



TOOLBOX

FOR SOCIAL AND
SOLIDARITY ECONOMY
ENTREPRENEURS



CREASSE



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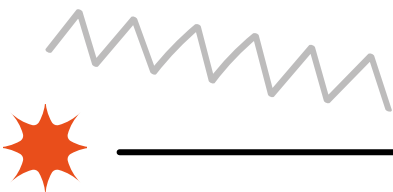


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INTRODUCTION

CREASSE (Creating and Reinforcing the Ecosystem for Aspiring Social and Solidarity Economy Entrepreneurs) is a transnational project funded under the Erasmus+ KA220-ADU framework. It aims to empower individuals from vulnerable groups, especially those from low-income backgrounds, migrants, women, and people from marginalised communities, to develop entrepreneurial competences, embrace sustainable innovation, and participate meaningfully in the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE). By equipping these groups with the right tools, skills, and support networks, CREASSE promotes social cohesion, inclusive growth, and community-led innovation.

The project addresses pressing challenges such as social exclusion, unemployment, and limited community participation by building the capacities of adult educators and social facilitators to guide collective and community-based economic initiatives. It promotes a bottom-up, participatory, and empowerment-based approach, aligning closely with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

CREASSE brings together a diverse consortium of partners from Cyprus, Spain, Italy, Hungary, and Albania.

In practice, it delivers a set of interconnected outputs designed to promote competence development and practical action, including:

- A **Competence Framework** mapping the skills needed for success in collective entrepreneurship.
- A **Facilitator's Toolbox** (this document), offering structured training tools and activities.
- A **Handbook for Facilitators**, guiding the implementation of workshops, mentoring, and community engagement activities.

Purpose and Scope of the Toolbox for Social and Solidarity Economy Entrepreneurs (SSE):

The Toolbox for SSE Entrepreneurs has been developed within the scope of Work Package 2 (WP2), which focuses on mapping personal, entrepreneurial, green, and social competences essential for starting or sustaining a social and solidarity economy initiative. The Toolbox acts as the core competence-building resource of the CREASSE project.

Its objectives are to:

- Build self-awareness and autonomy in vulnerable individuals;
- Strengthen entrepreneurial skills with a social purpose;
- Promote environmentally responsible thinking and practices;
- Equip participants with practical, innovative tools for launching SSE initiatives.

Each module combines theoretical framing with practical tools and real-world examples to support individual and collective learning paths.

Who is this Toolbox for:

This resource is specifically tailored for:

- Aspiring social entrepreneurs from vulnerable and underrepresented groups;
- Social facilitators, trainers, adult educators, and mentors supporting community-driven entrepreneurship;
- Civil society organizations, community leaders and grassroots organisations aiming to strengthen social impact through entrepreneurship.

The materials are designed to be inclusive, flexible, and suitable for non-formal learning environments, with or without prior business knowledge.

How to use this Toolbox:

Each of the four modules in the Toolbox is designed to support both independent learning and facilitated workshops. Each module includes:

- A clearly defined set of competences and learning outcomes.
- Step-by-step instructions and activities for implementation.
- Case studies and best practices from across Europe.
- Interactive exercises and self-reflection tasks.
- Suggested resources and self-assessment quizzes.

Each module can be used independently or as part of a structured course, and learners can also use the content for self-paced study, community-based workshops, or peer-to-peer learning.

The Toolbox is also a starting point for the activities developed in the CREASSE Handbook for Facilitators, supporting the broader CREASSE mission of strengthening adult education and inclusive entrepreneurship across Europe.

MODULE 1: PERSONAL COMPETENCES



Brief Summary

This module explores the importance of personal skills in the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), highlighting how qualities such as self-awareness, confidence, and leadership empower the entrepreneur to initiate and manage projects that advance social and community goals. These competencies not only support entrepreneurial success but also foster personal and professional growth, enabling value-driven and meaningful work. The module is designed to help entrepreneurs develop essential personal and social skills to navigate fast-changing and often challenging environments. It emphasizes managing emotions, maintaining flexibility, communicating effectively, and collaborating with others.

Through mindfulness practices, stress management techniques, and self-reflection, the entrepreneur learns to stay calm, focused, and in control during difficult situations, while identifying stressors and applying tools for mental and emotional balance.

Additionally, the module builds the entrepreneur's capacity to adapt and communicate in diverse or evolving contexts. Activities such as role-plays, group challenges, and communication exercises strengthen their ability to manage uncertainty, collaborate across differences, and solve problems collectively. By the end of the module, the entrepreneur will be equipped to manage stress, embrace change, and demonstrate resilience and adaptability in real-world challenges.



Module Objectives

2.1 Main Objective

To equip entrepreneurs with knowledge to develop essential personal and social competences—such as self-regulation, flexibility, communication, collaboration, and personal leadership—needed to effectively navigate challenges and lead initiatives within the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE).

2.2 Sub-objectives

- Understand the importance of personal skills in Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE): Entrepreneurs will learn how knowing themselves, being confident, and showing leadership can help make SSE projects successful.
- Learn to manage emotions and stress: Individuals will discover what causes them stress and use techniques like mindfulness to stay calm and focused. These skills help them make better decisions under pressure.

- Become more adaptable to change: Entrepreneurs will practice how to handle change through reflection. This will help them feel more confident in new situations and when goals shift.
- Improve communication skills: Individuals will gain knowledge on that help them speak clearly, listen well, and adjust their message for different people.
- Strengthen teamwork and collaboration: Entrepreneurs will work in mixed teams to solve problems and reach shared goals. They'll build respect, learn how to resolve conflicts, and understand different work styles.

2.3 Learning Outcome

- Adapt to new situations with confidence: Use self-reflection, accept feedback, and be open to trying new ways of doing things to handle change in learning, work, or social settings.
- Manage stress and stay focused in tough situations: Use mindfulness, deep breathing, and time management to stay calm, control emotions, and keep focused when under pressure.
- Solve problems when facing challenges: Look at problems with a positive attitude, adjust your plans when needed, and work with others to find flexible solutions.

Personal and Social Competences / Learning Content

Personal and social competences are a mix of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that help people act independently, take responsibility, and adapt to different and changing situations.

They are based on the idea of "learning to be" — the ongoing process of understanding yourself, shaping your values, and finding purpose. This involves making good decisions, handling challenges in a positive way, and building strong relationships. Your growth is also shaped by your social and cultural environment, including the roles you play and the people around you.

Being personally competent means always learning, thinking about your actions, and growing with honesty and motivation. Social competence is closely related and focuses on working well with others, respecting differences, avoiding bias, and contributing positively to your community. It shows our natural need to connect with others and our ability to communicate and cooperate effectively.

Some key personal and social competences include:

3.1 Personal Competence

3.1.1 Self-Regulation: *Awareness and management of emotions, thoughts and behaviour.*

Self-regulation is the ability to manage your thoughts, emotions, and actions by choosing how to respond, instead of reacting without thinking.

It's a step-by-step process that includes setting goals, checking your progress, and making changes to stay on track. This skill helps people control their impulses without ignoring them. It takes practice and mental energy, and it can be harder to use when you're stressed. Believing in your own ability to stay in control makes it more likely that you'll use self-regulation, and it helps you feel in charge of your actions and surroundings.

Self-regulation is especially important for entrepreneurs because it supports personal growth, helps them recover from setbacks, and stay focused on their goals. It allows them to manage stress, stay motivated, and make thoughtful decisions—even in uncertain or high-pressure situations.

Entrepreneurship also relies on self-confidence and the belief in one's ability to succeed, both of which are strengthened through strong self-regulation skills.

Three main factors contribute to effective self-regulation:

- Being aware of your own emotions, thoughts, values, and actions helps you notice and control unwanted reactions.
- Understanding and managing your feelings and thoughts—especially during stress—can improve how you perform in all areas of life.
- Building a positive mindset, confidence, and a clear sense of purpose helps you stay motivated and keep growing over time.

Self-regulatory strength varies among individuals but can be strengthened through practice.

To build self-regulation, individuals can use simple, practical tools that improve emotional and mental awareness:

1. Journaling and reflective writing help you spot patterns in your thoughts and emotions. Write about how you feel, what triggered it, and how you responded.
 - *Tool:* Day One Journal App or a simple notebook.
2. Mood tracking and emotion wheels help you recognize and name your feelings. This builds emotional understanding and helps you respond instead of reacting.
3. Mindfulness practices, like body scans, teach you to stay present and notice early signs of stress or impulsive reactions.
 - *Technique:* Body Scan Meditation (Audio Guide)

To manage stress and improve your response:

1. Breathing exercises and progressive muscle relaxation help calm your body and reduce anxiety.
 - *Technique:* Box Breathing Guide | Progressive Muscle Relaxation (YouTube)
2. Cognitive-behavioural tools like:
 - Thought stopping (mentally say "stop" when unhelpful thoughts arise),
 - Reframing negative thoughts into more balanced ones,
 - Positive self-talk to build confidence.
 - *Tool:* CBT Thought Record App

To stay focused and consistent in your actions:

1. Use SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) to plan and track progress.

To stay motivated and grow over time:

1. Build resilience by:
 - Reflecting on how you've overcome past challenges,
 - Visualizing success,
 - Focusing on personal strengths.
2. Boost self-efficacy by:
 - Setting small, achievable goals,
 - Getting encouragement from peers,
 - Using daily affirmations.
 - Tool: I Am – Daily Affirmations App

Using these tools regularly can help you stay calm, focused, and confident—especially when dealing with stress, change, or challenges.

3.1.2 Flexibility: *Ability to manage transitions, uncertainty, and to face challenges.*

Flexibility means being able to adapt to change, handle uncertainty, and take action even without all the answers. It's a key skill in today's fast-changing world and is highly valued by employers. It involves managing emotions, making decisions in unclear situations, and staying open to new ideas.

In entrepreneurship, flexibility is especially important. Entrepreneurs often face challenges and unexpected changes. Being flexible helps them adjust plans, try new ideas, learn from mistakes, and keep moving forward. It also supports creativity and problem-solving, which are essential for building and growing a business.

Flexibility depends on a few key things:

- Being willing to change your mind or actions when you get new information. This means being curious and able to understand different points of view.
- Being open to new ideas, methods, and tools when situations change, and being able to handle uncertainty.
- Being able to move between personal, social, and work roles by making thoughtful choices, setting goals, and always learning so you can stay ready and take initiative.

Developing flexibility starts with building critical thinking and openness to new ideas. Some effective tools and techniques include:

1. Critical Thinking and Re-evaluating Perspectives

- Structured debate – Practice defending and challenging different viewpoints to strengthen understanding and adaptability.
- Reflective questioning – Ask “why,” “what if,” and “how else” to reassess opinions and encourage deeper thinking.
- Decision-making frameworks – Use tools like SWOT analysis, pros/cons lists, or the Six Thinking Hats to make well-informed choices and consider alternatives.

Tool: Kialo – A platform for structured debates that helps you explore arguments from different perspectives.

2. Techniques for Embracing Change and Uncertainty

- Scenario planning – Imagine different future situations to prepare for unexpected changes.
- Rapid experimentation – Test small-scale ideas quickly to learn and adapt with minimal risk.
- Reflection routines – Set time for regular self-check-ins or journaling to assess what's working and what needs adjusting.

Tool: Futures Platform – For visualizing and planning multiple future scenarios.

3. Managing Transitions and Long-Term Adaptability

- Life-mapping – Create a visual timeline of past and future life events to understand patterns and set direction.
- Personal learning plans (PLPs) – Set learning goals, identify resources, and track progress to build new skills over time.
- SMART goal setting – Break big transitions into clear, actionable steps that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

Tool: Habitica – Set and track SMART goals with gamified or structured formats.

By using these tools consistently, individuals can better manage change, stay mentally and emotionally prepared, and thrive in fast-moving personal and professional environments.

3.2 Social Competences

3.2.1 Communication: *Using the right way to communicate, with the right tools and language, based on the topic and situation.*

Effective communication means using the right strategies and tools, depending on the people, topic, and situation. It includes key parts like the sender, message, receiver, context, and the channel used (like speaking, writing, or online platforms). Every action in a conversation sends a message, so good communication depends on being clear and appropriate.

Digital tools have changed the way we communicate. While they allow fast and easy sharing, they can also cause misunderstandings, reduce emotional connection, and lead to problems like cyberbullying. This makes digital communication skills very important. These include knowing how to stay safe online, protect your personal information, behave responsibly, and adjust your messages for different audiences and platforms.

