BeyondScale

Workshop User Story

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- Type of Activity - **Inbound Workshop**

Instituto Politécnico
de Viana do Castelo

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 entre-preneurial 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 supports the HEI's institutional development process and organisational 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, businesses, NGOs).

- **The Value Proposition Workshop:** In order to have a structured workshop format, the Value Proposition Design approach was adopted. The BeyondScale team came up with a new canvas format that incorporates the specific HEInnovate dimensions and the Value Proposition canvas. The Value proposition canvas is a tool that helps understand the inbound and outbound stakeholders and target their needs better, leading to optimised 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 organised as a buddy team throughout the project based on similar challenges, interests, and the HEInnovate dimensions.

Inbound Workshop @ IPVC, our story.

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Abstract

In the BeyondScale project, IPVC engages with the so-called Inclusive School Project, part of its Quality and Social Responsibility Management system. With the project, IPVC aims at two major goals: The first goal is to foster community building in innovation and entrepreneurship. It aims to enhance the link between the academic community and the social and non-profit organisation sector in the Alto Minho region. The second goal is to implement service-learning at IPVC. To this end, small scale collaboration projects where students service non-profit organisations in the region are implemented. These two goals are addressed by IPVC's inbound and outbound activity. In its inbound activity, IPVC engages with its teachers to convince and train them to engage in various service-learning projects and to foster social entrepreneurship in students. In its outbound activity, IPVC aims to strengthen the exchange and collaboration with the social sector in its region.

This user story zooms in on IPVC inbound workshop. It will describe how the workshop was organised, what actions were taken to learn about teachers' needs when implementing service-learning, and what additional IPVC actions support small-scale collaboration projects.

Key Words: social entrepreneurship; service-learning; entrepreneurial teaching and learning, HEInnovate ; the Inclusive School Project

The Activity

The Inclusive School is a social responsibility project of **Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo (IPVC)** that aims to meet the needs and problems of the community through various social responsibility activities. The project involves students with collaborative learning methods, and it aims at curriculum enrichment and at forming conscious and solidary citizens. In its inbound activity of the BeyondScale project, IPVC will develop a methodology of integrating social entrepreneurship in its teaching and learning through service-learning. A workshop with internal stakeholders and BeyondScale partners based on the value proposition canvas was organised to prepare for this activity.

The workshop aimed to stimulate a discussion about the benefits and challenges of integrating entrepreneurial teaching and learning activities. In particular, the workshop aimed to discuss the development of small-scale collaborative projects with social sector organisations and how to establish and nurture a collaborative network that includes stakeholders from the regional social sector, teachers and students. In the workshop, the HEInnovate methodology was applied, i.e. results from a (self-) assessement survey conducted among workshop participants, to stimulate the discussion in the workshop. Due to the Covid19-pandemic, the workshop was an online event.

Preparing the workshop

The preparation of the workshop mostly aimed at collecting information on the teachers' perception of entrepreneurial teaching and learning at IPVC and their ideas on current challenges and benefits for the implementation of service learning. This data collection was done two-step, including a survey and preparatory meetings with IPVC teachers.

As the first step in preparation, the project team developed a survey for teachers to collect their perceptions of entrepreneurial teaching and learning performance at IPVC in a preparatory meeting. The project team also aimed to identify the main issues and further ideas for the IPVC Inclusive School project with the survey. To this end, the project team selected and adapted statements from the HEInnovate self-assessment tool. These were statements from the dimension "Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning" for the inbound activity to which the project team also developed additional questions (see Box 1).

> **Box 1: Additional questions for the pre-workshop questionnaire**
>
> − How can IPVC provide formal learning opportunities to stimulate the development of entrepreneurial mindsets and skills, resulting in a final assessment of a curricular unit?
>
> − How can IPVC provide formal and informal learning (e.g. ideas competition, business plan contests, etc.) based on experimental opportunities to develop entrepreneurial mindsets and skills?
>
> − What are the opinions about learning outcomes and tools/strategies that promote the design and execution of the social entrepreneurial curriculum?
>
> − How can IPVC co-build and deliver curricula associated with the stakeholders?
>
> − What are the lecturers' expectations to foster entrepreneurship teaching and learning activities to connect the objectives of the courses to the needs of the internal community?
>
> − What are the lecturers' difficulties and unwanted situations in entrepreneurship teaching and learning activities when combining the course objectives with the needs of the internal community?

