

BeyndScale

Workshop User Story



Workshop Organizer - **FH Campus Wien,
Austria**



Authors - **Susanna Boldrino, Sandra Dohr &
Steffen Keijl**



Type of Activity - **Inbound Workshop: Digital
competencies in transition**

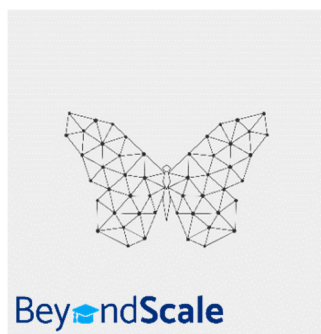
How to read the document

This document represents the series of workshop user stories within the BeyondScale project. These stories are based on the combination of the HEInnovate dimensions and the Value Proposition Canvas, and they depict the experiences of the partner higher education institutions. To understand the concept of the workshop, we provide a **glossary** below:

- **The Aim:** BeyondScale is one of the Forward-looking projects to create a pan-European community of practice, that will share, and document emerging good practices based on the outcomes of the individual and collaborative activities of the participants. Within the BeyondScale project, the HEInnovate tool is deployed beyond its self-assessment capacity.
- **Inbound & Outbound activities:** The HEInnovate dimensions are used to drive entrepreneurial and innovative change across a range of inbound and outbound education and engagement activities in higher education institutions (HEIs) with relevant stakeholders. From the BeyondScale perspective, the inbound activity serves to support HEI's institutional development process and organizational capacity; therefore, it targets internal stakeholders (administrative staff, academics, researchers, students). As for the outbound activity, it aims at strengthening HEI's wider regional and societal engagement, thus it targets external stakeholders (students, employers, social enterprises, business, NGOs).
- **The Value Proposition Workshop:** In order to have a structured workshop format, the Value Proposition Design approach was adopted and the BeyondScale team came up with the new format which incorporates the specific HEInnovate dimensions and the Value Proposition canvas. The Value proposition canvas is a tool that helps to understand the inbound and outbound stakeholders, and to target their needs better, which leads to optimized value creation.
- **Buddy System:** One of the main assets of the BeyondScale project is the Buddy System, in which partners engage in a peer-learning, exchanging experiences, and discussing plans. Our partner higher education institutions have been organized as a buddy team throughout the project based on similar challenges, interests, and the HEInnovate dimensions.

Inbound Workshop @ FH Campus Wien, our story.

Susanna Boldrino, Sandra Dohr, Steffen Keijl, FH Campus Wien, Akademische Hochschulentwicklung, AUSTRIA



FH Campus Wien, HEInnovate and BeyondScale

In 2018, FH Campus Wien learned about HEInnovate and its potential for strengthening its entrepreneurial agenda. At that time, FH Campus Wien took part in the [HEInnovate country review](#) for Austria. This experience helped to further develop the FH Campus Wien strategic plan 2021-2025. Amongst others, *digital transformation and social change* and *entrepreneurial teaching and learning* were identified as two strategy areas. While the HEInnovate experience provided valuable ideas for strategy development, the tool was not considered flexible enough at that time. Customization was required to increase its relevance for FH Campus Wien.

The BeyondScale project provided the opportunity to familiarize the institution with the HEInnovate self-assessment tool and to make the self-assessment statements align with the prevalent circumstances at FH Campus Wien. Additional statements and self-assessment questions were added and served as inputs to the BeyondScale value proposition workshops that were organized by FH Campus Wien with participants from various internal stakeholder groups.

Towards digital transformation

The first workshop focused on the HEInnovate dimension Digital Transformation & Capabilities and enabled the participants to discuss digital transformation as well as the associated “gains” and “pains”. The discussion was structured along the different items in the value proposition canvas and facilitated the development of an action plan to stimulate the digital transformation of FH Campus Wien. Although HEInnovate mostly focuses on the institutional level, looking at the program level was also considered.

In the light of curriculum development, digitalization requires open-mindedness and looking beyond possible limitations. Embedding digitalization into curricula is not simply about incorporating new digital contents or methods to complement the existing modules. It involves questioning the existing modules and looking for ways of implementing digitalization and digital competences in a holistic way. Curricula, however, are heterogeneous, so there is no one-size-fits-all solution for digitalization. Approaches will have to be adapted to the characteristics of individual degree programs.

It is important to realize that digital transformation is part of a general trend in society that drives all kinds of socio-economic transformations. Therefore, it has to be part of any future-oriented curriculum, enabling future graduates to address societal challenges.