Communication competence includes three main areas:

- Adapting to context and audience: Choosing the right language, tone, and tools depending on who you're talking to, your relationship, and the purpose of the message.
- Intercultural and professional communication: Being respectful and aware of cultural and professional differences in conversations
- Active and respectful participation: Listening carefully, speaking clearly and confidently, and interacting in a balanced and respectful way with others.

Effective communication begins with understanding the context and audience. This involves selecting the most suitable strategies, tone, and tools based on who you're communicating with, your relationship, the goal of the message, and the medium used (such as in person, email, or social media).

Practical techniques include:

- Practice real-life scenarios like interviews, team meetings, or client calls to learn how to adjust your tone and approach.
- Use templates or tools (e.g. Persona Creator) to identify key traits of your audience and adapt your message accordingly.
- Learn how to use tools like Zoom or Microsoft Teams effectively, depending on the medium and message.

As part of communication techniques, intercultural and domain-specific interaction refers to effective communication across different cultural and professional contexts. It calls for empathy, openness, and an awareness of varying values, norms, and communication styles. These skills can be developed through:

- Participate in training sessions that focus on cultural sensitivity and global workplace norms.
- Use apps like Duolingo or Memrise to learn relevant vocabulary for your field (e.g., medical, legal, technical).
- Analyze real or simulated professional interactions to explore effective and respectful communication in various domains.

Finally, active and respectful engagement involves attentive listening, clear and confident expression, and maintaining a balanced, respectful dialogue. To achieve this, the entrepreneur should:

- Practice paraphrasing or summarizing what someone said to ensure understanding.
- Set up small group sessions where participants give and receive constructive feedback using clear guidelines.
- Attend workshops or use tools like the Centre for Nonviolent Communication to learn how to express needs and opinions confidently without being aggressive.

By using these practical tools and techniques, individuals can become more skilled and adaptable communicators across different contexts—whether in person, across cultures, or in digital environments. Let me know if you'd like this turned into a printable guide or slide deck!

3.2.2 Collaboration: *Engagement in group activity, teamwork acknowledging and respecting others*

Successful collaboration depends on people working together in a supportive way, where everyone's input is valued. When individuals balance their own goals with respect for others, they are better able to cooperate, find compromises, and come up with creative solutions. Without teamwork, decisions based only on personal interest can lead to worse outcomes for everyone in the long run. Today, digital tools make it easier than ever to collaborate, but we need clear strategies to use them well.

Collaboration involves three key areas:

- Valuing diversity and working for the common good: This means appreciating different backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences while combining efforts to reach shared goals.
- Building respectful, trusting relationships: This includes treating everyone with dignity and fairness, and handling conflicts through honest discussion and understanding.
- Sharing responsibility and using group strengths: This involves dividing tasks fairly, encouraging different viewpoints, and using a team-based approach to solve problems more effectively.

Effective collaboration in today's connected world starts with valuing diversity and working toward a shared goal. It means respecting different cultures, beliefs, and life experiences while building something meaningful together which can be done through:

1. Encouraging openness, inclusiveness, and teamwork in diverse settings by:
 - Learning how to communicate across cultures.
 - Solving tasks as a team, focusing on shared goals.
2. Fostering dignity, fairness, and understanding while managing conflict constructively.
 - Focused attention and paraphrasing what others say.
 - Expressing needs respectfully and listening with empathy ([CNVC.org](https://cnvc.org)).
 - Practice real-life scenarios to build negotiation and understanding.

3. Making sure work is shared fairly, everyone contributes, and group thinking is encouraged.

- Use platforms like Miro, Trello, or Notion to co-design tasks and timelines.
- Tools like Slack or Microsoft Teams for clear and ongoing team communication.
- Regular check-ins to improve teamwork and adjust strategies.
- Everyone contributes ideas and decisions, reinforcing shared ownership.

These tools and practices help teams work more effectively, respect one another, and build sustainable collaboration in both face-to-face and digital settings. Let me know if you'd like a workshop outline or checklist version.

3.3 Personal Leadership

Self-regulation, flexibility, communication, and collaboration are essential pillars of personal leadership for an entrepreneur, enabling them to navigate the uncertainties and demands of building and sustaining a venture. Self-regulation fosters discipline and emotional control, helping entrepreneurs stay focused and resilient under pressure. Flexibility allows them to adapt quickly to changing market conditions and customer needs, making strategic pivots when necessary. Effective communication ensures that their vision is clearly articulated to stakeholders, inspiring trust and alignment, while collaboration promotes the exchange of ideas and resources, strengthening team dynamics and fostering innovation. Together, these qualities empower entrepreneurs to lead with clarity, confidence, and agility.

4.1 Case Study One: SEC Reorganization

In the case of SEC, a Scandinavian engineering consultancy undergoing rapid growth through mergers and acquisitions, significant challenges arose in integrating diverse organizational cultures and work practices. The company initiated a collaborative project called "accelerated cultural integration," recognizing that traditional management tools were insufficient for addressing deep-rooted cultural divides. Personal competences such as self-awareness, adaptability, and reflective thinking were crucial for employees navigating the tensions between mono-disciplinary and transdisciplinary work models. Through guided reflections on real work dilemmas and the creation of "learning histories," individuals were encouraged to evaluate their decision-making, adapt to new roles, and contribute to a shared understanding of identity and purpose within the newly formed organization.

Social competences played a central role in the integration process. SEC fostered collaboration and mutual respect through structured process meetings, where top management and project staff engaged in open dialogue across hierarchies and departments. These rituals of exchange provided a platform for active listening, conflict resolution, and intercultural communication—skills essential for collective learning and team cohesion.

4.2 Case Study Two: Green Action – Revitalizing Waste Management in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Green Action, a social enterprise based in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina, was founded to tackle two pressing local issues: youth unemployment and ineffective waste management. Comprised of young professionals and activists, the organization aimed to create employment for marginalized groups—especially Roma youth—while promoting environmental sustainability through recycling initiatives. Early challenges included cultural tensions among ethnically diverse team members, lack of operational experience, and resistance from local authorities who were skeptical of the non-profit business model. These obstacles threatened the stability and growth of the enterprise.

The turning point came when Green Action invested in building personal and social competences among its team. Through structured reflection sessions, members developed self-regulation and resilience to manage stress and setbacks. Adaptability was fostered by shifting service models based on community feedback. Social competences, including empathy and intercultural communication, were strengthened through “Story Circles,” which helped bridge cultural divides. Adopting a shared leadership approach allowed for collaborative decision-making and strengthened team cohesion. These competences not only helped the team navigate complex social dynamics and ethical dilemmas but also built the foundation for long-term partnerships, job creation, and a respected reputation across the Western Balkans.

4.3 Best Practice One: Building Community Trust through Empathy and Intercultural Communication

A female-led social enterprise in North Macedonia (Empowering rural women through creating small sustainable businesses) set out to empower rural women through traditional food production and sales. However, the founders faced resistance from local families due to cultural norms discouraging women's work outside the home. The entrepreneur used active listening and empathy to engage directly with community elders and families. Instead of imposing a business plan, she organized storytelling evenings where women shared personal experiences and hopes for their children's futures. This created emotional connection and cultural respect.

Participation tripled within six months, and the business grew into a cooperative exporting regional specialties. This success was rooted in the entrepreneur's social competence—understanding and valuing community dynamics while leading sensitively.

4.4 Best Practice Two: Navigating Uncertainty with Self-Regulation and Resilience

A youth-led eco-fashion start-up in Serbia, focused on upcycling textile waste, lost its main supplier and faced a funding gap during its first year. Instead of panicking or shutting down, the founder drew on self-regulation and adaptability by initiating a “72-hour reset” strategy: the team paused operations briefly to analyze emotions, assess realistic options, and brainstorm alternatives calmly. The entrepreneur also reached out to mentors for feedback and moral support.

They discovered a new supply chain by collaborating with a nearby refugee sewing cooperative. The temporary crisis became a growth moment that aligned more closely with their mission. The founder’s personal competence—staying emotionally grounded and flexible—turned a failure into innovation and strengthened long-term resilience, and inclusive governance.



Interactive Exercises

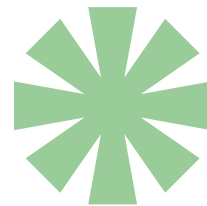
Self Regulation

- Describe a time you faced a challenge this week. How did you respond, and what could you try differently next time?

Flexibility

- Scenario Game - Present a real-world situation (e.g., a canceled event, a tech failure). Teams must develop a backup plan and explain why it would work.
- Life Transition Mapping - Individuals create a visual timeline of a personal or professional transition (e.g., moving cities, changing schools). They identify the emotions, challenges, and coping strategies used.

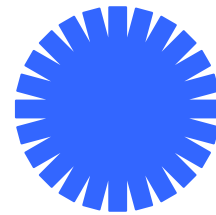
Communication



- Practice describing a project, idea, or themselves in 30 seconds to different audiences (e.g., a friend vs. a formal panel). Peer Feedback: What worked well? What could be clearer?

- Individuals bring a short story or phrase from their cultural background and explain its meaning, practicing intercultural communication.
- In groups of 3: one speaks, one listens silently, and one observes. Roles rotate and observers give feedback on listening behavior (eye contact, paraphrasing, body language). What was learned about personal communication habits?

Collaboration



- Teams are asked to build a structure (e.g., from LEGO or paper) but must complete the task without speaking—developing non-verbal coordination and trust. How did you feel? What strategies emerged without words?
- Before starting a team task, Individuals co-create a “Team Charter” outlining agreed behaviors, values, and ways to handle conflict. After completing a group task, the team reflects not only on the outcome but on how they worked together. How conflict was handled and what behaviors supported success?





Self-Assessment Exercise

Instructions:

Rate yourself on each statement using the following scale:

1 = Rarely

I often react impulsively and struggle to manage my emotions in conflict situations. I may withdraw or escalate tension.

2 = Sometimes

I attempt to stay calm but can still be visibly affected. I sometimes need support to resolve the conflict constructively.

3 = Often

I usually stay composed and try to understand others' views. I actively work toward resolution and self-control.

4 = Always

I consistently remain calm, use self-awareness techniques, and help de-escalate conflicts respectfully and constructively.

After completing the exercise, reflect on areas where you scored lower and consider how you might strengthen those competences in the context of social and solidarity initiatives.

Self-Regulation: Awareness and management of emotions, thoughts, and behavior

- I manage my emotional responses when facing disagreements in team settings.
- I set personal goals aligned with the mission and values of social or community-based projects.
- I stay focused and motivated, even when tasks become repetitive or outcomes are uncertain.

- I reflect on my thoughts and reactions to improve future decisions and actions.
- I actively manage stress to stay constructive and solution-oriented in group work.

Flexibility: Managing transitions, uncertainty, and challenges

- I adapt well to changes in project scope, team roles, or community needs.
- I am open to rethinking my approach based on new evidence or stakeholder input.
- I can take initiative and remain productive even in ambiguous or shifting situations.
- I respond constructively to unexpected challenges in social or economic initiatives.
- I view change as an opportunity for innovation and learning.

Communication: Use of context-appropriate communication strategies and tools

- I adjust my language and communication style depending on my audience (e.g. volunteers, funders, beneficiaries).
- I actively listen and seek to understand different perspectives before responding.
- I communicate clearly and respectfully in both face-to-face and digital environments.
- I use appropriate digital tools to engage and inform stakeholders in a project.
- I am aware of cultural and generational differences when I communicate with others.

Collaboration: Engagement in group activity and teamwork acknowledging and respecting others

- I contribute actively to shared goals while respecting others' roles and contributions.
- I help build consensus and resolve disagreements constructively within a group.
- I value diverse backgrounds and experiences as assets in collaborative projects.
- I take responsibility for my tasks and follow through on commitments to the group.
- I encourage others to participate and feel included in collaborative efforts.

**Total score per
competence
area:**

Self-Regulation: ___ / 20

Flexibility: ___ / 20

Communication: ___ / 20

Collaboration: ___ / 20

Reflection:

- Which competence area do I feel strongest in? Why?
- Which area would I like to develop further?
- What actions can I take to improve my personal and social competence in the SSE context?
- How might I support others in strengthening their competences in collaborative projects?



Additional Resources and Further Reading

Reports:

- UNESCO – Learning: The Treasure Within (Delors Report, 1996)

Emphasizes holistic human development through education.

[UNESCO Archive](#)

- OECD Learning Compass 2030

Defines core personal and social competences including adaptability, responsibility, and collaboration.

