

BeyondScale



Guidelines on Peer-Learning

# NOVA Information Management School

## GUIDELINE ON PEER-LEARNING INBOUND ACTIVITY

### NOVA-IMS Information Management School

#### **BeyondScale - Developing the Organisational Capacity of Higher Education Institutions using the HEInnovate platform to facilitate peer-learning and a pan-European community of practice**

##### **Take-aways from peer-learning experiences**

Peer-learning is a way for partners to learn from each other effectively. At a time when the university resources are limited and demands upon the staff are increasing, it can be beneficial internal as well as external stakeholders of an HEI to learn from each other.

For peer-learning to take place it is important to know who the “peers or buddies” are. For peer-learning to be achieved within the BeyondScale project a buddy system was created. The buddy system included internal HEI partners for the inbound projects, external for the outbound projects, and a system that involved project partners, associate partners as well as mentors. The internal partners were university management, heads of departments, heads of degree programs, experts in service units, and selected lecturers. On the other side external partners were public sector/policy-oriented organisations along with enterprise support organizations/incubators/start-ups, micro firms and relevant actors in the industry.

The internal HEI partners in the activities – the project team, administrative, academic, and other staff as well as students - benefited from the documentation of the activities of BeyondScale, the capacity building seminars and webinars organized at the higher education institutions. External stakeholders also benefited from the augmented capacity at the higher education institutions they collaborate with.

While COVID-19 made things more complicated, the design of the system allowed all partners to interact on multiple levels and with a variety of partners from the inside and the outside of their network. The result was the co-design and the implementation of inbound and outbound activities.

The following roadmap provides an overview of the peer-learning activities developed during the BeyondScale project. Further information is available at [www.beyondscale.eu](http://www.beyondscale.eu) or you can contact us at: [office@wpz-research.com](mailto:office@wpz-research.com)

The BeyondScale roadmap on peer learning included the following steps:

1. Think about what contribution you expect or what you want to learn
2. Think about your contribution and whether your partner can use this contribution
3. Define together with the goals of the exchange
4. Agree on the way of communication
5. Define future meetings or possibilities of exchange
6. Reflect on the value of the exchange
7. Think about further joint activities

## An example of a peer learning activity.

### HEInnovate dimension: Digital Transformation and Capability

**Description of the activity:** Review the state of the art of the digital context on NOVA IMS programs as well as digital tools and strategies used in the learning process

#### Our participants represented:

- University Management
- Heads of Departments
- Heads of the Study programme,
- Selected lecturers

Internal Buddies	Involved in:	Contribution	Future Benefit
Program coordinators Professors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value based proposition Workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of the main internal barriers to enhance digital learning</li> <li>• Feedback from the professor on the difficulties on digital transition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Propose a more positive learning experience</li> <li>• Include more active learning pedagogies</li> <li>• Have students more engaged</li> </ul>
University Management Heads of Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow up Workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition and implementation of a digital strategy to support learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create some programs with more digital content</li> <li>• Create content to be shared asynchronous and using alternative pedagogical models</li> </ul>
Professors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present the strategy to follow and invite for professors' engagement and participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have professors aligned with the global strategy</li> </ul>

#### Why was peer-learning important for your activity?

- The advantage of using this peer learning approach is that it allows the development of a collaboration and cooperation spirit among professors, management and students and makes them more effective. Also, when having external peers, such as organizations or BeyondScale partners participating in the workshops, a different perspective is added to the discussion allowing for a better brainstorming.
- Peer-learning, just as possible pedagogical model used in the classrooms, puts the learner in a position that he should not wait to receive knowledge, but he can also transmit it.
- Having this dynamic in such kind of workshops or webinar promotes for more discussed and reviewed conclusions.

**Would you recommend the peer-learning buddy system to another HEI and why? What could other HEIs learn from it?**

- The use of a peer-learning buddy system facilitates the sharing of experiences from different contexts, realities, and perspectives. This would enrich discussion and debate about topics.
- On the other hand, a lot is shared from different universities and different stakeholders around teaching and learning concepts. So, such systems allow the communication and share of strategies and guidelines that are usual very useful to partners.

**What were the common objectives?**

- The objective was to improve the teaching and learning processes by introducing digital tools in course curricula.
- An upscale of the digital competencies of the students and the professors
- The monitoring and the assessment of the satisfaction of the proposed pedagogies.

**What were the outcomes?**

- A clear definition of the required digital skills within NOVA IMS
- The creation of a set of recommendations for digital strategy to be included in the program curricula

**What were the possible barriers and challenges?**

- Refusal of professors of new digital pedagogical methods and tools, who consider these as a second-best option, providing less reputation and quality.
- Students' resistance to new pedagogical approaches, which imply continuous learning, more hours of work during the semester and self-discipline to maintain the pace.
- Students e-learning illiteracy, the lack of awareness, and motivation.
- Lack of dedicated strategies and lack of dedicated team to support a digital strategy.

**What were the possible opportunities?**

- The chance to improve the learning and teaching processes.
- The promotion of digitalization and innovation within NOVA IMS.

**Disclaimer:**

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