

**THE BIG BANG:
Bridging the cultural clash between young,
marginalised groups of young people and the
world of work and VET**

Work Package 7
Quality and Evaluation Plan

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Reference Documents

- BIG BANG Application form, Project Delivery (Activity) Plan, incorporating Timetable and Milestones

1. Introduction and context

This document represents the Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) for the Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation Project BIG BANG: Bridging the cultural clash between young, marginalised groups of young people and the world of work and VET.

It incorporates two elements:

1. A summary of the Quality Assurance arrangements in the Big Bang project
2. The Evaluation Framework

2. Project Summary

BIG BANG is concerned with the 'culture clash' between work-based culture and a culture of worklessness, social exclusion and low ambition. Its particular focus are young people who are participating in anti-social/negative peer group behaviour (including 'gang' culture and offending), and in addressing the disproportionate under-representation of young people from marginalised groups (black, minority and migrant communities) accessing initial VET and employment in the partner countries. The main aim of BIG BANG is to import and export, test and adapt existing innovative VET methodologies that have been developed to address this 'clash'. Firstly, the YES programme developed through a Leonardo Project in 2007 established a training toolkit for HR Managers, particularly SMEs, to recruit young people from marginalised groups and help sustain their employment. Secondly, the Dare2Achieve (D2A) model operated by 15 Billion in the UK, which is recognized by the Skills Funding Agency, the National Apprenticeship Service and DWP as successful youth employability programme that, responds specifically to the needs of marginalised young people.

The overall aim of the Big Bang project is to bridge the cultural clash between marginalised groups of young people and the world of work. Its concrete objectives in order to achieve this are:

- a. Through a process of comparative analysis and testing, to transfer through import and export the D2A and YES programmes in the partner states;*
- b. To produce new guidance and training materials for the target group of VET-related professionals (trainers, teachers, employability,*

information advice and guidance workers) supporting the target group young people and employers;

- c. To outline a competency framework for VET professionals, to incorporate within VET and NQF systems and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes in the partner states;*
- d. To align the competency framework to the European Qualifications Framework.*

In addition, the project has the same requirement as all Leonardo da Vinci projects to promote and disseminate the project results to a wider audience across the participating countries.

BIG BANG brings together 6 partners from 5 European countries who are sectorally diverse, but have a common professional stake in VET that better engages with disadvantaged young people.

3. Quality Assurance in BIG BANG

As set out in the BIG BANG application, the quality of the project and its outcomes is assured by blending the objectives of Work Package 1 – Management; and Work Package 7 - Quality Assurance and Evaluation.

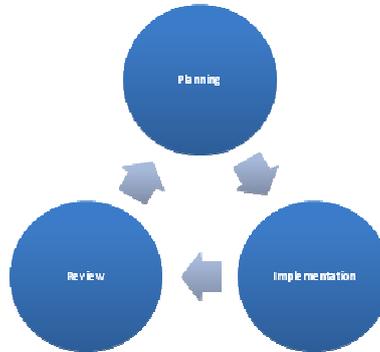
The Quality Plan will therefore focus on the Key Performance Indicators to set out 'what will success look like' at each stage of the project. It will also act as a qualitative mechanism to ensure that any issues regarding usability, understanding or the impact of the project's progress and deliverables are highlighted and fed back to the Partners, in order to implement corrective action or target resources in the appropriate areas.

In relation to quality assurance specifically, the BIG BANG application stated that quality assurance would occur through three specific mechanisms:

-  Setting out a Quality Assurance Plan which is agreed by all of the partners;
-  Defining how partners will assess quality through establishing Key Performance Indicators;
-  Producing an interim and final evaluation report, which reflect on the project's progress against its outcomes, highlighting learning and good practice.

Working collaboratively the BIG BANG partners, facilitated by Rinova, the on-going processes of management, monitoring and internal evaluation will contribute to an on-going quality assurance process as follows:

The Quality and Evaluation Cycle



Quality assurance and evaluation (whether internal, external or both) are key requirements of all European-funded projects and programmes as it is important to capture and assess the innovative elements of the activities to inform dissemination, including examples of best practice, successful pilot actions, and lessons learned. They also:

- ✚ Act as a check on whether the targets have been met (and assess to what extent);
- ✚ Allow the results to be improved based upon judgements made about the value and quality of the project;
- ✚ Give opportunity for feedback, reflection and therefore continuous improvement, during the lifetime of the project;
- ✚ Inform decision-making and can assist with fundamental changes in the project, should these be necessary.