[OECD Learning Compass](#)

Books:

- **Daniel Goleman** – *Social Intelligence* (2006); Supports understanding of social competence through science.
- **Jennifer Garvey Berger** – *Simple Habits for Complex Times* (2016); Practical strategies for adaptability, reflection, and growth in changing environments.
- **Catherine Nixey** – *The School of Life: Emotional Education*; Offers tools and insights for emotional literacy, self-awareness, and purpose development

Toolkits:

- SALTO Youth – Competence Model for Youth Workers Working Internationally; A practical model that outlines key competences, including personal and social dimensions.

[SALTO Toolkit](#)

- **Ashoka Changemaker Curriculum**; Promotes empathy, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving as core to social innovation.

Ashoka Framework

- **The School of Life YouTube Channel**; Emotional maturity, self-awareness, communication, and character development.

School of Life

MODULE 2: ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCES



Brief Summary

Entrepreneurial competences are essential for empowering individuals and communities to act on opportunities and ideas that create social, environmental, and economic value. Within the framework of the **Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE)**, these competences are not only about launching enterprises but also about driving change, fostering collaboration, and creating inclusive, sustainable solutions to real community challenges.

This module aims to develop the foundational knowledge, attitudes, and skills that adult learners need to become active contributors to their communities through entrepreneurship. It draws inspiration from the **EntreComp framework**, adapting it to the **collective, ethical, and participatory values** of SSE. Aligned with the broader goals of the CREASSE project, which seeks to build the capacity of adult educators and facilitators working with vulnerable groups, this module supports the creation of inclusive learning environments where people can gain confidence, explore collaborative models, and build meaningful, socially driven initiatives.

The module is intended for use by **learners** working in community settings, NGOs, social enterprises, and training centres. It includes learning outcomes, practical activities, real-world examples, and assessment tools to support experiential, non-formal learning processes.



Module Objectives

2.1 Main Objective

To equip aspiring social entrepreneurs with key entrepreneurial competences, spanning initiative-taking, project planning, risk management, collaboration, and resource mobilisation, necessary to drive sustainable and impactful ventures in the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE).

2.2 Sub-objectives

- Understand how entrepreneurial competences apply in the context of SSE and social innovation.
- Learn to plan, execute, and manage entrepreneurial initiatives that create both social and economic value.
- Strengthen capacity to adapt to ambiguity, manage risks, and recover from setbacks.
- Improve team collaboration, conflict resolution, and leadership skills for inclusive entrepreneurship.
- Gain practical knowledge on funding, budgeting, and value modelling for sustainable ventures.

2.3 Learning Outcomes:

- Develop a basic action plan for a social enterprise project.
- Organize tasks and resources effectively for initiating, planning and managing projects.
- Explain how social enterprises contribute to achieving SDGs and design project aligned with them.
- Demonstrate leadership skills and identify strategies to build and motivate diverse teams.
- Develop measurable indicators for evaluating social impact and analyse case studies to identify key lessons learned.





Entrepreneurial Competences / Learning Content

Entrepreneurial competences are a set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable individuals to identify and act on opportunities to create value for others. In the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), these competences help entrepreneurs align social impact with sustainability and innovation.

This module is informed by the **EntreComp (Entrepreneurship Competence) Framework**, developed by the European Commission, and adapted to reflect the values of collective entrepreneurship and social innovation.

The competences are grouped under three interconnected areas: **Into Action, Resources, and Ideas & Opportunities**. Each group includes essential traits and capabilities needed to plan, adapt, collaborate, and implement meaningful and sustainable initiatives in real-world community settings.

3.1 Into Action:

- **Taking the Initiative:** The ability to go beyond routine tasks and act on opportunities. Entrepreneurs with this skill proactively identify problems and develop solutions, taking action even when resources or instructions are limited. Tools like the Entrepreneurial Motivation Canvas and Lean Startup principles encourage fast, experimental action and reflective learning.

- **Planning and Management:** Organising and prioritising tasks efficiently. This includes defining objectives, allocating resources, and following up. Entrepreneurs use Gantt charts, SMART goals, and project planning templates to ensure progress toward outcomes.
- **Coping with Ambiguity, Uncertainty and Risk:** A vital competence in SSE contexts. Entrepreneurs must learn to tolerate ambiguity, make decisions with incomplete information, and manage risk. Scenario planning, risk matrices, and reflection tools help foster this capacity.
- **Working with Others and Conflict Management:** This involves team-building, active listening, and conflict resolution. Techniques include role-play, peer feedback, and consensus-building frameworks such as the 'Team Charter' tool.
- **Learning from Experience:** Reflection and feedback are key to entrepreneurial growth. Entrepreneurs improve by documenting failures, adapting strategies, and participating in review sessions. Tools include Learning Journals and Post-Mortem Analysis templates.
- **Self-awareness and Self-efficacy:** Understanding one's own strengths, weaknesses, and impact. Self-efficacy fuels confidence and perseverance. Methods include daily affirmations, peer coaching, and 360-degree feedback systems.

3.2 Resources

- **Motivation and Perseverance:** You will explore intrinsic motivation, set stretch goals, and use resilience-building tools such as journaling and feedback loops.
- **Mobilizing Resources & Access to Funding:** You will map and leverage human, financial, and physical resources. Activities include grant writing simulations and crowdfunding planning.
- **Financial and Economic Literacy:** Covers budgeting, cost forecasting, pricing strategies, and sustainability metrics. You will use balance sheet templates and cash flow models.
- **Encouraging and inspiring team members, stakeholders, and community actors to collaborate toward a shared vision:** Focus on influencing and inspiring action in others. You engage in role-plays, stakeholder mapping, and communication strategy building.

3.3 Ideas and Opportunities

- **Spotting Opportunities:** You will analyze community needs, gaps, and emerging trends. Tools include empathy mapping and environmental scanning.
- **Creativity:** Practice brainstorming, mind mapping, and lateral thinking techniques to ideate and problem-solve.

- **Vision:** You will define personal and enterprise vision statements. Exercises include future-back planning and theory of change mapping.
- **Valuing Ideas:** You will apply criteria to assess feasibility, desirability, and impact. Pitch deck development and peer evaluation exercises will be used.
- **Business Model Canvas:** You will complete a full Social Business Model Canvas, including social value proposition, customer segments, and channels.
- **Ethical and Sustainable Thinking:** This competence integrates environmental and social ethics into decision-making. You will analyze ethical dilemmas and map SDG alignment.



Case Studies and Best Practices

This section presents real-world examples of social enterprises and inclusive initiatives that demonstrate the application of entrepreneurial competences in action. These case studies highlight diverse strategies and innovations from across Europe, including Cyprus, Italy, Albania, Spain, and Hungary. Each example illustrates how entrepreneurs transform ideas into impactful actions, mobilizing resources, adapting to uncertainty, and promoting ethical and sustainable development.

These models serve not only as sources of inspiration but also as practical blueprints for learners and trainers aiming to develop and implement socially conscious ventures in their own contexts.

4.1 Case Study One: *Anakyklos* - Cyprus

Competences Demonstrated: Coping with ambiguity, Planning and management, Ethical and sustainable thinking.

Anakyklos is a Cypriot non-profit organisation that operates across various communities in Cyprus to promote reuse, recycling, and environmental education. Their core initiatives include a donation network for second-hand clothing and furniture, a 'repair and reuse' service, and sustainability education programs in schools. The organisation has built a decentralised volunteer-based structure that allows for broad civic participation. *Anakyklos* regularly collaborates with municipalities and schools to drive behavioural change. Their success in navigating funding gaps and limited public infrastructure demonstrates strong adaptability and resource mobilisation skills, alongside a long-term ethical vision aligned with SDGs.

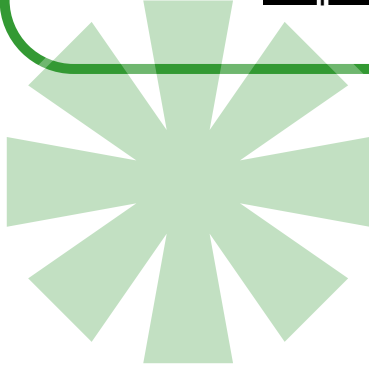
More info: <https://anakyklos.com/>

4.2 Case Study Two: *RAIS Fundación (Now Hogar Sí)* - Spain

Competences Demonstrated: Vision, Mobilizing others, Self-awareness and self-efficacy.

Hogar Sí (formerly RAIS Fundación) is a leading Spanish organization working to end chronic homelessness through a 'Housing First' model. Their approach prioritizes immediate access to housing, without requiring prior rehabilitation or compliance, and then builds tailored support services around everyone. This model fosters social reintegration and long-term stability. The organization also develops strategic partnerships with local authorities, real estate agencies, and social workers. *Hogar Sí's* transparent evaluation metrics, use of impact indicators, and advocacy work have made it a benchmark model for inclusive, rights-based entrepreneurship in Europe.

More info: <https://hogarsi.org/>



4.3 Case Study Three: *Made In Carcere* - Italy

Competences Demonstrated: Creativity, Working with others, Ethical and sustainable thinking.

Made in Carcere is a social cooperative founded in southern Italy that provides incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women with training in textile recycling and upcycled fashion production. The women create bags, accessories, and home goods using industrial textile waste, giving both materials and people a 'second chance.' The enterprise provides life skills, promotes dignity through work, and fosters a community of purpose among marginalised populations. The cooperative markets its products both nationally and internationally and reinvests revenues into education and reintegration programs. Its approach blends creativity, social inclusion, sustainability, and perseverance, highlighting the transformative power of SSE.

More info: <https://www.madeincarcere.it/>

4.4 Case Study Four: *Yunus Social Business Balkans* – Albania

Competences Demonstrated: Spotting opportunities, Planning and management.

Yunus Social Business (YSB) Balkans supports the growth of impact-oriented businesses through mentorship, seed funding, and ecosystem development. One standout case is Gjirofarma, a dairy cooperative that transitioned from a struggling producer to a modern, regionally recognised social enterprise. With *YSB*'s support, they adopted quality control systems, improved branding, and implemented a fair-trade policy with local farmers. *YSB Balkans*' programs also include social enterprise bootcamps, policy advocacy, and ecosystem mapping in Albania, demonstrating how entrepreneurial competences, particularly strategic planning and stakeholder mobilisation, can foster inclusive rural development.

More info: <https://www.yunussb.com/>

4.5 Case Study Five: *Szimpla Farmers' Market* - Hungary

Competences Demonstrated: Initiative, Learning from experience, Mobilising others.

Szimpla Farmers' Market, hosted weekly by the iconic Szimpla Kert cultural centre in Budapest, brings together small producers and urban consumers in a vibrant and supportive setting. Each Sunday, local farmers and artisans sell fresh, sustainable goods while musicians and non-profits engage with the public. Revenue is reinvested into community projects and food solidarity initiatives. The market encourages responsible consumption, supports micro-entrepreneurship, and provides a replicable model for community-powered circular economies. Its success is driven by grassroots initiative, participatory governance, and continuous learning through feedback.

More info: <https://farmwell-h2020.eu/SID%20Projects/szimpla-farmerss-market/>

4.6 Case Study Six: Too Good to Go – Europe-wide

Competences Demonstrated: Spotting opportunities, Planning and management, Ethical and sustainable thinking.

Too Good To Go is a mobile application founded in Denmark and active in over 15 European countries, including Spain and Italy. It connects consumers with surplus food from restaurants, bakeries, and supermarkets at reduced prices, directly combatting food waste. The platform demonstrates the power of digital innovation to address large-scale sustainability challenges. It blends entrepreneurial initiative with ethical consumption, uses behavioural nudges, and engages a growing network of 'Waste Warriors.' Too Good To Go's freemium business model and community engagement campaigns highlight the value of simplicity, vision, and scalability in social entrepreneurship.

More info: <https://toogoodtogo.org/>





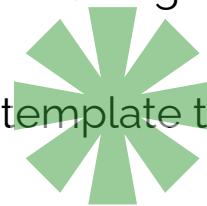
Interactive Exercises

Activity 1: Develop Your Own Lean Business Plan

Objective This activity allows learners to transform their social innovation ideas into a structured, easy-to-follow business plan using the Lean Canvas method. It is particularly helpful for aspiring SSE entrepreneurs who want to clearly visualise the social problem they aim to solve, the value they will create, and how to sustain their initiative. Through this exercise, learners will practice articulating key elements of a business idea, such as beneficiaries, solutions, resources, and desired impact. The activity nurtures strategic thinking, planning, and a holistic approach to social value creation.