In the value proposition workshops, a shared understanding of the gains and pains of digitalization at university level as well as on program level. Ultimately this will lead to a raised awareness of the opportunities of digitalization, which is expected to remain relevant long after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thorough preparation as the key to a successful workshop

In preparation for the value proposition workshop, an FH Campus Wien project team developed a questionnaire to collect ideas and opinions from university staff about digitalization at the university and program levels. The results proved helpful in the preparation for the discussions in the workshops. The HEInnovate self-assessment statements inspired the pre-workshop questionnaire; yet it was decided to adapt it to the institution's needs and included additional questions. Issues that were inspired by HEInnovate included digital transformation, people, teaching, learning and assessment, as well as digital infrastructure.

BeyondScale partners from the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) helped in determining the questions for the pre-workshop survey. The questionnaire consisted of both closed and open questions.

Respondents were also asked to provide suggestions concerning key performance indicators and their needs regarding digital infrastructure, or address digitalization in their working processes. The questionnaire was sent to 65 people within the institution.

The format of the workshop was defined by the value proposition canvas, which contrasts the customer profile of the target group, including their jobs and requirements as well as “pains” and “gains” connected to digitalization, to the value proposition of the activities and services the higher education institution can offer. The key questions to be answered with the help of the canvas were the identification of the “pains” and “gains” of digitalization for the target group and how the offers and services of the higher education institution can relieve some of the “pains” thereby creating additional and, perhaps, unexpected “gains”. Since the canvas format was new for the participants, familiarization with the concept (designed by Osterwalder, Pigneur et al., 2014), was essential.

Since looking at the institutional as well as the program level was considered crucial, two separate workshops were organized. Participants included internal and external stakeholders. They were selected based on whether they had been involved in the HEInnovate activity in 2018. Other interested

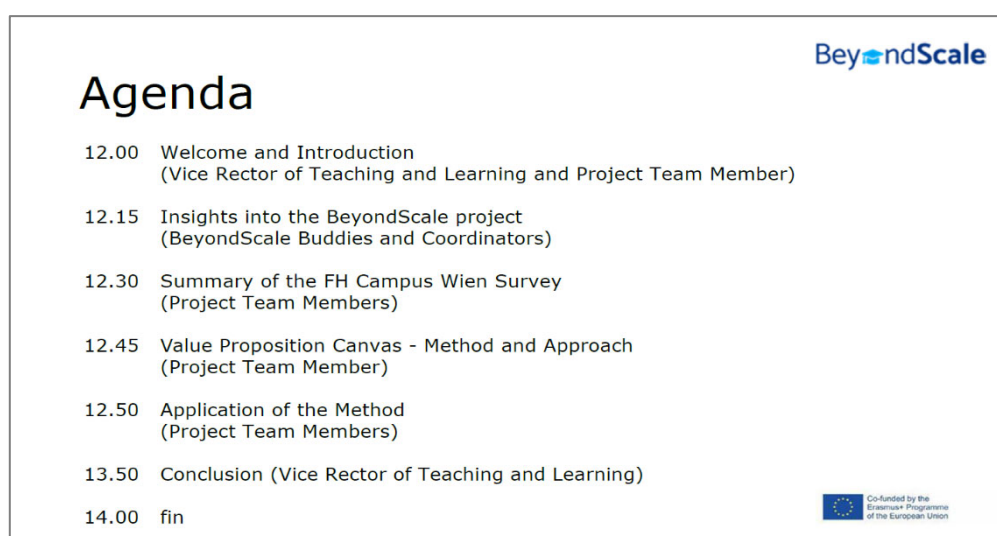
experts of FH Campus Wien and representatives from other BeyondScale partners were also invited. BeyondScale partners were selected (as “buddies”) based on their interest in the HEInnovate dimension Digital Transformation and Capabilities. Another factor was their German skills, as German was the chosen workshop language. The reason for this decision was that holding a workshop in English might prevent a natural discussion flow.

The workshops: two workshops with a different focus

Workshop 1 (program level) was held on March 8, 2021 and workshop 2 (university level) on March 9, 2021, both online. The online tool Miro (collaborative whiteboard) was used for documenting purposes and visualization. The moderation and documentation of both workshops was carried out by the project team.

In total, there were 12 participants in the first workshop, including the vice rector of teaching and learning, heads of degree programs, the head of strategic cooperation, lecturers, and other experts of FH Campus Wien. The BeyondScale project manager (WPZ) and representatives of CHEPS took part in the workshop as well.

On the following day, 13 participants attended the second workshop, including the rector, vice rector of teaching and learning, heads of degree programs, the head of human resources, and other experts of FH Campus Wien. In addition, the BeyondScale project manager (WPZ) and some representatives of CHEPS and the BeyondScale partner University of Innsbruck joined the workshop. The overarching goal was to discuss the digital transformation of FH Campus Wien.




