportunity to have a closer look at the participating project idea.
5. **Guides** including all the necessary information (duration of session, objective of each day, mentors, experts, and coaches' names), the links to useful files, and assigned tasks for each session were disseminated to participants before the event. A similar guide was drafted for mentors, coaches, and experts.
6. **Team Matrix.** This Excel file was utilized during the event to simplify the team creation process. Except for the project idea, project leader, and county, the sheet includes 3 more columns (one for each country) where participants can register their names under their country. This way is secured that transnational teams will be created.
7. **Google Form for the final transnational teams.** Even though participants sign in their names in the Team Matrix file, in the "First date" hands-on experience the participants



have the opportunity to change team. Hence, this file helps the organizer to know the team members of the transnational teams.

8. **Pitch presentation template.** This template will be utilized by all participants to draft their pitch presentation. The template consists of 8 slides. Except for the 2 cover slides the template includes slides for the problem, the product, the business mode, the market, the competition, and Team & Management.
9. **Mentors Feedback Form.** This was created to collect feedback from mentors who participated in the last session of the 2nd day.
10. **Experts Evaluation Sheet.** An Excel sheet where each expert is called to evaluate each pitch idea. Experts will evaluate each pitch presentation by rating from 1 to 5 specific criteria set by the organizer. The criteria are about the problem or need, market, solution, value proposition, competition, and team.
11. **Experience rate evaluation form (for participants).** The purpose of this form is to let participants rate their experience in the program.

Also, a list of partners' responsibilities was drafted that defined each partner's contribution to the event implementation. The list of responsibilities include:

1. **Secure local team participation.** Each HEI must propose 5 projects that have completed the national INFUSSE INCUBATION PROGRAMME (PR7). If a team withdraws, the partner must replace the participant by proposing a new team.
2. **Register project ideas.** You should provide the leading partner with a team or business idea name, a short description of the business idea, and each member's full name and contact information (email). This way, the leading partner will be able to cluster business ideas into specific topics and send participants instructions, the event schedule, etc.
3. **Recommend coaches and mentors (HEI partners).** According to the proposed event structure, we will need each partner to recommend coaches or mentors for the sessions that they moderate. The coaches or mentors can be trainees who have completed PR6.
4. **Recommend 1 expert for the "GRANT FINAL" event.** For the final day of the event, all partners will propose up to two experts each who will actively participate in the event. Following the proposal guidelines, the experts must have several years of experience in assessing projects in the fields of technology and digital innovation.
5. **Share contact information of your coworkers.** As mentioned above, UoM will be responsible for running the technical aspect of the project. However, we would like you to provide us with the contact info of your coworkers (technician/course manager, and coordinator) who will participate in the event by supporting our efforts. Coordinators will be cc-ed in all emails (communication material about team participation, contacting experts, etc.).

The table below summarizes partners' responsibilities:

	Partner Name	Responsibilities
1	UoM – PR Leader	Event coordinator



	Partner Name	Responsibilities
2		Technical support
3		1 coach for Customer validation session
4		5 project teams (1 backup)
		Up to 2 Expert for GRANT FINAL
5		GRANT FINAL Moderator
1	KINNO	1 Moderator for Co-creation session
2		1 Mentor for pre-pitch session
3		Up to 2 Expert for GRANT FINAL
4		GRANT FINAL Moderator - Pitch presentation & Q&A session
1	UMFST	1 coach for bridge concepts session
2		1 coach for business modeling
3		1 local coordinator
4		Up to 2 Expert for GRANT FINAL
5		5 project teams (1 backup)
1	ICEBERG+	1 Moderator for Speed dating session
2		1 Moderator for Customer validation breakout rooms
3		1 Mentor for pre-pitch session
4		Up to 2 Expert for GRANT FINAL
1	CUE	1 coach for Group dynamics & facilitation session
2		1 coach for pitching
3		1 Local coordinator
4		Up to 2 Expert for GRANT FINAL
5		5 project teams (1 backup)
1	CREATEHUB	1 Moderator for Presenting ideas & introducing team members
2		1 Moderator for the complementary session of business model
3		1 Mentor for pre-pitch session
4		Up to 2 Expert for GRANT FINAL

Table 6: Partners' responsibilities and tasks.



Quality Review

The feedback received from the participants, which will be in detail described under PR5, was really positive and encouraging. In total 31 participants (12 from Greece, 12 from Romania, and 7 from Poland) assessed the overall experience of the INFUSSE VIRTUAL INCUBATION PROGRAMME. Most of the participants found the program very good or excellent and stated that the programme met its objective to encourage transnational cooperation.

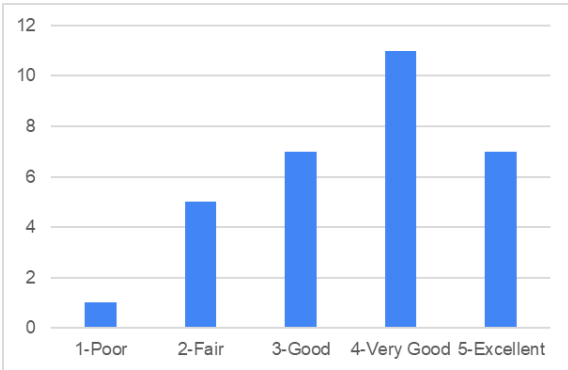


Figure 2: Overall impression of the Transnational INFUSSE VIRTUAL INCUBATION PROGRAMME.