Instructions:

1. Learners choose a social or environmental challenge they are passionate about.
2. They are guided through the Lean Canvas template to define:
 - What **social or community problem** are you addressing?
 - Who are your **target beneficiaries or users**?
 - What is your **unique value proposition**?
 - What is your **solution** (product, service, or action)?
 - Through which **channels** will you reach your audience?
 - What are your **revenue streams** (how will you sustain the initiative)?



- What are your key costs?
 - What are your impact indicators or success metrics?
 - What is the long-term social impact?
 - Facilitators encourage peer feedback and iteration:
3. Learners present their canvases in small groups or to the whole class. Encourage constructive feedback with simple reflection questions:
- Is the problem clearly articulated?
 - Is the idea feasible and socially impactful?
 - Are the target users and value proposition aligned?

Tools: Lean Canvas template (paper or Miro/Canva/Strategyzer versions)

Expected Competences: Planning and management, Vision, Spotting opportunities, financial literacy.

Activity 2: Scenario Challenge - Pitch Your SSE Idea in 3 Minutes

Objective This activity helps learners build confidence and clarity in presenting their social enterprise ideas. Being able to pitch an idea is an essential entrepreneurial skill, especially in the SSE field where passion, purpose, and social value must be communicated persuasively. Learners will practice summarising their initiative's core components, responding to real-life challenges, and adapting their message to different audiences. This activity supports the development of communication, adaptability, teamwork, and strategic thinking.

Instructions:

1. Learners prepare a concise pitch for their business idea developed in the previous activity. Introduce the idea of a "*3-minute elevator pitch*", a brief, persuasive speech to attract interest in your project. In the SSE context, the focus should be on social mission, target community, and collective impact.
2. Each pitch should address: the problem, the solution, the target group, impact, and what support is needed. Each team prepares a pitch using a simple structure:
 - What problem are we solving?
 - What is our solution?
 - Who benefits?
 - What is our mission and expected impact?
 - What support or action do we need?

Distribute a **Pitch Preparation Worksheet** with this outline, and encourage teams to assign roles (e.g., speaker, timer, note-taker).

4. They present in front of their peers, simulating a real investor or community funding setting:

In teams, learners prepare their pitch using the worksheet and available tools (paper, slides, flipchart, etc.). Encourage creativity but maintain focus on clarity and time limit (3 minutes max).

5. Add a Scenario Challenge to introduce a twist by handing each team a scenario card such as:
 - You're presenting to a municipality official—emphasise community impact.
 - You must cut your pitch to 1 minute due to time constraints.

- Your key partner just dropped out—how do you adjust?

This builds flexibility and improvisational skills.

6. Peers provide structured feedback using a scorecard or checklist (e.g. clarity, feasibility, impact):

Use peer or mentor feedback forms with prompts:

- Was the problem and solution clearly explained?
- Was the social value effectively communicated?
- Was the presentation engaging and confident?

Ask participants to reflect:

- What made this challenging?
- How did you feel under pressure?
- What skills did you apply or improve?

Tools: Timer, pitch checklist, optional video recording for feedback.

Expected Competences: Taking initiative, Self-efficacy, Communication, Ethical and sustainable thinking.

Activity 3: Risk Mapping & Contingency Planning Workshop

Objective: This activity aims to help learners anticipate potential risks—financial, operational, social, or environmental—that might impact their SSE initiative and develop proactive strategies to address them. Risk management is a core entrepreneurial competence and is especially important in the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), where initiatives often rely on limited resources and operate in dynamic social environments.

By visually mapping risks and creating simple contingency plans, learners build skills in planning, decision-making, resilience, and sustainability. Instructions:

1. Learners brainstorm potential internal and external risks:

Discuss categories such as:

- **Financial risks** (e.g. loss of funding, unstable revenue)
- **Operational risks** (e.g. delays, staff turnover)
- **Social risks** (e.g. lack of community support, misalignment with stakeholder needs)
- **Environmental risks** (e.g. natural disasters, regulatory changes)

Highlight that **risk is not always negative** — when identified early, it can guide smarter planning.

2. In teams, they classify risks using a risk matrix (likelihood vs. impact).

3. For high-priority risks, they draft contingency plans (Plan B, crisis communication strategy).

Once risks are mapped, learners select the top 2–3 **priority risks** and create a mini risk management plan for each using these questions:

- How can we reduce the chance of this happening?
- What can we do if it happens?
- Who is responsible for monitoring this risk?

4. Each group presents their key risks and action plans.

Encourage questions and suggestions from peers.

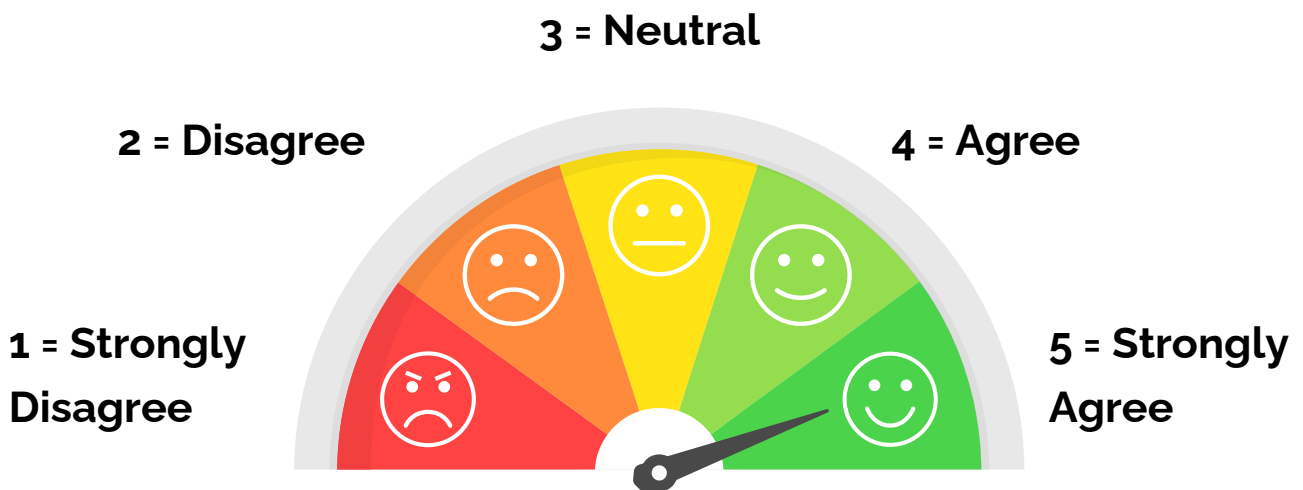
Tools: Risk matrix template, coloured markers, flipcharts or Miro board.

Expected Competences: Coping with ambiguity and risk, Planning and management.



Self-Assessment Exercise

Instructions: For each statement below, rate yourself from 1 to 5 based on how true it is for you right now



- I can spot social or environmental needs and imagine new solutions.
- I can create a realistic plan to develop an idea into a project or enterprise.
- I remain motivated and persevere even when I face obstacles or uncertainty.
- I am confident presenting my ideas clearly to others, including in public.
- I understand the value of teamwork and can manage group conflict constructively.
- I know where to look for resources (funding, people, tools) I need to launch a project.
- I consider long-term social and environmental impact when making decisions.
- I reflect regularly on what I've learned and how I can improve my actions.

Scoring Guide:

- 35–40: You have a strong entrepreneurial mindset—consider applying your skills in real initiatives!
- 25–34: You're developing well—target specific areas like resilience or planning for improvement.
- 15–24: Time to practice more! Consider building confidence and exposure through teamwork or micro-projects.
- Below 15: Don't worry, entrepreneurial skills can be learned step by step. Start small, reflect, and try again.

Reflection:

- What part of the module challenged me the most, and why?
- Which entrepreneurial competence do I feel most confident in? Least confident?
- What would my ideal social enterprise address? Why does this issue matter to me?
- What is one action I will take in the next 3 months to apply what I've learned?
- Who are 3 people I could collaborate with or learn from to grow my project idea?



Additional Resources and Further Reading

EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework

A comprehensive guide to entrepreneurial competences used as the foundation for this module.

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1317&langId=en>

EntreComp Into Action – Get Inspired, Make It Happen

A practical toolkit for using the EntreComp framework in educational and training contexts.

<https://op.europa.eu/en/home>

Social Enterprise Toolkit – School for Social Entrepreneurs (UK)

A practical guide for people starting and growing a social enterprise, including planning, funding, and marketing.

<https://www.the-sse.org/>

SSE Academy: ILO Knowledge Hub

Free online training and knowledge resources on Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE). [https://www.ilo.org/search?](https://www.ilo.org/search?search_api_fulltext=social+economy&sort_by=search_api_relevance&f%5B0%5D=language%3Aen)

[search_api_fulltext=social+economy&sort_by=search_api_relevance&f%5B0%5D=language%3Aen](https://www.ilo.org/search?search_api_fulltext=social+economy&sort_by=search_api_relevance&f%5B0%5D=language%3Aen)

SDG Compass – Global Guide for Business Action on the SDGs

Helps align your business or project model with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

<https://www.undp.org/ukraine/publications/sdg-compass-guide-business-action-sdgs>

CANVAS Business Model Generator (Free Tool)

Use this online tool to visualise and structure your social business idea. <https://canvanizer.com>

SOPHIE Guide – EU-funded project on Social Enterprise in Adult Learning

Includes curriculum and tools tailored to adult educators working on social entrepreneurship.

<https://www.sophieproject.eu/resources>, <http://sophie-project.eu/pdf/conclusions.pdf>

European Network of Social Integration Enterprises (ENSIE)

Information, policy tools, and success stories of inclusive entrepreneurship in Europe.

<https://www.ensie.org>

Euclid Network, Knowledge Centre

A hub for tools, funding opportunities, and case studies related to social enterprises and impact-driven organisations.

<https://knowledgecentre.euclidnetwork.eu/>

Social Impact Navigator (Bertelsmann Stiftung)

A step-by-step manual for measuring and managing social impact. <https://www.phineo.org/en/social-impact-navigator>

MODULE 3: GREEN COMPETENCES



Brief Summary

In this module, you'll delve into the fundamental role of **green competences** in successfully understanding and launching a Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) enterprise. You will gain a comprehensive understanding of how key green competences, such as **valuing sustainability**, **systems thinking**, and **futures literacy**, are critical for establishing and ensuring the long-term viability of a sustainable SSE enterprise.



Module Objectives

This specific module, grounded in the **GreenComp framework**, aims to equip you with essential green competences for the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE).

GreenComp is the European sustainability competence framework, developed by the European Commission. It's a key conceptual tool designed to define the essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to foster environmental sustainability and cultivate a "sustainability mindset."

It acts as a common reference for educators, learners, and institutions involved in lifelong learning, aiming to embed sustainability within education and training programs across the European Union.

GreenComp organizes sustainability competences into four interrelated areas, each comprising three specific competences, **for a total of 12 skills**. These areas are: **Embodying Sustainability Values**, which includes valuing sustainability, supporting fairness, and promoting nature; **Embracing Complexity in Sustainability**, covering systems thinking, critical thinking, and problem framing; **Envisioning Sustainable Futures**, encompassing futures literacy, adaptability, and exploratory thinking; and finally, **Acting for Sustainability**, which focuses on political agency, collective action, and individual initiative.

As this is a wide framework, in this module, we will be able to focus only on three critical competences outlined in the GreenComp : **valuing sustainability, systems thinking, and futures literacy, that we will apply to SSE sector.**

Upon successful completion of this module, you will be able to:

- Articulate the core principles of **valuing sustainability** and understand their application in the context of SSE enterprises.
- Apply **systems thinking** to analyze different sustainability challenges and identify interconnected solutions within SSE initiatives.

- Facilitate and train SSE entrepreneurs in **futures literacy** to drive sustainable practices and foster collaborative change within SSE ventures.
- Integrate all the above mentioned competences in order to have a **clearer and wider vision** of a sustainable and efficient SSE enterprise.



Green Competences / Valuing Sustainability

The competence of **Valuing Sustainability**, falling under the "Embodying Sustainability Values" area of the GreenComp framework, involves a deep personal reflection on one's own values. It requires the ability to identify and explain how values differ across individuals and evolve over time, while critically assessing their alignment with the principles and goals of sustainability. Essentially, it's about **internalizing sustainability as a core personal and organizational value**.

Acquiring this competence requires an approach that combines **self-reflection, critical analysis, and exposure to diverse perspectives**. In order to better understand and put into practice this competence, we have different opportunities.