Agenda		BeyondScale
12.00	Welcome and Introduction (Vice Rector of Teaching and Learning and Project Team Member)	
12.15	Insights into the BeyondScale project (BeyondScale Buddies and Coordinators)	
12.30	Summary of the FH Campus Wien Survey (Project Team Members)	
12.45	Value Proposition Canvas - Method and Approach (Project Team Member)	
12.50	Application of the Method (Project Team Members)	
13.50	Conclusion (Vice Rector of Teaching and Learning)	
14.00	fin	 Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Figure 1: Agenda of workshop 1

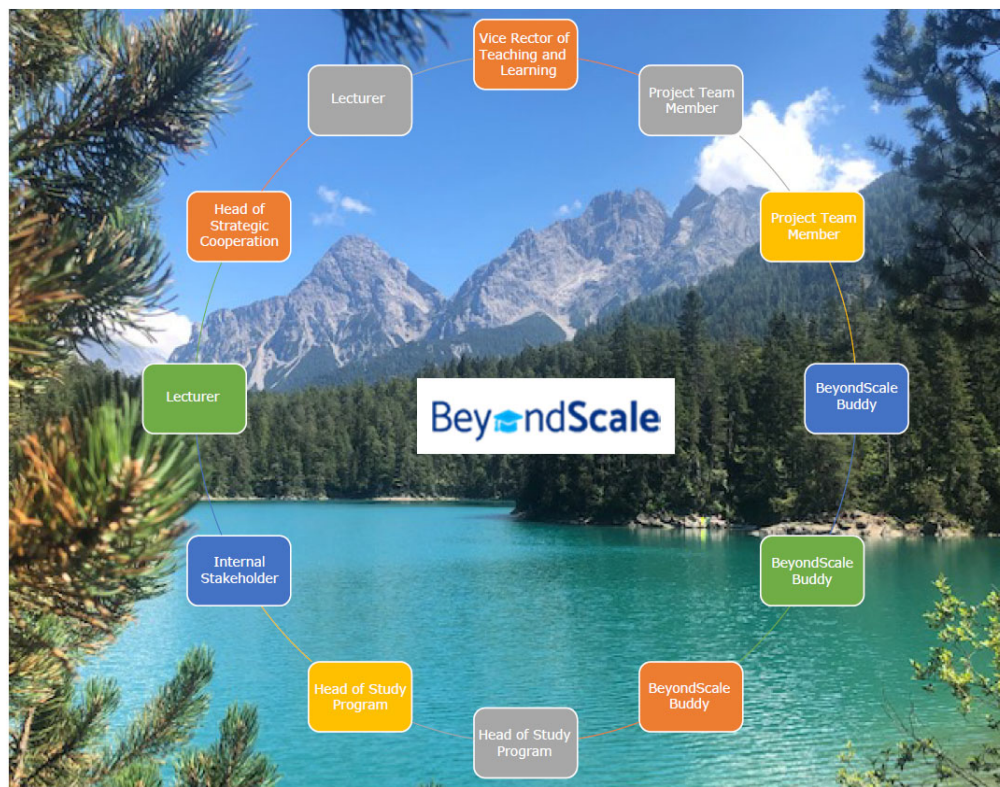


Figure 2: Slide for introducing the workshop participants (workshop 1)

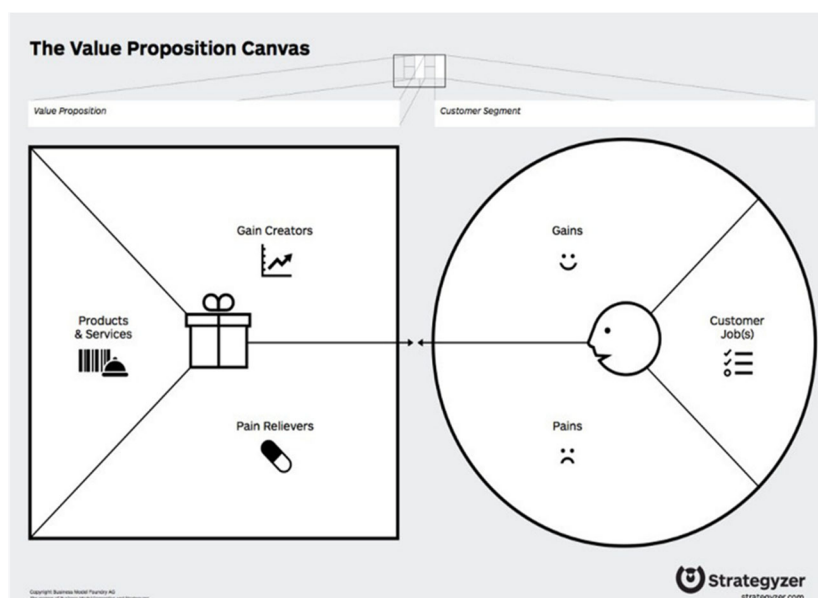


Figure 3: Image of value proposition canvas used during the workshops
Source: <https://www.einstein1.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/value-proposition-canvas.jpg>