15billion, in close collaboration with the WP Leader for Quality and Evaluation, Rinova, will undertake formal reviews at two key reporting points - the Interim and Final reports, to support the quality assurance of the project. We intend to conduct the 'internal evaluation' by capturing achievements / examples of good practice as well as highlighting any lessons learned or areas of concern as a peer process for these reports as well as to inform the wider dissemination.

However, the primary audience for the internal evaluation are the BIG BANG partners in order to inform project management, dissemination/exploitation and the reporting requirements of the Leonardo authorities. This internal process adopts a mixture of the following methodologies in support of this peer review approach:

- ✚ By contributing to a participative agenda for the partnership meetings and facilitating discussion with reference to project progress and the key issues that are arising;
- ✚ Review and analysis of the BIG BANG partnership's monitoring documentation including minutes, partner quarterly activity reports; and lead partner submissions to the Leonardo management authority;
- ✚ Analysis of qualitative feedback from trainers, key stakeholders and partners engaged by the BIG BANG partners via evaluation processes embedded into partner work programmes and delivery.

4. The Main Elements of the QAP

The BIG BANG application stated that the Quality Assurance Plan would be based on a set of key principles that reflect the importance of achieving the best possible results in all phases of the project:

- ✚ That the Partnership shares a vision of 'what success looks like'
- ✚ That this vision is supported by agreed and measurable criteria through Key Performance Indicators
- ✚ How quality is assured is set out in the Project Delivery Plan with appropriate resources and procedures
- ✚ That the end user beneficiaries will be involved in testing and validating relevant project results.

Each of these elements is described below.

a) *The Partnership shares and agrees 'what success looks like'*

The Partnership will agree at the outset the key action points and deliverables for each Work Package of the project to maximise the satisfaction of the partner organisations and the different target groups engaged in the process and the outcome of the project.

b) *Establishing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)*

The Key Performance Indicators for assuring quality and evaluating the project are set out in the QAP Table at section 6 below.

They are intrinsically linked with the results and impacts identified for the project, along with the milestones in the Project Delivery/Activity Plan (including Timetable and Milestones), against which the project outcomes must be achieved.

c) How Quality is assured is set out in the Project Delivery Plan

Quality assurance will take place in BIG BANG on a number of levels, both in terms of the approach to the research activity and the facilitation of partners through the testing and review of the models, and developing the Competency framework.

The quality and the 'fit for purpose' nature of the BIG BANG product(s) and its resulting impact, from a quality assurance perspective, is subject to:

- ✚ The scrutiny of the project manager (15billion) and facilitation from the Quality Assurance WP leader (Rinova);
- ✚ The periodic review of the BIG BANG Partnership Steering Group at its meetings; and
- ✚ The External Evaluator (see Section 5 below).

d) The satisfaction of the end user beneficiaries

BIG BANG has three primary learning groups, which are:

- a. VET professionals, including EIAG staff Tutors/trainers and support workers who will be at the heart of the testing activities,
- b. Employers, and
- c. The young people who will be supported in participating in the labour market.

Therefore, it will be important to capture both the satisfaction and the impact experienced by these groups of learners.

5. External Evaluation

As noted above, the evaluation approach in BIG BANG is primarily an 'internal' one, conducted between the partners based on the approaches listed in the Quality Assurance Plan produced by Rinova. From a quality assurance perspective, this is based on participatory evaluation and peer review and therefore all of the BIG BANG partners have individual and collective responsibility for different aspects of quality assurance and for evaluation activities that will take place during the project, facilitated by Rinova.

To complement this, an External Evaluator will be appointed to the project in order to undertake an independent assessment and review of (a) the 'impact and usability' of the BIG BANG products produced, and (b) the innovation transfer process, and how this process contributed to the development of the product.

As this work is focused on specific aspects of the project results it performs a 'valorisation' process to inform any of the final activities undertaken by the partners in terms of dissemination and exploitation; that is to say that the key messages that will be exploited about the work of the BIG BANG project have been externally assessed and validated.

