

momentum

support

knowledge

action

An Independent External Evaluation of



Final Report October 2014

A project funded under



LEONARDO DA VINCI TRANSFER OF INNOVATION PROJECT
Under the **Lifelong Learning Programme**
AGREEMENT NUMBER - **UK/12/LLP-LdV/TOI-506**
PROJECT NUMBER - **2012-1-GB2-LEO05-07860**

INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION completed on behalf of

Project Lead Newry & Mourne Enterprise Agency
Contact: Conor Patterson & Colin Hanna
Address: WIN Business Park, Newry, BT35 6PH
Tel: +44 28 3026 7011
Email: info@nmea.net

Internal Evaluator Louth County Enterprise Board
Contact: Joe English
Address: Mill Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth
Tel: +353 42 932 7099
Email: joe.english@lceb.ie

By
Company Momentum Consulting
Address: Orchard Court, Leitrim Village, Co. Leitrim, Ireland
Tel: +353 71 9623500
Email: orla@momentumconsulting.ie
Web www.momentumconsulting.ie
Project Team Orla Casey

Contents

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Description of Project
- 1.3 Lifelong Learning Programme
- 1.4 Establishing Project Need
- 1.5 The Project Partners and Evaluators Review of Partnership Structure
- 1.6 Summary of Findings of Interim Evaluation Report

2.0 Evaluation Purpose and Methodology

- 2.1 Evaluation Purpose
- 2.2 Key Areas for Consideration
- 2.3 Evaluation Methodology

3.0 Review & Assessment of Work Packages

4.0 Project Performance Overview

- 4.1 Project Meetings
- 4.2 Partner Co-operation
- 4.3 Project Management
- 4.4 Project Communications
- 4.5 Financial
- 4.6 Liaison with National Agency
- 4.7 Adherence to the Principles of the Lifelong Learning Programme

5.0 Conclusions

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

This report details the findings and conclusions of the final independent external evaluation of the Innovative Trainer project funded under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme of the Lifelong Learning Programme for the period 01/10/2012 to 30/09/2014. It builds upon our external Interim Evaluation Report presented in November 2013. The project sought to increase the capacity of Business Trainers and Mentors (BTMs) to support SMEs throughout Europe by developing a “Train the Trainer” blended learning training resource on non-technological innovation. This project was progressed and managed by a transnational partnership, comprised of the following eight organisations:

- Newry & Mourne Enterprise Agency, United Kingdom
- MindShare, France
- University Polytechnic Valencia, Spain
- Canice Consulting, United Kingdom
- European Business Network, Belgium
- University Polytechnic Bucharest, Romania
- Louth County Enterprise Board, Ireland
- National Enterprise Network – United Kingdom

The eight partners included VET organisations, enterprise representative bodies, the European industry association for BTMs working in Business Incubators (EBN), two national networks (LCEB & NEN) and innovation specialists from 6 countries. The total eligible cost of the action was determined as EUR 384,996.70 with a National Agency contribution to a maximum of EUR 288,744.57 equivalent to 75% of total project cost. This report has been prepared by independent evaluators Momentum Consulting and is based upon analyses and consultation carried out in the full evaluation period November 2012 to October 2014.

1.2 Description of Project

Over the 24 month project timescale, the Innovative Trainer partnership sought to devise and produce a tailored and highly accessible learning platform to increase the capacity of Business Trainers and Mentors (BTMs) to support SMEs throughout Europe (BTMs are Europe’s key players in developing innovation and growth within SMEs, and do so via range of public and private bodies). The project justification was that by updating their skills, BTMs will be better placed to provide guidance on how to innovate to small businesses, better adapt their services to changing business beneficiary groups & sectors and ultimately improve the innovation performance and growth of the enterprises they serve.

To achieve its objectives, the project set out a number of developmental steps all leading to the compilation of tailored learning materials in both multimedia elearning and classroom (blended) formats.

The anticipated actions as outlined in the funding application form were:-

- a European Baseline Audit, to ensure the correct focus of materials regarding target group needs and opportunities.
- a materials adaptation phase to modify, improve and enrich existing training materials. It was anticipated that case studies & peer experience would feature strongly in the course materials in order to assist trainees to link theory to practice and working out their own real life solutions. The course would also make use of a range of support materials allowing those trainees with specific interest may pursue further study if desired.
- a technical development phase building on an established and high ranking main project website and internal partner area, by transferring the new materials to a multimedia elearning and classroom (blended) format presented in a range of platforms (video, audio, power points, PDFs animations etc.).
- a transnational pilot testing exercise, with 36 BTMs and 60 trainee participants, who will trial both the online & classroom course providing quantitative and qualitative feedback which will be used to compile a series of recommendations and implement the necessary adjustments before launch.
- a transnational launch will form a central part of the exploitation work-package and will include work-shop demonstrations of the materials to BTMs from across Europe.
- a thorough dissemination plan will be adopted to promote the widespread uptake and use of the course following its launch. Given the lack of such a training/education resource, it was clear that there is high potential for Innovative Trainer post launch. It was also anticipated that subject to more detailed negotiations during the life of the project, the partners agreed that those partners who wish to commercialise the products post-project will present a commercialisation plan to the partnership for approval.

This final evaluation will assess progress made in completing these actions.

1.3 Lifelong Learning Programme, Leonardo da Vinci

The European Commission has integrated its various educational and training initiatives under a single umbrella, the Lifelong Learning Programme. The programme enables individuals at all stages of their lives to pursue stimulating learning opportunities across Europe. There are four sub-programmes focusing on different stages of education and training and continuing previous programmes, one of which is the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

Leonardo da Vinci is available to public and private bodies and institutions involved in vocational education and training. The potential beneficiaries span trainees in initial vocational training, to people already in the labour market, as well as VET professionals and private or public organisations active in this field. The aim of Leonardo da Vinci Multilateral Transfer of Innovation (TOI) Projects is to improve the quality and attractiveness of the European Vocational Education and Training system by adapting and integrating innovative content or results to new settings through working with transnational partners. Leonardo da Vinci enables VET organisations to work with European partners, exchange best practices, increasing the expertise of their staff and respond to the teaching and learning needs of people. It therefore supports efforts to make vocational education more attractive to young people. By helping European citizens to acquire new skills, knowledge and qualifications, the programme also aims to bolster the competitiveness of the European labour market. Innovation projects have always been at the core of the Leonardo da Vinci programme. It aims to improve the quality of training systems through the development and transfer of innovative policies, contents, methods and procedures within vocational education and training.

1.4 Establishing Project Need

It is useful to re-examine the identification of need that motivated the Innovative Trainer partnership to come together to design and seek funding for this innovative Leonardo da Vinci project. Their rationale was compelling – SMEs are crucial to Europe’s future prosperity and are essential in attaining the goal of "a sustainable economy based on knowledge and innovation".

SMEs are important!

- SMEs make an important contribution to the dynamism and innovative performance of an economy, thus enhancing economic growth especially in the medium and long term. The need to foster the conditions for SME growth and the need to address the innovation deficit is widely documented at EU level (Lisbon Agenda, CORDIS, Euroabstracts and European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS).
- Innovation and the transfer of knowledge of same is typically focused on technological innovation. However, for SMEs their crucial issue to survive is the non technological innovation. Their focus and need is on innovation in business models, organisation structure, marketing tools, etc.
- It is widely accepted that BTMs are vital in improving SME competitiveness. The project application impressively justified that business support needs to be more tailored to needs of different SMEs (Final Report of the Expert Group on Management Capacity Building 2006 & DG Enterprise “Support Services for Micro, Small and Sole Proprietors Businesses”, 2006). For example, women require advisors with specific innovation knowledge (Evaluation of Policy: Promotion of Women Innovators & Entrepreneurship July 2008).

- At country specific level, the project application provided compelling evidence in support of the project rationale.
- In Central and Eastern Europe, there is less understanding of concepts for SME growth & so business support provision is weaker still (European Training Foundation 2006).
- The 2010 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor revealed some unpleasant statistics for the UK. The number of people in the UK who aspire to start up their own company is just 7.3%, below the G7 average. The UK performs poorly in terms of the female to male entrepreneur ratio. Those who do start up are tending to set their sights lower. The number of people who are expecting their company to employ 20 or more people in five years had halved.

BTM’s potential as Innovation Change Agents

The premise of the Innovative Trainer project was that while good BTM practice exists, their potential to impact on SME performance was not being fully exploited. BTMs role as business experts and business educators could be built upon through the Innovative Trainer project to increase the contribution of BTMs as change agents who could facilitate the uptake of innovation & growth within their SME clients. The project’s training goal was not only to teach the knowledge they require to provide expert, personalized assistance, but to improve their performance as mentors & teachers which will in turn result in a significant impact of the survival & growth rates of start-up and early stage businesses.

1.5 The Project Partners

This section reviews each project partners in detail and summarises their respective roles within the framework of the project.



| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Project Lead | Since 2001, NMEA has assisted well over 1,000 entrepreneurs to develop businesses, employing 2,000 people and generating turnover of £7.2m. NMEA delivers the Enterprise Development, Tradelinks, Social Enterprise and Exploring Enterprise programmes and socio-economic regeneration |
|---------------------|---|



programmes for the Department for Social Development. NMEA employs 14 staff including a Chartered Accountant, Chartered Planner, marketing specialist, property manager, IT specialist and two community development experts.

This evaluator has been very impressed with the Project Lead role provided by Newry and Mournne Enterprise Agency. They brought solid management expertise to the project but importantly brought expertise in developing innovative VET initiatives particularly for start-up and early stage enterprises. At regional and cross border levels, they play a leading and influential role in promoting innovation and SME development. At EU level, their involvement in EU funded projects & international collaborations provided a solid platform for competent project management and leadership in achieving the anticipated outcomes of the project, but also robust financial administration. Importantly, Newry and Mournne Enterprise Agency used their very well-established links with wider national and EU VET and enterprise networks.

The role of Lead Partner is fundamental to the successful delivery of an EU Lifelong Learning project. At Interim Evaluation stage, we highlighted that although a first time LLP Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation lead partner Newry and Mournne Enterprise Agency were experienced project managers of training and development programmes with an international dimension. Within this project Newry and Mournne Enterprise Agency had overall responsibility for ensuring that the aims and objectives as set out in the project application and funding contract are achieved through an effective and productive partnership. They carried responsibility for the procedures established for project delivery, especially the pursuit of deadlines, the financial management of the project and the fulfillment of the requisites agreed between the partners for the deliverables.

Materials adaptation work package



MindShare Consulting (MSC), France was founded in 1994 with a focus on advancing facilitation and meeting services using innovative tools - the organisation was an early proponent, user and champion of innovative GroupSystems applications. Mindshare's expertise lies in alternative, informal and creative education techniques. They provide management consulting, concentrating on education/training concerned with change and innovation management and leadership. A multi-year collaboration with INSEAD (CALT – The Centre for Advanced Learning Technologies) has led to involvement in European deployment of the EIS Change and Innovation Management

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>Workshop.</p> <p>The organisation was involved in successfully completed EC (eTen) projects: KLAB (Knowledge & Learning Among Businesses): innovative e-service exploiting reality/need of SME managers to learn from peers. ChangeMasters: edutainment services for Change & Innovation Management and was a partner on a Leonardo project - IIME Introducing Innovation in Micro Enterprises. Given MindShare is a specialist innovation consultancy; they brought impressive training & innovation experience. As core developers of the original training materials, they were ideally placed to lead materials adaptation work package.</p> |
| <p>Training Needs Analysis work package</p>  <p>UNIVERSIDAD POLITECNICA DE VALENCIA</p> | <p>Established in 1968, University Polytechnic Valencia, Spain is a dynamic and innovative institution that is dedicated to research and teaching. The university community is made up of over 42.000 people. Of these, nearly 37.800 are students, 2.600 are members of the teaching and research staff and 1.700 are administrative and services personnel. UPV is composed of 10 schools, 3 faculties and 2 higher polytechnic schools. It also has the following associated schools: Ford Spain Technical School of Industrial Engineering, Faculty of Business Studies, La Florida University School, and Pax University College, as well as an extension in Xàtiva.</p> <p>University Polytechnic Valencia were selected for Training Needs Analysis having fulfilled this role in previous LLP projects and given their rigorous academic approach, together with their deep understanding of educational needs of VET professionals.</p> |
| <p>Technical Realisation work package</p>  <p>canice consulting</p> | <p>Canice Consulting, UK, is an international consultancy operating in the fields of local and regional development, enterprise and employment development, and management and technical support to EU networks and programmes. Canice Consulting staff has an in-depth knowledge of EU policies and programmes with extensive experience working in a range of Leonardo partnerships specialising on the development of multimedia vocational training tools along with extensive experience delivering multilingual, interactive learning tools. The company has developed a particular specialism in online learning development and search engine optimisation techniques that achieving excellent visibility and page ranking. At a regional level Canice Consulting has an extensive network amongst SME support organisations and have worked with over 300 SMEs in training and development during the last five years.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>Canice Consulting led the Technical Realisation phase of this project. Their strong track record in e-learning development & LLP experience was important in building a high quality, intuitive, learning platform that could be updated and improved according to pilot project and partner requests.</p> |
| <p>Exploitation work package</p>  | <p>The European Business & Innovation Centre Network (EBN) led the Exploitation work package. They were set up in 1984 as a joint initiative of the European Commission, European industry leaders and the first pioneering Business and Innovation Centres. EBN is now the leading non-governmental pan-European network bringing together 200+ Business & Innovation Centres (BICs), and similar organisations such as incubators, innovation and entrepreneurship centres across the enlarged Europe. BICs promote innovation and entrepreneurship, they help enterprises to innovate; they drive the creation of start-ups (support to innovation, incubation and internationalisation) and they promote economic development through job and enterprise creation and development.</p> <p>EBN is the umbrella organisation that brings together over 200 BICs from all around Europe and beyond. It provides help and support to these BICs by acting as an interface with other organisations including the European Commission (which officially recognises EBN), by providing expertise in numerous areas including funding and by stimulating the sharing of best practices.</p> |
| <p>Pilot Test work package</p>  | <p>University POLITEHNICA of Bucharest had primary responsibility for the Pilot Test work package. They are the largest and the oldest technical university in the country and among the most prestigious universities in Romania. As a leading European University, UPB were charged with developing a robust methodology that assesses relevancy and ease of use & equally important, one that also measures all aspects of impact as mentioned previously.</p> |
|  | <p>The National Enterprise Network, United Kingdom is a membership body for those committed to the support and development of enterprise. Members are not-for-profit organisations which provide independent and impartial advice, training and mentoring to new and emerging businesses. As well as enterprise agencies, members also include Chambers of Commerce, local authorities, further and higher education providers and other specialist enterprise support providers. NEN worked on the Pilot Testing and Dissemination WPs. Their involvement in the project was deemed very important in that it would help quality assure the relevance and appropriateness of the materials, for the wider UK market (not just Northern Ireland).</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Evaluation & Dissemination work packages</p>  | <p>Louth County Enterprise Board led the Evaluation & Dissemination work packages. They are part of the County Enterprise Board network in Ireland, the statutory body in charge for SME development in Ireland. As such they have extensive networks throughout Europe & as a national umbrella organization representing SMEs and their educator, so leadership in dissemination is strong. Established in 1993, Louth County Enterprise Board is the primary agency dedicated to SME development in the county and is one of 35 enterprise boards in Ireland.</p> |
|--|--|

