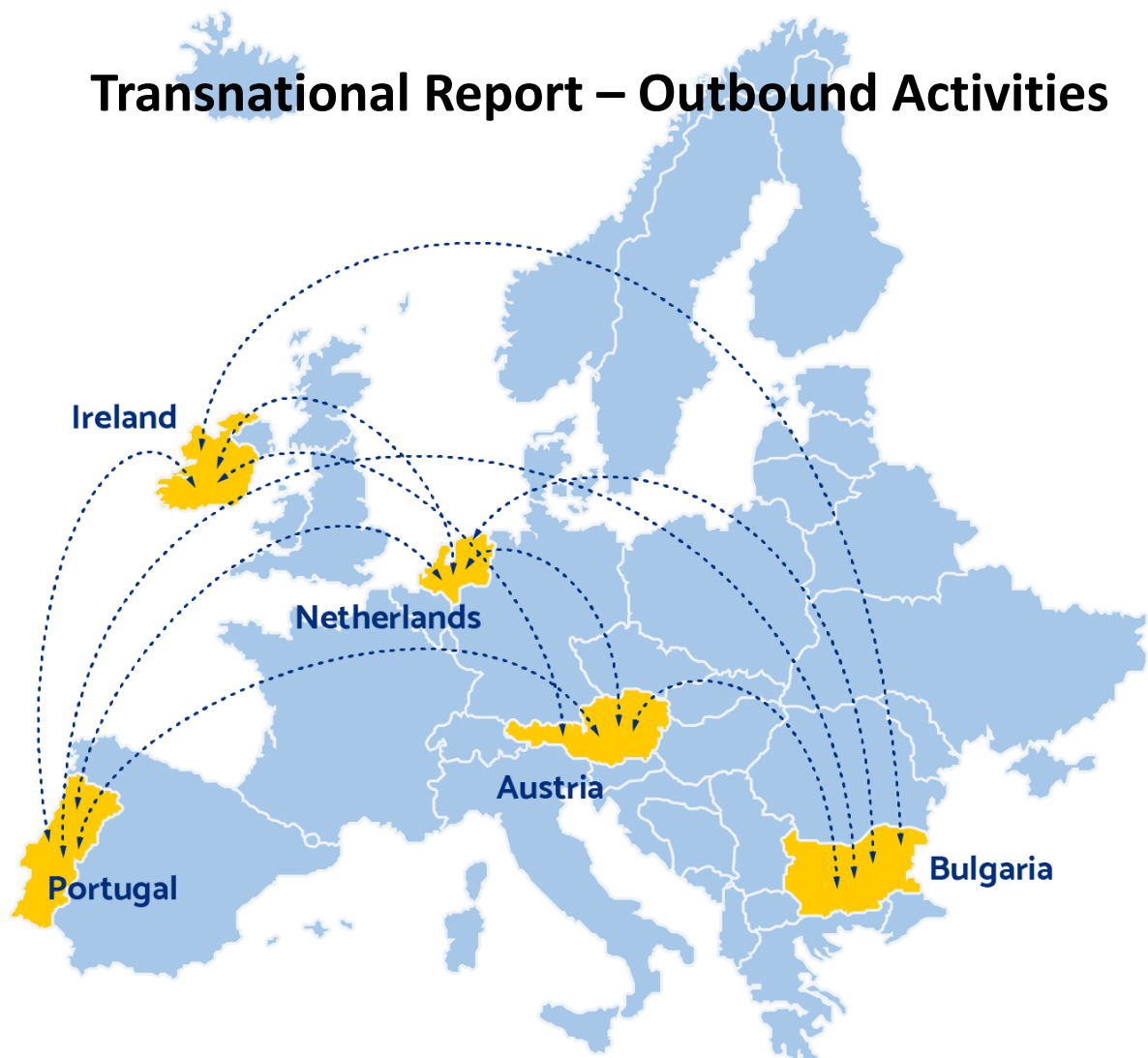


# BeyondScale: European Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects in the Fields of Education and Training

## Transnational Report – Outbound Activities



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The transnational report aims to outline outcomes, achievements, and lessons learned in each work package area and recommendations going forward for the use of the HEInnovate tool and platform in inbound and outbound activities.

## 1. The Project

BeyondScale is one of four forward-looking projects (FLPs) funded by the Erasmus + scheme. The FLPs aim to stimulate and enhance the use of the HEInnovate tool and the HEInnovate platform by (European) higher education institutions that aim to implement a more entrepreneurial agenda.

Regarding an entrepreneurial and innovative higher education institution there is not a common definition but rather a combination of characteristics that make it entrepreneurial. These characteristics could be how they manage their resources and the way that they build their organizational capacity the way in which they involve external stakeholders in their leadership and governance; the embedment of technology into their activities; the creation of synergies between teaching, research, and societal engagement; the promotion of entrepreneurship through education and business start-up support as well as knowledge exchange with the labour market.

The project intended to create a community of practice among the higher education institutions and their stakeholders, thus promoting the take-up of practical entrepreneurial experiences and activities focused on strengthening the links between education, research, and business. Nine HEIs from five different countries under the lead of WPZ Research developed the BeyondScale toolbox to support other HEIs to become more entrepreneurial, as encouraging institutional change is the focus of BeyondScale. Two aspects characterise the specific approach of BeyondScale. Firstly, there is a strong focus on identifying barriers that stand in the way of institutional change processes. Secondly, peer learning, facilitated by a so-called buddy system, is vital in achieving BeyondScale's goal of helping higher education institutions (HEIs) to overcome these barriers. The BeyondScale project distinguishes between inbound activities, which aim to improve change processes focusing on internal HEI goals and stakeholders, and outbound activities, aiming to improve change processes where HEIs interact with their external stakeholders in their wider innovation eco-system.