For the second step, the preparatory meeting, the teachers were invited by email or phone to attend. In total, 13 teachers reacted positively to this invitation and participated in one of the two preparatory meetings.[1]

The project team moderated the two preparatory meetings and explained its intention and agenda. In the workshop, the web-based (free) application Padlet[2] was used. During the meeting, the participant responded to the survey using this application. Padlet facilitated an easy interaction and discussion among the workshop participants as answers could be provided anonymously, making it easier for them to express their opinions.

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[1] To achieve a manageable group size, the project team decided to split the group and conduct two preparatory meetings.
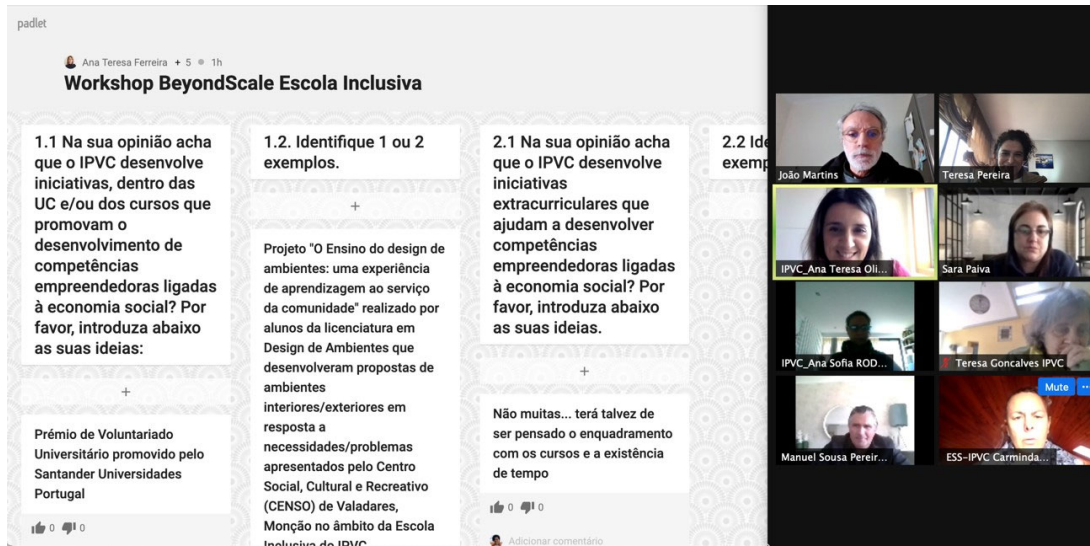
[2] https://padlet.com/

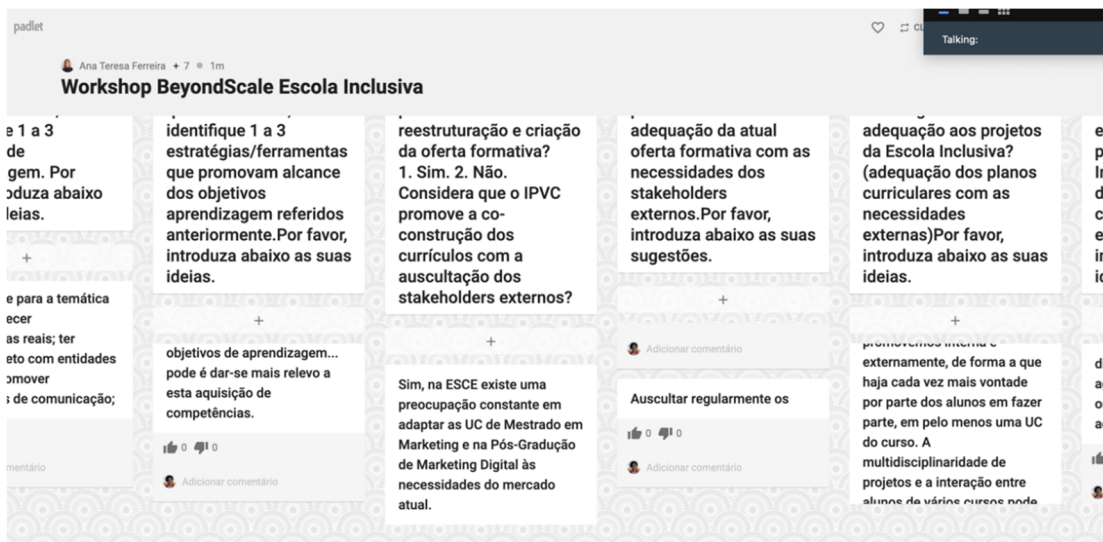*Figure 1 Questionnaire participation in Padlet platform*