One of the first steps and tools that help us to explore this topic and better understand the importance of valuing sustainability is to conduct a self-reflection session on the topic.

Through a structured self-reflection format (e.g., pro-con arguments) you can stimulate your reflection on controversial sustainability topics relevant to SSE (e.g., "Is degrowth a necessary path for true sustainability?").

Example: Degrowth in SSE initiatives self-reflection

To explore the "Valuing Sustainability" competence on your own, you can start to reflect on a controversial topic like: **"For my SSEs to be truly sustainable, it must embrace degrowth principles."**

Here's how you can structure this exercise:

1. **Brainstorm on both sides.** Dedicate time to writing down all the arguments you can think of for degrowth in SSE, and then all the arguments against it. Try to challenge your initial assumptions.
2. **Articulate your core values.** As you brainstorm, identify which of your personal values are engaged by each argument. For instance, does an argument for degrowth resonate with your value of ecological preservation? Does an argument against it align with your value of economic inclusion?
3. **Debrief and reflection.** Once you've explored both sides, take time to consider:
4. Which personal values were most challenged or affirmed during this exercise?
5. How did the arguments for and against degrowth align with or challenge your existing views on SSE sustainability?
6. Can you identify any potential value conflicts within your own understanding of SSE sustainability?

Example for collective SSE initiatives: The ethic coffee dilemma

If you are a part of collective SSE entrepreneurs aiming at creating, or improving a common SSE enterprise, it could be a good idea for you to face some Ethical Dilemma case studies. Case studies are examples of real (or hypothetical) SSE enterprises facing ethical dilemmas; in our case they can be related to sustainability (e.g., balancing social impact with environmental footprint, short-term economic viability vs. long-term ecological health).

In this kind of scenario, you can analyze some proposed cases, identifying the potential **conflicting values** at play. Then you can propose **concrete and both short term and long-term solutions**, justifying your choices based on a framework of sustainability values.

Example: "The Ethic coffee Dilemma".

In this example, you can practice valuing sustainability by analyzing an ethical dilemma, identifying conflicting values, and proposing solutions for an SSE.

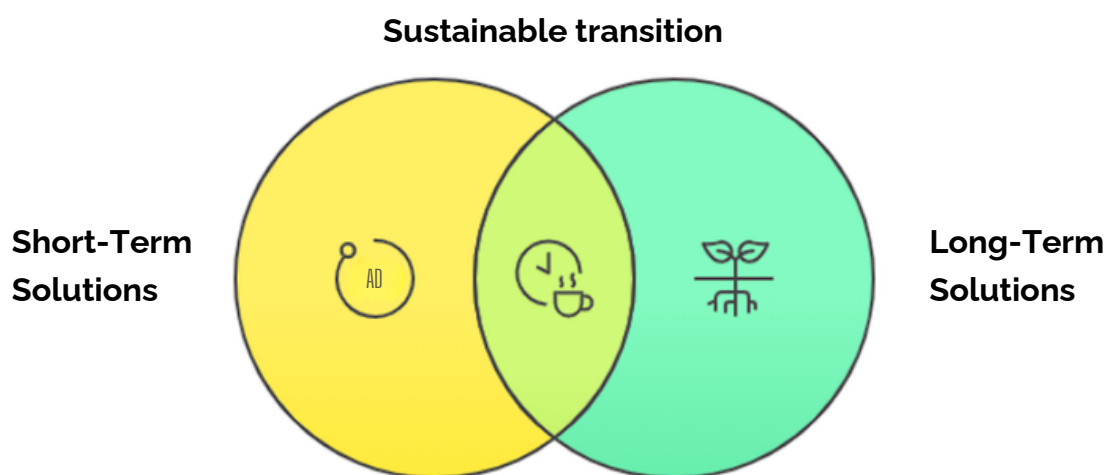
Imagine that a well-established fair-trade coffee SSE, 'Ethicoffee,' sources beans from a remote region, significantly improving farmer livelihoods. However, its international shipping methods (air freight for freshness) have a substantial carbon footprint, which is becoming increasingly scrutinized by environmentally conscious customers. Switching to sea freight would reduce emissions but might impact freshness, lead to higher storage costs for local partners, and potentially reduce farmer income due to slower turnover.

You and your group are invited to reflect on the following questions:

- What are the core conflicting values at play (e.g., social equity vs. environmental impact, short-term profit vs. long-term ecological health)?
- What are possible short-term solutions for EthiCoffee?
- What are possible long-term solutions for EthiCoffee, aligning with a broad understanding of sustainability values?

After this first evaluation phase, you are asked to reflect on the most prominent conflicting values, and collaboratively **propose 2-3 concrete short-term and long-term solutions**, justifying them based on sustainability values.

Sustainable Solutions for EthiCoffee





Case Studies and Best Practices

Ecoparque La Alhambra (Colombia)

Ecoparque La Reserva is a pioneering social enterprise and ecological park located near Bogotá, Colombia. It's a prime example of an SSE organization focused on biodiversity conservation, environmental education, and sustainable tourism. Ecoparque La Reserva's mission is to conserve and restore ecosystems, promote environmental education, and foster sustainable development through responsible tourism and community engagement. Their vision is to be a leading model for ecological restoration and sustainable living in Colombia and beyond.

They offer extensive educational programs for schools, universities, and the general public, focusing on ecological principles, biodiversity, climate change, and sustainable practices. This builds environmental literacy and a valuing of sustainability in the wider community. **Their business model is built around eco-tourism.** Visitors pay for entrance, guided tours, and other services (like educational workshops or birdwatching tours). **These revenues directly fund their conservation and educational efforts,** making their environmental impact financially sustainable. They likely employ local staff, further contributing to the social aspect of SSE.

The Ecoparque often works with local communities, providing employment opportunities, training, and involving them in conservation initiatives. This integrates the social dimension of sustainability, ensuring that environmental efforts also benefit human well-being.

They have demonstrably restored large areas of degraded land, contributing to the recovery of ecosystems and an increase in local biodiversity. This provides vital ecosystem services (like water purification and carbon sequestration) for the region. **By generating revenue through eco-tourism, they demonstrate that environmental conservation can be financially viable and contribute to local economies,** reducing reliance on external funding. This showcases a strong, sustainable business model within the SSE. Their success and expertise contribute to the broader conversation around environmental policy in Colombia, showcasing practical examples of what works in conservation and sustainable development.

Ecoparque La Reserva stands out because its very existence and operations are rooted in ecological restoration and environmental education, powered by a sustainable business model that directly values and funds its green mission.





Green Competences / System Thinking

The competence of **Systems Thinking** is a part of the "Embracing Complexity in Sustainability" area within the GreenComp framework and it involves approaching a sustainability problem **holistically**. It means considering all interconnected elements – including **time horizons** (past, present, future), **spatial scales** (local to global), and **specific contexts** – to understand the intricate relationships, feedback loops, and emergent properties within a system. This allows for a deeper comprehension of root causes and potential leverage points for change, moving beyond isolated issues to grasp the full complexity.

Acquiring Systems Thinking for the SSE sector requires hands-on practice in analyzing the complex social, economic, and environmental ecosystems in which the enterprise will operate. It's about shifting from linear cause-and-effect thinking (e.g., "we'll just sell X product to solve Y problem") to recognizing the interconnectedness of social needs, market forces, ecological limits, and community dynamics.

In order to acquire this competence, there are some methodologies that help SSE Enterprise values to be aligned with an holistic vision of sustainability.

The Casual loop diagrams (**CLDs**) for problem-solution mapping can help aspiring SSE entrepreneurs map out the social or environmental problem they aim to address. For instance, tackling food waste in a community, map variables like food surplus, food insecurity, landfill waste, community engagement, volunteer availability, and local food producers should be considered.

Example: You can identify how the above mentioned variables influence each other (e.g., more food surplus leads to more landfill waste, but also potential for more food donations to address food insecurity). This will help leverage points for the SSE's intervention (e.g., directly connecting producers to food banks, creating community composting initiatives) and anticipate unintended consequences.

Another useful tool to integrate systems thinking vision in the creation or the management of a Social and solidarity enterprise, is the **Scenario planning for resilient business model design**. For a new SSE, defining key uncertain driving forces that could impact its long-term viability (e.g., local policy changes, shifts in consumer preferences towards sustainable products, economic recessions, climate impacts, competitor actions), is a crucial factor.

Example: You can develop 2-3 plausible future scenarios based on how the above mentioned forces might evolve. Then, for each scenario, you can discuss how the SSE's proposed business model would fare and what adaptations would be necessary in order to survive.

These aspects force you to consider long-term temporal aspects and how their business model might need to adapt to different systemic contexts.

By actively engaging with these tools and methodologies during the creation phase, you can develop the capacity to approach the venture from all sides, considering time, space, and context, ultimately enabling you to apply sustainability and system thinking into robust business models for your SSEs.

Scenario Planning Cycle for SSE Resilience



Humana - People to People

For a SSE enterprise, to embody systems thinking in the approach to sustainability, is not always easy because this often means addressing interconnected social and environmental issues through integrated solutions.

A famous example can help us clarify on how to focus on the circular economy and social inclusion: **Humana - People to People**. This is a global network of NGOs and social enterprises, with a significant presence across Europe (e.g., in France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Finland, etc.). They are primarily known for their extensive second-hand clothing collection and recycling programs. While their core activity is textile reuse, their broader vision encompasses community development and global impact.

In fact, Humana doesn't just collect clothes; they manage a complex system for **maximising the lifespan of textiles**. This includes the following aspects:

Collection: Widespread network of collection bins, making it easy for citizens to donate.

Sorting & Re-use: Highly skilled sorting operations that separate textiles for direct re-sale (second-hand shops), upcycling, or material recycling. This diversifies their product streams and ensures optimal value retention.

Material Recycling: For textiles that cannot be re-used, they are processed for material recycling (e.g., into insulation, cleaning cloths, or new fibers). This closes the loop on materials that would otherwise be wasted.

Work Integration: Their local operations in Europe often serve as work integration social enterprises (WISEs), providing training and employment for marginalized groups (e.g., long-term unemployed, migrants, people with disabilities). This tackles social exclusion within their "green" business model.

Funding Development Projects: The revenue generated from the sale of collected textiles directly funds long-term development projects in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This creates a powerful feedback loop where local European actions support global sustainability and social justice.





Green Competences / Futures Literacy

For a Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) enterprise, Futures Literacy, under the "Envisioning Sustainable Futures" area of GreenComp, is the vital ability to proactively engage with and shape the future it desires. It's not just about guessing what might happen; it's about courageously **imagining and developing alternative sustainable futures** for your enterprise and its community by constructing diverse scenarios. This competence equips SSE leaders and teams to not only envision their preferred sustainable impact and operating model but also to critically **identify and strategize the tangible steps** and collaborative pathways needed to achieve it.

Concretely, for SSEs, this means building the capacity to anticipate social, environmental, and economic shifts, **innovate resilient solutions**, and adapt strategically, ensuring their long-term relevance and deep impact in a rapidly evolving world.

Acquiring Futures Literacy means moving your SSE beyond simply reacting to present challenges. It requires fostering a culture of curiosity, challenging ingrained assumptions about how things "must be done," embracing uncertainty as a source of opportunity, and systematically practicing foresight methodologies within your enterprise and with your stakeholders.

Example: To start building some new ideas of sustainable futures, you can start by vividly defining your SSE's highly desirable preferred sustainable future 10-20 years from now. What social problems will you have solved? What will be your environmental footprint? How is our community thriving?