Within the BeyondScale project, the HEInnovate tool is deployed beyond its self-assessment capacity. 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 with relevant stakeholders.

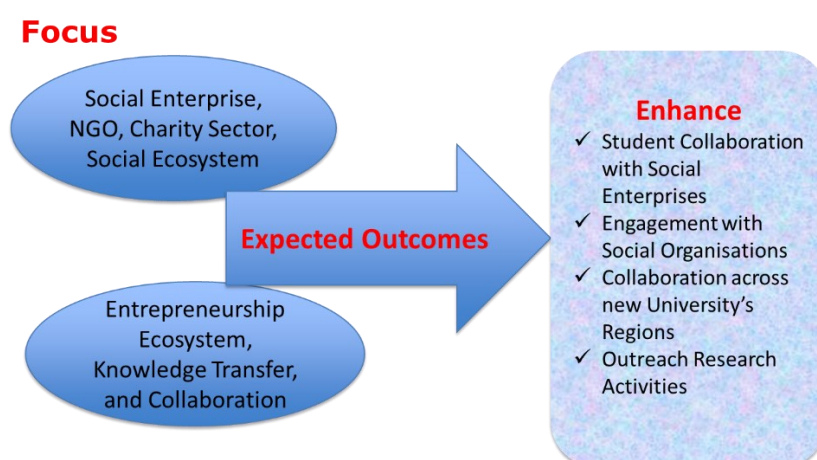
One of the main assets of the BeyondScale project is the buddy system, in which partners engage in a peer-learning, exchanging experiences, and discussing plans. Facilitating capacity building through collaboration among higher education institutions can be understood as an important driver to move the transformation of European higher education forward. Currently, when looking for partners, higher education institutions often face the problem of finding matching partners, i.e. partners with or from whom they can learn. Frequently, higher education institutions aim to establish collaborations with institutions that are known for their overall excellent performance or are regarded as light towers in selected areas. To some extent, this might not lead to a situation that benefits all collaborating institutions. Those institutions that already perform well or excellent might not be eager to engage in learning communities with institutions that only start to develop the issue. There is no burning need for mutual learning for those institutions, and investment in the collaboration might exceed their actual return. In addition, the collaboration of non-matching institutions might lead to a standardization of the HE sector across Europe as practices of more successful institutions are copied without considering the profile and context of the adopting institution.

## 2. 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 outbound activities aimed at strengthening the HEI's wider regional and societal engagement, thus targeting external stakeholders (students, employers, social enterprises, business, NGOs).

The outbound activities of the higher education institutions involved in BeyondScale undertook a set of activities focussing on external matters and stakeholders, such as engagement with the professional field in the development of academic programmes and R&D activities, engagement in social entrepreneurship activities, or engagement with regional bodies to develop entrepreneurial educational, economic, social, and cultural plans at a regional level. The activities also aimed at the internationalisation of the institution.

**Figure 1: Overview of Action Plan to Implement Outbound Activities**



## Mutual Benefits of the Activities

- ✓ Greater visibility and interaction between the HEI and the region. E.g, Social Enterprises (social and traditional), charities, development agencies.
- ✓ Identification of new stakeholders/opportunities for businesses and for the HEI for work-placement, research (Innovation Vouchers), employees.

## 3. BeyondScale Toolbox for Outbound Activities

The BeyondScale toolbox is made for higher education institutions to learn from experiences, projects and activities of the BeyondScale partners. The tools comprise e.g. user stories based on the combination of the HEInnovate dimensions and the Value Proposition Canvas (see 3.1) as well as guidelines (see 3.2) providing a set of recommendations on how HEIs should use the HEInnovate approach to further the entrepreneurial agenda.

### 3.1 The Value Proposition Canvas

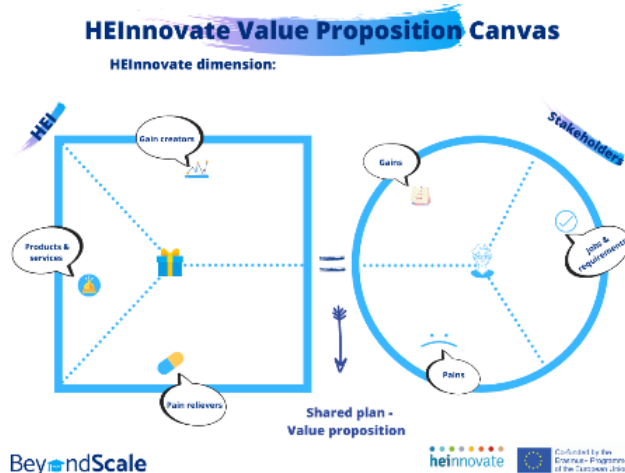
The idea of the value proposition originates from the business world. The Value Proposition Canvas was initially developed by Alexander Osterwalder as a framework to ensure that there is a fit between a product and the needs of the market (Osterwalder et al., 2015). A value proposition describes the benefits customers can expect from the products and services on offer. It gives the reason why a customer should buy a product or service from that particular business. The value proposition is the basis of the business model of a firm.

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.

A Value Proposition Canvas (VPC) is a way to structure the different elements that feed into the value proposition. The canvas can be visualised and in group settings it is often used as a means to structure a discussion around business ideas. The canvas has two segments: the 'Customer Needs' and the 'Value Proposition'.

