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Training Guide

DECO - ENTER4FUTURE

**Developing need-based entrepreneurial competences and
showing opportunities in entrepreneurship**

**Activating potentials for sustainable economic
development in rural regions**

Project period: 01/10/2024 - 31/12/2025

Project ID: 2024-1-DE02-KA210-VET-000255581



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1

Introduction

This training guide has been produced by MMT Academics with the support and feedback of project partners, for the Project DECO – ENTER4FUTURE – Developing need-based entrepreneurial competences and showing opportunities in entrepreneurship. Activating potentials for sustainable economic development in rural regions, 2024-1-DE02-KA210-VET-000255581, which has been co-funded by the Erasmus+ Program of the European Union.

Members of the consortium:

MMT Academics from Germany – coordinator of the project

Absentia APS from Italy

Associação CHECK-IN - Cooperação e Desenvolvimento from Portugal

Mano Europa from Lithuania

1.1

Relevance and Purpose

This training guide presents a catalogue of skills and provides a flexible framework of specific competencies aimed at strengthening entrepreneurship education and fostering an entrepreneurial mindset. The topics and related skills compiled in this guide have been identified in the project DECO – ENTER4FUTURE as highly relevant for learners in VET, to strengthen their competences, build confidence in pursuing entrepreneurship, and recognize it as a career path.

The aim of this Training Guide is to strengthen learners' skills and initiative and to build their self-confidence, particularly among those who are underrepresented in entrepreneurship, such as learners from disadvantaged backgrounds or female

learners. Entrepreneurial competences can open up new career opportunities and inspire more learners to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career pathway. The promotion of inclusive access to entrepreneurial education not only supports underrepresented groups in entrepreneurship but also contributes to gender equality in the field. At the same time, it fosters the development of more diverse and resilient entrepreneurial ecosystems. The skills and competences presented in this Training Guide are also relevant beyond entrepreneurship and contribute to learners' personal life management.

Furthermore, entrepreneurship is increasingly recognised as a key driver of rural development. By promoting entrepreneurial thinking and targeted skills development, the guide helps to unlock local potential and support the preservation and growth of rural regions, particularly those that rely on local actors to maintain infrastructure and ensure long-term, sustainable development.

With this relevance and purpose, this Training Guide aligns with the direction set by the Union of Skills and the renewed EU Vocational Education and Training policy framework, which place strong emphasis on entrepreneurial, transversal, and sustainability-oriented competences that remain relevant across changing labour markets. Entrepreneurship is framed as a cross-cutting competence, with learning activities designed to strengthen initiative, financial judgement, communication, and local problem-solving, all of which are explicitly highlighted in current EU skills and lifelong learning policies. The focus on slow entrepreneurship reflects the EU priority on territorially rooted skills ecosystems, where VET supports local economic resilience rather than short-term mobility or growth-driven models. Business planning, financial literacy, and communication modules are embedded in rural and peripheral contexts, providing a concrete response to EU objectives, as set out in the Council Recommendation on VET (2020) and recent skills policy updates¹².

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/education/skills/union-skills_en

² <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/vocational-education-and-training>

1.2

Background

Although a large share of young people in Europe pursues vocational education and training, this is not reflected in the proportion of entrepreneurs with a VET background. This discrepancy prompted the organizations to investigate the entrepreneurial gap among graduates of vocational education institutions and to explore the obstacles learners perceive on their path to self-employment or starting a business. Attention was paid to the gender gap, as young women are even less represented in entrepreneurial career paths.

This Training Guide has been developed based on the key findings from our desk research and interviews, as well as the expertise of each project partner in specific domains. Conducted under Activity 1 of the project, our research confirmed that VET learners across Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Lithuania face a combination of structural and experiential barriers to entrepreneurship. The guide's four focus areas aim to directly respond to these challenges, helping learners build essential competencies while fostering inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurship in their communities.

The key competencies presented in this training guide can serve as a first step in introducing entrepreneurship education and in reducing the knowledge gaps faced by learners. The inclusion of targeted modules on financial literacy and business planning directly addresses these gaps, equipping learners with practical tools to move from ideas to implementation.

One of another major findings concerned the specific challenges faced by female learners and entrepreneurs, who reported limited representation, reduced access to support networks, and persistent gender bias, issues often existing in rural settings. In response, the training guide reinforces the importance of communication skills development, not only to support self-confidence and public speaking but also to increase access to professional networks and improve visibility in male-dominated sectors.

While the interest in entrepreneurship among VET learners is high, the research demonstrates that entrepreneurship remains rarely structured or promoted within vocational education. Embedding slow entrepreneurship as a core concept in the guide offers an alternative model that resonates with the realities of rural learners, placing value on sustainable development, community-based initiatives, and long-term resilience over rapid growth or competition.

1.3 How to Use this Training Guide?

The guide is designed in a modular way, allowing individual topics to be selected and further developed by VET providers, educators or trainers. Instead of focusing on abstract theoretical models, the development of this training guide emphasized practical activities that can also be used by VET providers outside of traditional business education, for example, in classroom projects. Each skill or concept includes background information and practical activities with clear instructions and guidelines, making training sessions easy to plan and implement. By specifying the required time and materials, trainers can better assess the necessary resources.

Special attention was given to the design of this training guide to ensure that: 1) It sparks interest in entrepreneurship; 2) It supports the development of relevant competences; and 3) It offers practical value in learners' everyday lives, even beyond an entrepreneurial context. This approach was chosen to ensure that the training provides added value also for those learners who may not intend to start their own business³.

³The idea of managing one's own life like a business has found its place in many areas of entrepreneurship education. This concept represents a synthesis of management theory, coaching, entrepreneurship, and personal development. Its goal is to encourage individuals to shape their lives with greater self-responsibility, strategic thinking, and entrepreneurial action also outside of business. In German sociology, Ulrich Bröckling has notably explored this phenomenon, especially in relation to governmental techniques, subjectivation, and neoliberal self-concepts. In his work "The Entrepreneurial Self: Fabricating a New Type of Subject" (in GER "Das unternehmerische Selbst. Soziologie einer Subjektivierungsform") (2007), he illustrates how individuals are increasingly encouraged to conduct themselves as if they were enterprises, through goal setting (e.g., career planning), self-monitoring (e.g., efficiency improvement, optimization), risk management (e.g., self-presentation, job applications),

Promoting gender equality and broadening access to entrepreneurial education enhances the relevance of this guide for all learners by ensuring that the skills addressed are accessible, empowering and relevant across diverse groups. Using this guide not only supports the development of entrepreneurial thinking but also helps learners acquire key competencies that are transferable to everyday lives and future careers.