The value proposition canvas concept (see Figure 3) was used for the workshops and each of the six sections of the canvas was discussed in a ten-minute block.

Participants had the opportunity to speak their minds and interact without feeling obstructed by differences in hierarchy. In terms of moderation, the ten-minute blocks helped to structure the workshop and prevented wandering from the subject. The workshops raised awareness about the topic of digitalization among all participants.

Workshop take-aways and follow-up

The outcomes of the workshops were classified as “gains”, “pains”, gain creators and pain relievers on the value proposition canvas (see Figure 4). In addition, an action plan with upcoming activities was produced.

Outcomes of workshop 1 (program level issues)

The identified “pains” on the program level included the digital literacy of external lecturers. There appeared to be no clear and uniform understanding of hybrid teaching models. The different ratios between internal and external lecturers across degree programs are seen as problematic. Communication between external lecturers and administrative staff is often difficult. Internal barriers that were identified during the workshop included the handling of group sizes and the related teaching load in light of the available resources regarding time and facilities. The issue of support for external lecturers, or rather lack thereof, (e.g. eTutoring) was also mentioned. The monetary reward system for distance learning was seen as another barrier for external lecturers.

Opportunities for involving international experts in online teaching was mentioned as a great “gain”. All participants recognized the importance of digital transformation without any questioning. Digitalization creates more flexibility in terms of time and space for students, and digital competences of lecturers have improved. Taught content can be made available more easily (e.g. in the form of recordings). Overall, digitalization offers ample possibilities for enriching teaching. Nevertheless, understanding the motivational factors of external lecturers is important when incentivizing digital transformation.

Support structures for teaching methods, peer-learning opportunities (e.g. the platform Campus Connect), additional IT support, and a remuneration system were identified as gain creators. Positive feedback from students was seen as a valuable motivation factor for lecturers to embrace digitalization.

An elaborated feedback tool was mentioned as a potential gain creator. Further suggestions included support structures for digital teaching, setting up a network of teachers in similar subject areas, or issuing a certificate for digital literacy in teaching as an equivalent of ECTS for teaching competencies. Increased multidisciplinary understanding of digital teaching is believed to be essential as there are major differences between social sciences and technical sciences.

Outcomes of workshop 2 (university level)

At the university (i.e. FH Campus Wien) level, “pains” related to the digitalization process included questionable writing and language competencies of students, lack of information on the key trends in the professional field and finding a balance between individualization and standardization. The workshop clearly enabled the identification of internal barriers on the institutional level, such as the organizational structure of independent units. Resources need to be used across competing priorities; internal processes tend to be slow and bureaucratic.

In contrast, identified “gains” included a changed mindset across the entire organization as well as the quick embracement of the potential of distance learning and working from home. Digitalization can also support the recruiting and employment of international lecturers; new student markets can be reached more easily, and the potential for networking can be increased greatly. Overall, the higher degree of flexibility has increased motivation among staff, which has been conducive to organizing everyday life at FH Campus Wien.

Gain creators supporting digital transformation included the provision of software solutions (e.g. conference licenses), hardware components in lecture halls, adapted regulations and guidelines and online formats for study information (e.g. online open house). Most service units at FH Campus Wien have started to offer digital services.

Participants made additional suggestions for gain creators, such as the increased flexibilization and individualization enabled by digitalization. For example, working processes become more independent of time and place. However, managers will need to exemplify digital transformation in all facets and facilitate digital spaces (e.g. the online format Research & Development Café) to encourage informal exchange and community building. Providing hybrid teaching formats or digital short formats can help position FH Campus Wien externally.