Figure 1 Padlet platform (in Portuguese) showing the questions that the participants were asked to complete

As a next step to prepare for the main workshop, the project team analysed the information collected in these two preparatory meetings with the help of the adapted value proposition canvas. This analysis was supported by colleagues who were already experienced in using the value proposition canvas. The answers collected in the preparatory meetings were structured according to the canvas for the analysis. In the analysis, the project team also used experiences they gathered when participating in the value proposition workshops of the other BeyondScale partners. The project team established a draft of the value proposition canvas with the analysis, which is shown in figure 3 below.
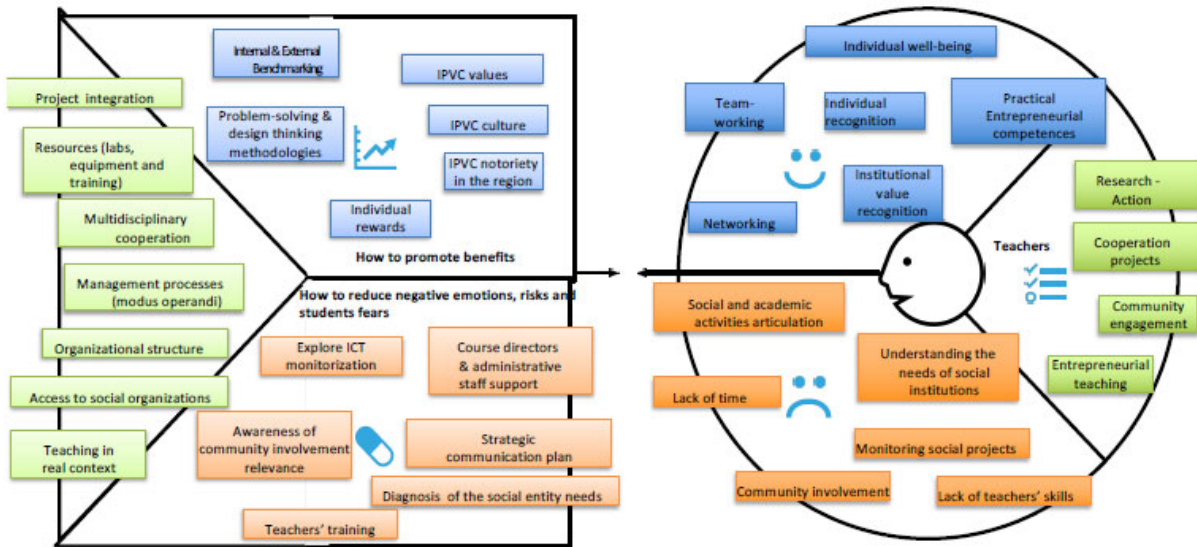
Figure 3 *IPVC draft value proposition canvas*

The draft canvas was then sent out to the IPVC Inclusive School community, including IPVC teachers and students, with a formal invitation to the workshop. This invitation also included the workshop programme and descriptions of the BeyondScale project and the IPVC inbound activity. Further, the project team advertised the workshop on IPVC various social media channels (for example, on Facebook or Instagram, as shown in figure 4 and 5).