This training guide is built on four pillars, each designed to develop specific skills. It begins by introducing the concept of slow entrepreneurship to help learners understand that there are ways to approach entrepreneurship with less risk. The second pillar of this training guide is the development of a business plan, which is closely linked to the first pillar and builds upon its foundational principles. The third pillar of the training guide is financial literacy, which has been identified as highly relevant for learners, not only from a personal perspective to enhance individuals' financial competence and optimize business finances, but also for reducing risks through solid risk management of financial resources. Additionally, it contributes to the sustainability and growth of businesses. Research shows that female entrepreneurs, in particular, face disadvantages when it comes to accessing financial resources. Therefore, raising awareness about these challenges and providing training in financial literacy, alongside the other skills addressed in this guide, creates a comprehensive and empowering learning opportunity. The fourth pillar of the training guide is communication skills, which are essential for learners in vocational education and training. Effective communication is not only a foundational competence across nearly every profession, enabling learners to interact confidently with customers, colleagues, supervisors, and clients, but also a key asset for aspiring entrepreneurs.

marketing strategies (e.g., personal branding), and continuous self-improvement. He embeds these assumptions within the neoliberal paradigm, in which the individual becomes an entrepreneurial entity, and highlights the growing significance of self-regulation and personal responsibility in everyday life management.

1.4

Target Audience

The underrepresentation of entrepreneurs with VET background may indicate that current VET programs do not sufficiently integrate entrepreneurial education or adequately address the specific barriers faced by learners. As a result, many VET learners miss opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills that could enhance their career prospects and contribute to economic development of their region. Addressing this gap is crucial to fostering inclusive entrepreneurship, particularly by designing tailored training that considers the unique needs of VET learners and encourages their participation in entrepreneurial activities.

This Training Guide is intended for the training of learners primarily who are not enrolled in business-oriented programs. Its aim is to facilitate access to entrepreneurial concepts and competencies through low-threshold, practice-oriented approaches. By integrating hands-on activities, the guide enables flexible implementation across sectors, suitable for both project-based and classroom learning environments.

It serves as a tool for VET providers and trainers working in the fields of vocational education to deepen their knowledge, support their teaching, and inspire new approaches. VET providers and trainers are encouraged to tailor the content to suit their specific contexts and the target groups they work with.

1.5

Learning Outcomes

The overarching learning outcomes of this training guide are to equip learners with skills related to entrepreneurship, enabling them to confidently approach entrepreneurial activities.

Through the implementation of this training guide, learners are supported in developing sustainable and responsible projects that balance economic success with social and environmental responsibility. Learners will gain financial literacy skills to help manage

resources, create realistic budgets, and plan for financial risks and opportunities. Learners will be equipped to design business plans that integrate market insights and financial forecasting with ethical decision-making grounded in the principles of slow entrepreneurship. Additionally, they will develop intercultural communication competencies to engage respectfully and effectively with customers and diverse stakeholders, adapting strategies to various cultural contexts and fostering inclusive business relationships.

Each hands-on activity in this training guide is designed with clear learning outcomes, defining what learners should know, be able to do, or apply by the end of the activity. This approach helps both trainers and learners pursue clear objectives. Clearly defined learning outcomes enable objective assessment of learner achievements, facilitating quality assurance and constructive feedback.

2

Slow Entrepreneurship

2.1

Concept of Slow Entrepreneurship

What is Slow Entrepreneurship?

To properly use this guide, it is important to understand the concept behind it. Slow Entrepreneurship embeds different values that purposely emphasize creating and running a business that is not primarily focused on rapid growth, perpetual innovation and scalability. It is meant to be sustainable by reconsidering what is meaningful to society, both socially and economically. While a classic firm or company will focus on rapid expansion and substantial financial return, a “slowpreneur” will base the business on a model that is measured by a long-term investment and impact, a relevance on the local context and both collective and personal well-being.

It does not aim to be successful at the pace of work alone but rather consider more carefully what it means to be sustainable and bring meaning to an economic activity.

Hence its concept drawn from the “slow movement”, inspired by Slow Food, which emphasize on respect for local tradition, environmental sustainability and take the time to do things properly.

In the entrepreneurial context, this translates into a commitment to quality, the cultivation of trust with customers and partners, and a business rhythm that allows for reflection, adaptation, and care. Entrepreneurs working within this logic often choose to build around existing community needs, cultural heritage, or ecological constraints rather than trying to disrupt them. Their projects tend to grow modestly, stay embedded in their territories, and evolve based on the people and places they serve.

Slowpreneur offers a solution by empowering young people to create sustainable, innovative businesses while fostering their well-being through the concept of *“deceleration”*. This concept encourages young entrepreneurs to slow down, reflect, and adopt sustainable practices that benefit their personal development and the resilience of their communities. Unlike conventional entrepreneurship programs, Slowpreneur introduces *deceleration* as a key principle, helping young people avoid rapid scaling and profit-driven pressure, instead fostering creativity, resilience, and well-being first.

In practice, slow entrepreneurship can take many forms. It might look like a micro-enterprise based in a rural area that works closely with local producers to preserve traditional know-how. It might emerge as a cooperative that reinvests profits into community initiatives rather than scaling up. It may also be a solo venture that limits its client base to avoid overwork or burnout, aligning the business model with personal life choices. What links these practices is not their size or sector, but a conscious effort to align business decisions with ethical commitments, social responsibility, and environmental awareness. This approach resonates particularly in peripheral and rural regions, where traditional forms of entrepreneurship may not be viable or desirable. It offers a counter-narrative to extractive models of development, often aligning more closely with territorial needs and environmental limits.

Across Europe, a quiet movement is reshaping what it means to run a business. Far from the fast-paced world of start-ups and venture capital, small-scale entrepreneurs are building enterprises that grow slowly, stay local, and prioritize depth over scale in

rural and remote areas. These businesses don't chase global markets but respond to the needs of their communities and the values of sustainability.

2.2 Relevance of Slow Entrepreneurship for the VET Sector

As the concept of slow entrepreneurship is new, its relevance in the VET field still needs to be demonstrated. However, it aligns with the evolving needs of learners from regions in Europe that are facing depopulation, unemployment, or demographic shifts. Deceleration and slow business provide an alternative model for sustainable economic activity which is community-based and future-oriented. These values make it particularly suitable for VET learners who are often rooted to their locals' contexts due to their studies and reduce mobilities possibilities compared to students pursuing higher education.