To this end, therefore, Rinova, on behalf of the partnership and as the work package leader, will appoint and oversee the work of an External Expert, as an Evaluator in the first year of the project, and in consultation with partners, for activity that will take place primarily in the second year. It is anticipated that the External Evaluator will be appointed with specific expertise in the field of operation of the project, in particular in relation to the culture clash between youth culture and that of the world of work.

Specifically, the external evaluation will be asked to take into account the following aspects of the project:

(a) From the partners, the trainers or trainees:

- A description of and commentary on the added value of the new approaches in the transfer countries
- Impacts upon trainees who are NEET, in placement, or accessing employment in companies
- The perspective of VET professionals and company staff, in terms of the usability and impact of the project results

(b) As an 'expert', providing observation and commentary in relation to:

- Implications for policy makers in education and employment and other external stakeholders
- An assessment of sustainability perspectives, including succession planning.

As the evaluation is focused on the usability and impact of the project results, the evaluation will be 'summative' and will take place primarily in year 2 of the project (from January 2014), although there will be opportunities for the external evaluator to attend partnership meetings to observe proceedings and to participate as appropriate before that date.

6. The QAP: KPIs, Methods and Timetable

6.1 In the table below we set out the BIG BANG Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) in summary form, combining all the key elements to be quality assured; the KPIs that will be used as measures; and the means by which the factors will be quantified and assessed.

BIG BANG OBJECTIVE 1

To transfer through import and export the D2A and YES programmes in the partner states, through a process of comparative analysis and testing

QUALITY & EVALUATION INDICATORS (KPIs)	QUALITY AND EVALUATION METHODS	TIMING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comparative Study / Synthesis report produced 2. That the D2A / YES materials are successfully adapted for use in the partner countries 3. That the D2A and YES adapted materials are accessible and useful to the partners. 4. Completion of testing for Young People 5. Completion of testing for VET practitioners 6. Completion of testing for Employers 7. The overall level of satisfaction of the targeted organisations with the project results for both staff/personnel and young people <p>Key quantitative impact indicators are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 learning/employability skills manager participating in the project • 20 VET (EIAG advisors) practitioners taking part in the pilots • 40 young people from marginalized communities taking part in the pilots • High levels of satisfaction by all those participating in the pilots/testing • High levels of satisfaction of the participating organisations from the 5 partner countries 	<p>Partnership peer evaluation – questionnaire and feedback of findings – summary report (Rinova)</p> <p>All partners to comment on this in Quarterly Activity reports and subsequent partner questionnaires (circulated by Rinova)</p> <p>Peer Reviews to inform and share effective practice (all partners piloting the transfer)</p> <p>Review of relevant materials including the comparative study guidance (all partners presenting the Country reports)</p> <p>Feedback from the 3 groups involved in the testing (designed by Rinova, completed by all partners' staff)</p> <p>Review of testing (led by APS and 15b and supported by Rinova)</p>	<p>Feedback and review – 2nd partnership meeting April 2013</p> <p>Jan-Apr 2013</p> <p>Sep 13 to Jun 2014</p> <p>June/July 2014</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement grades of the young people participating in the pilots and their increase levels of confidence and self-esteem Improvements of young people attitude towards finding a job and a work placement 	<p>External Evaluator: An assessment and review of the innovation transfer process, and how this process contributed to the development of the product produced</p>	<p>September 2014</p>
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BIG BANG OBJECTIVE 2

To produce new guidance and training materials for the target group of VET-related professionals (trainers, teachers, employability, information advice and guidance workers) supporting the target group young people and employers;

QUALITY & EVALUATION INDICATORS (KPIs)	QUALITY AND EVALUATION METHODS	TIMING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> New guidance and training materials for the target group produced YES+ Toolkit and Guide - a new 'synthesised' innovation arising from the results of testing of newly produced materials That the materials have relevance and applicability for supporting VET professionals, young people and employers Completion of curriculum development programme for train the trainers, including relevance of the train the trainers programme in each country (includes content), Complete delivery of train the trainers programme for partners' personnel/target groups <p>Key quantitative impact indicators are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 VET professionals (trainers, IAG advisors and support 	<p>Partnership peer evaluation – questionnaire and feedback of findings – summary report (Rinova)</p> <p>All partners to comment on this in Quarterly Activity reports and subsequent partner questionnaires (circulated by Rinova)</p>	<p>Following each partner meeting, feedback of results to subsequent meeting</p> <p>Quarterly Activity Reports</p> <p>Interim and Final report stages.</p>

