

Work package WP4 – Innovation Competency

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| Work Package Number | WP4 | Lead Beneficiary | 7. NUACA |
| Work Package Name | Innovation Competency | | |
| Start Month | 3 | End Month | 31 |

Objectives

WP 4 Innovation Competency is linked to all specific objectives of the project:

- Increasing competitiveness and welfare
- Enhancing B2B Sales and innovation capacity
- Renewing the assessment culture
- Increasing private investments to higher education.

To reach the requirements of modern working life as clearly indicated in Global Economic Forum's listing of Top 10 skills, students must acquire the competences of their own study fields or disciplines and a set of so-called innovation competences during their studies. Giving students opportunities to work in hands-on research and innovation projects is essential when aiming to improve their innovation capacity. According to the latest research, innovation competences have five dimensions that focus on creativity, critical thinking, initiative, team working and networking. These competences will be in focus in WP 4 in all stages.

To enable the success in WP 4, staff members of the Armenian and Georgian partners will acquire the knowledge to facilitate trainings on entrepreneurship and innovation. Intensive trainings will be organized by European partners KTH and UPV, both being internationally acknowledged as leading universities in innovation policy and entrepreneurship.

Competitions on Innovation will take place with teams of students in a local (university) level. Final results of best ranked teams will be showcased together with B2B Sales competitions in EU*s Eastern Partnership countries B2B Sales and Innovation Games. Preparing a competition helps teams acquire the required innovation and entrepreneurial skills and apply them within a deadline, in front of a professional jury and interacting out of the comfort zone.

The assessment of learning outcomes, especially innovation and entrepreneurship competences, is development-oriented, i.e. students are able to assess their own and peers' competences and thereby know how to develop them. We will use existing assessment frameworks, especially FINCODA (Framework for Innovation Competences Development and Assessment) and EU's EntreComp tool. In Innovation Competition setting, assessment will focus on quality of presentations as well as outcomes of the work of Innovation teams.

Companies will be attracted to support work of Innovation teams, both financially and in-kind as mentoring for teams. Furthermore, best ideas may find further support from companies, local public RDI supporters or business angels. Representatives of companies will be invited to become jury member in innovation competition, together with representatives of academia.

Description

T4.1 Innovation Facilitator Training. Innovation Facilitator Training will be organized in Valencia, Spain, by UPV. Aim is to increase and update Armenian and Georgian professors' and lecturers' capacity to train and mentor students in Innovation and Entrepreneurship practices.

T4.2 National innovation trainings. Trainings in Armenia and Georgia about national innovation themes, e.g. Intellectual Property Rights and private capital in partner countries and how to utilize them in boosting innovation capitalization. We will utilize external stakeholders - e.g. Chambers of Commerce and public authorities – as external speakers in these trainings.

T4.3 Innovation Courses and Competitions. Planning and organizing Innovation Trainings and Competitions two times during the project in Armenian and Georgian partner Universities. Innovation courses may be organized as stand-alone courses, targeted only to innovation aspects, or as part of existing course/module.

Courses will be targeted to STEM students – in practice engineering students – and all respective universities are responsible for all technical arrangements (e.g. admission, registration, grading) according to their universities' policies. In Innovation Competitions, students will form teams and create new solutions to existing societal challenges. Companies will be attracted to provide blanks or themes for students. Sustainability aspects will be considered, and priority will be given to themes respecting “three E strategy”: Ecology, Economy and Equity.

Best performing student teams will represent their universities in EU's Eastern Neighborhood Sales and Innovation Games.