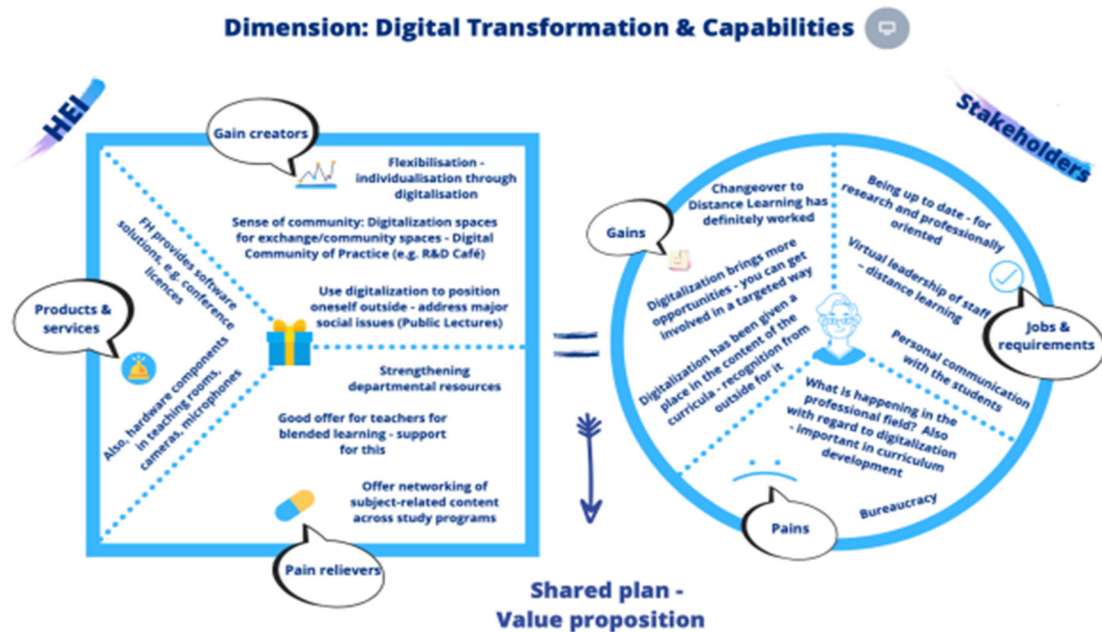


Figure 4: Summary of workshop outcomes

The two workshops enabled the project team to develop an action plan consisting of three main activities. These are designing (1) a maturity model for incorporating digitalization in degree programs, (2) a blueprint with activities and measures for the strategic field digital transformation and social change that is part of the FH Campus Wien strategy, and (3) a competence framework for digital outcomes and good practice for integrating digitalization in learning outcomes within a curriculum. The period for carrying out the actions spans June to December 2021 and involves several follow-up workshops and discussions with different internal stakeholders and external partners.

Conclusion

Applying the value proposition canvas in the workshops was a challenging undertaking. Approaching suitable participants, explaining the topic and the (canvas) method and developing an appropriate (online) workshop setting was a rather complex matter. However, the value proposition canvas format contributed to a successful workshop and produced useful outcomes.

Moderators in the workshop have to be on top of the subject and encourage the participants to speak freely. The approach of giving only small but well-directed impulses for discussion can be recommended. This may require two people for running the workshops – one for the moderation and one for the documentation. Although the workshop format was challenging, the clear structure and the given time limit of two hours proved successful; the virtual character did not represent an obstacle.

A major advantage of the virtual setting was the psychological effect of decreasing hierarchical barriers, which is an important factor to consider when stakeholders from different hierarchical levels within the university participate in such a workshop. However, inviting people who hold different positions, including management and mid-level positions, is essential. The attendance of external individuals helped to broaden the spectrum in the discussion. However, the externals' role must be defined precisely in advance and be made transparent at the beginning of the workshop. A proper introduction and appealing PowerPoint slides were useful for this purpose. Overall, the composition of the group in the workshop is crucial; it is the key ingredient of success. Positive feedback was received from the participants; especially lecturers were delighted to be in the focus of a workshop. Another factor is the chosen language for the workshop. The main working language should be used. However, this limits the possibility to involve participants from abroad.

Overall, the combination of the above organizational aspects led to a useful result in terms of identification of benefits, barriers and support processes around digital transformation. The workshops offered a diverse repertoire of "pain relievers" and "gain creators" that inspired a list of actions.

The most useful impact of the workshops was the increased curiosity in matters around digitalization that was instilled in the participants, who eagerly delved into the issue of digitalization during the discussions. They enthusiastically started to analyze what digitalization means in the context of higher education and degree programs. Moreover, the specific workshop setting encouraged the participants to speak about matters they might have chosen not to mention in a different setting. Their personal opinions and perceptions were at the center of attention. This leads to the conclusion that the value proposition workshops are a useful and fruitful step in the journey towards the digital transformation of FH Campus Wien.



Figure 5: Recommendations

Disclaimer:

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.