In total it comprises of six elements:

- Customer jobs
- Pains
- Gains
- Products & services
- Pain relievers
- Gain creators



The canvas can be used by a HEI to identify the needs and demands of its stakeholders (both its internal and external stakeholders) and the way the HEI can address those needs. The function of the canvas is to structure discussions between a provider of goods and services – in our case: a HEI – and its customers (its stakeholders, e.g. its students), and to stimulate learning about the stakeholder needs. The tool helps develop the HEI's value proposition to the stakeholders.

The BeyondScale project tested an adjusted format the Value Proposition Canvas (VPC) which incorporates the specific HEInnovate dimensions and the Value Proposition Canvas aiming to develop action plans for the HEI.

## 3.2 Value Proposition Workshops

The basic idea was to develop a structured workshop approach integrating the HEInnovate dimensions into a Value Proposition Canvas approach in order to develop a collaborative project design and development.

The structured workshop approach should yield a shared plan (value proposition) focused on delivering chosen activities through the provision of assistance and solutions by the HEIs to relevant stakeholders. It should also facilitate the collection and analysis of information and data, which inform the accompanying research in the BeyondScale project.

The three workshop stages were:



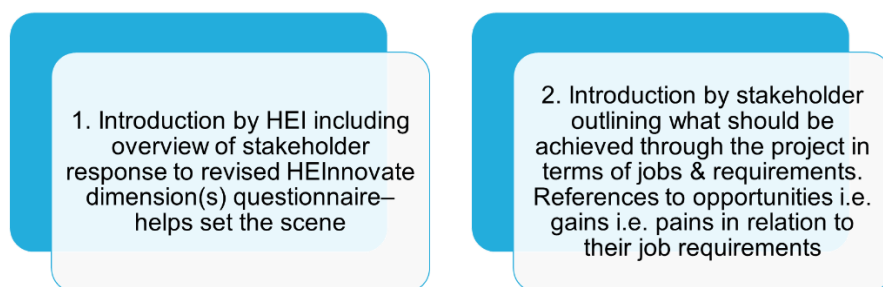
The **workshop preparation – stage 1:**

1. Identify collaborative activity area (inbound and outbound)
2. Identify stakeholders (internal and external)
3. Broadly define overall activity and workplan objectives
4. Select appropriate dimension(s) of HEInnovate to form basis of the workshop
5. Expend dimension questions with a view to stimulating discussion and the formation of a project plan

## The **workshop preparation– stage 2:**

1. Reflect on proposed HEI collaborative activity/project in terms of relevance to own objectives and requirements
2. Engage with refined HEInnovate dimension(s) questions with a view to informing jobs/activity & requirements to be developed in collaboration with the HEI
3. Prepare overview of what they are seeking in terms of jobs (activities) and requirements including opportunities and threats i.e. pains and gains for discussion with the HEI

## The **workshop process** – stage 3:

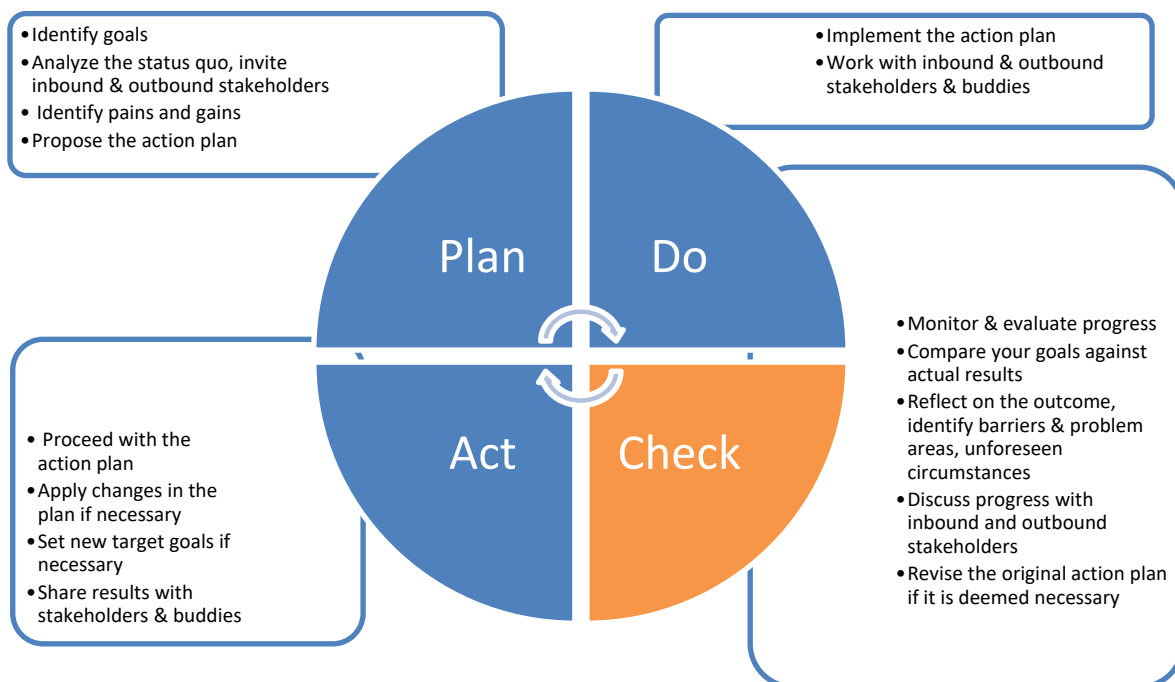


The BeyondScale team also produced a tutorial video that aims to illustrate how the various HEInnovate dimensions were used in the BeyondScale project and applied to the value proposition canvas. Within the project, we use the HEInnovate dimensions combined with the value proposition canvas to deliver innovation activities in higher education institutions with relevant stakeholders.