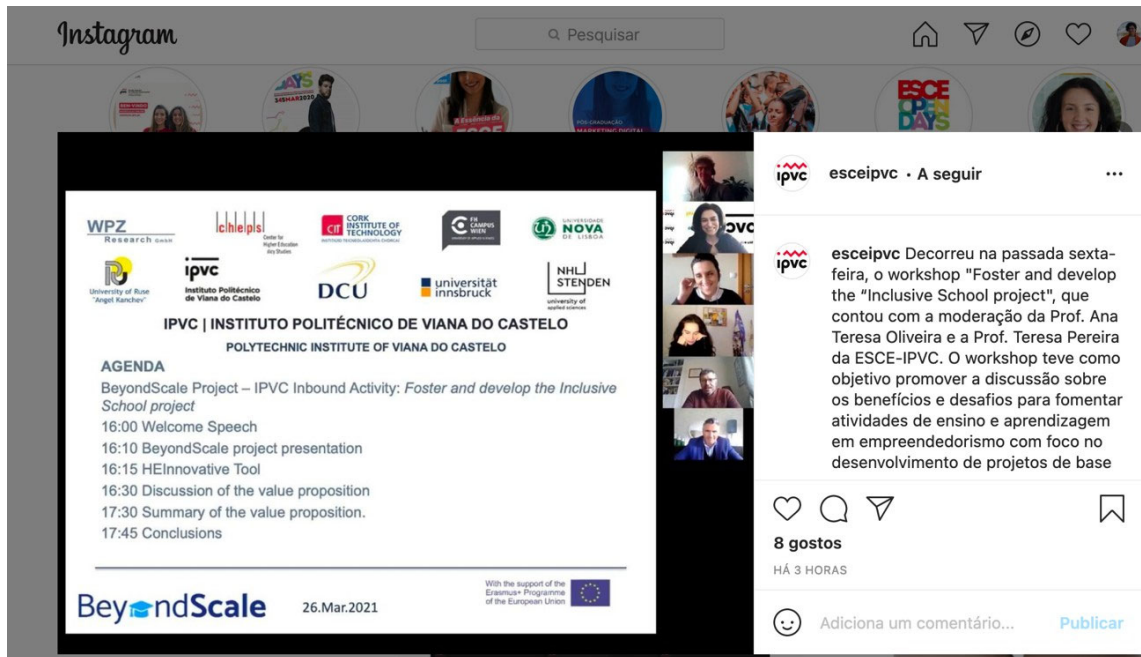*Figure 4 IPVC BeyondScale Inbound Workshop Activity Dissemination on Facebook*

Figure 5 IPVC BeyondScale Inbound Workshop Activity Dissemination on Instagram

Conducting the workshop

In total, 17 participants registered and participated in the online workshop (via Zoom). Apart from IPVC teachers, some BeyondScale partners who also engage in the field of social entrepreneurship joined the event.

At the start of the workshop, the BeyondScale project was introduced. The participants were then introduced to the BeyondScale value proposition canvas methodology and the draft canvas developed as an output of the preparatory meetings.

The workshop discussion mainly focused on strengthening relationships with social sector organisations and increased collaboration between students, teachers, and the regional social stakeholders. The discussion was extensively based on the draft value proposition canvas. The BeyondScale partners enriched the discussion with their experiences in social entrepreneurship in general and their BeyondScale activities.

The workshop discussion revealed major challenges are identifying key regional stakeholders and the overload of concepts underlying service-learning and entrepreneurial teaching and learning. The BeyondScale project' partners helped clarify specific concepts bend solve open questions. As major

outcomes of the workshop discussion, in line with the value proposition canvas, the IPVC team concluded the following actions:

(i) Foster and strengthen the collaboration with the community through the teachers and students' engagement to address their needs for innovation and social entrepreneurship;

(ii) Reinforce entrepreneurship and service learning knowledge in teachers, and enable students with teachers' support to develop practical curricular projects; and

(iii) Stimulate critical thinking on social issues among students and teachers.

After the workshop

The results of the workshop discussion were used to update and finalise the draft of the value proposition canvas. The project team found that the discussion added a few new perspectives, but mostly there was a strong overlap between the discussion outcomes in the preparatory meetings and the workshop.

When finalising the value proposition canvas, the project team established links between pains and gains voiced by teachers and the gain creators and pain relievers IPVC can provide.