1.5.1 Evaluators Review of Partnership Structure

It is Momentum's considered view that the Innovative Trainer partnership was an insightful mix of the key strands of VET and innovation specialisms at academic and private practice levels, enterprise representative bodies, the European industry association for BTMs working in Business Incubators (EBN) and two national networks (LCEB & NEN). From the outset, the partners strove to involve, and to use the multiplying potential of, their networks and partners. Each partner brought to the project an impressive access to an extensive network of BTMs and SMEs, thereby aiding take up of research and dissemination activities to the target group through very influential channels as we will see in the evaluation of dissemination actions. The partner had a very impressive reach scoping six counties but the involvement of EBN ensured widespread dissemination across their pan European network.

Bringing together the skills and resources from academia, SMEs and policy influencers, the Innovative Trainer partnership was a collaboration of significant reach and impact in its own right. We were impressed that the partnership was effective from the outset, in no small part to the fact that many of the partners had collaborated with one or more other partners in previous EU funded projects.

1.6 Summary of Findings of Interim Evaluation Report

It is useful to recap on the key findings of this evaluator's Interim Evaluation Report presented in November 2013 in setting the scene for this final evaluation report across the key work packages of ...

- **Needs Analysis**

Momentum assessed that the needs analysis work package was completed to a very high standard, but needed to be very well disseminated and closely tracked in terms of the foundation for the materials development. We recommended that this information was shared through the website without delay. We felt that a one page headline needs analysis findings document would be very useful. The interviews with Government representatives yielded some very insightful findings - for example - the feeling that SMEs do not generally promote creativity and innovative concepts generation and certainly not enough

and that Government feel they are throwing a lot of resources at innovation; however, the task remains to change the mindset among SMEs. Thus, we felt it was incumbent on the Innovative Trainer project to really demonstrate uptake and measure its reach so that SMEs embrace all innovation opportunities available to them. Momentum felt very strongly that this disconnect could be addressed by better trained BTMs to bridge the gaps.

Momentum was impressed with the quality of the work package. Equally, at partner level at the 6 month evaluator review of the project, partners give the TNA work package a favourable rating with 56% respondents rating the work package as excellent and the remaining 44% rating it as good, after 12 months this had increased to a highly notable 80% excellent and 20% good rating.

- **Materials Adaptation**

Following Momentum's review of four modules of Innovative Trainer materials, we felt that it was a really engaging course with an excellent blend of very current learning tools which any BTM would find really useful. The materials themselves were creatively designed and constructed – in keeping with the project theme and the need for creative approaches as highlighted in the TNA. Likewise, the trainer notes were very good giving the necessary tools to the trainer to deliver the training session. Momentum urged the partnership to complete the content as soon as possible as it was fundamental to other work package actions; hence urged the work package lead to bring the deliverables to finalisation without delay. The project partners reflected a high satisfaction with this work package. At our end of year one evaluation consultation, a highly impressive 80% of respondents cited the outputs of the work package as excellent and 20% cited very good – this had increased from 44% respondents rating the work package as excellent and 56% rating it as good at the end of 6 months while the work package was at an early stage.

- **Website Development**

At the end of year one the development of the Innovative Trainer brand graphic had led to a well branded and highly engaging web design pallet. Momentum assessed the brand as attractive and engaging, it is contemporary and emphasizes interaction and communications through the use of a linked graphic. We found the tagline of Learn Inspire Empower was very appropriate to the target audience. The website <http://www.innovativetrainer.eu> was assessed as a premium quality design standard; it is aesthetically pleasing and offers very good navigation. We were highly impressed with the Toolkit section embedded a highly engaging video of a 4 and a half minute introduction in English which takes us through the need for the course and how the course is delivered. Visually this is very strong; the presenter is really clear and keeps our attention throughout bringing us through screenshots and slides which are very clear. We commended the partners on this innovative feature which is creative, engaging and innovative in its own right!

Commendably, at the end of year one the site achieved 11,248 visits and 74,821 hits by November 2013. Momentum asked partners to rate the performance of this work package – at the 6 month 67% rated the work package as excellent and 33% rated it as good. This was a very strong rating for this early in the project. However the end of year one feedback changed in that 40% rated the work package as excellent and 60% as good. Given the website was purely informative at that stage with the materials yet to upload this feedback was not surprising. We recommended that the reports section should be populated with the Needs Analysis report document ASAP and that the ezine section would benefit from an introduction statement on the landing page for same.

- **Piloting**

At the interim evaluation stage, 60% of partners rated the pilot testing work package as excellent and 40% rate it as good.

- **Dissemination**

We found the year one dissemination reach of the partnership and activities completed to be very impressive and a strong reflection of a very evident commitment to dissemination by the project partners from the outset. We felt this boded well for a highly active dissemination programme to drive interest and engagement in the training tool. This was reflected in an evaluation feedback from a partner after the first partner meeting – *‘The feeling of high motivation from all involved is quite beneficial, too. A commitment from all to prioritise early results and early, appropriate, dissemination can be cited, too.’*

The first Innovative Trainer ezine had been uploaded on the project website with content drawn from the application form. For future publications, we encouraged partners to change the style to a much more journalist approach to capture the real spirit and work ethic of the partnership and include examples, photographs and be as ‘newsy’ as possible. Partners were also encouraged to take photos of their attendance at events and conferences which can be used for PR and dissemination purposes. A French language Facebook group had been established by the French partner Mindshare Consulting, with 41 members at that early stage. We suggested that an English language Facebook (or LinkedIn) group be established as LinkedIn is particularly appropriate given BTMs prolifically use this professional networking platform. At the end of year one, the partner rating for the dissemination work package is 60% excellent and 40% good, testament to the excellent work carried out in quarters 3 and 4.

- **Evaluation**

At the end of year one, the rating for this work package was a very strong 80% of partners rating the work package as excellent and 20% good.

- **Exploitation**

By May 2013, the partners had devised, agreed and signed IPR agreements which set out the Rights and Compromises of the exploitation strategy. Typically Momentum sees the exploitation agreements put in place at the end of the two year projects – we found it was testament to the commitment and ambition of this partnership that IPR agreements were in place within the first six months of the project.

- **Project Partnership and Management**

In Momentum's consultation, impressively all respondents (100%) were satisfied that their colleagues were co-operating with the work package leads and were happy that levels of co-operation are very high. In the first year, communications were impressive within the partnership enhanced by three very satisfactory transnational meetings and bi weekly Skype meetings. The use of Trac System, the management repository for all important documents; including all financial and administrative guides and evidence of dissemination was very impressive feature of this project. Our review at the end of year one showed this was very current and actively used. It was an effective smart methodology to ensure that the latest documents are available to partners and the external evaluator. This was the most impressive depository we had seen in our experience of evaluating Lifelong Learning Programme and we rated it as best practice in action.

Based on our year one observations it was clear that project management was highly effective and professional. Partners were wholesome in their feedback on project management – *'Exemplary 'and 'the lead partner is totally engaged in the overall project. Each partner has their own WP responsibilities, but the lead partner assures there is a collegiate approach, which means each partner contributes to all work packages. Great job. Collaboration in action.'*

In terms of financial administration, this evaluator found that the project had established and maintained a compliant and effective system to meet the requirements of both the company and its audit responsibilities but also the exacting requirements of the EU. Most importantly, Momentum were impressed that the project was demonstrating a very close adherence to the Principles of the Lifelong Learning Leonardo da Vinci Programme.

2.0 Evaluation Purpose & Methodology

2.1 Evaluation Purpose

Consistent with the requirements of the EU for the Lifelong Learning Programmes, evaluation lead partner Louth County Enterprise Board issued Terms of Reference for the external evaluation of the project with the principal objective of *'examining the extent to which the project met the objectives laid out in the application and work-plan agreed by the partners and the funding agency.'* Following this tender process in November 2012, Momentum Consulting was appointed as External Evaluator of the project, charged with the production of regular Monitoring Reports, Interim and Final External Evaluation reports. Momentum has considerable experience as an EU funded programme evaluator and has completed several external evaluations of Leonardo da Vinci programmes including SUPORT, EU Pathways to Work, EU Vetba and Inovate (Entrepass).

Evaluation is a key aspect of the Lifelong Learning programme. The external evaluator works to a structured process by which the project's activities are assessed and understood. It involves analysing and interpreting data about the project in order to identify achievements and areas of weakness. The evaluation is an independent and objective view of the success of the Innovative Trainer project in relation to the extent to which the project met its objectives as laid out in the transnational work plan agreed by the partners in the application document. The evaluation findings are relevant to a wide audience, specifically:

- The transnational partnership;
- Enterprise support organisations and BTMs stakeholders;
- Beneficiary groups;
- Other Leonardo da Vinci Lifelong Learning Programme projects and the European Commission;
- Policy- Makers

The external evaluation process is progressed using a twofold approach as described below.

- i. A review of the processes and procedures implemented by the partners during the individual project work package developments i.e. training needs analysis and good practice review, pilot testing, technical realisation, internal evaluation, dissemination and an assessment of individual partner experiences.
- ii. An analysis of project status and the provision of suggestions for improvements. This will assist partners with project delivery during the final stages of the project.

2.2 Key Areas for Consideration

Particular issues for this evaluation included:

- The extent to which the project is achieving its objectives to date;

- The extent to which the Innovative Trainer project is effective across all work packages to date;
- The value of the project to each of the partners at this interim stage;
- The efficiency of transnational project management and administration;
- Suggestions for improvements which can be implemented to assist with project development for the remainder of the Innovative Trainer project.

2.3 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation process followed in the completion of this Interim Report used the following qualitative and quantitative procedures:

1. Ongoing liaison and regular communication with evaluation lead Louth County Enterprise Board and internal evaluator Newry & Mourne Enterprise Agency including meetings in November 2012, October 2013 and October 2014;
2. Design and circulation of 4 x tailored questionnaires including a comprehensive end of year review consultation ;
3. Evaluator's attendance at the fourth partner meeting held in Paris 19 – 21 February 2014.
4. Review of secondary material relating to the project including internal monitoring and evaluation material of the participating partner organisations;
5. Review of usage of and materials held in the online Trak project management system.

3.0 Review & Assessment of Work Packages

3.1 Review & Assessment of Work Packages

As the project concludes, we review each individual work package in sequential order in terms of their detailed outputs and comment on progress achieved across each work package.

3.1.1 Needs Analysis

As reviewed in the Interim External Evaluation Report, the starting point of the project was the Needs Analysis (NA) work package. Managed by Universitat Politècnica de València, the objective of the NA work package was to provide a research framework for joint implementation by all partners. The work package aimed to

- Research and identify the full range of initiatives, supports and training tools designed to encourage innovation in SMEs and BTMs in each of the partner countries.
- Gain a deep understanding of current barriers and issues facing Business Trainers and Mentors (BTMs) across Europe, particularly their attitudes to training and obstacles they perceive to business innovation.
- On the basis of this knowledge, to identify gaps and to propose principal themes and module titles for the new learning materials in the IT project.

The needs analysis framework was structured into three actions:-

I. Baseline analysis - review of existing literature

The UPV report set out a listing of the key innovation support programmes in all six countries. Links are given to access more information which is very useful as a reference resource in the training materials.