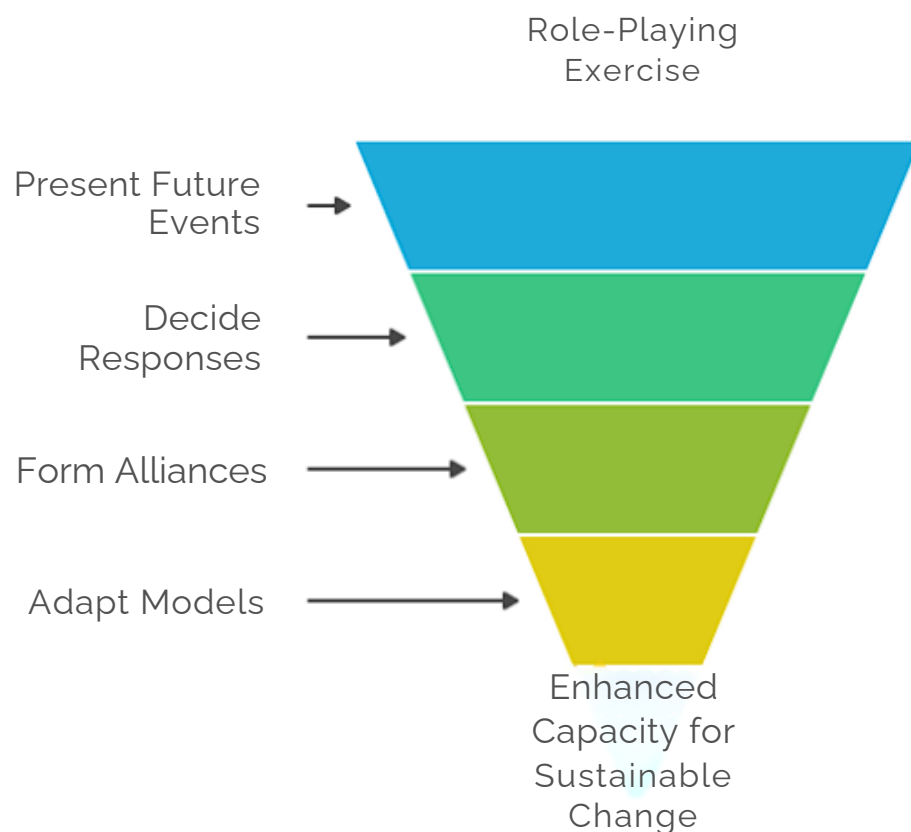
E.g., "By 2045, my SSE is a zero-waste cooperative employing 50 local youth, providing affordable green energy to the entire neighborhood." Once this vision is clear, you can work backward in time (e.g., to 2035, then 2025). At each backward step, ask yourself: "What significant changes, milestones, or external conditions must have occurred by this point for me to be on track to reach my desired future?" This method, even not so easy, allows us to explicitly focus on "identifying the steps needed to achieve a preferred sustainable future" for your specific enterprise.

Another useful tool to understand and integrate futures literacy, is to imagine participatory futures games and simulations with stakeholders.

Example: You can design a simple game or simulation where your SSE team, beneficiaries, and community partners embody different roles (e.g., SSE manager, local councilor, community elder, climate activist). Present them with a series of future events or dilemmas (e.g., "A new policy restricts our waste streams," "A competitor offers a cheaper, less sustainable alternative," "A natural disaster impacts our community"). Participants then decide how their SSE would respond, what alliances they would form, and how they would adapt their model.

This hands-on, collaborative exercise directly helps develop the capacity to act for sustainable change also in collaboration with others within various future contexts.

Building Sustainable Change Capacity



La Louve

La Louve, is a cooperative supermarket based in Paris, France, **founded on principles of social solidarity, environmental responsibility, and direct democracy.** Members volunteer a few hours a month to run the store, which allows them to offer high-quality, often organic and local, products at significantly lower prices.

From its very inception, La Louve's founders and early members clearly articulated a radical vision for the future of food retail in Paris. This wasn't just about "another organic shop"; it was about creating a model where consumers *own* their food supply, cut out intermediaries, build community, and democratize access to sustainable food. Their vision extended beyond a single store to a future where cooperative, ethical food systems were a norm, not an exception, directly challenging the dominant supermarket model.

This bold vision acted as a powerful magnet, attracting thousands of members who shared this desired future. Every decision, from product sourcing to volunteer management, is implicitly filtered through **this long-term vision of a more equitable and sustainable food system.** It's a living example of a "preferred sustainable future" being actively built.

This awareness of potential futures influences strategic choices. For instance, prioritizing diverse local suppliers (even if initially more complex) is a hedge against global supply chain disruptions. Investing in strong community bonds and democratic governance (even if slower) builds resilience against fluctuating member engagement, **ensuring the cooperative's long-term viability even in less ideal future scenarios.**

La Louve explicitly uses a "backcasting" approach in its operational planning. For example, their long-term goal of fostering a more direct farmer-to-consumer relationship (a key part of their sustainable future vision) translates into concrete steps. Their continuous recruitment drives for members and volunteers, their transparent financial reporting, and their regular member assemblies are all "steps" designed to build the capacity and community necessary to achieve their envisioned sustainable food future.

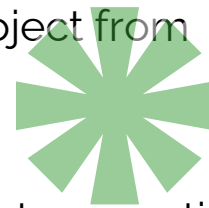
Their entire model is built on collaboration. Members don't just shop; **they actively participate in running the store, making collective decisions, and shaping its future.** Furthermore, La Louve actively collaborates with other SSEs, local producers, and community initiatives in Paris and beyond, sharing their model and advocating for policy changes.



Sustainable Creative Project Canvas

The **Sustainable Creative Project Canvas** (SCPC) will assist you in visualising and designing your entrepreneurial model through a creative planning process combining environmental, social and financial priorities enabling to reflect upon and address urgent sustainability challenges by:

- mapping, developing and planning different ideas
- hinking about the different aspects of the project
- finding out how to connect with people wishing to see, engage or participate in the project
- connecting the big picture with the finer details of each of the potential stages of the project
- calculating the potential impacts of the project from different perspectives



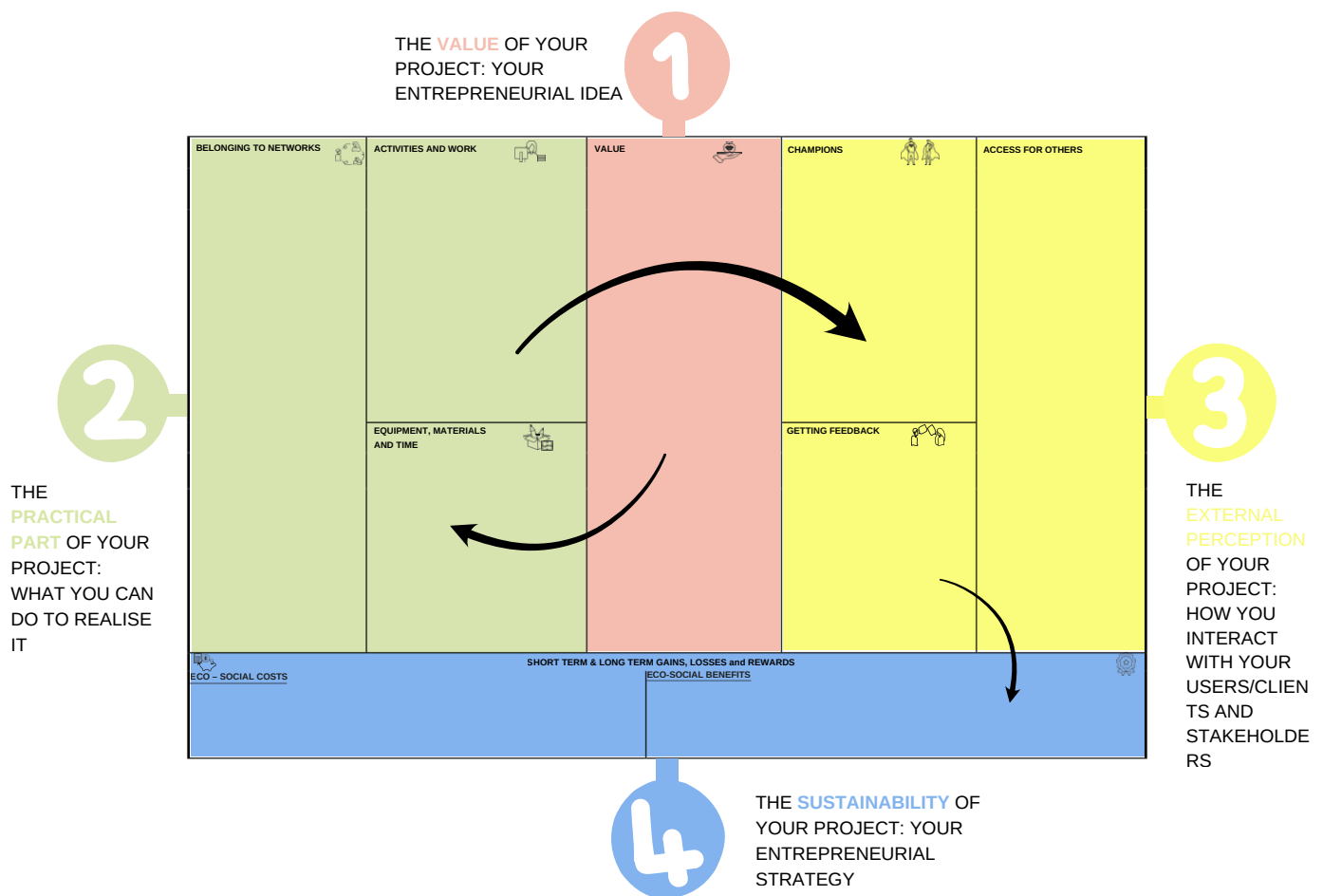
The sustainability approach of the SCPC aims at supporting entrepreneurs in outlining their projects and businesses for the integration of policies, proposals, processes, tools and certifications related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or regulators proposing new disclosures or extending producers or service providers' responsibilities, carbon management, the EU Green Deal, the Circular Economy.

Therefore, it is crucial to focus on how the value of a business (product or service) can be created, proposed, captured and delivered by taking into consideration, integrating and applying all the above-mentioned sustainable themes.

For instance, to outline a **sustainable business vision and mission**, it is crucial to reflect on the following key questions:

- *What long-term social and/or environmental challenge are you trying to solve with your new entrepreneurial idea? Where should your organization be in five or ten years?*
- *What values will this business idea be determined by? Which mission do you pursue with your entrepreneurial idea? Which duty does it fulfil in this world?*
- *How can you describe your Vision and Mission in a short and understandable way? Does this align with your core entrepreneurial sustainability strategy?*
- *What is the desired impact of your entrepreneurial idea on the SDGs?*
- *What concrete contributions will this entrepreneurial idea make to achieve the sustainable development goals by 2030?*

The Sustainable Creative Project Canvas consists of **4 main parts** helping you visualise the main aspects of your project, which are:



Since the themes are mutually connected to each other, we suggest following specific steps to reflect and implement the creative process that will lead you to build your own Sustainable Creative Project Canvas.

Each theme includes a series of key questions for you to reflect upon the finer details of your project and we suggest starting with a summary of about 3 "top" topics / answers.



By answering all the key questions listed in each theme, you will build your Sustainable Creative Project Canvas and visualise a brief however clear and straightforward plan of your project / idea. We suggest you review your Sustainable Creative Project Canvas over and over again to improve your answers until the whole project seems harmonious and well structured. Remember to discuss, share and collect valuable suggestions from your supporters and / or potential users / customers.

Enjoy your entrepreneurial journey through the Creative Project Canvas!