[Watch the Tutorial](#)

The BeyondScale project plan included that the partners conduct a follow-up workshop after a few weeks as part of their inbound/outbound activities. This was a chance for the BeyondScale partners to re-apply the HEInnovate self-assessment tool in the workshop. The re-use of the HEInnovate self-assessment tool intended to provide a means of determining the extent to which the HEI's performance has changed, i.e. to determine the extent to which the 'entrepreneurial agenda' has become further embedded in the respective HEIs. Furthermore, the second use of HEInnovate was to determine whether HEInnovate is also suitable for monitoring and steering projects that serve to strengthen entrepreneurship in HEIs.

## Cycle in the BeyondScale partner projects



In the second workshop – again together with internal and external stakeholders – HEIs discussed the progress of the activities, considered to what extent the objectives had already been achieved, checked whether the objectives were still in line with the expectations and the use of resources for the activity.

### 3.2.1 The BeyondScale roadmap on peer-learning and HEIs' 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 guidelines produced within the BeyondScale project provide a set of recommendations on how HEIs should use the HEInnovate approach to further the entrepreneurial agenda as well as describe the outcomes, contributions, impact of the use and experimentation with HEInnovate in achieving the outcomes and objectives in each activity area.

Click on the pictures to read the complete guideline or go to <https://www.beyondscale.eu/result-repository/guidelines-on-peer-learning/>



## University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev”

**Description of the activity:** Two workshops were organised by the University of Ruse to analyse how the university could collaborate better with local industry partners in applied research projects in the field of knowledge transfer.

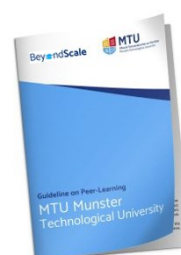
**HEInnovate dimension:** Knowledge Exchange & Collaboration



## Munster Technological University

**Description of the activity:** The expansion of MTU's entrepreneurship ecosystem. While MTU's Entrepreneurship ecosystem has been well linked to various external stakeholders, their views are less understood. The value of external stakeholders is crucial for the continued success of MTU's strategy to support for entrepreneurship and innovation.

**HEInnovate dimension:** Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration



## NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences

**Description of the activity:** Determination of the current situation regarding the way that NHL Stenden supports entrepreneurship within its organization and to aim to develop a better insight in the current educational initiatives and other activities to support our students' entrepreneurship.

**HEInnovate dimension:** Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning



## Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo

**Description of the activity:** The activity aims to expand IPVCs' social entrepreneurship ecosystem, collaboration, and knowledge exchange with NGOs. The activity also intends to identify partners' needs in order to promote the development of service-learning projects with teachers and students.

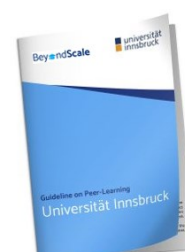
**HEInnovate dimension:** Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration



## University of Innsbruck

**Description of the activity:** The main goals of the UIBK outbound activity was to get an insight about the needs of the NGO / charity / non-profit / social enterprise sector regarding entrepreneurial mindset and innovation. This was achieved through seminars, webinars, and workshops as well as development of ideas & impulses how to improve this interaction.

**HEInnovate dimension:** Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration



## 3.2.2 User Stories

The user stories produced within the BeyondScale project 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.

*Click on the pictures to read the complete user story or go to <https://www.beyondscale.eu/result-repository/user-stories-tutorial/>*

### Munster Technological University User Story

The overarching aim of the outbound activity undertaken by Munster Technological University (MTU) for the BeyondScale project was to activate the thought process and actions needed to expand the entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem beyond the University for the mutual benefit for students, staff and regional stakeholders. As one of Ireland's newest Universities, it was vital for MTU to further develop links with external stakeholders across the region.



### Dublin City University User Story

For the planned outbound activity at Dublin City University, the DCU BeyondScale team chose the HEInnovate dimension Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration. The team wanted to investigate what knowledge exchange and collaboration currently looks like between DCU and the third sector and explore ways to enhance collaboration between them. The third sector accounts for not-for-profit organisations such as social enterprises, charities, NGOs, and community organisations. The main objectives set for the outbound workshop were as follows: gain an insight into what the landscape of knowledge exchange and collaboration currently looks like between DCU and the third sector; identify and understand the main challenges that exist in the third sector and to investigate how DCU could help to overcome these challenges; improve knowledge exchange and collaboration between DCU and the third sector by developing an action plan based on the findings of the workshop.



## University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev” User Story

The University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev” has organised a seminar to create awareness among the companies in its region for the potential of knowledge interactions between the university and the region. The seminar was inspired by the HEInnovate tool and was organised as part of the university’s involvement in the BeyondScale project. The Ruse BeyondScale team believes that the workshop results have been very useful for the university and the experience could be useful for other academic communities as well in their search for opportunities to establish fruitful collaboration with companies. Therefore, the purpose of this document is to describe some of the key steps in the preparation and execution of this workshop.



## NHL Stenden User Story

The workshop user story focusses on the outcomes and impact of using the BeyondScale workshop approach by NHL Stenden for its inbound and outbound activities in HEInnovate dimension areas. In this workshop user story, NHL Stenden reports on how the BeyondScale workshop format was applied and helped to achieve the institute’s objectives as well as lessons learned from this experience. With the workshop user stories, the BeyondScale project aims to support other higher education institutions that are interested in applying a similar workshop format, showing details of the process, tips, and tricks for a successful implementation of the workshop, and collecting detailed feedback from internal and external stakeholders.