II. Consultation with Business Trainers and Mentors and a representative of Government Dept

Consultation (1) - Business Trainers and Mentors - While the target was to consult with 10 Business Advisers/Mentors in each partner country (60 in total), it was very impressive that 72 BTMs participated in a very detailed survey. Working through 17 questions, BTMs were then brought through questions on SME Innovation Training, stimuli for innovation training activities, barriers for innovation activity and expectations on training for innovation. We extracted some headline facts and findings from the consultation findings:-

- 67% of respondents are not affiliated with a regional BTMS
- Respondents were well established in their roles - 86% have more than 3 years working experience

- Respondents were well balanced across 4 key areas of business economy, Phd/ Engineering, trainers and consultancy
- Describing the level of Innovation Training provides an interesting breakdown –
 - 41% for Promoters: introducing the motivations of a business strategy based on innovation.
 - 25% for Managers; providing solutions for demand innovation project managers.
 - 30% for Consultants: business innovation consultancy services for diagnostic analysis, technological surveillance, identifying opportunities and developing proposals.
 - 4 % Auditors of Innovation: This is a high level profile introducing students to the skills of an auditor innovator.
 - Medium size SMEs seem to implement more innovation training:-
 - 20% of SMEs with turnover of 0 to 50.000 Euros
 - 43% of SMEs with turnover of 50.000 to 500.000 Euros
 - 28% of SMEs with turnover of 500.000 to 2 million Euros
 - 82% of SMEs which draw the most innovation training activities have less than 50 workers
 - BTMs feel that most innovation training occurs in three main fields:- Manufacturing, Information and Communication and thirdly Professional, Scientific and Technical activities
- In terms of Stimuli for Innovation Training, two clear stimuli received the most recognition – almost 80% each for changing impact in cost and for increasing growth potential
- Interestingly, when asked for barriers to Innovation Activity and did the services offered by Innovation brainer bodies match the demand of SME, BTM respondents were more or less equally balanced with 35.49% stating no they did not match need and 37.51% stating yes they did match need. Qualitative responses to what is lacking give more insight –
 - Lack of suitability, too generalised, not geared to the size of the typical SME
 - More Innovation training bodies , especially lacking open innovation expertise.
 - Programmes tailored for delivery in small areas.
 - Training lacking with practical experience approaches and importance of innovation to compete.
 - Commitment lacking by business leaders and policy makers.
 - Lack of flexible learning/training/professional development models.
 - Lack of innovation training for non-high technological SMEs.

- Lack of knowledge and skills. Trainer Bodies not expert enough on innovation themselves.
- Lack of encouragement of the commercial exploitation of the research and development.
- In terms of the demand of SMEs for Innovation Trainer Bodies expertise, almost half of the respondents think the demand is above average.
- In measuring the barrier for Innovation at SMEs, the top 5 which received over the 80% of importance are: lack of Innovation culture, shortage of own financial resources, lack of management time, lack of external finance and the problem of accessing finance
- The factors which were considered most importance for success were cited as innovative mentality, creativity and thirdly the identification and analysis of problems and opportunities
- BTMs were asked how rate the importance of key issues for BTM or VET organization to improve training innovation. Again, Innovation Culture promotion scored highest followed by training through solving practical tasks and planning for innovation
- Coming at the topic from a different perspective, BTMs were asked to rate the development of skills for BTM training innovation at SME. Creativity scored highest followed by communications and leadership in that order.
- To drill further into this topic, BTMs were asked to rate the topics can be improved by the Innovation trainers. This time creativity came out on top marginally, 82,78% for creativity as an engine of innovation processes, 81,11% for planning for innovation and 80,83% for innovative culture promotion.

The conclusions derived from these consultations were summarised as:-

- Need for hard work to improve the perception of productivity, quality and innovation in Europe.
- Need to develop a creative environment for SMEs. Basic techniques for defining and analyzing a problem to come up with something new.
- Search for European creativity tools which could be taught and used with SME's to help them develop a creative culture
- Experience of the mentor and their ability to communicate is vital.
- It is a concern that non-technical Innovation training is very limited
- Worryingly, innovation training bodies are scarce and do not have much experience in innovation
- There is a clear need for innovation training
- Lack of creativity and culture of innovation

- The new training material produce must be easy to understand fun and encourage SME's creativity!

- **Consultation (2) - Representative of Government Department**

For this evaluator, this is one of the most important outputs of the project giving a raw and honest overview of the views of Government departments to innovation and training. Each partner was charged with conducting an individual interview with a representative of Government Department responsible for SME sector development in all partner countries. Not surprisingly, this aspect of the base line audit needed more time as since some partners had problems securing an interview with Government contact. Some very insightful findings that stood out for this evaluator from these interviews:-

- Respondents felt that SMEs do not generally promote creativity and innovative concepts generation and certainly not enough. The SMEs promote creativity and the generation of new concepts but often this is disconnected from a systematic effort to innovate.
- When asked do SMEs anticipate the organizational effort required for the different innovative initiatives, the Government representatives cited that most probably don't, apart from those who have tried it previously. The SMEs have guidelines for the management of innovation but not easily anticipate the necessary effort.
- They felt that present Government policies help to nurture/promote an innovation culture within SMEs in two ways:-

Directly, through public R&D: Universities and public research centers primarily and direct financial aid to companies and through different projects of cooperation between SME's in EU in order to increases innovation.

Indirectly, through a variety of policy support towards the realization of R&D by firms, technology transfer, dissemination of the results of public R&D to the production sector and in ultimately create a climate conducive to innovation in business and society.

- The findings state that Government feel they are throwing a lot of resources at innovation; however, the task remains to change the mindset among SMEs.
- When asked how Government propose to bring innovation within the reach of all SMEs, the feedback was that more programmes would come on stream and making programmes more widely available (i.e. making eligibility more flexible). Other ways were to improve the access of SMEs to innovation the Government may propose funding programmes of the foundation of new innovative enterprises, research and innovation project, networking between projects or project managers and joint initiatives involving international partners.

- **Compilation and Analysis of Data**

The findings of the NA work package were discussed in detail at the second partner meeting in Valencia Spain in March 2013 and using those findings as the basis for the selection of training topics for the project. This was the synthesis and analysis of data published and circulated by UPV. Momentum was impressed with the quality of the Needs Analysis work package. At the 6 month evaluator review of the project all project partners give the TNA work package a very favourable rating with 56% respondents rating the work package as excellent and the remaining 44% rating it as good. After 12 months, this had increased to 80% excellent and 20% good rating. At this Final Evaluation stage the work package was rated as 100% excellent. Executive summaries of the baseline audit and the Compilation and Analysis of Data Report are available to download from the project website.

3.1.2 Materials Adaption

The project lead of the Materials Adaptation (MA) work package was MindShare, a specialist innovation consultancy based in France but active throughout Europe. The MA work package drew from the previous IIME Leonardo da Vinci Partnership programme which developed an innovation classroom based course with SME owner managers as the primary target group. As Mindshare were the core developers of the IIME training materials, they were ideally placed to lead materials adaptation work package for this project. To augment these materials the partners also had access to the EBN produced self learning pack for Business Incubatory staff. Albeit the EBN materials were ten years old, much of the format was still valid. Taking these materials and complementing them with new materials, the MA work package sought to generate compelling training materials which Canice Consulting used as the basis of the web technical realisation therein creating the elearning course.

Very clear instructions are given as an introduction to the learning materials. This is very important as the Innovative Trainer e-Learning platform is delivered using Pearltrees. This is introduced as 'an innovative, collaborative mind map-style social bookmarking service' and the learner is invited to view a video link introducing Pearltrees. The materials can also be accessed through the Toolkit tab on the Innovative Trainer website. Very impressively, this section is embedded with a highly engaging video of a 4 and a half minute introduction by project partner Dr. Tanja Vos which introduces us in a very engaging way to the need for the course, explaining in a very motivating style the role of the trainer and how the course is delivered. Visually this is very strong; the presenter is really clear and keeps our attention throughout bringing us through screenshots and slides which are very clear. We commend the partners on this innovative feature which is creative, engaging and innovative in its own right!

The training materials are presented in four modules. As mentioned, these can be accessed through Pearltrees but also through the Toolkit section where each of the four modules is presented as a training module with the PowerPoint animated through embedded video of format with Dr. Tanja Vos ,

accompanying trainer notes, a timing guide and additional resources download. We have reviewed the content as presented on the website:-

Module 1 Your Inner Innovator

Module one is highly engaging with an excellent use of exercises blended with key learning topics. The Richard Branson case study is excellent. The trainer notes are very good to give the necessary tools to the trainer to ‘carry’ the training session.

Module 2 Types of Innovation

Again, this, module is highly interactive and we are particularly impressed that the language used is interesting and engaging, it is ideally ‘pitched’ for SMEs. Lots of thought provoking images and excellent use of exercises make for a very compelling format. This module seems ‘meatier’ than module 1 but that is the nature of the topic. Again, the trainer notes are very good.

Module 3 Innovation on SMEs

Interestingly, this module looks at the very important topic of Theory versus Practice and sustains the interactive tone of the materials. The module takes the learner through the four Steps of the Innovation Journey. The strong graphics, images and excellent use of exercises continue to make for a very compelling format. The trainer notes are excellent and the notes section for each PowerPoint slide are very detailed with lots of referral information.

Module 4 "Tooling Up" for Success = Your ACTION PLAN

This training module focuses on the skills required to take action. This is a really engaging course with excellent blend of very current learning tools which any BTM would find really useful.

The professional support tools provided for Business Trainers and Mentors to equip them in delivering the innovation training modules are very strong. The trainers guide is an excellent resource with detailed learner objectives and top tips, the course materials and speaker notes, timing guidelines and a download for additional resources. We feel the materials themselves are very creatively designed and constructed – in keeping with the project theme and the need for creative approaches as highlighted in the TNA findings. The partners have progressively increased their satisfaction with this work package over time.

| At 6 months | At 12 months | At 24 months |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 44% respondents rated the work | 80% respondents rated the | 100% respondents rated |

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| package as excellent and 56% rated it as good | work package as excellent and 20% rated it as good | the work package as excellent |
|---|--|-------------------------------|

3.1.3 Website Development

This work package involved the design of a compelling website to provide the architecture for the Innovative Trainer virtual learning environment. The development of the brand graphic for the project led a well branded and highly engaging web design pallet. Momentum assesses the brand as attractive and engaging, it is contemporary and emphasises interaction and communications through the use of a linked graphic. The tagline of Learn Inspire Empower is very appropriate to the target audience.

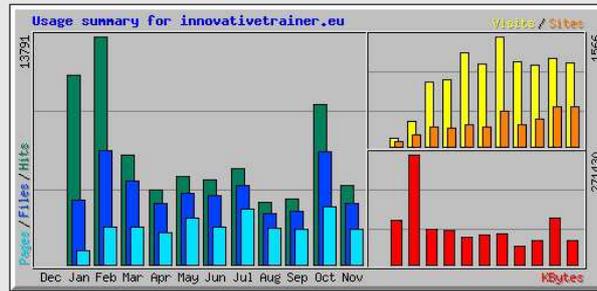


Canice Consulting was responsible for the realisation of the portal website <http://www.innovativetrainer.eu>. After a landing page giving a selection of the four project languages, we are taken to a landing page which creates interest through the use of a headline statement and engaging image. The embedding of an overview video is very strong. Momentum concludes that the website is of a premium quality design standard; it is aesthetically pleasing and offers very good navigation. The addition of an overview video on the home page is very effective. As highlighted in section 3.1.2 materials development, we are particularly highly impressed with the Toolkit section which embeds a highly engaging video of a 4 and a half minute introduction in English which takes us through the need for the course and how the course is delivered. Visually this is very strong; the presenter is really clear and keeps our attention throughout bringing us through screenshots and slides which are very clear. Well done partners on this feature – it is creative, engaging and innovative in its own right!

In terms of web performance, even at an early stage of development and pre access to the learning materials, the website performed really well. This was in no small way due to the access of the partnership to extensive networks of the target market BTMs who's interest has been captured enough to find out more at an early stage. The website was averaging 221 hits per day in the first year with visit spikes very clearly linked into dissemination activities.

Usage Statistics for innovativetrainer.eu

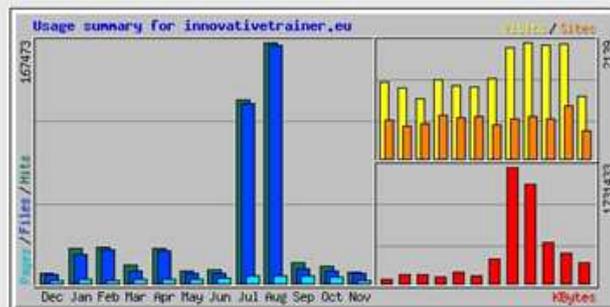
Summary by Month
Generated 29-Nov-2013 12:03 GMT



| Month | Daily Avg | | | | | Monthly Totals | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-------|-------|--------|-------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Hits | Files | Pages | Visits | Sites | KBytes | Visits | Pages | Files | Hits |
| Nov 2013 | 164 | 127 | 74 | 41 | 573 | 59444 | 1197 | 2173 | 3706 | 4768 |
| Oct 2013 | 311 | 220 | 113 | 40 | 560 | 115986 | 1256 | 3520 | 6825 | 9654 |
| Sep 2013 | 131 | 108 | 70 | 38 | 391 | 58963 | 1154 | 2117 | 3256 | 3945 |
| Aug 2013 | 121 | 98 | 70 | 39 | 315 | 46297 | 1213 | 2183 | 3061 | 3779 |
| Jul 2013 | 186 | 155 | 109 | 50 | 511 | 74826 | 1566 | 3395 | 4807 | 5784 |
| Jun 2013 | 171 | 138 | 76 | 39 | 272 | 73229 | 1171 | 2306 | 4150 | 5132 |
| May 2013 | 172 | 139 | 91 | 43 | 310 | 68021 | 1341 | 2846 | 4326 | 5348 |
| Apr 2013 | 150 | 122 | 65 | 31 | 263 | 84016 | 956 | 1953 | 3685 | 4520 |
| Mar 2013 | 214 | 163 | 74 | 29 | 286 | 86775 | 917 | 2301 | 5079 | 6649 |
| Feb 2013 | 492 | 245 | 81 | 12 | 161 | 271430 | 356 | 2282 | 6874 | 13791 |
| Jan 2013 | 408 | 140 | 31 | 4 | 71 | 108555 | 121 | 868 | 3932 | 11451 |
| Totals | | | | | | 1047542 | 11248 | 25944 | 49701 | 74821 |

The year 2 website performance built on this year one success. In total, the site recorded just under 30,000 visitors for the two years, with almost 20,000 coming in year 2! The visitor spike in July/August is very clearly linked to Canice Consulting's search engine optimisation efforts and post launch online marketing campaign.