VET learners emphasize their learning with skills over scale, valuing craftsmanship, care work, cultural knowledge, agroecology, and all areas deeply connected to vocational disciplines. It allows learners to see their technical and manual abilities not only as job-market tools, but as foundations for building resilient, purpose-driven businesses. Moreover, many VET learners come from rural, peri-urban and/or economically disadvantaged areas where traditional employment opportunities might be scarce. Slowpreneurship gives an opportunity to provide an impact directly in their livelihoods that respond to local needs, whether it be food production, hospitality, crafts, or services.

Social and ecological stewardship also matters, cultivating and nurturing a mindset of sustainability and ethics, increasingly required across industries with ESG policies. Integrating these principles into VET curricula can help learners develop not only job readiness but also entrepreneurial agencies rooted in environmental stewardship and community engagement.

2.3

Good Practices & Examples in the Slow Entrepreneurship Field

This concept, although new as a practice and difficult to implement for a new entrepreneurship as it mostly applicable far from urban centres, where fundings and opportunities are scarce compared to urban counterparts. Below, a few successful examples will be shown to demonstrate what slow entrepreneurship is about.

1. Sende Portugal – A coliving in the Portuguese Countryside

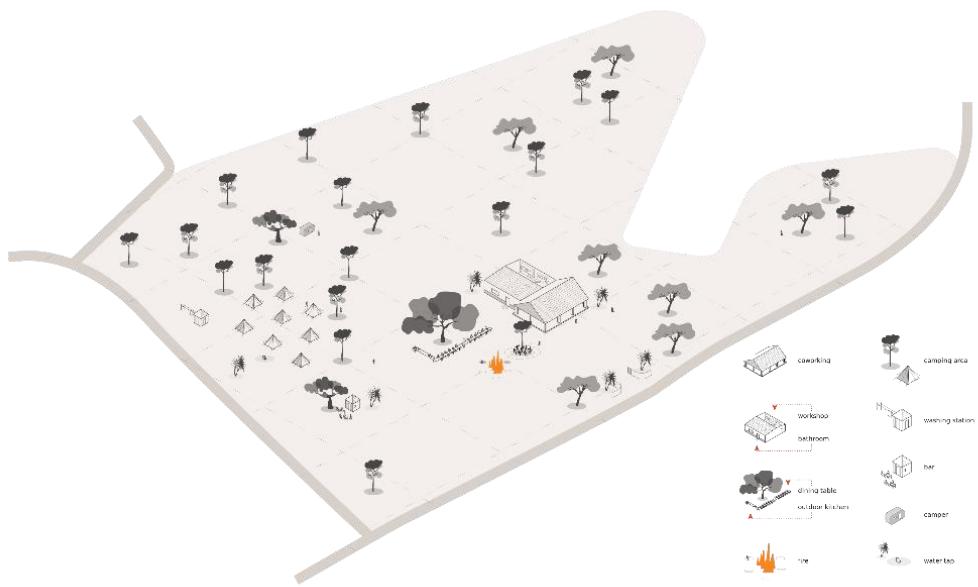
In the remote mountains of northern Portugal, Sende⁴ has established itself as a compelling example of slow entrepreneurship, one that prioritises depth of experience, community, and connection to place over rapid growth or market-driven expansion. Building on its origins in rural Galicia, the founders chose not to scale up through replication or franchising, but to remain grounded in the restoration of abandoned villages and the creation of spaces where people can think, work, and live at a different pace. In doing so, they have transformed forgotten rural areas into vibrant micro-centres of creativity, learning, and international exchange.

At its core, Sende is more than a coliving and coworking project. It uses these tools to host and facilitate multi-day events designed around human relationships and shared purpose. Every gathering begins with group building and informal connection, an essential step that allows trust to form before diving into content. The events range from innovation and entrepreneurship to conflict resolution and educational design, often developed in partnership with NGOs, educators, or companies seeking a reflective environment away from the noise of their daily routines. Teams come to Sende not for speed or efficiency, but to step outside their structures and engage with problems in a calm, focused way.

What makes Sende successful is its refusal to compromise its values. It has remained intentionally small, using its scale as an asset to preserve intimacy and authenticity. Its

⁴ <https://www.sende.co/portugal>

spaces are human-sized, its rhythms seasonal, and its working style collaborative rather than transactional. In a landscape dominated by acceleration and scale, Sende shows that sustainable entrepreneurship can grow slowly, with care, for the land, for people, and for the future of rural life.



The map of Sende Portugal by Ena

2. NoceFresca – Artist Residency in Sardinia

NoceFresca⁵ is a residency set in the quiet villages of rural Sardinia, a sustainable hospitality network for international artists. It offers creators from around the world the time, space, and context to reflect, create, and engage with a slower rhythm of life.



⁵ <https://www.nocefresca.it/>

With its strong ties to the land and its people, Nocefresca embodies the principles of slow entrepreneurship: it prioritizes process over performance, connection over consumption, and depth over scale.

This project is seen as good practice for slow entrepreneurship as it is based in a non-touristic area, rooted in the local community and promoting Sardinian culture through human exchange and revitalization of a rural area. The Host emphasizes quality experiences, fostering a close-knit community of artists and encouraging meaningful interactions over mass participation. Hosts artists who engage with local traditions and landscapes, helping in preserving Sardinian heritage and promotes awareness of the island's unique cultural identity. The residency provides a supportive environment for artists to experiment and develop their work without the pressure of immediate commercial success, aligning with the principles of slow entrepreneurship that value process over product.

At Nocefresca, each resident is offered a quiet, fully equipped workspace set in the historic heart of Sardinia's rural villages. These spaces are more than studios, they are entry points into the rhythms, architecture, and lived heritage of the island. What makes Nocefresca unique is its strong bond with the local community. Artists live and work alongside residents in villages where nature, craft, and tradition remain part of everyday life. This immersion encourages genuine exchange of practices, values, and perspectives without extracting the local culture. Instead of delivering output, the residency fosters dialogue and mutual enrichment, reinforcing the idea that creativity can be a form of shared living.

3. Mannos – Regenerating Sardinia Through Local Culture, Food & Craft

Mannos⁶ is a Sardinian-based initiative that redefines how people interact with food, land, and local traditions. Founded by Maria Giovanna Mereu, who returned to her island roots after years abroad, Mannos is not a typical farm or shop, it is a living network of local producers, artisans, and smallholders committed to preserving Sardinia's cultural and agricultural identity through sustainable, small-scale practices.

⁶ <https://www.mannos.it/>



At the heart of the project is a distinctive "adoption model." Individuals and companies can adopt olive trees, beehives, vineyards, or small farms, and receive authentic, seasonal products made by Sardinian producers using traditional methods. This direct connection between producers and adopters goes beyond commerce. It builds emotional investment and trust, bringing urban consumers closer to the rural rhythms of production and encouraging long-term support for local ecosystems and crafts.