For example, lecturers' pain 'lack of time' can be relieved with the measures' support from course directors and administrative staff' and the implementation of a 'strategic communication plan'. The expectation of lecturers' individual value recognition' could be met with "IPVC values and culture". Figure 6 depicts these found relationships as an example.
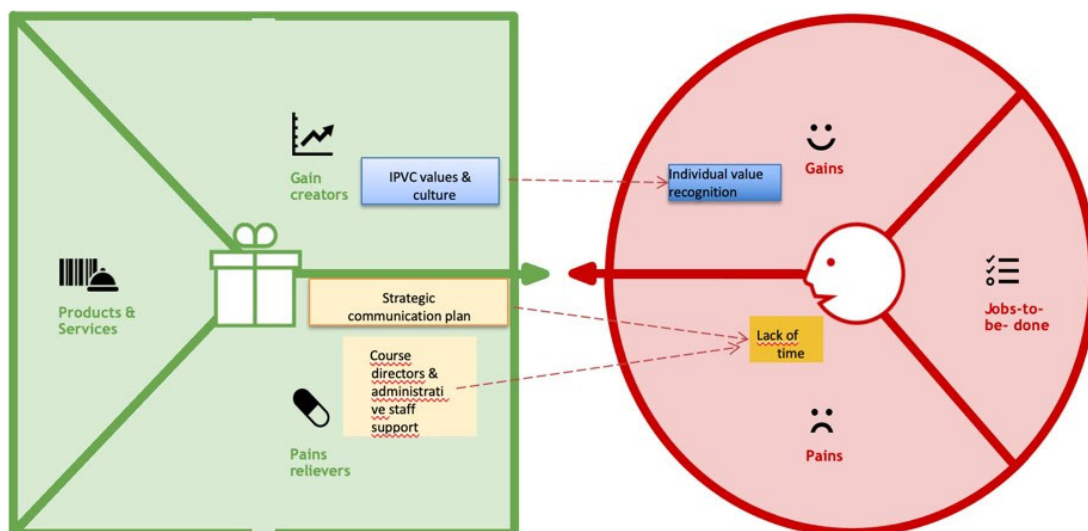

Figure 6: Links between pains/gains and pain relievers and gain creators in the CANVAS model format

The following main pains and barriers were identified in the preparatory meetings and the workshop:

(i) lack of time: difficulty in articulate academic times with activities;

(ii) resistance from colleagues;

(iii) alignment with the teaching processes;

(iv) requirements for the tasks' operationalisation;

(v) understanding the complexity of the problems presented by the NGO's and

(vi) receiving information from the NGO in time.

As major gains, the preparatory meetings and the workshop identified:

(i) individual well-being through contribution to a social project;

(ii) understanding the required tasks;

(iii) team-working;

(iv) networking;

(v) institutional value recognition and

(vi) acquisition of practical entrepreneurial competencies.

Against this background, the project team developed three actions to improve the social entrepreneurial activities of IPVC:

i.   **Develop teachers' entrepreneurial and innovation skills**. This action will train teachers in project-based and service-learning and collaborating with organisations and stakeholders from the regional social sector. Thus, this action will seek to build competencies such as teamwork, networking and the acquisition of practical entrepreneurial skills in teachers and provide them with know-how on overcoming difficulties when linking social engagement with teaching and learning activities.

ii.   **Identify the needs of social sector organisations**. This action aims to foster innovative learning initiatives at IPVC and organise a joint learning event with organisations from the social sector. Therefore, this activity will identify institutional and individual values and overcome the problems revealed for the collaboration with social sector organisations. These interventions could include an improvement of IPVC understanding of the needs of social organisations. Also, measures to learn about the need of social organisations more early need to be established.

iii. **IPVC Inclusion School Roadshow**. This action aims to foster the learning of innovative initiatives and to hold a joint learning event. The roadshow aims to help recognise institutional and individual values and improve information sharing to ensure that the needs of non-profit organisations are properly addressed.

Lessons learned and recommendations

The workshop format was fundamental to identify new perspectives and social entrepreneurship challenges for students and teachers, strengthen social entrepreneurship knowledge and practical competencies and stimulate critical thinking on social issues. Thus, the workshop format allowed to develop actions to improve the internal stakeholder's interaction and IPVC' social entrepreneurial activities. As a further outcome, the activity created value for the HEInnovate methodology.

The project team found it useful to collect information on the internal stakeholders' perceptions of IPVC performance in social entrepreneurship in advance of the workshop. This data helped to focus the discussion during the workshop. Also, finding similar perceptions of IPVC's pain and gains among a different stakeholder group helped identify and validate the most important issues where actions should be implemented. Also, the collaboration with the BeyondScale partners helped interpret the workshop results and develop the action plan.

Since not all participants of the pre-workshop meetings were familiar with the structure of value proposition models, the implementation of the value proposition canvas was a challenge. The action plan aims to meet the lecturers' expectations and overcome their difficulties. Overall, the project team highly recommends using the value proposition canvas since the model is simple, structures the discussion, and brings about more detailed insights from participants. However, the project team also would like to highlight the active participation of stakeholders through which more, better and creative ideas could be developed.