Social Innovation Training for Virtual Work Based Learning

Newsletter 1, February 2018

COOP-IN

Social Innovation in Training Goes Live

In November 2017, seven Erasmus+ partners assembled in Santander, Spain for the first of a series of meetings to develop and implement an exciting new project about the use of social innovation in work based learning.

Lead by Leigh Sear, Chief Executive of the Small Firms Enterprise Development Initiative Limited (SFEDI), partners set out their plans to develop a social innovation toolkit, a game-based learning platform supported by a self assessment tool and a blended learning course.

Leigh said, "This is an important project that will help trainers to convert social innovation from a theoretical concept into a practical approach to developing work-based learning."

Meet the Partners

SFEDI has assembled a team of experts from six countries to drive this project forward. Partners include VET centres, education and industry:

- Instituto de Soldadura e Qualidade (Portugal)

- Trebag Szellemi Vagyon-Es Projektmend-edzserkft (Hungary)

- Associacion Instituto Europeo de Estudios Para la Formacion y el Desarrollo (Spain)

- Centre for Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology (Cyprus)

- Exponential Training & Assessment Limited (United Kingdom)

- Meath Community Rural and Social Development Partnership Limited (Ireland)

Partners at the first of a series of meetings: Santander, Spain

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Website:

www.coopinproject.eu

Erasmus+

Project Aims and Impact

Innovation is a key source of competitiveness and economic growth. This Erasmus+ funded project will develop a practical social innovation training kit to help VET trainers and mentors to experience the benefits of using social innovation in the workplace.

The project will raise awareness of the advantages of implementing social innovation at work. The training toolkit will include a 'virtual game-based' learning platform—this will enable VET trainers and enterprises to learn about and to implement social innovation in the workplace.

The learning portal will feature the use of 'game-based learning' and will help participants to develop a range of skills and competences including: strategic thinking, idea generation and management, working collaboratively and developing diversity at work.

In addition to a blended learning programme, the social innovation serious game, interactive exercises and self assessment tool will help enterprises to 'kick-start' their own social innovation strategy leading to performance and productivity improvements.

What is Social Innovation?

There has been considerable interest in the concept of social innovation in recent years. However, despite this interest, no common definition of social innovation has emerged. Whilst some definitions are very specific which then exclude many examples of social innovation, others are so broad that they include e projects and organisations that are not particularly innovative, even if they are in some way social.

The European Commission project, 'TEPSIE', identifies five core features that they believe to be essential when describing something as social innovation: (1) It must involve something novel; (2) It must involve the implementation of ideas rather than just ideas; (3) It must meet a social need; (4) It must contribute to an effective solution or improvement; and (5) it increases people's and society's capacity to take action.

One of the more helpful definition of social innovation is provided by the Center for Social Innovation at the Stanford Graduate School of Business which has described social innovation as "the process of inventing, securing support for, and implementing novel solutions to social needs and problems."

What Is Next?

- Live launch of the project website in March 2018 (www.coopinproject.eu)

- Development of the course called **'Applied Social Innovation'** comprising six modules and a Trainer Manual by September 2018

- Development and release of a **serious gaming platform** about social innovation in the workplace by January 2019

- Development of a **social innovation toolkit** for VET and corporate trainers by February 2019

- Release of the project's **social innovation assessment tool** by April 2019

- **Social Innovation National Round Table** events in April 2019

- UK **project conference** in September 2019

- **Next partner meetings:** February 2018 (Hungary), Ireland (May 2018)