Every adoption comes with stories, updates, and parcels, not just products, but a piece of Sardinian life. For companies, Mannos offers tailored experiences that combine ethical gifting with social and environmental impact. Businesses can adopt on behalf of employees or clients, organize visits, and integrate Sardinian values such as care, slowness, responsibility, to their corporate culture. Rather than opting for fast, impersonal branding strategies, Mannos invites firms to invest in relationships that are grounded, slow, and sincere. Mannos thrives not through growth metrics or international scaling, but through its capacity to reconnect people to place. It weaves together agriculture, storytelling, and identity in a model that promotes continuity, craftsmanship, and the local economy.

2.4

Hands-on Activities to Train Slow Entrepreneurship

2.4.1

Building a Business Together

Duration	3 hours
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Help participants explore and define a business idea aligned with the principles of slow entrepreneurship.➤ Support learners in mapping their ideas into a usable format that could form the basis of a website, poster, or small campaign.➤ Introduce basic tools for understanding user needs, market context, and value creation.➤ Foster visual thinking, collaboration, and the ability to iterate quickly and reflectively.➤ Reinforce the idea that good businesses grow from clear, locally rooted, and carefully considered ideas.
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ A clearly formulated business idea built around real needs, not abstract ambitions.➤ A simple visual prototype that communicates the core message and feel of the business.➤ Greater awareness of the tools and steps involved in planning a small venture.➤ Improved confidence in articulating slow, sustainable, and locally rooted ideas.
Group Composition	Designed for small to medium-sized groups (20–25 participants) to foster rich discussion, peer support, and hands-on collaboration.
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Whiteboards and markers or flipcharts➤ Sticky notes and pens➤ Computers or tablets with internet access (for basic market research)➤ Prototyping tools: paper, markers, scissors, tape, or creative materials like Legos➤ Optional: Canva, Figma, or simple sketch templates for digital prototyping

Tips for the Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Set an open tone and reassure learners that this is a creative experiment, not a pitch competition. ➤ Emphasise that we are not seeking "the next startup" but meaningful, human-scale ideas. ➤ Support participants to reflect on the pace, purpose, and personal relevance of their idea.
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Activity Description and Session Breakdown

This hands-on session leads participants through the early-stage design of a small business idea. Working solo or in pairs, learners will develop a concept by following four key steps:

1. Identifying a real-world problem
2. Proposing a solution
3. Defining the target audience
4. Articulating the unique value proposition (USP)

Learners will conduct quick market and competitor research and then create a simple prototype, visualizing what their idea could look like as a landing page or presentation. This process encourages iterative thinking, experimentation, and a strong link between purpose and audience. Importantly, learners are reminded this is a working hypothesis, not a finished product. The goal is to go through the process, not to get it "right."

Part	Activity	Duration	Description
1	Brainstorming the Business Idea	1 hour	<p>Learners identify a small problem they care about, propose a thoughtful solution, and define their target audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prompt: "What's something around you that doesn't work well, but could, with a bit of care?" ➤ Encourage fast, simple ideas. Don't overthink. ➤ Map out the core four: problem, solution, target audience, and unique value propositions (unique angle of your product or unique selling angle).

2	Market Research & Competitor Scan	30 minutes	<p>Participants explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Does this product or service already exist? ➢ How is it offered, and to whom? ➢ What are others doing well or badly in this space? ➢ What makes my idea <i>slow</i>, distinct, and locally relevant? <p>Trainer tip: Guide them to focus on <i>real fit</i> over imagined scale. If something already exists, great! Now improve it or localise it.</p>
3	Visual Prototyping	1 hour 30 minutes	<p>Using paper, markers, or digital tools, learners build a basic mock-up of their landing page, product poster, or visual pitch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Suggest using A4 paper “blocks” for each section (headline, image, offer, testimonial, etc.) ➢ If they prefer digital: simple layouts in Canva or hand-drawn wireframes work fine. ➢ If it's a physical product, they can sketch packaging or build with objects. <p>This process grounds their idea in something tangible, while surfacing clarity or confusion in their thinking</p>
4	Debriefing		<p>This final step helps participants reflect on what they created and how it felt to do so.</p> <p>Facilitator questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ How did brainstorming go? Did anything surprise you? ➢ Where did you get stuck, and why? ➢ Did you feel connected to your idea? Did it feel realistic? ➢ How did market research shape what you changed or kept? ➢ What did prototyping teach you about communicating your idea? ➢ What would your next step be if you had more time?

2.4.2

Deconstruct Participant's Business Ideas

Duration	More or less 3/4 hours
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Motivate learners to apply the principles, tools, and strategies of slow entrepreneurship to real project ideas. ➤ Support critical evaluation of business concepts through a step-by-step analysis. ➤ Reinforce the importance of taking time to understand each component of a venture deeply, audience, impact, community ties, and sustainability. ➤ Create a space for shared learning and collaborative refinement. ➤ Encourage participants to rethink success not as scale or speed, but as long-term value and resilience.
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A deeper appreciation of how slow entrepreneurship principles apply in practice. ➤ Improved ability to analyse and adapt business ideas through group reflection. ➤ Increased confidence in planning ventures with a focus on long-term value, ecological awareness, and local relevance. ➤ Development of richer, more resilient project concepts grounded in personal and collective insight.
Group Composition	Ideal for small to medium-sized groups (15-20 participants) to ensure focused analysis, meaningful exchange, and collaborative learning.
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Whiteboard and markers or digital presentation tool ➤ Notepads, pens, or laptops for participant note-taking
Tips for the Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Select a participant's idea that reflects the values of slow entrepreneurship, care for community, sustainability, rootedness in local context, and long-term vision over quick returns. ➤ Guide the deconstruction process to ensure all key elements are explored thoughtfully. ➤ Foster open dialogue and active involvement; value reflective input over speed. ➤ Offer constructive feedback in real time, emphasising meaningful improvement rather than perfection.

Activity Description and Session Breakdown

This session invites learners to collectively deconstruct a selected business idea, focusing on its foundational elements. The aim is to reinforce the application of slow entrepreneurship theory to practical contexts. The selected idea should ideally be one explored in the previous exercise.