SUSTAINABLE CREATIVE PROJECT CANVAS

Project name:

Team members:

BELONGING TO NETWORKS  <u>Who can help you?</u> - How can current and potential networks support you in becoming more sustainable in any of the stages of your project (to create and develop, to share and promote, to reflect and improve, to implement activities)? - Who are your key partners and suppliers that can make your whole network sustainable, transparent and circular? - Can you shape anticipated environmental regulations by partnering and cooperating with relevant regulatory bodies? HINTS - Think about the opportunity to make your partnership/s more sustainable by including regulatory bodies or sustainability managers (professional experts in policies tools, methods and certification/accreditation processes to implement businesses sustainability) who may support your project with up to date environmentally and socially sustainable, transparent and circular processes.	ACTIVITIES AND WORK  <u>What do you need to do?</u> - What are the most important activities needed to make your project happen? - How can you adjust them (e.g. manufacturing) to ensure sustainability? - Who will carry them out? - Do you have the competences to carry them out? Which new abilities/competences do you need to develop? - Will you need other human resources or expert organisations/professionals? - To what extent is sustainable design / implementation of your key activities important to fulfil your value proposition? (efficient and safe processes, certification). HINTS - Think about all the activities that you need to undertake in order to support your value proposition, manage your channels, etc. and what role sustainability plays in your key activities. For instance, reflect upon their impact on the environment in terms of carbon footprint (e.g. if your activities involved intensive usage of energy, think about how you could leverage renewable power sources). EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS AND TIME  <u>What do you need?</u> - What kind of equipment and materials do you need (including recyclable/used materials or already available from other projects)? - Which natural, energy and technical resources do you need or do you use? - What happens at the end of your product life cycle? - Who can provide what you need? - How much time do you need to organise your equipment? HINTS - Think about all the resources you need for your key activities and business (skills, employees, natural resources, etc.) including tools and processes that may replace other less sustainable ones. Reflect upon your product end of life cycle (is it recyclable, reusable and/or can it be refurbished) and the circularity of your distribution channels.	VALUE  <u>What do you do?</u> - What are the main reasons why you engage with this project? - Does your project satisfy a need or desire or does it solve a problem more sustainably? How? - What are the benefits of delivering this value to yourself and to others? - How does the integration of sustainability contribute to customer's benefit? - How does it add value to other stakeholders? If so, which ones? - Can your sustainable value contribution be enhanced or enabled with the help of product-related environmental / sustainability-standards measures (certification, label, seal)? If so, which one(s)? HINTS - Think about how you can solve your customers' problems more sustainably and transform sustainability into customer value. Reflect upon the possibility to extend your service/product life cycle. For instance, when you develop energy efficiency product, you might have a positive impact on the CO2 emissions.	CHAMPIONS  <u>Who can give you useful external perspectives on your project?</u> - Who can guide you, help you reflect and improve aspects of your work by highlighting strengths and weaknesses through constructive criticism? - Who appreciates your talent, believes in your potentials and in your project and might advocate it to others? HINTS - Think of mentors, tutors, teachers/trainers, colleagues, collaborators, opinion leaders, potential stakeholders (e.g. investors, sponsors, broadcasters etc.) and even family and friends. GETTING FEEDBACK  <u>How will you interact with your clients/customers/users?</u> - Who can give you feedback to improve your project, work and activities? - How can you assess and help your clients/customers/users evaluate and/or improve your value proposition and sustainability? - How can you collect feedback (e.g. web tools, informal conversations, surveys, focus groups etc.)? - How can you use the feedback collected to improve society's mindset on sustainability? HINTS - It is crucial to concentrate on the indicators as well as measurements	ACCESS FOR OTHERS <u>How will you reach your clients/customers/users and vice versa?</u> - Who can access and experience your project, services, products, contents? - What is the importance of "sustainability" for your target group / your key customers now and probably in the future? - What are the different ways and places through which others can access your work (e.g. web pages or social media or premises open to the public, offices, stores, etc.)? - How can you reach your audience/clients/users (e.g. promotional and communication campaigns, marketing actions, events etc.)? HINTS - Try to provide detailed answers to these questions by describing your target clients/customers/users or by envisaging how you can enable them to act sustainably and consolidate a sustainable relationship with them. Think about how the customer relationship should be formed and which communication and distribution channels are suitable. Also, think about whether a credible sustainability certificate / seal is important to your customers
SHORT TERM & LONG TERM GAINS, LOSSES and REWARDS  ECO - SOCIAL COSTS - What ecological or social cost is your business model causing? - Which natural, energy and technical resources do you need or do you use? HINTS think about key resources that are not renewable, key activities that use a lot of resources, harmful waste generated and so on.  ECO-SOCIAL BENEFITS - What ecological or social benefits is your business generating? - Who are the beneficiaries? Are they potential customers? - Can you offer non-monetary benefit to your employees (4-day workweek, remote week etc.) HINTS think about the positive effects on the planet, society and economy of your organisation and how you can maximise them.				

TEMPLATE:

SUSTAINABLE CREATIVE PROJECT CANVAS

Project name:

Team members:

BELONGING TO NETWORKS 	ACTIVITIES AND WORK 	VALUE 	CHAMPIONS 	ACCESS FOR OTHERS
	EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS AND TIME 		GETTING FEEDBACK 	

ECO – SOCIAL COSTS



SHORT TERM & LONG TERM GAINS, LOSSES and REWARDS

ECO-SOCIAL BENEFITS



Self-Assessment Exercise

In bold the correct answer

1. In the text, which activity is suggested as a good way to start practicing the "Valuing Sustainability" competence?

A) Reading books about sustainability.

B) Watching documentaries about environmental issues.

C) Participating in dialogue and debate sessions.

2. According to the text, what does "Systems Thinking" primarily involve when approaching a sustainability problem?

A) Breaking down a problem into the smallest possible isolated parts to solve them individually.

B) Only focusing on the immediate effects of an action without considering long-term impacts.

C) Approaching the problem by considering all interconnected elements, time horizons, and spatial scales.

3. In the text, what is a key aspect of "Futures Literacy" for a Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) enterprise?

A) Predicting the single most likely future with certainty.

B) Reacting to immediate challenges without long-term planning.

C) Proactively imagining and developing alternative sustainable futures by constructing diverse scenarios.

3. What is a core element of La Louve's initial vision that attracted thousands of members and guided its operations?

A) Becoming the largest supermarket chain in Paris through a big expansion.

B) Maximizing profits for its founders by selling internationally food items.

C) Creating a cooperative model where consumers own their food supply and democratize access to sustainable food.

5. Beyond collecting clothes, what is a significant impact that Humana achieves through its operations?

A) Primarily focusing on selling new, fast fashion clothing lines to compete with major retailers.

B) Providing financial donations to international corporations.

C) Serving as work integration social enterprises (WISEs) that provide training and employment for marginalized groups.



Additional Resources and Further Reading

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- Routledge
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- UNESCO Global Futures Literacy Network
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MODULE 4: INNOVATIVE METHODOLOGIES AND TOOLS FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Brief Summary



We live in a world marked by complex social, economic and environmental challenges, which require new ways of thinking and acting. In this context, **social entrepreneurship** emerges as an innovative and transformative response that combines creativity, social commitment and sustainability to generate a positive impact on communities.



In this module you will learn about methodologies and tools to **create innovative and sustainable solutions** that address the world's current challenges, which you will respond to through social entrepreneurship. You will learn what social entrepreneurship is and practical cases as benchmarks in the sector. Its purpose is to provide practical and methodological tools to those who wish to develop entrepreneurial initiatives that are not only economically viable, but also responsible and aligned with the real needs of society.

You will find the fundamentals of social entrepreneurship, techniques for detecting opportunities, strategies for creating effective prototypes and explanations for designing business models with social impact.



Module Objectives

- Know what social entrepreneurship is.
- Learn how to create a prototype of the service or product to be developed.
- Know and design the main characteristics of a business model with social impact.
- To learn about cases of social entrepreneurship.



Digital Competences / Innovative Social Entrepreneurship Learning Content

3.1 Definition of Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship is a **form of business that seeks to solve social or environmental problems through innovative and sustainable solutions**. Unlike traditional ventures, the main objective is not only to generate profits, but also to create a positive impact on society. This type of entrepreneurship combines a passion for social mission with business discipline to achieve measurable and transformative results.

Instead of focusing solely on maximizing economic benefits, social entrepreneurs put values such as equity, social justice, sustainability, and inclusion at the center of their business model. Its purpose is to address real challenges: from poverty, unequal education or youth unemployment, from poverty, unequal education or youth unemployment to climate change, pollution or the digital divide.

A social enterprise can take various forms: a company, a cooperative, a foundation or even a hybrid initiative. What they all share is an innovative approach, aimed at generating systemic and lasting solutions. To do this, they rely on actively listening to the communities they serve, use agile methodologies, work in a network and rely on impact measurement models that allow them to assess whether they are really generating significant changes

In addition, social entrepreneurship promotes a new way of understanding business success: one that **values both economic benefit and collective well-being**. It is not about doing charity but about rethinking the economy from a regenerative logic (focuses on restoring and revitalizing ecological and social systems), where personal growth, respect for the environment and responsible innovation go hand in hand. It aims to create a system where economic activity enhances the environment and benefits all members of society.

In short, social entrepreneurship represents a powerful response to the challenges of today's world. It is a way to transform the passion for helping into concrete action, using business tools at the service of a fairer, more humane and sustainable future.

The social enterprise was born from the detection of a...

social need

And it seeks a solution through...

**to carry out an
economic activity**

To generate...

**positive social
impact**

Transforming the current situation

3.2 Methodology for Understanding Market Needs and Trends

Before starting any venture, it is essential to understand the environment, identify real needs and detect relevant trends. Starting a project without this understanding can lead to developing solutions that don't connect with people or that don't solve meaningful problems.

Therefore, this initial stage acts as the foundation on which the entire business model will be built.

This phase comprises several fundamental steps that combine to shape a solid idea, with meaning and potential for impact. Here you have 17 market research tools and resources to help you think like your consumers:

<https://www.gwi.com/blog/market-research-tools>

Market Research

It is about collecting information directly from the target audience: who they are, what they need, what worries them and how they currently solve those problems. This can be done through surveys, interviews, direct observation, or digital tools. The key is to actively listen and validate hypotheses from reality, not from assumptions.

There are online tools available to carry out this type of study such as <https://www.pewresearch.org/> or for social media listening, [BuzzSumo](#), that helps identify trending content and analyze social media engagement around specific topics.

Trend Analysis

Reports, specialized articles, and statistical data are used here to identify emerging patterns in people's behaviour, social, cultural, or technological changes, and new market interests. Spotting these early signs can help you anticipate needs before they become massive demands. The following tool is used for understanding public interest:

<https://trends.google.com/trends/>

Brainstorming and creative thinking

Once opportunities are identified, it's time to generate ideas without limitations. Techniques such as brainstorming, mind mapping, the SCAMPER method or lateral thinking allow us to explore different ways of approaching the same problem. The goal is not to have the "perfect idea," but many ideas that can then be refined, combined, or transformed.

Problem-solution adjustment

One of the keys to successful entrepreneurship is to achieve a fit between the real problem of the user and the proposed solution. In this stage, the idea is contrasted with reality, the value proposition is adjusted, and it is validated that there is real interest in what is being created. It's time to ask yourself: does this really solve something important? In a viable and differentiating way?

This process is cyclical, not linear. Many times, after research or prototyping, the problem is redefined or new solutions are devised. That's why it's critical to adopt an **open, iterative, and people-centered mindset** that allows you to adjust course as you learn from your environment.

A deep understanding of the market not only increases the chances of success, but also helps build projects that are more sustainable, relevant, and connected to the real world.

This methodology for understanding market needs and trends, generating creative ideas and adjusting the problem-solution fit, is naturally aligned with the *Design Thinking* approach.

It is a people-centered methodology that seeks to solve complex problems through empathy, creativity, and experimentation. Their goal is not only to generate innovative ideas, but to make sure that those ideas respond to real needs, connecting deeply with those who are going to use or experiment with them.

Both in market research and in trend analysis and the ideation phase, *Design Thinking* proposes very specific tools and stages that enrich the process: start by empathising with the user to understand their desires, pains and motivations; then clearly define the problem to be solved; move on to devising without limits; prototype tangible or visual solutions; and finally test to learn and adjust. This non-linear and flexible structure allows entrepreneurs to adapt their value proposition in an agile way, minimizing risks and increasing the chances of success.

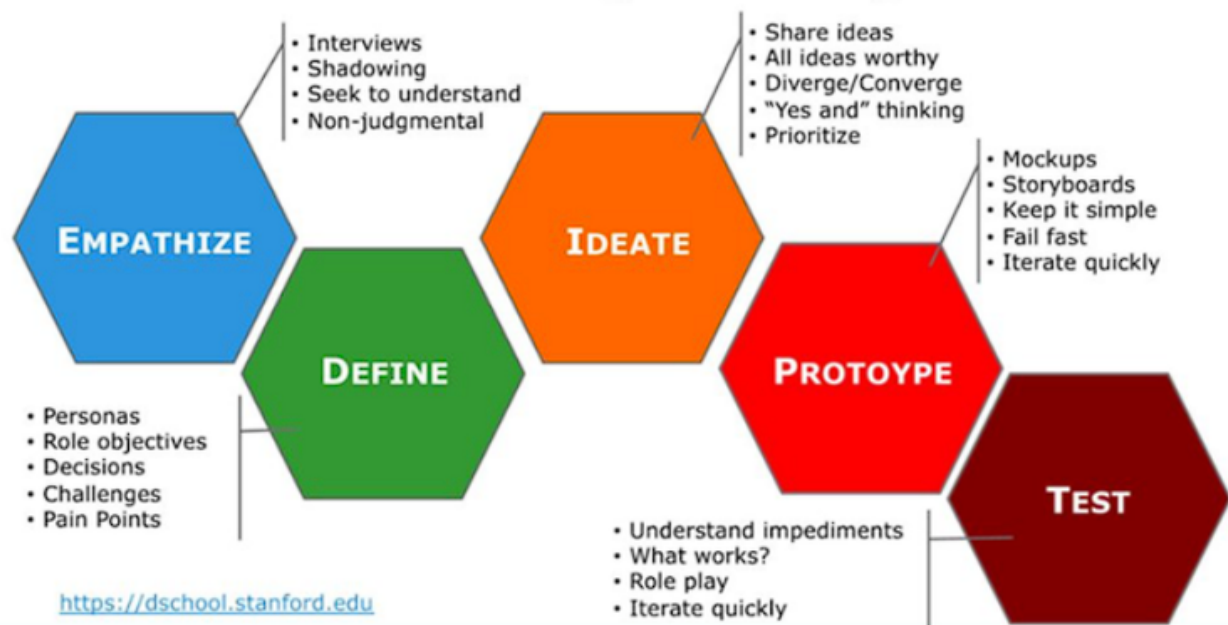
When we apply *Design Thinking* to the methodology for developing an entrepreneurial idea, we not only generate more innovative solutions, but also more humane, sustainable and aligned with the true needs of the market. Instead of assuming, it is validated. Instead of creating alone, you co-create with people. In this way, the process is transformed into a continuous learning experience, where each interaction with the environment allows us to better refine our product, service or business model.