Usage Statistics for innovativetrainer.eu year 2



| Month | Daily Avg | | | | | Monthly Totals | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-------|-------|--------|-------|----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| | Hits | Files | Pages | Visits | Sites | KBytes | Visits | Pages | Files | Hits |
| Nov 2014 | 449 | 373 | 124 | 63 | 512 | 317233 | 1146 | 2235 | 6730 | 8093 |
| Oct 2014 | 376 | 289 | 155 | 67 | 964 | 458531 | 2104 | 4808 | 8969 | 11679 |
| Sep 2014 | 484 | 333 | 169 | 69 | 733 | 602638 | 2095 | 5073 | 9998 | 14538 |
| Aug 2014 | 5402 | 5328 | 164 | 69 | 773 | 1467147 | 2139 | 5091 | 165179 | 167473 |
| Jul 2014 | 4113 | 4041 | 161 | 65 | 726 | 1731433 | 2030 | 4996 | 125278 | 127532 |
| Jun 2014 | 302 | 222 | 110 | 48 | 612 | 364733 | 1464 | 3329 | 6677 | 9087 |
| May 2014 | 270 | 213 | 95 | 42 | 765 | 114337 | 1327 | 2954 | 6630 | 8399 |
| Apr 2014 | 819 | 750 | 95 | 44 | 751 | 167565 | 1345 | 2866 | 22529 | 24573 |
| Mar 2014 | 400 | 271 | 97 | 47 | 799 | 99006 | 1457 | 3011 | 8430 | 12423 |
| Feb 2014 | 910 | 838 | 83 | 39 | 645 | 137899 | 1105 | 2348 | 23481 | 25487 |
| Jan 2014 | 778 | 657 | 90 | 41 | 600 | 134780 | 1294 | 2805 | 20377 | 24119 |
| Dec 2013 | 238 | 192 | 78 | 45 | 706 | 70052 | 1397 | 2445 | 5976 | 7379 |
| Totals | | | | | | 5665374 | 18903 | 41961 | 410254 | 440782 |

In our evaluation, we provide the following critique of the site's features/benefits:-

- We are impressed with the site interface in terms of style, font and layout.
- In terms of navigating the site, the site structure is clearly understood and the information that is on the site is clear, pertinent information, well structured and classified.
- Loading times are excellent.
- The site is very rich with download documents
- Search engine optimisation was highly successful and led to a most impressive project reach of almost 40,000 visitors in 2 years.

In addition to providing the training materials through the Innovative Trainer website, the partners must be commended for embracing Pearltrees as a training delivery tool. Pearltrees is a free, visual and collaborative library – interestingly the company's mission is very much in tune with the objectives of Leonardo da Vinci Lifelong Learning Programme and the Transfer of Innovation strand in that it helps users "Democratize Organization of Knowledge". To widen its reach and add social features to the training modules, Pearltrees users can synchronize their accounts with both Twitter and Facebook. Another key innovative feature in using Pearltrees as a training access tool is its curation community functionality. This gives likeminded people the ability to act together to curate topics of common interest. In the context of the innovative theme of this project that is extremely strong and very impressive.

We are very impressed that the Innovative Trainer training course has been viewed over 2,700 through Pearltrees. This has added a whole new cohort of training participants to the Innovative Trainer course which will have a very strong multiplier impact.

Team Innovative Trainer English

 3 members  88 items  4 adds  Comment  2.7K views



It is very impressive that during the fourth partner meeting in Paris (February 2014), Mindshare Consulting organised a meeting with a senior management team of Pearltrees who were very interested in Innovative Trainer's use of Pearltrees as a training tool and were keen to learn from the experience of the IT team. The opportunity to influence the future development of Pearltrees is a testament to the foresight of the IT team to use Pearltrees to augment e-learning access through new and high growth social platforms. This is one to watch in the future development of Pearltrees.

We reflect on one partner’s view of using the Pearltrees tool as a very useful insight into the value it has brought to the project. *“The use of collaborative online platforms has been invaluable; the project would have been much more difficult to deliver without them. Developing learning materials from scratch isn't as straightforward a process as you may think!”*

Again, partner rating of this work package incrementally built to the highest satisfaction level possible.

| At 6 months | At 12 months | At 24 months |
|--|--|--|
| 67% rated the work package as excellent and 33% rated it as good. This was a very strong rating for this early in the project. | 40% rated the work package as excellent and 60% as good. Given the website was purely informative at this stage with the materials yet to upload this feedback was not surprising. | 100% respondents rated the work package as excellent |

3.1.4 Piloting

The pilot testing work package allows for the ‘perfection’ of the resource. This work package was led by UPB who as a leading European University were equipped to develop a robust methodology to ensure the pilot test was carried to ensure relevancy, quality & ease of use. The pilot test target was to involve 36 BTMs and 60 trainee participants in a formalised assessment of the online & classroom courses to provide quantitative and qualitative feedback. We review the outcome of the pilot test work package by reviewing each of the target groups:-

- **Business Trainers and Mentors**

The target of 36 BTMs was exceeded by one with 37 BTMS completing the pilot test. They broke down as 68% male and 32% female with an excellent representation of ages. The country spread of pilot testers breaks down as follows:-

| Belgium | France | Ireland | Romania | Spain | United Kingdom |
|---------|--------|---------|---------|-------|----------------|
| 5% | 3% | 30% | 19% | 8% | 35% |

The stronger UK and Ireland response is explained that through their work, the development agency partners NMEA and LCEB were able to access pilot testers easier than others. The findings of the pilot test are very strong. More than half of the respondents thought that the content of the course was very impressive, highly interactive and importantly, it kept the learner engaged. The cumulative feedback was recorded as:-

- 57% Strongly Agreed and 43% Agreed that the content was well organized and easy to follow

- In terms of the course content matching the learning objectives, the response was emphatic as 35% Strongly Agreed 35%, 62% Agreed and 3% could not decide.
- Achieving the appropriate level of course information was again very positive as 43% Strongly Agreed, 49% Agreed and 8% could not decide
- The course design (i.e., materials and learning activities) was clearly endorsed as encouraging participation in the class: as as 43% Strongly Agreed, 41% Agreed and 8% could not decide. A further 8% felt the question was not applicable to them.
- 38% Strongly Agreed and 43% Agreed that the course provided opportunities to practice and reinforce what was taught. 8% did not agree and 3% felt the question was not applicable to them.
- The course length was clearly endorsed as sufficient to deliver the content as 32% Strongly Agreed, 43% Agreed – 11% disagreed and 14% could not decide.
- A very important measurable is the ability to apply the knowledge learned: 35% Strongly Agreed and 62% Agreed that this was the case. 3% felt the question was not applicable to them.
- Looking at each of the module content, the findings were wholly positive.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Module 1: Your Inner Innovator</p> <p>59% were Very satisfied 38% were Fairly satisfied 3% were 50/50</p> | <p>Module 2: Types of Innovation</p> <p>62% were Very satisfied 30% were Fairly satisfied 8% were 50/50</p> |
| <p>Module 3: Mapping Your Innovation Route</p> <p>49% were Very satisfied 40% were Fairly satisfied 11% were 50/50</p> | <p>Module 4: Your Action Plan</p> <p>46% were Very satisfied 38% were Fairly satisfied 11% were 50/50 5% Fairly dissatisfied</p> |

- The trainers' presentations were seen as clear and organised as 43% Strongly Agreed and 46% Agreed. 6% felt the question was not applicable to them and 5% could not decide
- The class discussion contribution to their learning was not as clear-cut with 22% Strongly Agreed and 25% Agreed. 21% felt the question was not applicable to them, 3% disagreed and 19% could not decide.
- In terms of the training meeting the BTMs professional requirements, 38% Strongly Agreed and 35% Agreed. 16% could not decide and 3% disagree. 8% felt the question was not applicable to them

BTMs highlighted the following features for special mention – it’s interactivity, practical applications, good content and layout, innovative tools and learning through examples which make learners more receptive to innovation highlighting because we generally understand better by doing. Interestingly, in terms of learning that will be useful in their BTM roles, respondents highlighted:-

- Structuring innovation information;
- Using low cost tools;
- How to move from having an innovative idea to putting it into practice;
- To think outside the box;
- The systematic way to teach about entrepreneurship;
- How to innovate;
- Use of some of the web-based tools such as Pirate Pad and PearlTrees.

The overall BTM rating of the training course was very impressive with 53% rating it as excellent, 30% as good and 17% as average. In terms of suggestions, there were three directions for future development highlighted:

- identify strategic directions for the project to be developed (depending on the strategic direction of European innovation);
- stronger involvement of stakeholders (companies, universities, research institutes, trade unions)
- creation of an European system of encouragement and recognition of innovation - annual awards in several categories.

• **Learners**

The target of 60 learners was met and breaks down as 43% female and 57% male of whom 74% were employed and 26% were unemployed. They represented the following country breakdown.

| Romania | Ireland | United Kingdom | France | Spain |
|---------|---------|----------------|--------|-------|
| 19 | 15 | 15 | 2 | 9 |

- 49% Strongly Agreed and 47% Agreed that the content was well organized and easy to follow. 2% could not decide and 2% disagreed.
- In terms of achieving the stated objectives of the modules, the response was emphatic as 65% Strongly Agreed, 28 Somewhat Agreed and 2% were neutral. 5% Strongly Disagreed.
- Measuring how the course design (i.e., materials and learning activities) encouraged their participation in the class, 46% Strongly Agreed, 45% Agreed and 7% could not decide. 5% Strongly Disagreed.

- Learners were asked if the exercises were enjoyable or useful. 74% Strongly Agreed, 19% Agreed and 2% were neutral. A further 5% Strongly Disagreed.
- A very important measurable is ability to provide opportunities to practice and reinforce what was taught. 40% Strongly Agreed, 51% Agreed and 9% felt the question was not applicable to them.
- In terms of the ability to apply the knowledge learned, 42% of learners Strongly Agreed, 49% Agreed and 9% felt the question was not applicable to them.
- In terms of the training meeting the learners professional requirements, 51% Strongly Agreed and 40% Agreed. 5% could not decide and 2% disagreed.

When asked were there aspects of the training could be improved, almost all of the respondents thought that the training is very interesting, but they suggested that more practical real examples, were added.

At this interim evaluation stage, 60% of partners rate the pilot testing work package as excellent and 40% rate it as good. At final evaluation stage, this had increase to 100% of partners rating the work package as excellent. As evaluators, we rate the pilot test methodology and execution as truly impressive, extremely thorough and very insightful.

3.1.5 Dissemination

As dissemination is central to the overall success of the Innovative Trainer project, the onus was on each project partner to energetically implement a multi faceted strategy to raise awareness and encourage engagement with the project. We now present the year one and year two highlights on a country by country basis.