<p>workers) engaged in the project per country,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high level of satisfaction by learning managers and VET professionals (trainers, IAG and support workers) participating in the train the trainers programme in each partner country, • Number of institutions/organisations in each partner country who express interest in using the new materials 	<p>External Evaluator: An overall assessment and review of the impact and usability of the products produced. An overall assessment of the impact on the VET practitioners</p>	<p>September 2014</p>
<p>BIG BANG OBJECTIVE 3</p> <p>To outline a competency framework for VET professionals, to incorporate within VET and NQF systems and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes in the partner states</p>		
<p>QUALITY & EVALUATION INDICATORS (KPIs)</p>	<p>QUALITY AND EVALUATION METHODS</p>	<p>TIMING</p>
<p>Producing a technical competency map, which sets out setting out the central competences required by various VET professional target groups that are working with marginalised unemployed young people</p> <p>Engagement with relevant accreditation and regulatory bodies to ensure that the competences are relevant for, and consistent with, national and European professional development.</p> <p>The quality indicators will also take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of satisfaction by learning managers and VET professionals (trainers, IAG and support workers) • The extent to which the competency framework (either stand alone or merged) reflects the competencies needed by VET 	<p>Partnership peer evaluation – questionnaire and feedback of findings – summary report (Rinova)</p> <p>External Evaluator: A perspective on the impact of this aspect of the project on the key target groups</p>	<p>Following partnership meetings</p> <p>Final report</p> <p>September 2014</p>

<p>practitioners to deliver effective Careers education information advice and guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the competency framework assesses whether staff (at partner level) are delivering to a high quality standard and are meeting the intended outcome of the Yes + Toolkit 		
<p>BIG BANG OBJECTIVE 4</p> <p>To align the competency framework to the European Qualifications Framework</p>		
<p>QUALITY & EVALUATION INDICATORS (KPIs)</p>	<p>QUALITY AND EVALUATION METHODS</p>	<p>TIMING</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The development of a competency map Outline of a core framework of competencies for occupations involved in using the YES+ Toolkit The successful alignment of the competency framework with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ERF EQF ECVET <p>Key quantitative impact indicators are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The degree to which the competency framework (either stand alone or merged) reflects the competencies needed by VET practitioners to deliver effective Careers education information advice and guidance 	<p>Quarterly Activity Report Template designed by Rinova.</p> <p>Partnership / peer review and statement on issues concerned framework development and with alignment and mapping against European standards</p> <p>Final Project Report prepared by Rinova with all partners input. Insight on ERF, ECVET and EQF implications in final report.</p> <p>External Evaluator: the perspective of VET professionals/trainers in terms of the viability and application (usability) of the material produced and the overall project results</p>	<p>Final Report</p> <p>September 2014</p>

BIG BANG - DISSEMINATION

To promote and disseminate the project results to a wider audience across the participating countries

QUALITY & EVALUATION INDICATORS (KPIs)	QUALITY AND EVALUATION METHODS	TIMING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A multichannel publicity approach will be adopted to support the development and delivery of the promotional/dissemination actions to all target groups, stakeholders and relevant networks. The cornerstone of this approach will be a Dissemination & Valorisation Plan 2. Development and maintenance of the Project website 3. Completion of the Project Brochure 4. Completion of the six-monthly e-zines/news letters 5. Complete the policy review paper with recommendations using current best practice of effective interventions to support marginalized young people into the world of work. 6. Delivery of the London Conference with a wide range participation of stakeholders from the UK and the partner organisations <p>Key quantitative impact indicators are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 press releases to raise the project profile • 1,000 hard copy of Project brochure will be distributed across the 5 partner countries 	<p>Partnership peer evaluation – questionnaire and feedback of findings – summary report (Rinova)</p> <p>All partners to comment on this in Quarterly Activity reports and subsequent partner questionnaires (circulated and analysed by Rinova)</p> <p>Partner deliverables reviewed and validated by Partnership Steering Group and analysed by Rinova</p>	<p>Following each partner meeting, feedback of results to subsequent meeting</p> <p>Quarterly Activity Reports</p> <p>Interim and Final reports</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,000 electronic copies of the brochure will be mailed out • 10,000 visitors to the project website over the life of the project • 2,000 stakeholders will receive a six-monthly e-zine/news letter across partners • 5 articles/briefings will be published pan Europe • 80 participants will attend the Final Dissemination Conference in London • Participation of relevant stakeholders (including learning providers, community based organisations and employers) in 1 local seminar to be hosted by each partner during the life of the project, • The depth and breath of the policy review and recommendation paper produced • Number of organizations attending the final conference event in London 		
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A full list of the BIG BANG results is provided at Appendix 1