This user story zooms into the phase of the change process during which NHL Stenden aimed to adapt its activity plans to respond to the demands of its internal and external stakeholders. The workshop helped NHL Stenden identify the major barriers and facilitators to achieve its objectives.



## 4. The Digi Buddy Platform

The BeyondScale project explores the possibility of identifying partners to facilitate peer learning across Europe. Therefore, the BeyondScale project created a web-based tool – the Digi Buddy platform - which will support higher education institutions to find other higher education institutions to establish collaborations that are beneficial for all partners and help them develop and transform their institutions.

Digi Buddy is a digital platform that supports higher education institutions finding institutional partners for peer learning and supports their collaboration and capacity building during institutional transformation with evidence-based tools. Thus, it is a process-oriented and interactive tool to support the higher education institutions' transformation and capacity building. It mainly provides support in areas linked to the dimensions that currently are addressed by HEInnovate.

The Digi Buddy platform has the following three main functionalities:

1. To enable HEIs to find matching institutions that face similar challenges
2. To facilitate collaboration, networking, and mentorship among HEIs
3. To provide access to evidence about how institutions become more entrepreneurial through the "Inspiration Fiches". For the prototype platform, inspiration fiches are included for two HEInnovate dimensions: "Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning" and "Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration with a special focus on social entrepreneurship and social innovation.

The platform includes the "Inspiration Fiches" developed in the course of accompanying research of the BeyondScale project by CHEPS. The "Inspiration Fiches" summarize evidence from scientific literature and resources provided by the HEInnovate platform and BeyondScale. They provide a menu of typical challenges that higher education institutions face when becoming more entrepreneurial. In addition, the fiches list interventions higher education institutions employed to respond to challenges, the inputs used, the barriers faced, and the solutions institutions have developed. The inspiration fiches can be understood as a condensate of the available evidence of the entrepreneurial transformation of higher education institutions. The keywords in each category (challenge, intervention, barrier...) form an entry point to the underlying knowledge base.

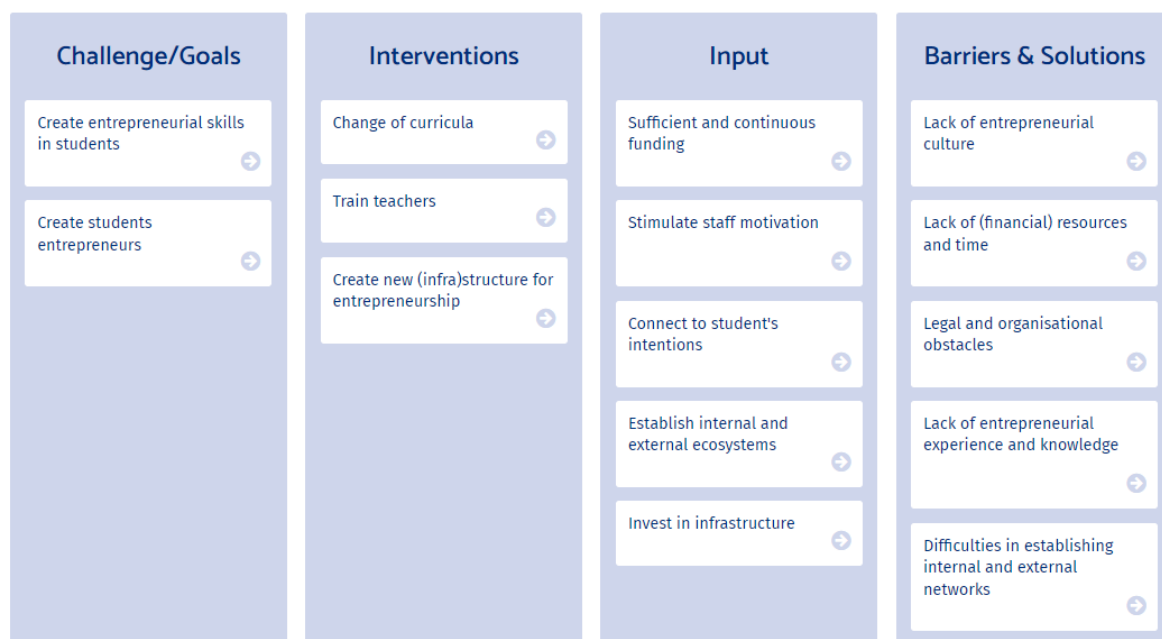
Users of the digital fiches will be linked to more information and resources once they select a keyword included in the fiches. They provide several entry points for the users from which they can start their learning journey.

The inspiration fiches are intended to give an overview of possible courses of action that you can apply to achieve change in your university. They provide basic information, but also show additional sources of information where further knowledge can be used.

They include answers to the following questions:

- **Challenge/Goals** – Which goals should be achieved through the change process?
- **Interventions** – What interventions are there to achieve the goals?
- **Input** – What inputs or resources must be expended for this, and what special requirements must these inputs meet?
- **Barriers & Solutions** – What problems can arise and what can be done to overcome them?

## Inspiration Fiche – Entrepreneurial teaching and learning



## Linking the Digi Buddy Platform and HEInnovate

The Digi Buddy platform capitalizes the existing HEInnovate resources in two ways: First, it uses the current eight HEInnovate dimensions for the matching procedure. In addition, it links users to the consultative information on the HEInnovate platform by linking them to the case studies, user stories and other information material that is available on the platform. This will enable users to engage in networking activities with other HEIs that have used HEInnovate before and actively pursue institutional change and transformation processes. The suggestions of this information will be based on the selection institutions make when they register for the platform and the matching.