Ireland

| Year One | Year Two |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In conjunction with UPV, presentation in Portugal to 30 commercial, government & research stakeholders as part of workshop on SME/University co-operation presentations. • Big Ideas exhibition & conference involving 400 Innovators, commercialization professionals. • Highlighted the project at major enterprise and innovation events e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Presentation at Assistant CEO conference of the national County Enterprise Board network ○ EU cross boarder programme launch involving 100 SME support organisations, businesses, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dissemination database growth to 286 contacts • Highlighted the project at major enterprise and innovation events e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plato Networking event with 100 attendees from UK and Ireland ○ iOTA project roadshows involving 178 Businesses, trainers and civic leaders from UK and Ireland ○ LCEB Open day and presentation at Board meeting of the Louth County Enterprise Fund. ○ Cross border trade fair and expo.involving 250+ Businesses, trainers and civic leaders from UK and Ireland |

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Launch of the Plato business support network in conjunction with NMEA ○ CEO Association Meeting ○ National Women’s Enterprise day involving 400 female entrepreneurs ○ SCI-NET project in conjunction with Mindshare ○ Patenting and licensing conference ○ Cork-meet event with 400 attendees ○ Business Expo involving 100 SME owner managers ○ Conference marking 20th anniversary of LCEB. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Productica 2014 - Romanian Academy of Scientists in conjunction with Romanian and French partners to 120 academics, scientists and business leaders |
|--|---|

Belgium

| Year One | Year Two |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project introduction at seminar for business advisors ● Circulation of email to engage in TNA to 30 business advisors ● Circulation of ezines to over 400 Business and Innovation Centres and their partners throughout EU ● Circulation of project info sheet at Cluster 2020 partner meeting, Munich ● Presentation to Entrepreneurial universities and policymakers at EUEN partner meeting, Brussels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promotion at meeting of Business and Innovation Centres, business advisors, social entrepreneurship centres ● Presentation of Innovative Trainer as a potential tool for inclusion in the ACE (www.europeanace.eu) online resource centre to partner meeting attendance of 40 ● Presentation to Business and Policymakers Summit attended by 400 Policymakers, Business Advisors, Investors, entrepreneurs Presentation of Innovative Trainer during meeting with the visiting delegation of 15 Portuguese ICT Cluster Members ● Various newsflash announcements at critical points in the project – call for feedback on training materials, project launch etc.. ● Presentation of Innovative Trainer during meeting with the visiting delegation of 25 Romanian Business Advisors |

France

| Year One | Year Two |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● French Facebook and Twitter pages established for the project. Also a blog feature on Mindshare website. ● Highlight the project at major enterprise and innovation events e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One current and important highlight is participation in the eChallenges e-2013 Conference (http://www.echallenges.org/e2013/) where two ITP papers were presented - in addition to key dissemination over the 3 days of the conference | <p>Highlighted the project at major enterprise and innovation events e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Libération Forum de Paris : 75+ General public, politicians ● Made In France trade fair ● Silicon Sentier présente NUMA - 40 Startups, coworking and SMEs, microenterprises. ● Le Camping season 5: Kick Off @ NUMA (incubator – startup accelerator) to 40 start ups and mentors ● Salon des Entrepreneurs 2014 - 400 experts and exhibitors; over 2000 visitors |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conference: Les Grands Prix de l'innovation de la Ville de Paris 2012 attended by 200 Government agencies, business leaders, SME owner managers ○ Salon E-Commerce Paris 2013 conference and 20 targeted attendees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workshop 2.2 - New frontier for Entrepreneurship Education at 23rd EBN Congress to over 200 delegates ● Le Salon Solutions ERP - Entrepreneurs, exhibitors, general public with 250 exhibitors, 7000 visitors (total) |
|---|---|

Romania

| Year One | Year Two |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation on the project to widespread and influential academic connections ● Highlight the project at major enterprise and innovation events e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Congres and seminar "Productica 2013" ○ Optimum Research Centre seminar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IMST faculty ○ IMST, MSP department ○ Paper on Innovative Trainer was presented at the Romanian Academy of Sciences / annual conference in University POLITEHNICA of Bucharest "Productica 2014" to 77 Academics, Students & Business leaders ○ National launch of ITP project at New Library of University POLITEHNICA of Bucharest. The event was featured in T&T - Technique and Technology magazine. ○ Seminar with 35 masters students involving Academics, Business leaders, students from CMP speciality |

Spain

| Year One | Year Two |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation on the project to widespread and influential academic connections ● Meetings with key enterprise influencers e.g. BTM company, REDIT and the Generalitat Valenciana ● Highlight the project at major enterprise and innovation events e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Event "Take off for Horizon 2020" in Dusseldorf ○ PROS Research Centre seminar 2013 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ eChallenges workshop ○ Event Horizon 2020 in Vilnius ○ Horizontal seminar related to Programming Classes (Computer Science faculty) ○ PROS Research Centre seminar 2014 ○ Meetings with BTM companies ○ Dissemination at event RCIS (Research Challenges in Information Systems) involving 60 academics and teachers ○ Dissemination at event FEDCSIS (Federated Conference on Computer Science and Information Systems) involving 90 academics and teachers ○ Dissemination at event ESEM (Empirical Software Engineering and Measurement) involving 140 academics and teachers |

UK

| Year One | Year Two |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation of project at Round table discussions at the 7 NEN regional member meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Presentation on ITP to Social Economic Forum Working Group, Newry |

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous Northern Ireland networking opportunities with SME representative organisations, educators, state business development agencies and government connections. Also highlighted the project at the All Island Innovation conference • Highlight the project at major enterprise and innovation events e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Launch of the Creative Spark facility in Dundalk ○ Visit by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to Titanic Centre, Belfast ○ Presentation of ITP to UK Shadow Secretary of State, Vernon Coaker, Newry ○ Presentation on ITP to the Social Democratic and Labour Party Business Development Group, Newry ○ Discussion on how to promote innovation in business, OECD, Lisburn ○ Discussion on ITP with Tangible Ireland Partnership, Crossmaglen ○ Discussion on innovation challenges with Sinn Fein Spokesperson on Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Phil Flannigan, Stormont Buildings ○ Leaders of Local Enterprise Partnerships annual conference with 100 delegates ○ Buy Yorkshire Expo with 500+ delegates ○ Future of British Innovation-London ○ LEP social enterprise WM, local authority and social enterprise leaders ○ Ops group meeting CC- Nottingham with Operational leaders of Enterprise Agencies ○ Walsall Enterprise with Local Agency leaders, council officials ○ Yorkshire Day Business Expo with local business leaders SME's ○ North Notts Business show with SME,s business leaders council officials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discussion sessions on the challenge of innovation with secondary school Principals from across the NI border region, Newry ○ Presented paper on ITP to the eChallenges conference in Dublin ○ Introduced ITP at IOTA programme launch ○ Attended All Island Innovation Conference ○ Introduced ITP to Enterprise Northern Ireland Board members ○ Introduced ITP during networking session after lunch with Minister for finance ○ Introduced ITP to members of the NI Assembly Enterprise, Trade and Investment committee ○ Introduced ITP during 3rd all party group on SMEs in Belfast ○ Presentation on elements of ITP to Labour+ conference ○ Presented ITP during Challenge of Change Conference ○ Presented ITP during EU Economic Roundtable Dublin |
|---|--|

Project Launch

The project's official launch was held as part of the EBN Congress on June 25th 2014 as part of the plenary session in Lleida, Spain. It was attended by over 300 attendees. Dr Conor Patterson presented an overview video which is now available on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzf-i1sYGcQ>) and on the project website. The partners really capitalised on the conference opportunity with three IT 'speakers' speaking from the podium and a project stand for the 3 days of the conference in the main hall.

At this evaluator's attendance at the partner meeting in Paris, there was much discussion on the launch event and how to maximise their presence at the large event. Partner feedback reflecting on the launch event is very enthusiastic and it is obvious any fears were allayed. As recorded in their evaluation feedback:-

- *Obviously the project launch was a highlight; the dynamic of the conference certainly added value as the project was introduced to interested parties who may not have had the opportunity to interact with the project. I suspect that most if not all the partners enjoyed the face to face 'selling' of the project to delegates they met while manning the project stand.*
- *Reaching a very wide swath of our intended stakeholders - SMEs, micro-enterprises, trainers and business support organizations and governmental and policy individuals. And all that not only in our partner countries (Ireland, UK, France, Belgium, Spain and Romania) but across the board in most European nations and even in international markets like China.*
- *The dynamic of the EBN conference added value to the meetings inside EBN Congress. The most beneficial outcomes of the partner meeting was the participation of the coordinator of ITP project (Dr. Conor Patterson- NMEA, from Northern Ireland) to the competition of the best projects.*

Country Launches

Following the national launch, partners undertook to formally launch the project in their home countries.

The approach varied between partners but we highlight the following:-

- The launch in France was targeted on the 14th arrondissement Paris which has a high density of business activity and population. It provided access to the former Mayor who is now a Deputy at national level.
- The Irish and UK partners collaborated to run a joint cross border event attended an MP as well as political representatives from Rol. The launch generated interest highlighting the project in the media and stakeholder channels.
- The National launch in Romania was held in the New Library of University POLITEHNICA of Bucharest. The event was featured in T&T - Technique and Technology magazine.

Social media

- In addition to the Pearltrees presence, the project also established an Innovative Trainer presence on Facebook and LinkedIn. While numbers of reach are modest, they are a very important precedence in establishing a social media strategy for the partnership. Post launch Canice Consulting instigate a digital marketing campaign which was very successful. For example, one element was a sponsored Facebook post ad. This received
 - 104 post likes, 224 Post Clicks, 112 Photo Views
 - 115 Clicks – the number of clicks the ad received
 - 112,358 Impressions i.e. the number of time the ad was displayed

The ad was highly targeted and breakdown on visitors is very interesting as highlighted in Canice Consulting dissemination report :-



Ezines

In all, 4 ezines were produced by the partners and are available on the website. We commend partners in taking our feedback on board to evolve from a text based ezine format in ezines 1,2 and 3 to an interactive brochure style format with weblinks and carrying the project's very attractive branding. In particular we must commend the partnership on their dissemination databases which gave the project excellent communication reach to the BTM audience.

Print Materials

A very attractive project brochure was produced to build awareness. With very strong branding and a tent fold the brochure looks well. It has a very appropriate level of text relying on graphic design word path to create interest in the reader. All project languages are represented. A pop up banner was also produced and used extensively at dissemination events. Project business cards were a smart addition and given the incidence of dissemination reflected in the listing provided above. The partners used these tools extensively and took pride in same – *'Our ITP business cards and folders were very effective and conveyed our pan-European sensibility'*.

Other

Other dissemination actions include links to the Innovative Trainer website from each partner's web presence and mentions of partner Facebook pages and LinkedIn pages.

In terms of partner reflections on dissemination highlights over the 2 year period, the following were cited:-

- *The highlights would be the national and international launches as well as the high number of hits on the project website and Pearltrees pages*
- *Presentation of the project to the International Council for Small Business world-wide conference.*

- *In addition to the creation and care of the Facebook page for "Innovative Trainer FRANCE" - the only partner that launched a language-specific Facebook presence, beyond the main English-language page, there was the continuation of dissemination in as many appropriate trade-shows as possible (Paris being a great location for many, many trade shows of all persuasion and sizes).*
- *Dissemination in two magazines (T&T and Technomarket) - Cooperation with the National Institute of Small and Medium Enterprises from Romania,*
- *The major dissemination activity for us was at the workshop Productica 2014. Productica is sponsored by the Romanian Academy of Sciences and this year focused on "From productivity to Innovation in Global Competitiveness". The workshops were extremely well attended by innovation practitioners and academics from across Europe.*
- *Pan-European and national Launch events*

Again, partner rating of this work package incrementally built to the highest satisfaction level possible.

| At 6 months | At 12 months | At 24 months |
|--|---|--|
| 44% rated the work package as excellent and 44% rated it as good and 12% stated there was room for improvement. This was a very strong rating for this early in the project. | 60% rated the work package as excellent and 4% as good. | 100% respondents rated the work package as excellent |

3.1.6 Evaluation

The aim of the internal evaluation work package led by Louth County Enterprise Board was to monitor and evaluate overall project progress across key quality measurements:-

- identify any variances with respect to what had been planned;
- ensure coherence and conformity between the project and the objectives;
- guarantee active participation of the actors directly and/or indirectly involved in project implementation.

Momentum, upon appointment as External Evaluator, prepared a work plan outlining the key deliverables of the assignment. Full consideration of the terms of reference is given in section 2 but we can summarise the overall aim as delivering an independent and objective view of the progress of the Innovative Trainer project and examining the extent to which the Innovative Trainer project meets the objectives laid out in the funded application. The key deliverables of this assignment to date have been:-

- Every 6 months, Momentum designed and distributed questionnaires which will independently track progress, challenges, outcomes and partnership dynamics throughout the lifetime of the project.
- Production of Monitoring Reports with six monthly milestones which quantitatively and qualitatively tracked progression and recommendations for performance improvements as required. This approach kept the external evaluator very close to the project throughout the 2 years and brings objective comment to the progression of the project.
- Evaluator attendance at the first partner meeting and fourth partner meetings.
- Ongoing liaison and regular communication with internal evaluator Louth County Enterprise Board and lead partner Newry & Mourne Enterprise Agency
- Production of the Interim Independent External Evaluation at the end of year one of project delivery and this Final External Report at the end of year two.

At the end of year one, the rating for this work package was a very strong 80% of partners rating the work package as excellent and 20% good. At the end of year two, this has increased to 100% excellent rating.

3.1.7 Exploitation

This work package, led by EBN, explored and set out an exploitation plan for 'mainstreaming' and 'multiplication'. Mainstreaming is the planned process of transferring the successful results of programmes and initiatives to appropriate decision-makers in regulated local, regional, national and European systems. Multiplication is the planned process of convincing individual end-users to adopt and/or apply the results of programmes and initiatives.

By May 2013, the partners had devised, agreed and signed IPR agreements which set out the Rights and Compromises of the exploitation strategy. The key points can be highlighted as :-

- All partners have joined in the ownership of the property rights of the complete set of materials produced in the project
- All partners will enjoy full exploitation rights of the complete set of materials produced in the project
- Jurisdiction - all parties, expressly renounced their own jurisdiction and agreed that any legal matters which may arise in the course of the fulfilment and implementation of this contract, will be subject to the jurisdiction and competence of the courts of the United Kingdom

Typically Momentum sees the exploitation agreements put in place at the end of the two year projects – it is testament to the commitment and ambition of this partnership that IPR agreements were in place within the first six months of the project.