Part	Activity	Duration	Description
1	Preparation & Idea Selection	15 minutes	The trainer selects a business idea that exemplifies slow values: grounded in place, serving a real community, and not dependent on fast growth. Learners are divided into small discussion groups. Visual aids are prepared in advance to guide the deconstruction process.
2	Business Idea Presentation	30 minutes	The selected participant (or group) presents the idea, highlighting its market, audience, problem statement, and proposed solution. The group is encouraged to ask questions, challenge assumptions, and offer 1% improvements, small but meaningful suggestions for refinement.
3	Deconstruction Process	1 hour	<p>Together, the group unpacks the business idea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Who is the target audience and what is their real need? ➢ What problem does the idea respond to, and why does it matter? ➢ What is the value proposition, and how is it unique or relevant in a slow context? ➢ How does the idea position itself in relation to similar local or traditional alternatives? <p>This phase uses tools such as group mapping, SWOT analysis, and thematic prompts to guide reflection.</p>
4	Application of Theoretical Knowledge	1 hour	Ideally, participants can link each element of the idea to frameworks (e.g. empathy mapping, customer profiling, sustainable business model design). If it is not the case, emphasis can be placed on Slowpreneurship and on how “slowness” can be integrated into design decisions.
5	Group Discussion & Idea Refinement	1 hour	Facilitated group work supports the revision of the original concept. Participants collaborate on improvements, making the idea more resilient, context-aware, and aligned with the values of slow entrepreneurship.
6	Summary & Closing	15 minutes	The group reviews the changes made and highlights the key learning moments from the session. The refined idea is

		<p>documented for future reference and shared within the group.</p> <p>This reflective space allows participants to connect the exercise with their personal projects and broader entrepreneurial journeys. Suggested guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What shifted in your understanding of business planning after this session? ➤ Which part of the deconstruction process challenged your thinking the most? ➤ How can what you learned today be applied to your own project or idea? ➤ What does “value” mean for you now, after considering slowness, sustainability, and impact?
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3

Creating a business plan

3.1 Relevance of the Skill of Creating a Business Plan

The skill of creating a business plan is important from an entrepreneurship perspective, serving as both a roadmap and a strategic tool for guiding a new business idea toward potential success. A well-planned business plan outlines the vision, mission, goals, target market, competition, marketing strategies, financial projections and operational structure of the business. This enables future entrepreneurs to approach their ideas with more clarity and sense of purpose.

Skill of creating a proper business plan helps the entrepreneur to critically evaluate the feasibility of their concept idea, identify potential challenges, and plan allocation of resources in an efficient way.

Furthermore, a business plan is essential for securing potential funding, as investors and financial institutions rely on it to assess the viability and profitability of the business idea. Beyond external stakeholders, the process of developing a business plan

enhances the entrepreneur's decision-making skills and enables long-term thinking. It helps entrepreneur to anticipate future risks, measure progress and adapt their strategies as the business grows and market conditions evolve. In essence, the ability to create a strong business plan transforms an idea into a structured, actionable and sustainable enterprise.

3.2 Hands-on Activity to Train the Creation of a Business Plan

3.2.1 Creating a Business Plan

Duration	approximately 2-4 hours (can be adjusted)
Objectives	Equip VET learners with practical knowledge and hands-on experience to create a basic business plan, using interactive activities.
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Participants understand the key components of a business plan (e.g., market analysis, financing, marketing, target groups).➤ Participants are able to apply the Business Model Canvas to structure a business idea.➤ Participants can develop their own business idea using the Business Model Canvas.➤ Participants are capable of drafting a basic business plan (e.g., executive summary, financial planning, target audience description).➤ They understand how costs, revenues, and resources fit into a business model.➤ Participants can clearly and convincingly present their business idea (e.g., in the form of a pitch).➤ The workshop promotes entrepreneurial thinking, problem-solving skills, and teamwork.➤ It fosters a sense of responsibility for the economic and social impact of their business idea.

Activity Description and Session Breakdown

Part	Activity	Duration	Description
1	Introduction	15 minutes	Importance of business planning – facilitator can use the above text to summarize to VET learners on why a skill of creating a business plan is important. Overview of business plan components: presenting SWOT Analysis and Business Model Canvas templates.
2	Business Idea Generation	30 minutes	Participants brainstorm simple business ideas individually or in groups. Short presentation of business idea per individual/team.
3	SWOT Analysis	45 minutes	Each team completes a SWOT analysis for their idea. Before each team completes a SWOT analysis for their idea, a facilitator should briefly explain each part of SWOT and provide 1-2 examples to the VET learners. SWOT analysis helps learners think critically and encourage honest discussion.
4	Business model canvas	60 minutes	After participants finalized their SWOT analysis you can present to them Business model canvas: https://canvanizer.com/new/business-model-canvas
5	Presentations & Feedback	45 minutes	Each group is tasked to present their SWOT analysis and business model canvas. It is important to highlight that these tools are a simple map for any business idea with aim to verify and refine your business idea.

Template Example:

What's in a SWOT analysis?

The good

Strengths

What resources can we deploy?
What are our advantages?
What's working well?



The not-so-good

Weaknesses

What abilities are we lacking?
Where are we starting to struggle?
How can we overcome these?



What we've got

Opportunities

Who might most value our strengths?
What trends work in our favour?
What prizes are within reach?



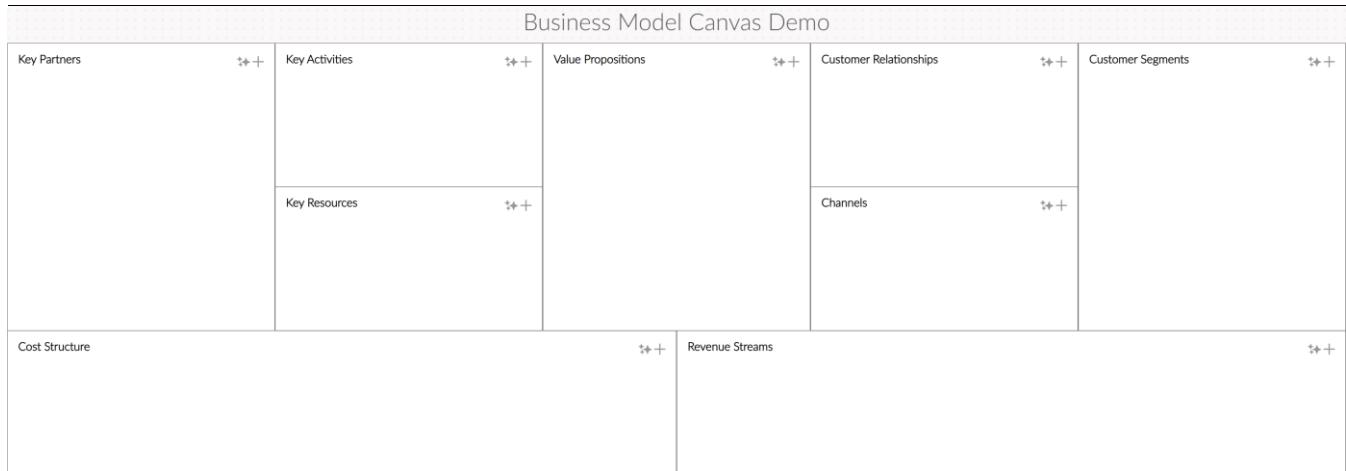
What's out there

Threats

What headwinds do we face?
Who might challenge us?
What could go wrong?