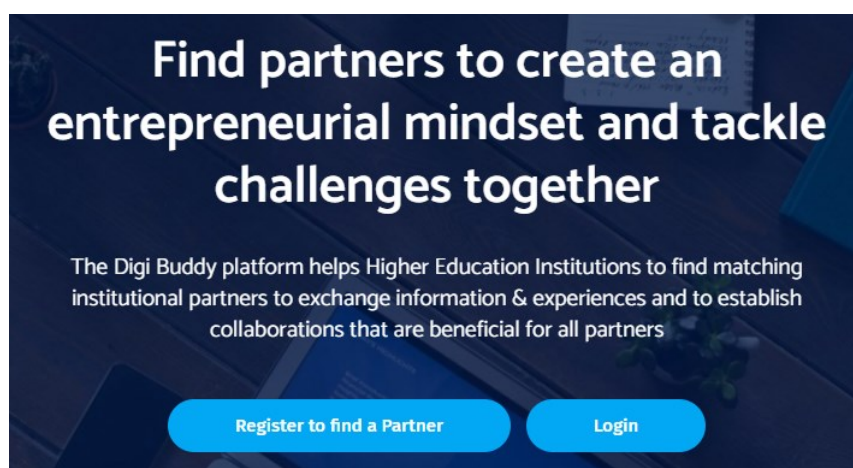
## How Does It Work?

Digi Buddy provides three major functionalities: 1. matching higher education institutions interested in collaboration and peer learning, 2. a digital space where higher education institutions can kick off their collaboration, and 3. access to evidence-based material on institutional transformation, in particular the Inspiration Fiches, to inspire and support the collaboration.

To participate in the platform, institutional users register on the platform providing information on their institution (such as size, type of institution, full or specialized institution, country, etc.), thematic area of interest and on the topic they seek to collaborate on. The platform is aligned with the GDPR regulations and provides users with information on how their data is used. The platform does not disclose information to third parties and only shares information with registered users during the matching process.

The matching process involves two steps. First, users will fill in general institutional characteristics. Based on the users' choices the platform shows a list of higher education institutions with similar interests. These choices include structural and process-oriented information, which will lead to matches of higher education institutions that might face similar challenges and plan to engage in a similar area of transformation.

Once the platform generates a match, the seeking institutions can send an invitation for collaboration to the matched institutions through the system, forming the second step.



*Click on the image to go to the website or use this link: <https://www.digi-buddy.eu/>*

To promote the Digi Buddy platform, a seminar (online, due to COVID-19 restrictions) was organised by the University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev" in which the concept of the platform was presented. Participants from Bulgarian and Romanian Universities were introduced to the background of the platform and guided through the registration process. Their feedback was very helpful to improve features of the Digi Buddy platform.

A seminar at the University of Athens was held by WPZ Research to inform an international group of students about the platform and give them the opportunity to test and discuss the design and concept.





There is potential to further enhance the Digi Buddy platform functions such as allowing users to benchmark, compare, network, and collaborate with the selected peers and other stakeholders to become a tool for a bigger audience and serve diverse external stakeholders (policymakers, researchers, start-up representatives, entrepreneurs, governmental bodies, community representatives, social enterprises), especially by linking to HEInnovate where it could be identified as a new tool of the HEInnovate family.

## 5. The International Entrepreneurial Education Network (“Teacher Network”)

The interest of students to start a business during or after their degree program is increasing. The question is how this ambition can be integrated into courses/modules and programmes. How do students, lecturers, and entrepreneurs think the road to self-employment can best be paved? How do education providers and entrepreneurs effectively use the increasing opportunities to start a business? And what can entrepreneurship-focused education programs in other European countries teach us?

Within the BeyondScale project, the BeyondScale consortium partners kicked off an International Entrepreneurial Education Network based on an action plan. This network will continue after the project ends and shall focus on building entrepreneurial education, research and awareness.



To support the start of the network, the BeyondScale team, led by NHL Stenden, organised a capacity building seminar called **“Teaching the Entrepreneurs of the Future”** that took place as a hybrid event, hosted by the Center for Entrepreneurship – NHL Stenden. More than 50 participants from all over Europe attended the event, with around 40 people attending online, and around 15 people being present

at the location of the event in Leeuwarden.

Guiding questions of the seminar were as follows: The interest of students to start a business during or after their degree program is increasing. The question is how this ambition can be integrated into the education of the future. How do students, lecturers and entrepreneurs think the road to self-employment can best be paved? How do education providers and entrepreneurs effectively use the increasing opportunities? And what can entrepreneurship-focused education programs in other European countries teach us?

[More information](#)



As a first step, an inventory of existing entrepreneurial teacher networks was made, based on a concise internet-based desk research. Next, the target group of teachers, a vision, the future requirements, and concrete steps for setting up the network were defined..

Subsequently, an initial exchange on the vision and objectives of the International Entrepreneurial Education Network has been developed, based on discussions with relevant stakeholders both inside as well as outside of the BeyondScale project. In order for the network to be continued after the end of the BeyondScale project, initiatives to involve other partners outside of the BeyondScale have already started. The next step in the development is to secure funding the institutionalization of the network.



## 6. Webinars

Within the BeyondScale project, a variety of webinars and seminars on different topics were offered to the public, focusing on developing and sharing good practice and resources with regard to the outbound perspective of the entrepreneurial agenda. The majority of webinars were advertised and accessible for external stakeholders upon registration, a few were held as internal webinars within the project team. The following provides an overview of some activities.