4.0 Project Performance Overview

As outlined in section 1.5, the partnership boasts a broad and varied range of experience and expertise amongst the parties involved. This has facilitated solid project progress and has given partners the opportunity to exchange views and listen to examples of best practice from other member states. Effective working relationships have been established and partners have taken the opportunity to experience and to learn from other business and innovation cultures.

4.1 Transnational Project Meetings

Below is an overview of the transnational meetings which guided the project over the last two years:-

The **first Innovative Trainer transnational project** meeting was held in Newry, Northern Ireland, UK from November 6th – 7th 2012. Commendably, at the meeting outset a strong emphasis was placed by the lead partner on partner introductions and building familiarisation with each other at organisational and personal levels. This brings the understanding of partnership members beyond their formal application form descriptions into living organisational profiles spanning ambitions and character which cannot be captured on paper. This is a very important component in building shared relationships at a personal level which will be called upon over the course of the project. Crucially partner expectations were explored and discussed ensuring that a shared and realistic outlook was adopted from the outset. The meeting also provided the opportunity to review the financial basis for the project, payment plan and an administrative update in terms of Partner Agreements.

The lead partner Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency (NMEA) led a detailed work package and task planning exercise and cross package familiarisation. A highly impressive feature of this project is the Trac Project Management system – this is, in our opinion, is the **ultimate** project management portal. This system was successfully used by some of the partners in a previous Lifelong Learning Project and was evaluated as best practice tool. Our review of the content and usage of the system show that it has been enthusiastically adopted by all project partners and it is clearly a well used project management tool.

Evaluating the usefulness and performance impact of the first meeting for project partners was explored through the external evaluation online questionnaire relating to this vital first quarter and the subsequent quarter. The feedback provides a very interesting internal perspective of the early day's progression of the project including the 1st partner meeting in Northern Ireland and the follow up period thereafter.

We are particularly impressed with the partner emphasis on partner familiarisation, building relationships and stimulating a dynamic team approach at the first meeting. This bodes very well for a progressive partnership. All partners without exception reported that all their expectations were met at this meeting.

The commentary from the more experienced EU collaborators is particularly impressive. The following highlights were singled out for emphasis:-

- *NMEA did an excellent job of over-viewing the full project and, even better, provided supporting materials that they prepared beforehand (excel sheets of WPs, all deliverables, key dates, assigned leaders, etc.).*
- *Our expectations were met as the meeting was extremely businesslike. The project was reviewed in great detail with the result that all partners understood the deliverables. A methodology for working was agreed. The tools that the partnership would use were also agreed and demonstrated.*
- *All partners were well prepared and the meeting excellently organised.*

Partners were asked where there parts of the 1st partner meeting that they didn't feel were worthwhile or productive. The feedback did not give rise to any concern:-

- *The trip to Belfast although interesting and valuable might better have been handled as a visit from the presenters in Belfast coming to Newry.*
- *Maybe I would liked to have one more day to go more into details*

As we can see there was a very high level of satisfaction with the tone and content of the first meeting. As evaluator's we are impressed that the new partnership has gelled very well from the outset. This bodes very well for the ongoing delivery of the detailed project work plan – perhaps it will be a challenge to maintain this level of satisfaction.

The **second Innovative Trainer transnational project** meeting was held in Valencia, Spain in March 2013. Firstly, we asked participants if they were satisfied with project progress between the 1st partner meeting in Northern Ireland and the 2nd partner meeting in Spain. There was a unanimous level of satisfaction. To review specific feedback shows the depth of progress achieved in between the meetings:-

- *About 4 months elapsed between these meetings and we seem to be right on-target for the WPs that need to be focused on in this period. WP2 got off to a solid start and partners had been reviewing the materials from the previous project (IIME) to better understand improvements needed.*
- *All work packages have been kept to schedule with individual partners contributing on time and to a high standard*
- *The project is mainly on target, where there were some delays they have been highlighted and discussed, so that any concerns were addressed.*

- *There were regular meetings on Skype between partners. This allowed a smooth and correct progression of project activities.*
- *All partners worked hard and very well together to ensure that we had reached the stage we should have by the time of the second meeting*
- *The methodology and tools agreed at the meeting were followed through - SKYPE calls, SVN, Pirate pad etc.. Each partner has embraced the methodology.*

In terms of determining and measuring the partner's main hopes and expectations for the 2nd Innovative Trainer partner meeting and the extent to which these expectations were met it is interesting to consider the comments coming through. They provide a very interesting insight into partner thinking:-

- *To review the progress of each partner in the leadership of their assigned WPs and also the expectation that we would clearly set out work activities for the WPs that run during this period (and until the next meeting). Also that we would continue to improve in our use of joint tools.*
- *To maintain the momentum of progress and specifically to agree the share-out of work for WP3*
- *Project development and results up to that date were consistent with the project plan.*
- *To use SVN and other tools: Pearltrees, Popplet etc.*
- *To get the results of the TNA and to plan the materials adaptation phase*
- *To develop a clear plan of action for the next 6 months*
- *To get agreement of the outline of the training programme, and assign tasks and deadlines.*
- *To finalise the WP2 deliverable document and set up the starting basis for WP3.*

It is very encouraging that partners went into the second meeting with such clear and well thought out expectations – it shows a high level of ambition and a very focused work ethic. In terms of satisfaction with the 2nd partner meeting, the partner satisfaction was commendably sustained at 100% satisfaction level. The following highlights were singled out for emphasis:-

- *All partners departed Valencia fully briefed and in agreement as to what was expected of them*
- *My expectations were met in full.*
- *Generally speaking they were. To explicit: - Leader and other partner work activities were covered and documented well (using the technology tools adopted by the project at the outset).*
- *Not all partners took the time to delve deeply into the material from the IIME modules - in part this is due to the fact that some partners were actually the module creators (3 out of the 4 modules - with only module 3, lead by Fraunhauser - who is not a partner here in ITP -being "orphaned" - but reassigned to UPV). I would have liked all partners, especially the "new" ones to have gotten deeper into at least a full review of all modules so as to have early and better congruence with the overall project, and especially WP2.*

- *The broad outline was 'hammered out' and agreed during the meeting. Discussions were lively and extremely fruitful. The involvement of ALL partners in the discussion and decisions was exemplary. The project manager ensured that each partner contributed, and that their contribution was debated.*
- *The WP2 base line audit needed more time. Since some partners had problems securing an interview with Government contact.*

Partners were asked to provide comment on the most beneficial outcomes/highlights of the 2nd partner meeting. The feedback is very insightful:-

- *It was clear from the meeting that we work very well as a team and working through the agenda, delegation of further work was made and any concerns were discussed.*
- *Very solid advancement on WP2 - especially with the review of early results to the surveys.*
- *Better clarity of the upcoming key WPs (such as WP2) - dates, deadlines, activities. In part this is greatly due to the fine work done by Conor Patterson in his "IIME CRITIQUE".*
- *All individuals are "getting" the great value of tools such as PiratePad, Popplet and Pearltrees, and their inter-linkages for being both more efficient and more effective in reaching out goals in a superior way.*
- *Each partner has understood very well what to do and project development did not suffer any delay.*
- *Presentation on learning technologies by Polimedia from UPV.*
- *The results of the TNA*
- *MindShare's presentation of tools.*
- *The formation of the plan for development of the training materials.*
- *Have feedback about the survey results representations and the highlights that will be used to define the most important topics on the WP3 To assign responsibilities on the different modules of WP3*

Partners were asked where there parts of the 2nd partner meeting that they didn't feel were worthwhile or productive. Like the 1st partner meeting the feedback does not give rise to any concern:-

- *No, not really. It was well laid out and used our time very efficiently with major chunks of time/energy being given to the most important items.*
- *It would have been useful to know in advance that it would take only one and a half of the 2 days scheduled*

The third Innovative Trainer transnational project meeting was held in Carlingford, Ireland, October 7 and 8, 2013. In partner feedback to our external questionnaire, partners highlighted their expectations/

objectives for the meeting:-

- *To draw a line under WP3 content and set the scene for WP4 and WP5. To satisfy ourselves that the project was on track with no issues.*
- *Material adaption (Module 2) and integration of all modules in ITP final product; To have a feedback for WP5 - Pilot testing*
- *That WPs 3 4 and 5 would be progressed. That any delays or issues with any of the other work packages would be highlighted and dealt with*
- *As usual a full review of the project to date and a clear focus on the work for the remaining time, especially in the next few months before the next project meeting in Paris. In relation to WP3, I wanted to see us work together, live, on a full review of each module and its supporting materials to ensure a high level of quality and value to both BTMs and workshop participants.*

80% of partners were fully satisfied these objectives were achieved at the meeting, *'a good meeting with plenty of work done during it as well as plans to address project-related tasks for the next few months. There was considerable work done to complete WP3. WP4 technical realization was well hammered out. There was excellent progress on the pilot test WP.'*

Partners were asked to provide comment on the most beneficial outcomes/highlights of the 3rd partner meeting. The feedback is very insightful:-

- *WP3 was pretty well closed off, and all partners should have come away with a clear understanding of what is involved with WP4.*
- *Feedback for UPB concerning on proposed methodology and logistics for Pilot Testing work-package; Presentation of updating versions of modules (.ppt) in the presence of all partners.*
- *Putting WP3 to bed and the planning for WP5 pilot testing*
- *The SPECIFIC action items needed to close the WP3 effort at the best level were well laid out. Also the discussion regarding the use of Pearltrees and the work plan to fully populate what will be an innovative approach to providing support materials to BTMs. In addition the discussion on the use of Polimedia as both a SUPPORT tool and, especially, a DISSEMINATION vector was both timely and useful.*

This meeting was highly regarded – *'overall this was one of the most focused project meeting I have attended (in this project or others) and it was a pleasure to feel the level of both commitment and motivation of all the partners.'*

The **fourth partner meeting was held in Paris 19 – 21 February 2014**. Momentum attended this meeting to assess incremental performance in the fifth quarter of project implementation and observe the dynamic of the partnership in person. In terms of determining and measuring the partner's **main**

priorities and expectations for the fourth Innovative Trainer partner meeting and the extent to which these expectations were met, three clear priority themes emerged (partner feedback in italics):-

(i) Materials review

- *To firm up and critique, as far as possible, the content for the training modules*
- *To get the training materials agreed and the pilot test schedules underway*
- *To review progress in the material adaptation and translation of the modules*
- *Good, solid review of WP3 materials - especially language versions of "classroom" materials (PowerPoints, Trainers' Guides) in all language versions.*

(ii) Pilot testing

- *Pilot Testing – clarity and plan for pilot testing activities*
- *Determining the most efficient way of evaluation in pilot testing activity*

(iii) Clarity on European Launch Event

- *Dissemination and Exploitation to devise good plan for the project-end (close at least) launch event.*

All partners reported that their expectations were met. The following highlights were singled out for emphasis:-

- *Excellent work by the materials developers to get the training materials completed and presented. Getting the Polimedias on track*
- *Well managed meeting with plenty of time for discussion*
- *The project is run according to schedule. Collaboration between partners is very good.*
- *A lot of valuable work was completed and useful feedback received*
- *The reception we got at the Pearltrees meeting exceeded expectations.*

There was one issue raised in this section in respect of the dissemination event, which arises in later questions:-

- *On the whole my expectations were met, there was still some doubt on whether or not the launch would be included in the EBN conference*

In terms of what partners say as the **most beneficial outcomes/highlights of this 4th partner meeting**, the following feedback was received:-

- *Consolidation of the training materials. It is always good to meet with partners face to face to discuss progress. Everyone is working towards the same outcome of producing a really good training package on innovation*
- *Reviewing the Pearltrees content. Excellent work by all partners*

- *Plan for the two pilot phases and the measurement tools for each phase*
- *Work Package progress on ITP project and looking at the possibility of working together again on new projects.*
- *Wish list for European Launch*
- *Much better clarity on the many tasks needed to fully complete WP3 in time for the follow on Pilot Testing.*
- *A excellent overview by our Romanian partners on pilot testing country by country.*
- *The commitment of our Spanish partner to produce a whole set of Polimedia materials covering all the modules (and the overview).*
- *The visit to the headquarters of our strategic technical partner, Pearltrees for a review of our usage plans and their divulging plans for PT Version 2 which includes major changes we can now start to plan to take advantage of.*

Partners were asked where there **parts of the 4th partner meeting that they didn't feel were worthwhile or productive.** The only feedback focused on the dissemination plan but in a spirit of understanding notes that the issue was resolved:-

- *Would have liked to have the final dissemination/exploitation event in June fully nailed down. I understand the organisational difficulties, and it was subsequently resolved.*

We asked participants if they were satisfied with project progress between the 3rd partner meeting in Carlingford, Ireland in October 2013 and 4th partner meeting in Paris. To review specific feedback shows the depth of progress achieved in between the meetings notwithstanding project challenges in the interim:-

- *Considerable improvements made to the training materials*
- *On a whole yes, there has been some delay in engaging with stakeholders to undertake the pilot testing, however this has been addressed.*
- *Iterative revision of pilot testing process prove effective in the long-term*
- *Extraordinary amount of high quality work completed, particularly on the training materials and technical realisation side. Great credit to project manager for keeping this on track.*
- *We stayed on target, even as we added perhaps some additional items (like Polimedias) to the outputs. Motivation levels and commitment of all partners was exemplary.*

Given the project partners convene in regular Skype meetings, we felt it was appropriate to question the effectiveness of these meetings at this critical and busy project juncture. In addition to assessing their effectiveness, we also sought recommendations from project partners should any improvements be advised. Partners were very explicit in their positive response to the use of Skype meetings:-

- *Our Skype meetings are getting more and more important as we move close to project completion. The calls are actually getting shorter in duration but that is because everyone knows what they are doing and what is expected !*
- *Absolutely very effective. Still a super way to keep us all focused on progress made, bottlenecks, improvements, questions, etc. in all aspects of the project. We, as a team, have gotten much better at participating and following up on these meetings . The concurrent use of a collaborative meeting text (live minutes) allows us to go back and be clear of who is doing what by when ... and our measures of success.*
- *During critical times monthly would be sufficient*
- *Skype meetings are informative and a good way to speak with other partners.*
- *Regular Skype calls are without doubt one of the most effective tools we have at our disposal; while they can never be quite as good as a face to face meeting there are elements of face to face meetings that transfer well to Skype*
- *Skype meetings have stimulated the activity and set the milestones.*
- **Suggestion:** *Review the previous meeting (two weeks ago, usually) before diving into the day's agenda. Easy to set up since all meeting are indexed.*

There was a very high level of satisfaction with the tone and content of the fourth meeting as reflected in the significant progress made between meetings three and four, particularly in the area of materials development, refinement and the adding of the very innovative Polimedia materials. As evaluators engaged with the project for over a year we were impressed that the partnership built upon a good starting relationship to demonstrate a robust partnership where open and frank discussion is encouraged, a results orientated, action led approach is very evident. Attending the meeting in person meant the partners were more expressive and open in communicating their views with the evaluator.