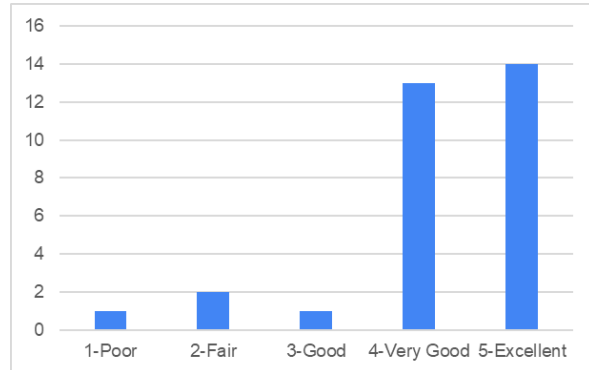


Figure 2: Activities encouraging transnational cooperation.

The participants were satisfied with the quality of the program and activity duration rating it either as fair, good, very good, or excellent. These results validate the proposed event structure but also create opportunities for further improvements.

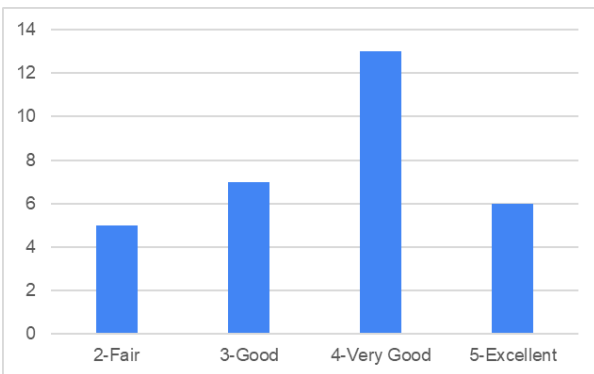


Figure 4: Quality of the activity.

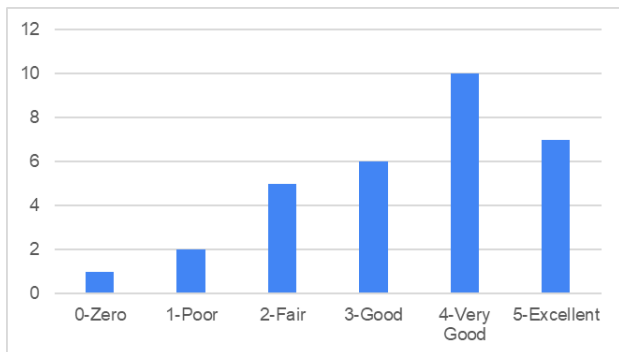


Figure 5: Activity duration.

Finally, it is important to shed light on participants' comments because they would help us to improve the event structure and create a program that meets participants' needs. Some participants commented that they would prefer the hands-on experience sessions to be longer so they would have more time to work on their ideas as sometimes they were interrupted by the mentors. Finding ways to improve communication and participation at the breakout rooms was



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another comment that should make us rethink the structure of the hands-on experience. Two comments referred to the process of creating transnational teams. One participant found it complicated, and another participant recommended following a different approach where the project leader would state the project's needs and required skills and the participants would choose based on their skills. This approach is very interesting and should be considered in future implementations. Finally, one participant recommended increasing the number of coaches so participants to be informed about other aspects of the business.

Pitfalls and Learnings

The INFUSSE TRANSNATIONAL INCUBATION PROGRAMME was a valuable experience both for participants but also for organizers. However, the organizers and the partners faced some issues related to participation and the implementation of the program. More specifically, even though the participants in this program were secured from previous activity in PR7 one partner couldn't source the 5 requested teams. Hence, in the program, only 13 teams and in total 31 participants. These 13 teams created 10 transnational teams with at least 1 participant from each country. The language barrier was one reason that participants were hesitant to join the program. Another reason was the lack of motivation and receiving a prize at the end of the programme. In future implementations, organizers may consider offering travel vouchers to motivate participants and enhance competition.

Another learning curve for the consortium was the choice to run the program in 3 consecutive days. This choice added extra pressure to local coordinators because they had to secure participant's daily availability. For future implementation, organizers should consider the option of weekly sessions. Namely, to propose a day and for 3 consecutive weeks, the participants gather and work on their project ideas. This arrangement will be useful both for organizers and participants. For organizers will be easier to manage the workload because it would be allocated to 3 weeks and for participants would be easier to participate because they will have to dedicate 4 hours per week and will work better on their ideas. Choosing to weekly run the event will give the option to organizers to extend the duration of the program and give more time to teams to connect and work on their ideas.

Even though multiple features, especially from the ZOOM software were used during the 3-day event, there is space for improvement. The recommended digital tools were not used by the majority of participants, and they mainly used graphics provided by Google Slides. One reason for this could be the tied schedule and that they only had 40 minutes for the hands-on experience. If the event allocation were different many participants would be more willing to exploit these digital tools. Hence, the weekly session option sounds like a viable solution. Another problem that the organizer, coaches, and mentors faced during the sessions was that they didn't know to which team each participant was assigned. To solve this problem, maybe in the future organizers request participants to change their Zoom names in a format like this Transnational Teams Name_First Name. Finally, it was very difficult for the moderator in some sessions to let



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participants know that they were running out of time. To solve this problem one of the moderators used a clock interaction to let participants know about the remaining time. This practice was adopted in the Pitch Presentation session, too.

Another problem that appeared in each virtually organized event was participation, and participant's choice to not turn on their cameras. This problem was more intense in the theoretical sessions. One option to boost interactivity is for organizers to choose more interactive software or better utilize features that support interactivity like polls, use of interactions, etc. Rearrange the structure of each session and give more time to Q&A sessions. However, organizers must communicate the importance of interactivity in coaches, and mentors first and then to participants. Finally, interactivity is hindered by the problematic use of technology. In this case, organizers may conduct tech checks and provide clear instructions on how to access and use the virtual event platform to ensure a smooth experience for attendees.