### Webinar from Munster Technological University - Peer Learning, Networks and Communities of Practice for Educators and Researchers



As part of the BeyondScale webinar series, MTU's Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence hosted this session on the value of peer learning, communities of practice and networks for educators and researchers.

The event shared ideas on how educators and researchers in entrepreneurship and innovation can learn from each other and the role of peer learning.

[Watch the Webinar](#)





## Webinar from FH Campus Wien - Do we Need a Digital Boost? Three Perspectives on Digitalization,



Digitalization approached the higher education world like a wave during the COVID-19 pandemic. A digital environment seems to be state of the art in higher education institutions in 2022.

However, do HEIs simply react to external influences or are they proactive players in their environment? What will happen after the current crisis? Do we need a further digital

boost? In this webinar, FH Campus Wien looked closer into these questions and explored related perspectives.

[Watch the Webinar](#)

## Webinar from University of Innsbruck - Piloting the Universities of the Future: AURORA & Universität Innsbruck



In 2019, Universität Innsbruck joined the European University Alliance AURORA – a big step towards a university of the future. The aim of the European Universities is to promote European values and identity and revolutionise the quality and competitiveness of European higher education.

In the BeyondScale webinar the AURORA Innsbruck Office will share their experiences and offer insights into the breadth of their activities. There will be some reflection on the potentials and which role peer learning in the AURORA network has.

Challenges and potentials will be shown up in the case of being part of a transnational university network.

## Webinar from Dublin City "Eating Insects to get my Degree" - Social Innovation and Sustainability, Dublin City University



The BeyondScale team at DCU – Dublin City University hosted an interactive webinar to showcase socially innovative sustainability initiatives. Guest speakers were Dr. Dervila Cooke and Dr. Susan Pike presenting the Seasons' Pace Food Growing Initiative, a project undertaken by DCU and Newcastle

[Watch the Webinar](#)

University in collaboration with a social enterprise in Dublin and community organisations in Paris. Dr. Darren Clarke and Leonie Goodwin (CCHANGE team Oslo) presented the impact of a 30-day challenge for his first-year students to contribute positively to the climate crisis

## Webinar from NHL Stenden - Festival Experimentation and Sustainable Entrepreneurship



To move towards more sustainable businesses, alternative products, practices and systems are needed. As temporary mini societies, festivals and similar temporary events are the perfect playground to experiment with these alternatives. They offer a real-life context with similarities to the real world in a rather safe, fun and laid-back atmosphere, where people can experiment with sustainable innovations. In this webinar, NHL Stenden presented an approach that may provide sustainable innovators, start-ups, incubators, researchers, students, government representatives, festival organisers and all other innovators that want to contribute to sustainable innovation, insight into how a festival can be used as a place to experiment with sustainable ideas and innovations. The webinar is not focussed on the question of making a festival itself more sustainable, but instead it will discuss how festivals can be used as means for sustainable innovation.

[Presentation](#)

## Webinar from Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo - Global Schools and Sustainable Development Goals



The webinar focused on the concept of social innovation and social entrepreneurship, through the integration of Learning Service into a local ecosystem and the cross-cutting concept of Global Schools and Global Citizenship Education (GCE). Furthermore, the need to have policy coherence on GCE as a pre-condition to promote education as a driver for social innovation, considering the role of policy makers as crucial as the role of educators on higher educations and how to integrate GCE in educational policies towards social entrepreneurship and at the technical level, how it can support teachers' motivation and professional training on social issues were topics discussed in the webinar.

[Presentation](#)

A webinar for SME representatives was organised by the **University of Ruse „Angel Kanchev“**, Bulgaria with the intention to discuss the experience of the participants of the outbound activity with HEInnovate and to provide further information on the tool. The webinar was open for students at the University of RUSE.

The webinar organised by **NOVA IMS**, Portugal, concentrated on the canvas model in general and how NOVA's canvas approach, application, and experiences to allow other BeyondScale partners to learn from their workshop experiences and implement this into their own workshops.

A webinar (in German) was organised with representatives from the **German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)** to present the Inspiration Fiches and to discuss integration into the portfolio and the activities of DAAD and to get feedback for further development of the fiches.

## 7. The HEInnovate Platform and the BeyondScale Activities

The development and implementation of the HEInnovate tool date back to 2010/2011. A significant stimulus for its development was the University-Business Forum, organised by the European Commission in 2010. This regular event aims to support the modernisation of higher education and strengthen cooperation between academia and business on a European level. During one of the events, practitioners requested to widen the perspective on entrepreneurship in higher education institutions (HEIs). Till then, entrepreneurship in HEIs mainly was understood as commercialisation by HEIs and creating spin-offs. Two major questions crystallised for the HEI:

- How to build entrepreneurial skills and competencies in students?
- How to provide a supportive environment at HEIs?

Following up on this discussion, the European Commission collaborated with the OECD to develop a first version of the HEInnovate tool. The collaboration was supported by the "HEInnovate Expert Group", which still exists to advise on the HEInnovate tool's further development in its annual meetings. During the initial phase, it was also decided to design the HEInnovate tool as a self-reflection instead of a bench-marking tool as valid data and indicators on entrepreneurship in higher education were still largely unavailable. The Expert Group, the EC, and the OECD were further supported by a literature study on the relevance of entrepreneurship in higher education with an international group of entrepreneurship experts' input. Technopolis was commissioned as consultant in order to implement and maintain the HEInnovate platform.