We are clear this is not a talking forum, live minutes are taken by the technically masterful Jose of Mindshare France which brings a very powerful dynamic to the clarity of agreed actions and being in real time, partners leave the meeting fully au fait with what is expected of them – many other partnership projects would benefit from this approach. This innovative approach is carried through to the platform through which the learning programme is delivered – Pearltrees. Headquartered in Paris, the partners took the opportunity to visit the company headquarters to see the next generation Pearltrees application. This was very useful as the use of Pearltrees is a very innovative approach to materials presentation which will be comprehensively reviewed in our final evaluation report. Key highlights that stood out for the evaluator arising from meeting observation:-

Progress on Work Packages

Discussions on work package progression were very interesting and the partnership came across as having a strong work ethic. It was clear the key issues were:-

- **Materials Adaptation** Significant refinement of the training materials was evident since our Interim Evaluation Report in November 2013.
- **Pilot Testing** Partners are at different places in advancing towards the overall target of 36 BTMs. Through their work, some of development agency partners e.g. NMEA and LCEB can access pilot testers easier than others. Both agencies committed to recruiting 6 to 8 BTMs each. Early indications from pilot testing are broadly very positive although some minor issues were raised.
- **Dissemination** It was clear from the meeting that the dissemination plan for project launch was still in the planning stage. That plan being to use the EBN international conference focusing on young entrepreneurs to be held in Lleida (Spain) from 25th to 27th June to launch the Innovative Trainer project, present the learning tools at key workshops during the conference and use the opportunity to network with the 400 + conference delegates to bring the project to their attention for use in their own learning offerings. While the final agenda for the EBN conference was not confirmed at the time of the partner meeting, general principles of attendance were agreed.
- **Looking to the Future**
The partners allocated meeting time to explore the opportunities for this project and their partnership in the next funding period 2013-2020. While exploratory in nature, it shows a commitment to building on their shared learning, relationships and experience to achieve strategic progress – such vision is to be commended.

We asked partners did they feel their colleagues were cooperating fully in advancing their work package. Impressively all respondents (100%) were satisfied that their colleagues were co-operating as they required as articulated by one respondent *-forthcoming, timely and constructive inputs provided as requested*. We proceeded to ask partners were they satisfied with the quality standard of work undertaken by the other partners in progressing their work packages thus far in the project. As recorded in previous evaluation reports, very impressively (and most unusually in project partnerships) all respondents (100%) were satisfied with the quality of the work undertaken. No comments were forthcoming.

The **fifth partner meeting was held in Lleida (Spain)** from 25th to 27th June 2014 coinciding with the EBN international conference. In terms of partner expectations for this meeting, minds were very focused on the INternational launch of Innovative Trainer and maximising the opportunity of the large attendance to stand out. We asked partners to highlight their expectations of the meeting and event:-

- *To successfully launch the project at an international event*
- *To finally have a great launch with a good mix of practitioners and state agencies*
- *Primarily to get out the word in a real, powerful and positive way now that all the materials were produced, test and ready for use by the wider community.*
- *To participate of the partner meeting and to be in contact with different entrepreneurs. I attended the plenary session on 27 June "Innovative Country, Innovative Citizens".*
- *All modules to be in the final shape. All translations to be done. All packages to be up to date.*
- *To get maximum exposure of the project outcome. Ensure appropriate organisations were aware of the project. Demonstrate and promote the training package.*
- *Finalise the Training Materials in all languages and organise/oversee Pan- European and National Launch events*

These expectations were met in full. We asked partners to identify the most beneficial outcomes/highlights of the fifth partner meeting and questioned if the dynamic of the EBN conference add value to the meeting. The feedback is very interesting and reflects the partner's value of the international platform:-

- *Obviously the project launch was a highlight; the dynamic of the conference certainly added value to the meeting as the project was introduced to interested parties who may not have had the opportunity to interact with the project. I suspect that most if not all the partners enjoyed the face to face 'selling' of the project to delegates they met while manning the project stand.*
- *Project presentations at the conference. The ITP project was extremely well represented with at least three 'speakers' from the podium and a stand in the main hall.*
- *Reaching a very wide swath of our intended stakeholders - SMEs, micro-enterprises, trainers and business support organizations and governmental and policy individuals. And all that not only in our partner countries (Ireland, UK, France, Belgium, Spain and Romania) but across the board in most European nations and even in international markets like China.*
- *Yes, the dynamic of the EBN conference added value to the meetings inside EBN Congress. The most beneficial outcomes of the partner meeting was the participation of the coordinator of ITP project (Dr. Conor Patterson- NMEA, from Northern Ireland) to the competition of the best projects.*
- *All tasks in project agenda were fulfilled. The EBN conference add value to the partners meeting and offers the opportunity to make new connections. The conference was also a very good dissemination opportunity.*

- *High volume exposure and another opportunity to review with partner organisations*
- *Yes. New connections and uptake of training materials by EBN members.*

Partners reported that no element of the fifth partner meeting could have been improved upon – ‘No, I felt it was all very worthwhile. I don't think we could have found a better venue or a more propitious time’.

While the partners originally planned five partner meetings, they decided that to properly conclude the project, a sixth meeting in the final quarter of the project would be very useful. Hence, the **sixth partner meeting was held in Valencia (Spain)** in September. Partners clearly got real value from this meeting as reflected in their feedback :-

- *To set the scene for the final report process, to make sure that all partners know what their roles will be in the preparation of the final report. Also this was an excellent opportunity to do a top-down review of the project*
- *A final wrap up of the project and a 'loose ends' tie up.*
- *Besides celebrating what all partners felt was a project that was literally a powerful learning experience for all, and that produced excellent training materials (based on pilot and continuing feedback), it was also a very enjoyable collaborative experience. I feel we did, in fact, "walk the talk" in the way we worked together and that we produced innovative content and, especially, innovative ways to deliver and maintain that content . Also it was a chance for us to "cross the t's and dot the i's" in reference to navigation on the website and availability of all deliverables (in four languages). Finally, it was a chance for us to make some final improvements based on feedback from EBN attendees and our own reflections.*
- *Yes, to finalize the ITP project in very good conditions.*
- *Review of all areas and Work packages to ensure everything complete and in line with the programme requirements.*
- *To ensure all deliverables were complete, up-to-date and of a high quality and to clarify final reporting procedures.*

All partners reflected that their expectations were met.

- *The materials review was probably the most beneficial outcome as because several glitches were highlighted that may otherwise have been missed*
- *Making plans for future use of the product*
- *Knowing, being certain actually, that every partner played an important, even vital, part in all aspects of the project - some going well "above and beyond" the original scope of the project to*

produce a truly solid, comprehensive offering to drive innovation throughout Europe. The possibility of continuing to work together as appropriate (in dyads, etc.) is one of the most beneficial outcomes on an individual partner basis. Showing the way both in exemplary project management, collaborative working relationships and production of innovative training (with a basis for even further dissemination: other languages, easily added and community-curated content).

- *On this occasion, all organizational aspects have been clarified. The final report of the project is based on the work packages assigned for each partner of the consortium.*
- *All partners accomplished their own tasks. The IT project "coagulated" a strong team and I'm sure that this partnership can make a good team for future European projects.*
- *Confirmation and demonstration of an exceptional training package. Continued relationship with partners.*
- *Reinforced collaboration and set footing for continued and new collaborations in the future*

SKYPE Meetings via Conference Calls

Skype conference calls were prolifically throughout the project. As highlighted in our partners consultations *'the standing "rule" of a Skype conference call every two weeks has been an enormous aid in better communication, motivation and commitment of all partners. The bottom line is better FOCUS and adherence to work plans and due dates.'*

We were impressed that agendas/minutes were prepared for each call. As pointed out by one project partner *'having the agenda available before the meeting, thanks to Colin's discipline, has been a big help in structuring the time spent together on the call. We have become, as a team, increasingly proficient at using both Skype and PiratePad (as a concomitant tool for collaboratively creating in real time both minutes and action plans).'*

The partners clearly found the Skype meetings invaluable as evidenced through the following feedback:-

- *'Simply put, I really don't know how we could run a project like this without regular Skype meetings; Skype is probably the most effective tool at our disposal.'*
- *'Regular meetings on Skype helped a lot in the progress of the project. All matters arising are recorded in a document type PiratePad, which is available to all project team members.'*
- *'Absolutely essential. They have very good attendance and real work is done. WPs are moved forward during the meetings.'*

Evaluator Comment:- Overall, the six partner transnational meetings and the Skype conference calls offered a very robust platform for action planning, keeping on track and decision making. It is very clear that meetings are effectively managed by Newry Mourn Enterprise Agency. Partners also reported that the meetings facilitated the establishment and development of working relationships between partners,

whilst also providing an opportunity to establish new strategic linkages. The hospitality offered by all host partners was also widely praised.

4.2 Partner Co-operation

To assess partnership progression, we asked partners did they feel their colleagues cooperate fully in advancing their work package. Impressively all respondents (100%) were satisfied that their colleagues did co-operate. The comments give insight into the partnership workings:-

- *I feel that levels of co-operation were very high.*
- *Co-operation was evident in all phases. Each partner contributed to the various Skype calls and deadlines are being met. The collaborative working environment ensured that all partners are visibly contributing to the realisation of goals.*
- *Partners were quick to comply with requests, also attendance rates for Skype calls are consistently high*
- *Partners were all experienced in collaborative working, which worked very well*

Momentum asked partners were they satisfied with the quality standard of work undertaken by the other partners in progressing their work packages thus far in the project. Very impressively (and most unusually in project partnerships) all respondents (100%) were satisfied with the quality of the work undertaken and this it was to best practice standard. The commentary in relation to this quality topic is interesting:-

- *The quality of work generated is among the best I've seen.*
- *Each partner was actively involved in all work packages. This is great co-operation and there is no 'silo' mentality.*
- *All the partners are professionals and work to a high standard of quality.*
- *Especially heartening is the interconnection between modules as each partner also reviewed the modules other than the one assigned and gave focused feedback to the "module owner".*
- *The standard of work has been consistently high making an excellent foundation on which to base future work packages.*

We asked partners if problems occurred, why did they occur? The feedback is interesting:-

- *The challenge was to get our members to become actively involved in pilot testing, that is mainly to time constraints not because they don't want to help*
- *Getting agreement across different languages and approaches. It works well, but can be time consuming.*
- *To get sufficient engagement in Pilot Testing was somewhat challenging but we got there in the end!*

An important output of a Lifelong Learning programme is the organisational learning and development that accrues as a result of their involvement in an EU partnership. We asked partners to identify any new learning from work packages outputs. It is very clear from responses that there is significant learning yielding from this project.

- *Learning on innovation and innovation approaches*
- *As an employee of a technical university, deepening knowledge about non-technological innovation opens new horizons for my future development.*
- *Especially related to work-load balancing and, more importantly, the integration of learning materials with learners (in our case, trainers) needs (real world needs).*
- *The Polimedia approach for learning.*
- *The main learning has been not to underestimate the time it takes to develop new training materials*
- *This has been the first time that we have worked together on a European contract using work packages so all of it has been a learning experience.*
- *We learned new things that we hope to implement in future projects.*
- *New Pearlrees will be very useful*

At the end of the project we asked partners to reflect on what did you learn about transferring innovation in an EU context. The feedback was very interesting and very honest:-

- *It is never as easy as it looks on paper BUT having a validated framework, key procedures and appropriate tools goes a long way to giving the support needed while still allowing the necessary degree of freedom, flexibility and personalization needed across countries, cultures and business sectors.*
- *Each small and medium enterprise must have at least one BTM that is prepare to accelerate the transfer of innovation and new ideas into practice.*
- *That the issues are similar if not the same in all jurisdictions*
- *While countries and cultures differ, in business and innovation there can be a consistent view and explanation of the process.*
- *It is always a challenge in transferring innovation in a EU context. As teacher, I learned a lot of new things and techniques that I'll be able to implement in my academic activity.*
- *Innovation is a priority in all of Europe and it is essential to promote and use all possible means and tools.*
- *It's worth the effort!*

Another key measureable is the assessment of learning the partner organisation through their participation in the Innovative Trainer project. Again, feedback is very interesting.