APPENDIX 1 BIG BANG RESULTS

The Big Bang results are:

1. **A Research report** - consisting of a comparative analysis of the approaches currently being taken in the participating members states to address 'transition to VET and employment' issues with young unemployed people from marginalised groups. The Executive Summary of the report will be in English from the country reports, which themselves will be produced in both English and the partner language (Dutch, German, Icelandic and Spanish).

Target Group: VET practitioners (IAG advisors, support workers, trainers, learners, mentors,) and employers.

2. **Position Statement on the outcome of the Transfer and Test – YES, D2A and APS** materials tested internally leading to the position statement with recommendations for the approach required in WP4 (Testing phase)

Target Group: Partners (within each organisation VET professionals), young people and employers

3. **YES+ Toolkit and Guide (to be renamed)** - a new 'synthesised' innovation arising from the results of testing of newly produced materials. It will be translated in German, Spanish and Icelandic.

Target Group: Partners (within each organisation VET professionals), young people and employers

4. **Competency framework for VET professionals** who support young people to move into employment- focus on diversity and addressing disadvantage

Target Group: Partners (within each organisation VET professionals), young people and employers

5. Project Website, Project Brochure and e-zines

Target Group: Policy stakeholders, target group VET professionals and EIAG staff, employers, young people, social partners and institutions working with skills development and learning for young people.

6. **Policy Review paper** will be disseminated by VMST at the London conference

Target Group: Policy stakeholders, target group VET professionals and EIAG staff, employers, young people, social partners

7. **Final Conference** in London

Target Group: Policy stakeholders, target group VET professionals and EIAG staff, employers, young people, social partners

8. **Quality Plan** - setting out key performance indicators and the internal evaluation and review process, together with providing for an external evaluation of impact and usability.

Target Group: Partnership

Dissemination and Exploitation results are **provided** in Appendix 2

The overarching aim of the project is to bridge the gap between marginalised groups and the world of work. To ensure that the key beneficiaries of the project are fully engaged in the development of the resources generated and also in benefiting from these final resources we shall adopt a multichannel approach to dissemination through the lifetime of the project culminating in a final event in September 2014.

Summary timetable:

- Agreement of communication and engagement plan – arising from stakeholder analysis – month 3
- Launch of awareness raising – initial project website and project brochure – month 6
- Production of six-monthly e-zine to mailing list of 2,000 stakeholders across partners consisting of specify
- Year 1 – webinar – online seminar and broadcast
- Exploitation action – second state dissemination arising from validation of tests – month 15
- Final conference – London

We have set out a specific Dissemination Work Package (6), incorporating an overarching communication and engagement plan, so that promotion of the project as well as feedback on the research and materials developed can be obtained. Each partner shall actively use local social media and web facilities to engage target group beneficiaries; meetings with representative target groups – including cross partner engagement through video conferencing, will ensure that target specific materials gain maximum promotion. Finally print media will be used, including trade press, regional and national press and to national and international magazines covering the fields of education, employment and rehabilitation, including the national agencies of European programmes, to

ensure that maximum impact with specific target beneficiaries can be achieved. At regular times the partnership will publish pan Europe briefings through social media and LdV vehicles including national support office communication tools. These will be published in the English language, and when useful in the national languages of the partners.

Shortly before the end of the project the partners will organise a European Conference with the following working title: "The Big Bang: a Clash of Cultures: Young people and Work. The conference will provide a strong focus on the innovative ways to address the engagement of young people in the labour market. All relevant national agencies will be informed frequently about the proceedings of the project.