BiteSize Learning



Example template of business model canvas - canvanizer.com

The Business Model Canvas reflects systematically on the business model, so participant can focus on their business model segment by segment. This also means you can start with a brain dump, filling out the segments the spring to your mind first and then work on the empty segments to close the gaps. The following list with questions will help participants brainstorm and compare several variations and ideas for your next business model innovation.

1) Key partners

- i. Who are your key partners/suppliers?
- ii. What are the motivations for the partnerships?

2) Key activities

- i. What key activities does your value proposition require?
- ii. What activities are important the most in distribution channels, customer relationships, revenue stream?

3) Value proposition

- i. What core value do you deliver to the customer?
- ii. Which customer needs are you satisfying?

4) Customer relationship

- i. What relationship that the target customer expects you to establish?
- ii. How can you integrate that into your business in terms of cost and format?

5) Customer segment

- i. Which classes are you creating values for?
- ii. Who is your most important customer?

6) Key resource

- i. What key resources does your value proposition require?
- ii. What resources are important the most in distribution channels, customer relationships, revenue stream...?

7) Distribution channel

- i. Through which channels that your customers want to be reached?
- ii. Which channels work best? How much do they cost? How can they be integrated into your and your customers' routines?

8) Cost structure

- i. What are the most cost in your business?
- ii. Which key resources/ activities are most expensive?

9) Revenue stream

- i. For what value are your customers willing to pay?
- ii. What and how do they recently pay? How would they prefer to pay?
- iii. How much does every revenue stream contribute to the overall revenues?

4

Financial Literacy

Financial literacy can be challenging for VET learners because it often involves abstract concepts such as budgeting, taxes, or investment. These topics can seem theoretical and disconnected from learners' everyday experiences. It is important to enhance immediate relevance of training involving financial literacy; otherwise, if learners don't see how financial skills apply directly to their personal lives or career goals, they may lose motivation. Clear explanations and practical examples are needed to avoid the complexity of financial terminology. Moreover, some learners may have had little prior exposure to financial education or may associate it with stress or failure. Traditional lecture-based approaches without hands-on activities or real-life context can make the subject feel uninteresting and disconnected from reality. To overcome these barriers, financial literacy training should be interactive, relatable, and tailored to learners' backgrounds and goals. Incorporating practical examples, storytelling, and real-world applications can significantly increase engagement and understanding.

4.1

Relevance of Financial Literacy

The need for training in financial literacy was widely recognized as a key competence for overcoming barriers in entrepreneurial or freelance career pathways. It is particularly important for VET learners, especially female learners in rural areas. Often, limited access to networking opportunities, positive role models, financial knowledge, and local resources make starting and sustaining a business more challenging. Enhancing financial literacy equips learners with essential skills such as budgeting, planning, investment, and risk management, crucial for developing viable business ideas and successfully managing self-employment. For female learners in rural regions, these skills not only foster economic independence but also promote active

engagement in local development. Furthermore, improved financial literacy enhances access to suitable and sustainable funding options, which are crucial for the long-term growth of rural communities.

Financial literacy plays a central role in effective risk management, as it provides learners with the tools to identify, assess, and respond appropriately to financial uncertainties in entrepreneurship, enabling them to evaluate and minimize risks proactively. With a solid understanding of budgeting, cash flow monitoring, savings strategies, and insurance options, entrepreneurs can anticipate potential risks such as market volatility, unexpected costs, or changes in customer demand. This knowledge enables them to create contingency plans, make informed investment decisions, and allocate resources prudently to minimize financial losses. By fostering a proactive and informed approach to managing risks, financial literacy enhances business resilience and supports long-term sustainability.

A small business owner can increase the sustainability of their business and minimize potential risks through proactive financial planning. When unexpected expenses arise, such as equipment repairs or delayed customer payments, they can quickly identify potential shortfalls. Furthermore, understanding insurance options allows them to select appropriate coverage, reducing the financial impact of unforeseen events such as natural disasters or theft. This proactive financial planning helps the business navigate challenges and continue to grow sustainably.

4.2 Hands-on Activities to Train Financial Literacy

4.2.1 Business Budgeting

The following hands-on activity on Business Budgeting was designed for VET learners or beginner-level entrepreneurship training. It emphasizes real-world relevance, interactive learning, and accessibility, particularly for young or underserved learners.

Duration	90–120 minutes (can be adjusted)
Objectives	To introduce learners to the basics of creating a business budget, including estimating income, identifying expenses, and managing cash flow over time.
Learning Outcomes	By the end of this activity, learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Understand the components of a basic business budget➤ Distinguish between fixed and variable costs➤ Access and forecast income and expenses➤ Identify potential financial risks and shortfalls➤ Adjust plans to maintain a balanced budget
Group Composition	The effectiveness of the activity can be enhanced by thoughtful group composition (see further below).
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Budget template (paper or digital spreadsheet)➤ Calculators or computers with spreadsheet software➤ Flipchart or whiteboard➤ Example business scenarios (printed or projected)➤ Pens, markers, sticky notes➤ (Optional) Fake currency or budgeting cards for tactile learners
Tips for the Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Use real prices and local cost examples where possible➤ Encourage peer-to-peer learning by mixing teams with different strengths

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Make it fun! Add gamified elements like "budget points" or a "financial resilience badge"
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Mixed-Skill Groups

Composition: Combine learners with different strengths, some more confident in math or tech, others stronger in communication or creativity.

Why:

- Encourages peer learning
- Helps everyone contribute based on their strengths
- Reflects real-world business teamwork

Ideal for: General VET classes, mixed-level groups

Peer-Support Pairs

Composition: Pair more experienced or confident learners with those who need extra support (e.g., language learners, learners with math anxiety).