- *The benefit for our members of being involved in a pan European project and the introduction of new tools, Skype, pear trees, SVN etc. A great training package on Innovation for our members to utilise.*
- *The use of collaborative online platforms has been invaluable; the project would have been much more difficult to deliver without them. Developing learning materials from scratch isn't as straightforward a process as you may think!*
- *That Innovation is a continuous process that can be learned.*
- *Project management, managing deadlines, handling slippages and non-conformance, excellence of communication and intelligent use of tools (apps, software, etc).*
- *Development of a collaborative and innovative work environment.*
- *Involvement in an European project is always a opportunity to learn new things, to meet new (and very interesting) people and to develop new relationships for future projects.*

4.3 Project Management

Based on evaluator observations through a review of documentation, internal monitoring procedures and the feedback of the other partners it is clear that project management was highly effective and professional throughout the two years of project implementation. It consistently received a 100% satisfaction rating throughout the project. Partner feedback is insightful:-

- *Sincere, caring, professional and effective.*
- *Very professional and demonstrated excellent leadership*
- *One has only to look at the working relationship, the progress and the levels of motivation of all partners - this stems primarily for the dedication and professionalism of our lead partner.*
- *Regular evaluation of how project is progressing, any issues dealt with addressed quickly*
- *Project management is provided with professionalism by NMEA.*
- *Exemplary*
- *Collegiate, collaborative approach ensures that quality work gets done in a timely and efficient manner. There is a real feeling that the project is being kept 'under control'.*
- *I am usually less concerned with the actual implementation of project management as much as by the dedication and commitment to "getting (the right) things done" and to respect of all the partners. I couldn't ask for better in this way from our lead partner.*
- *The project coordinator has experience in managing multiple projects and this current project provides a high success rate.*

- The lead partner is totally engaged in the overall project and assures there is a collegiate approach, which means each partner contributes to all work packages. Great job. Collaboration in action.

4.4 Project Communications

Early in the project, Universidad Politécnica de Valencia established the SUPORT Trac System as a depository of important documents; including all financial and administrative guides documents. This is actively used and is a smart methodology to ensure that the latest documents are available to partners and the external evaluator. Our consultation found that the year one level of communications within the partnership is well regarded – 60% of partners rate it as excellent and 20% rate it as very good and 20% rate it as fair. This had increases to 80 % excellent rate and 20% very good rating at project conclusion at project conclusion.

4.5 Financial

The Innovative Trainer contract was based on the following budget breakdown showing requested budget and a slightly reduced eligible budget profile :-

| Costs | Estimated Budget (from proposal) | Eligible Budget |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Direct costs | | |
| Heading A - Staff costs | | |
| Staff Costs: | 277,442.00 € | 271,839.00 € |
| Heading B - Operational costs | | |
| Travel and subsistence: | 59,521.00 € | 59,521.00 € |
| Equipment (up to 10% of [A+B]): | 0.00 € | 0.00 € |
| Subcontracting (up to 30% of [A+B]): | 26,700.00 € | 26,950.00 € |
| Other: | 1,750.00 € | 1,500.00 € |
| Total Heading B: | 87,971.00 € | 87,971.00 € |
| Total Direct costs [A+B]: | 365,413.00 € | 359,810.00 € |
| Indirect costs (up to 7% of [A+B]): | 25,575.00 € | 25,186.70 € |
| Total project expenditures: | 390,988.00 € | 384,996.70 € |

Based on a funding rate of 75%, the following receipts were anticipated for the project:-

| Receipts | Estimated Budget (from proposal) | Eligible Budget |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| EU Grant Requested from LLP: | 293,238.00 € | 288,744.57 € |
| Partner's own funding: | 97,750.00 € | 96,252.13 € |
| Other sources of financing: | 0.00 € | 0.00 € |
| Total sources of financing: | 390,988.00 € | 384,996.70 € |

In terms of financial administration, this evaluator has found that the project lead Newry Mournie Enterprise Agency established and maintained a compliant and effective system to meet the

requirements of both the company and its audit responsibilities but also the exacting requirements of the EU. Partner contracts were issued at project outset which included total budget, breakdown of costs within each category and payment schedule i.e. payment dates and payments amounts for each partner.

The partners were required to submit their financial claims on an annual basis. Within the partner contracts a payment schedule and conditions of payment were outlined. Each partner utilised a claim form and timesheet template. Completed claims were checked by the lead partner to ensure that the information is correct and the costs are eligible. To the best of our information, the project progressed within budget, match funding provision is on target and all of the partners found the financial reporting mechanisms relatively straight-forward.

In terms of the appointment of External Providers, we conclude that appropriate procedures were followed as regards the selection of external providers and payments were made according to fulfilment of contract conditions and payment schedules.

4.3 Liaison with Lifelong Learning Programme

Newry Mourne Enterprise Agency found liaison with the National Agency team to have been professional and effective. The project management workshop together with regular monitoring calls offered the lead partner an opportunity to 'take stock' of project progress and to highlight areas requiring address.

4.4 Adherence to the Principles of the Lifelong Learning Leonardo da Vinci Programme

We now review the project performance vis a vis the key objectives of the Lifelong Learning Leonardo da Vinci Programme:-

- **Innovation**

Prior to the development of this project and as out set in this report's project need assessment section 1.4, this project channels new innovation learning through Business Trainers and Mentors. As Europe's key players in developing innovation and growth within SMEs, the project was very justified in the premise that by updating their skills, BTMs will be better placed to provide guidance on how to innovate to small businesses, better adapt their services to changing business beneficiary groups & sectors and ultimately improve the innovation performance and growth of the enterprises they serve. The training materials themselves were designed and formatted to focus on highly creative content with very strong focus on innovative and highly engaging case studies and exercises to stimulate innovative approaches.

- **Partnership**

The scope of partners involved in the project capitalised on a beneficial depth of expertise with an excellent balance from both the academic and enterprise development fields. This dynamic

was hugely beneficial for the project and importantly broadened the horizons of all the organisations involved.

- **Transnationality**

The transnational platform that Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation offers has direct relevance to this project in that the countries involved were at different stages of innovation development (innovation leaders, innovation followers and those lagging behind) and are facilitating to engage in co-operation and the transfer of learning.

- **Validity**

Validation involves the process of assessing and recognising educational and training content, knowledge, skills and competences acquired during a specific learning and/or training experience. The validity of the Innovative Trainer approach was very clearly proven in the extensive two level pilot test work package. Innovative Trainer, by adopting a robust set of classroom and virtual training tools specifically designed to intermediary BTMS, will be tested in terms of the impacts and benefits for the target group. Momentum are pleased that there was a very impressive effort on the part of the project partners to ensure the relevancy and suitability of the resource content.

- **Valorisation**

The EU Leonardo programme defines "*valorisation*" as "... *the process of disseminating and exploiting project outcomes to meet user needs, with the ultimate aim of integrating and using them in training systems and practices at local, regional, national and European level.*" The project undoubtedly achieved valorisation of the Innovative Trainer product into the CDP (continuous professional development) training of BTMs. Pilot testing have proven the materials achieve a very high degree of approval while the impressive web statistics show the reach and demand for the information. As Business Advisors with 20 years experience the Momentum team have been highly impressed with the materials which have widespread applicability into training environments across Europe.

5.0 Conclusions

Where appropriate throughout this document, we have made comment on the overall effectiveness of the project. We now set out the conclusions of our external evaluation starting with a review of the Innovative Trainer work packages.

- **Needs Analysis**

This work package was completed to a very high standard and provided the foundation for materials development. The interviews with Government representatives yielded some very insightful findings - for example - the feeling that SMEs do not generally promote creativity and innovative concepts generation and certainly not enough and the fact that Government feel they are throwing a lot of resources at innovation; however, the task remains to change the mindset among SMEs. Thus, it should be incumbent on the Innovative Trainer project to really demonstrate uptake and measure impact so that SMEs embrace all innovation opportunities available to them. Momentum feel very strongly that this disconnect can be addressed by better trained BTMs to bridge the gaps.

Momentum is impressed with the quality of the work package and it's dissemination improved in year 2 when an executive summary of TNA findings was added to the project website.

- **Materials Adaptation**

Following Momentum's review of four modules of Innovative Trainer materials, we are clear this is a really engaging course with excellent blend of very current learning tools which any BTM would find really useful. The materials themselves are very creatively designed and constructed – in keeping with the project theme and the need for creative approaches as highlighted in the TNA. Likewise, the trainer notes are very good to give the necessary tools to the trainer to 'carry' the training session.

- **Website Development**

The development of the Innovative Trainer brand graphic guided a well branded and highly engaging web design pallet. Momentum view the brand as attractive and engaging, it is contemporary and emphasises interaction and communications through the use of a linked graphic. The tagline of Learn Inspire Empower is very appropriate to the target audience.

The website <http://www.innovativetrainer.eu> is a premium quality design standard; it is aesthetically pleasing and offers very good navigation. We are highly impressed with the use of Polymedia video, the presenter is really clear and keeps our attention throughout bringing us through screenshots and slides which are very clear. Well done partners on this feature – it is creative, engaging and innovative in its own right!

The year 2 website performance built on this year one success. In total, the site recorded just under 30,000 visitors for the two years, with almost 20,000 coming in year 2! The visitor spike in July/August is very clearly linked to Canice Consulting's search engine optimisation efforts and post launch online marketing campaign. In addition to providing the training materials through the Innovative Trainer website, the partners must be commended for embracing Pearltrees as a training delivery tool. We are very impressed that the Innovative Trainer training course has been viewed over 2,700 through Pearltrees. This has added a whole new cohort of training participants to the Innovative Trainer course which will have a very strong multiplier impact.

- **Piloting**

This work package was led by UPB who developed a robust methodology to ensure the pilot test was relevant and easily understood. The pilot test process got very rich feedback from 37 BTMs and 60 trainee participants who participated in a formalised assessment of the online & classroom courses to provide quantitative and qualitative feedback. The pilot test reports are very detailed and full of excellent guidance and insight into the impact of the IT training programme on both BTMs and learners or trainees.

- **Dissemination**

The dissemination reach of the partnership over the two years of project implementation was very impressive and was the basis for a highly active dissemination programme which drove interest and engagement in the training tool. Social media was used effectively bearing in mind it was the first time many of the partners got involved in same, pan European and country launches were successful and the precedence of in country briefings and presentations at conferences and events is truly impressive as seen from the extensive listing in 3.1.6. Particular highlights were

- *Presentation of the project to the International Council for Small Business world-wide conference.*
- *Dissemination in two magazines (T&T and Technomarket) - Cooperation with the National Institute of Small and Medium Enterprises from Romania,*
- *Productica 2014, sponsored by the Romanian Academy of Sciences and focused on "From productivity to Innovation in Global Competitiveness". The workshops were extremely well attended by innovation practitioners and academics from across Europe.*

- **Evaluation**

At the end of year one, the rating for this work package was a very strong 80% of partners rating the work package as excellent and 20% good. At the end of year two it achieved a 100% excellent rating.

- **Exploitation**

By May 2013, the partners had devised, agreed and signed IPR agreements which set out the Rights and Compromises of the exploitation strategy. Typically Momentum sees the exploitation agreements put in place at the end of the two year projects – it is testament to the commitment and ambition of this partnership that IPR agreements were in place within the first six months of the project.

- **Project Partnership**

The Innovative Trainer partnership brought together eight partners from six counties assembling impressive backgrounds and directly relevant experience to the project. The format and balance of the partnership was very impressive with partners representing key facets of VET and innovation specialisms at academic and private practice levels, enterprise representative bodies, the European industry association for BTMs working in Business Incubators (EBN) and two national networks (LCEB & NEN). Of particular note, the composition of the partnership ensured it reached and influenced networks & contacts.

It is impressive that the partners are looking at new collaboration opportunities to build on their partnership and innovation expertise. Communications were very impressive within the partnership and no doubt enhanced by means of six very satisfactory transnational meetings (one more than originally planned) and bi weekly Skype meetings. The use of the Trac System as a depository of important documents; including all financial and administrative guides documents was impressive two years ago and our review shows it was actively used.

- **Project Management**

Based on evaluator observations it is clear that project management was highly effective and professional. Partners themselves were wholesome in their feedback on project management – *'Exemplary'*. In terms of financial administration, this evaluator has found that the project established and maintains a compliant and effective system to meet the requirements of both the company and its audit responsibilities but also the exacting requirements of the EU. Most importantly, Momentum are satisfied that the project achieved a very close adherence to the Principles of the Lifelong Learning Leonardo da Vinci Programme.

In final conclusion, Momentum Consulting would like to compliment the Innovative Trainer project team on the delivery of a well executed transfer of innovation project. The overall quality of the partnership, the learning materials, the project Pearlrees, the project's dissemination reach is very impressive. Of particular note, the dynamic of partnership and their genuine engagement with each other is very strong. The partners should be very proud of their project outputs - a superior framework and high impact tools to train the future entrepreneurs across the Europe and give them the leverage they need to succeed with innovation.