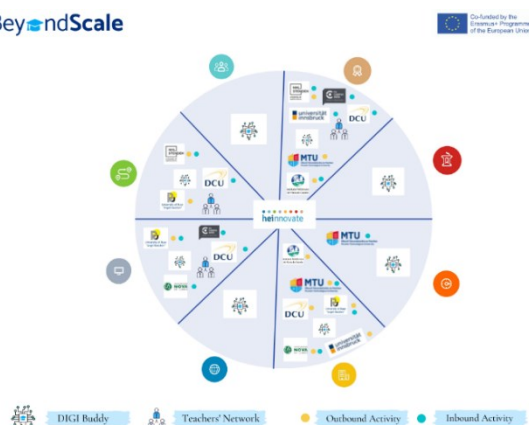
Based on the outcomes of a pilot, a number of interviews, and the feedback from the HEInnovate expert group, the tool was regularly revised since 2012. It was gradually adapted to the needs of HEIs and the latest developments in the higher education sector. The tool originally consisted of two dimensions: Entrepreneurial Teaching & Learning and Higher Education Start-ups. In 2013, the first version was launched, and various revisions and additions were implemented afterward. The revisions mainly concerned the HEInnovate statements, which were fundamentally changed in 2015, based on users' feedback. In 2019, an additional HEInnovate dimension, including statements on the digital transformation of HEIs, was added.

In recent years, the HEInnovate platform has grown. Besides the self-reflection tool, it now provides resources such as case studies and user stories for HEI practitioners, seeking inspiration to strengthen their institutions' entrepreneurial agenda. EPIC - an instrument that helps measure entrepreneurial education's impact on students – is connected to the HEInnovate platform since late 2019.



The **accompanying research** of the BeyondScale project engaged differently with the HEInnovate platform than the project partners. Rather than employing the platform, the accompanying research reflected on how the project partners use the HEInnovate tool and platform in their project activities related to the BeyondScale project. As part of this, the accompanying research studied the role that the HEInnovate resource base plays in facilitating partners during their (organisational/institutional) change processes initiated by the HEInnovate/BeyondScale activities.

BeyondScale



The accompanying research in the BeyondScale project took three different roles. The first was to provide support and consultation for project partners concerning the planning and development of their activities and their use of the HEInnovate tool. In its second role, the accompanying research created a useful knowledge base for the partner projects (and further users of the HEInnovate platform). This role included collecting and unlocking the available evidence from the currently overwhelming academic literature on different aspects of entrepreneurship in higher education.

Thirdly, the accompanying research analysed the experiences of the partner projects in using the HEInnovate tool. In addressing these three roles, the accompanying research strived to suggest ways to enhance the HEInnovate tool.

The HEInnovate self-assessment statements are often the start of a discussion – the start of a learning journey – around the experiences and ways in which HEIs can become more entrepreneurial and transform themselves while undertaking this journey.

In order to learn about the ways in which this transformation can take place, the users of the HEInnovate tool can get inspiration from the rich database of case studies and user experiences that is made available through the HEInnovate website. However, the experiences of BeyondScale partners in making use of these HEInnovate resources (i.e. the self-assessment statements, the case studies) suggested that a number of additions and enhancements to the tool can be made.

A set of recommendations based on the experiences of the BeyondScale project partners on how the use and the usability of the HEInnovate tool could be enhanced can be found in the document

**“BeyondScale: Testbed for improving the use and usefulness of HEInnovate”**. This report and a variety of further documents are available on the BeyondScale website.

[Research and Reports](#)

## 8. Closing Thoughts

The common denominator in the findings of the different project partners is that one size does not fit all when promoting entrepreneurship. Creating an entrepreneurial mindset is a multi-faceted process. Among the different project partners there have been rather diverse outcomes and different implementation of more commonly found outcomes. A generally accepted focus has been on interdisciplinarity, which is complex but very valuable for innovation and entrepreneurship within Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs).

The project has been one with a strong emphasis on international cooperation. A clear trend throughout the project is the focus on and the value generated through peer-learning opportunities. Although one size does not fit all, following good practices has been found to be hugely valuable. This also ties to the learning by doing approach.

Overall, collaborations are essential to the successful fulfilment of the project, as they enable continuity and knowledge sharing. These collaborations are being set up through the BeyondScale project, with initiatives such as the Digi Buddy and the Teachers' Network, which make the collaborated design and implementation of best practices possible.

Besides peer-learning, another trend throughout the project has been the prevalent focus on the sustainable goals and making a societal impact. This is hugely important, since educating students to make the world a better place makes much more sense than preparing them solely for a certain job within a specific field of expertise.

For innovation within higher education and student entrepreneurship to work out, HEIs need an ecosystem approach – collaborating with businesses, political organizations, research institutes, NGOs, and other HEIs. However, companies often lack the time for activities outside their core business, which is a major challenge in implementing outbound activities in a project like BeyondScale. How can businesses be motivated to dedicate more time to such activities? This could be solved by building long-term partnerships with mutual benefit between a HEI and a company. Besides an ecosystem approach, a clear system perspective is needed for institutional change and sustainable transformation.

The BeyondScale project has brought about valuable insights and benefits for the parties involved. Three examples, although the benefits clearly extend far beyond those. First, there is increased interest and funding of student entrepreneurship, specifically nurturing their entrepreneurial mindset. Second, there is an emphasis on what employers look for when hiring new graduates and how HEIs can collaborate with industry to support students and employers. And third, it became visible in the project that entrepreneurship and innovation are equally important for all disciplines.



## 9. Further Information:

[www.beyondscale.eu](http://www.beyondscale.eu)

[www.digi-buddy.eu](http://www.digi-buddy.eu)

[www.heinnovate.eu](http://www.heinnovate.eu)

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