Why:

- Builds confidence in less experienced learners
- Encourages leadership and empathy

Ideal for: Inclusive classrooms, low-threshold VET settings

Activity Description and Session Breakdown

Part	Activity	Duration	Description
1	Introduction	15 minutes	<p>The trainer asks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What do you think a business needs money for? ➤ What happens if a business spends more than it earns? <p>Then introduces key terms:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Revenue, Expenses, Profit, Cash Flow ➢ Fixed Costs (e.g. rent) vs. Variable Costs (e.g. materials)
2	Choose Business Scenario	a 10 minutes	<p>Each group or learner selects (or is assigned) a small business idea, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ A food truck ➢ A handmade craft shop ➢ A local cleaning service ➢ A tutoring business <p>These scenarios come with context info (e.g., target market, startup goals).</p>
3	Create a Budget	40 minutes	<p>Using the Business Budget Worksheet, learners estimate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Monthly or quarterly income (number of sales × price per unit/service) ➢ Fixed expenses (e.g., rent, licenses, salaries) ➢ Variable expenses (e.g., raw materials, packaging, fuel) ➢ Unexpected costs (repairs, slow season) ➢ Set a savings or reinvestment goal (e.g., 10% of income) <p>Optionally, learners use spreadsheets for automatic calculations and visualization.</p>
4	Problem Cards – Risk & Adjustment	15–20 minutes	<p>Trainer gives each group a "Surprise Budget Challenge" card, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ "Your supplier raised prices by 15%" ➢ "You had fewer customers this month" ➢ "Your delivery vehicle broke down" <p>Groups adjust their budgets accordingly and discuss how they can compensate (cut costs, increase prices, delay investment, etc.)</p>
5	Share & Reflect	20–25 minutes	<p>Each group presents their budget briefly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you prioritize in spending? • Did you have enough profit? • How did you manage risks? <p>Trainer guides a reflection:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is budgeting important before launching a business? • How does budgeting support long-term success?
6	Optional Extension	optional	Have learners compare their budget with a real business case or invite a local entrepreneur to give feedback on budget decisions.

4.2.2

Pricing Activity

Duration	90–120 minutes (can be adjusted)
Objectives	Learners will calculate an appropriate price for a product, develop a brief sales pitch, and present it to their peers to practice pricing decisions and persuasive communication.
Learning Outcomes	<p>By the end of this activity, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Calculate basic costs associated with a product or service ➢ Set an initial price based on cost, market research, and perceived value ➢ Articulate a clear value proposition ➢ Deliver a short, persuasive pitch to a peer or panel ➢ Reflect on pricing decisions and improve their pitch based on feedback
Group Composition	Ideal for small groups (3-4 learners)
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Product description cards (can be real or fictional products/services) ➢ Cost breakdown sheets (materials, labor, overhead, etc.) ➢ Calculator or paper for calculations ➢ Paper or digital device for preparing pitches
Tips for the Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Adapt complexity based on learners' background (simplify math for basic levels). ➢ Encourage creativity, this boosts engagement, especially in mixed-ability groups. ➢ Invite local entrepreneurs for real-time feedback or to act as the jury if available.

Activity Description and Session Breakdown

Part	Activity	Duration	Description
1	Introduction	15 minutes	<p>Trainer explains the basics of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Cost structures (fixed vs. variable costs) ➢ Pricing models (cost-based, value-based, competitor-based) ➢ What makes a compelling pitch (problem-solution, uniqueness, call to action)
2	Product Development Simulation	15 minutes	<p>In small teams or individually, learners create a fictional product or service idea. It can be based on a local need or something creative and fun (e.g., eco-friendly lunch boxes, handmade crafts, a dog-walking service).</p>
3	Calculate Costs & Set the Price	20–30 minutes	<p>Learners fill out a simplified cost structure worksheet, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Material costs ➢ Labor/time ➢ Overhead or equipment ➢ Profit margin <p>Then, they set a price and justify it using one of the pricing strategies.</p>
4	Pitch Preparation	20 minutes	<p>Learners write a 1–2-minute pitch that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ The product idea and target market ➢ What problem it solves ➢ Why it's worth the price ➢ (Optional) Promotional slogan
5	Pitch Presentation	20–30 minutes	<p>Each learner or team delivers their pitch to the group or a mock jury (trainer or peers). Encourage applause and provide brief feedback based on clarity, persuasiveness, and pricing logic.</p>
6	Reflection & Feedback	15 minutes	<p>Group discusses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ What made certain pitches effective? ➢ How did the pricing influence the perception of value? ➢ Would they adjust their price or presentation in the future?

5

Communication Skills

Strong communication is a cornerstone of entrepreneurial success. From presenting a business idea to building relationships with clients, partners, and stakeholders, entrepreneurs must be able to convey their messages clearly, persuasively, and authentically. In rural contexts especially, where trust and community engagement play a critical role, effective communication becomes not only a skill but a strategic tool for sustainable business development. This chapter explores different aspects of communication relevant for entrepreneurs and provides practical methods for improving them.

5.1 Relevance of Communication Skills

How confident are you in adapting your message to different audiences?

In what ways do you currently practice active listening in your business relationships?

Communication is not merely about speaking well. For entrepreneurs, it includes active listening, empathy, intercultural sensitivity, persuasive messaging, negotiation, and the ability to adapt the message to the audience. Clear and consistent communication contributes to building credibility, trust, and loyalty, all vital components in creating lasting customer relationships and networks.

In rural and local entrepreneurship, communication also supports community integration and facilitates collaboration with institutions, suppliers, and clients. Entrepreneurs often become role models or leaders in their community, and developing strong communication skills helps them fulfil that role more effectively. Furthermore, entrepreneurs who can communicate their vision are better positioned to attract partners, access funding, and promote their values.

5.2

Cross-cultural Communication

Have you ever experienced a communication challenge related to cultural differences?

How can you adjust your communication style to be more inclusive of different backgrounds?

With globalization, migration, and the rise of tourism, even rural entrepreneurs are increasingly required to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds. Cross-cultural communication refers to the ability to understand, respect, and adapt to cultural differences when engaging with others. It involves more than just language; it includes body language, tone, values, time perception, hierarchy, and social norms.

Entrepreneurs working in hospitality, tourism, or any client-facing field must be especially aware of these nuances. Misunderstandings due to cultural differences can lead to conflicts, lost opportunities, or poor customer experiences. On the other hand, demonstrating cultural sensitivity can become a strong competitive advantage and a means of creating inclusive, welcoming environments.

For example, understanding how to greet international guests, respect dietary habits, or tailor marketing messages for different cultural groups enhances a business's appeal and trustworthiness.

To improve effectiveness in cross-cultural communication, it's helpful to keep a few practical suggestions in mind.

Observe and ask: Pay close attention to non-verbal cues and politely ask questions when unsure about cultural expectations or preferences. This shows respect and helps avoid misunderstandings.

Be patient and open-minded: Recognize that cultural differences can affect communication pace, style, and decision-making. Adapting to these differences with patience builds stronger, trusting relationships.

5.3

Speaking in Public

Public speaking is one of the most important and feared communication skills. For entrepreneurs, speaking in public can mean pitching to investors, presenting a project in a local meeting, participating in a fair, or leading a workshop. Developing confidence and clarity in public speaking enables entrepreneurs to convey their ideas persuasively and inspire their audience.

Key elements of effective public speaking include:

- Knowing the audience and tailoring the message
- Structuring the content logically (e.g., introduction, problem, solution, call to action)
- Using storytelling to create emotional connection
- Managing voice, body language, and eye contact
- Handling questions and unexpected situations calmly

In rural entrepreneurship, public speaking is also a tool for building visibility and credibility within the community. Entrepreneurs often serve as advocates for sustainability, innovation, or local identity, and their ability to speak confidently supports these missions. To help develop this ability, a few practical tips can guide entrepreneurs toward more impactful and engaging public speaking:

- Practice aloud: Rehearsing in front of a mirror or recording yourself can help refine your message and delivery.
- Engage the audience: Ask questions or invite short interactions to maintain interest.
- Breathe and pause: Use natural pauses to pace your speech and reduce anxiety.

5.4

Hands-on Activities to Train Communication Skills

5.4.1

Pitch Your Passion

Each participant is invited to imagine they are presenting their business idea to a local event audience, a potential investor, or a partner. They must capture attention and communicate value clearly in 2 minutes.

Duration	90–120 minutes
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ To strengthen public speaking and persuasive communication by practicing concise business pitches➤ To build confidence in presenting ideas
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Increased confidence in public speaking➤ Ability to structure and deliver a message clearly➤ Skills in giving and receiving constructive feedback
Group Composition	4–12 participants and aspiring entrepreneurs with little or no experience in public speaking
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ A4 paper or notebooks➤ Pens or pencils➤ Timer or smartphone➤ Chairs arranged in a circle or semi-circle➤ Flipchart or whiteboard (optional)

Activity Description and Session Breakdown

Part	Activity	Duration	Description
1	Introduction	10 min	The facilitator introduces the idea of an elevator pitch and provides a basic structure:

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Who are you and what's your idea? ➤ What problem does it solve? ➤ What is your solution? ➤ What makes it special or valuable? ➤ Call to action (what do you want from your audience?)
2	Writing the pitch	15–20 min	Participants write a short pitch (max 2 minutes) using the structure above. The facilitator can offer examples or help clarify ideas.
3	First round of pitches	30–40 min	Each participant presents their pitch to the group. After each presentation, the group gives feedback using three guiding questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What worked well? ➤ What could be improved? ➤ How did it feel as a listener?
4	Revision and second round	30 min	Participants revise their pitch and deliver it again, applying the feedback.
5	Debriefing	10–15 min	Final group discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What was the biggest challenge? ➤ What helped reduce nervousness? ➤ Any advice or insights? The facilitator may also share tips on breathing, pacing, and audience engagement.

5.4.2

Message in Motion

Participants work in pairs or small groups and practice adapting the same message (about their business idea or product) to various audience types (e.g., investors, elderly clients, children, municipality officials). This helps them understand how to tailor tone, content, and approach depending on the context.

Duration	90 minutes
Objectives	To develop skills in active listening and message adaptation by simulating real-life business communication scenarios with different audiences and goals.
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased awareness of the listener's perspective ➤ Improved clarity and effectiveness of spoken messages ➤ Confidence in adapting content for different real-life situations ➤ Stronger active listening and audience reading skills
Group Composition	6–15 participants
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scenario cards (examples below) ➤ Paper and pens ➤ Flipchart or whiteboard (optional) ➤ A timer

Activity Description and Session Breakdown

Part	Activity	Duration	Description
1	Introduction	10 min	The facilitator introduces the idea of audience awareness and message adaptation. Briefly explain how entrepreneurs often need to shift language, tone, and detail when speaking with different people (e.g., customers, partners, institutions).
2	Scenario Assignment	10 min	<p>Each participant draws a scenario card that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A brief description of their role (entrepreneur) ➤ A target audience (e.g. “convince a local farmer to test your new tool” or “explain your idea to a school group”) ➤ A communication goal (e.g. inform, persuade, ask for support)
3	Preparation	15 min	<p>Participants prepare a short 2–3-minute message to deliver based on their assigned scenario. Encourage them to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What tone or language would work best? ➤ How much detail is appropriate? ➤ What does the listener care about?

4	Presentation & Feedback	40 min	<p>Participants take turns presenting their message to the group (or to a “mock audience” made of peers acting in role). After each turn, the group discusses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Was the message appropriate for the target audience? ➤ What worked well? ➤ How could it be clearer or more engaging?
5	Debriefing	10–15 min	<p>Final group discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How did it feel to change your style? ➤ What do you find hardest about listening or adapting? ➤ How can this apply to real interactions in your community or business?

Sample Scenario Cards

- “You’re pitching your eco-friendly food packaging idea to a group of 12-year-olds on a school visit.”
- “You want a local municipality official to support your rural co-working space idea with a small grant.”
- “You’re meeting a farmer who is sceptical of using digital tools. You want to explain the benefits of your app.”
- “You’re at a local community fair and want to spread the word about your new artisan bakery.”

6

Conclusion

The key competencies presented in this training guide can serve as a first step in introducing entrepreneurship education and in reducing the knowledge gaps faced by learners.

Equipping VET learners beyond business- and economics-oriented vocational programs with entrepreneurial competencies can bring multiple benefits to the sustainable economic development of rural regions.

These learners can contribute to promoting local value creation, as entrepreneurs from the region invest locally and create jobs, thereby strengthening the regional economy. They also can support the preservation and sustainable use of regional resources. In particular, sustainable business models emphasize the careful and meaningful use of natural and cultural resources.

In a broader context, entrepreneurial activities contribute to economic diversification, as new businesses and innovative ideas help create a more diverse economic base and reduce dependence on single industries. Economic growth leads to improved infrastructure, education, and leisure opportunities, enhancing the attractiveness of rural and marginalised areas and attracting more people and investments.

Entrepreneurship also strengthens social networks, as local businesses foster community and cooperation, which enhances social cohesion. Expanding entrepreneurship education beyond business- and economics-oriented vocational programs would further promote gender equality. The targeted inclusion and support of women in the rural economy would drive more inclusive development by bringing diverse perspectives, fostering innovation, and addressing community needs often overlooked in male-dominated sectors. A stronger female entrepreneurial presence can contribute to more resilient and socially balanced rural economies.

We wish success and inspiration in applying and adapting the knowledge and skills presented in this training guide.

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