It is based on a collaborative and creative approach, and is widely used in the design of products, services, and experiences.

The Design Thinking process generally includes five stages:

1. Empathize: Deeply understand the needs and problems of users.
2. Define: Identify and clearly define the problem to be solved.
3. Ideate: Generate a wide range of ideas and possible solutions.
4. Prototype: Create prototypes or models of the most promising solutions.
5. Test: Test the prototypes with users and collect feedback to improve the solutions.

Stanford d.school Design Thinking Process



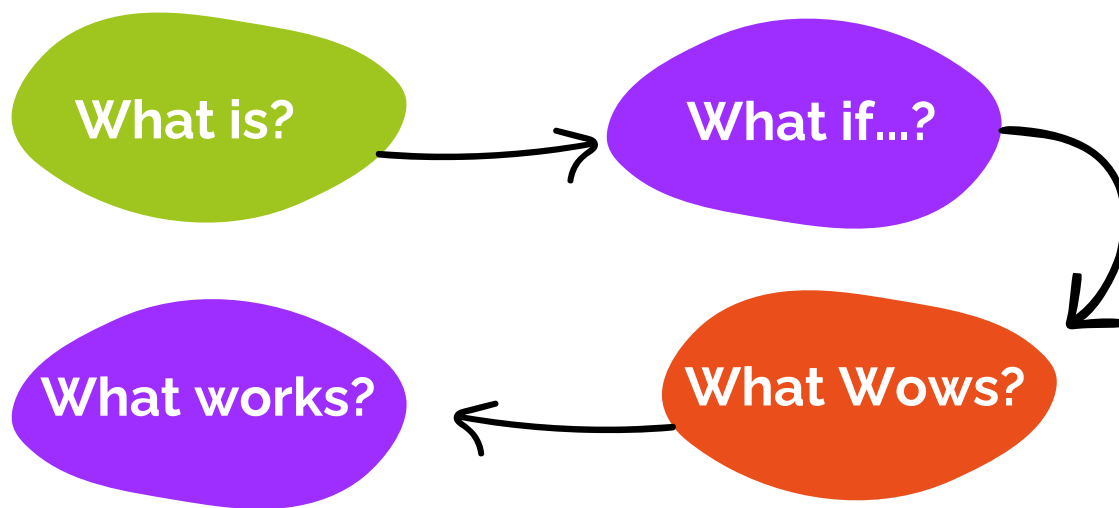
This methodology encourages creativity and innovation, and is very useful for addressing complex problems and developing user-centred solutions. Through an iterative process, it allows entrepreneurs to explore new perspectives, identify real needs, and generate ideas that respond effectively to the challenges of the environment.

One of the fundamental pillars of this approach is direct **contact with customers**, which is not limited to a final validation, but is integrated from the beginning of the process. It is a product development approach in which customers participate from the initial idea or concept, which allows them to build more relevant proposals that are adjusted to the reality of the market.

The goal is to define or adjust the offer based on real information and not on assumptions. Early *customer feedback* eliminates uncertainty and allows informed decisions to be made before investing large resources in developments that might not be accepted. Thanks to this constant feedback, it is possible to detect in time what works and what does not, thus avoiding costly mistakes.

In addition, this way of working encourages us to think "**out of the box**", to get out of traditional schemes and explore new ways of creating value. It allows you to grow from an initial idea, adapting it flexibly according to the needs of the target audience, and thus achieving a greater connection between what is offered and what is really sought.

In short, this approach not only improves the quality and relevance of the products or services developed, but also promotes a more empathetic, agile and continuous improvement-oriented entrepreneurial culture.



Market research encompasses phases 1, 2 and 3 of **Design Thinking**. Here we empathize with our surroundings to understand what the clientele wants, what the competition is doing, how the market is moving and thus define the need we want to address. It is like doing a "check" of the market to know if your business or product has a chance of success.

This allows us to brainstorm ideas that respond to the defined problem.

PHASE 1 Define what you want to find out

Think about what you need to know. It can be if people would like a new product you want to launch, what they think of your current products, or if there are any gaps in the market that you can take advantage of.

PHASE 2 Choose how you are going to research

- **Primary research:** Here you collect information directly, talking to people, doing surveys, organizing focus groups, or testing products. For surveys, a popular option is SurveyMonkey.
- **Secondary research:** You review information that already exists, such as industry reports, previous studies, statistics, or specialized articles.

One tool for this is www.statista.com

This platform supports market analysis and forecasting, data analysis, product and price research, concept testing, and user experience research

PHASE 3 Identify your ideal clientele

Think about who your clientele might be. This includes data such as their age, where they live, what they like, how much they earn, and how they buy products. You can create a **BUYER PERSONA**, a tool that helps visualize our goal and create archetypes:

BUYER PERSONA



Assign a label that makes it easy to identify:

e.g., Urbanites, Gardeners, Ecofriends, Gamers, etc

Who is this person? DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE: Age, gender, profession, place of residence	FRUSTRATIONS How do their difficulties manifest regarding the problem/unmet desire you are trying to solve?	Through what products/services are they trying to solve this problem/unmet desire? What alternatives exist in the market?
Who is this person? PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILE: Interests, lifestyle, values, consumption habits, relationship with their environment	GAINS Describe the benefits they expect, desire, or would be surprised to find Saving time, effort or money, positive sensations, improved experience, better health	In what social environments do they operate? Places they frequent, communities, social media..

You can get an online tool in this link:

[Free Buyer Persona Generator by Magnetly.](#)

PHASE 4 Analyze the competition and the data

Study what other businesses similar to yours are doing. This will give you an idea of what works and what doesn't, and will help you better position your product.

There are different types of **competition**:

- **Direct competitors**

Companies that offer similar products or services to the same target audience and meet the same needs. A coffee shop competing with another coffee shop in the same area.

- **Indirect competitors**

Companies that offer alternatives to satisfy the same need or solve the same problem, even if the product or service is different. *A coffee shop competing with a tea shop or home coffee machines.*

- **Complementary competitors**

Companies that offer alternatives to satisfy the same need or solve the same problem, even if the product or service is different. *A coffee shop competing with a tea shop or home coffee machines.*

- **Complementary competitors**

Companies that offer products or services that complement what you sell, but with whom you could compete indirectly if consumers prefer their combined solutions. *A restaurant indirectly competing with food delivery apps, as the latter allow consumers to stay at home.*

After collecting all the information, go through it to find patterns or trends. To do this, it uses the tool par excellence: **SWOT Analysis.**

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis will help you assess your position in the market and identify key areas for the development of your marketing strategy.

STRENGTHS:

- What makes your company strong compared to the competition?
- *Examples: High product quality, brand recognition, innovation in design.*

WEAKNESSES:

- What areas need improvement?
- Examples: Limited distribution, high prices, lack of marketing resources.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- What external factors can you take advantage of to grow?
- Examples: Growing demand for organic products, emerging trends in the market.

THREATS:

- What external risks could affect your business?
- Examples: New competitors, changes in regulations, economic fluctuations

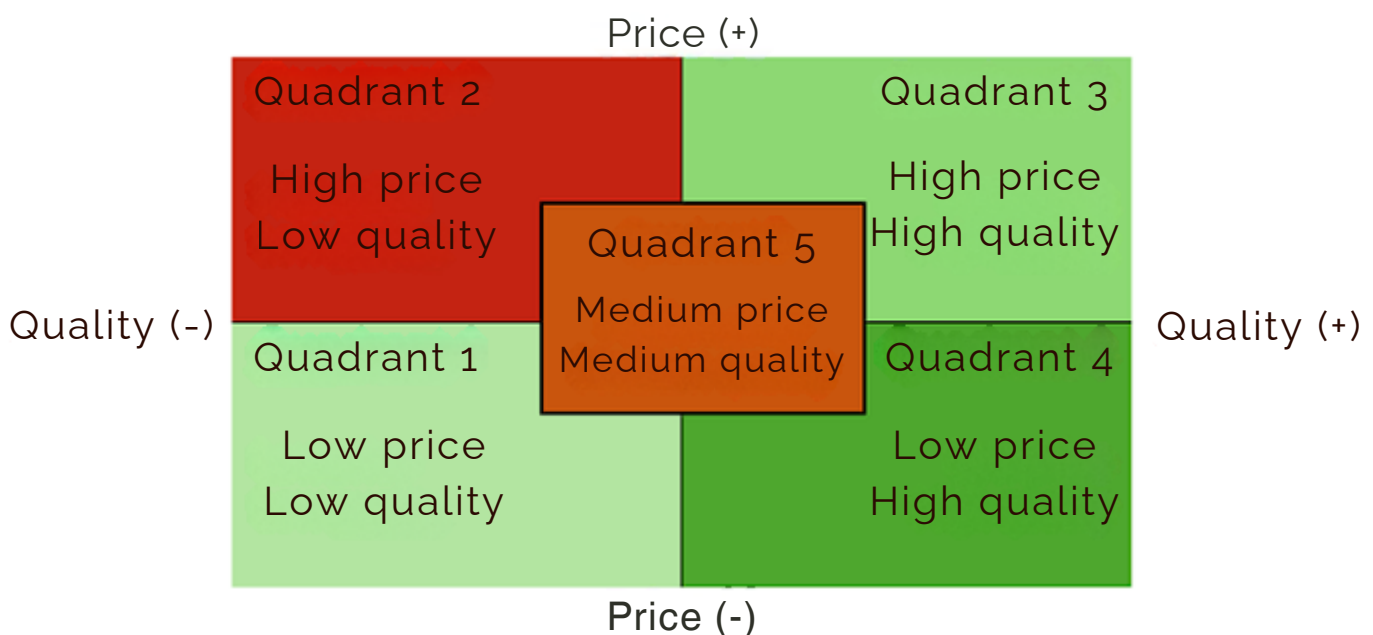
You can get an online template in this link:

[Beige Minimalistic SWOT Analysis Quadrant Diagram Chart - Templates by Canva](#)

With this analysis, it is interesting to be able to establish a **competitor matrix or positioning map**, determining, with key criteria, in axes of our competition, positive and negative.

The positioning map is a graph that allows you to compare the characteristics, capabilities, and performance of your company with those of your key competitors. It helps identify areas where your company has competitive advantages and areas that need improvement. Steps to create a positioning map:

1. Draw the map: These are represented by two lines, one horizontal and one vertical; the first represents the X-axis and the second the Y-axis. At each end we must add a minimum and a maximum value.
2. Select the evaluation criteria: Price, product quality, distribution, marketing, customer service, innovation. Choose the right one.
3. Represent your key competitors (direct and indirect).
4. Assign scores: Evaluate your company and your competitors on each criterion with a scale (e.g., from 1 to 5).
5. Analyze the results: Identify areas where your company outperforms competitors and where there is room for improvement.



1. You can get potential tools & templates for both positioning map, and competitor matrix in the following link:
2. <https://www.hubspot.com/business-templates/competitive-analysis>

3.3 Prototyping with basic tools

Once you've understood the needs of the market, identified relevant trends, and generated ideas through creative thinking exercises, it's time to shape those ideas. This is where prototyping with basic tools comes in. This stage allows concepts to be transformed into tangible representations – either through sketches, digital simulations or simple models – to be quickly tested. By linking the prototype with the problem-solution adjustment process, it is possible to validate whether the proposal really responds to what people need, thus facilitating continuous and user-centred improvement.

At this very moment, thousands of people around the world are dedicating, just like you, their hopes, dreams, time, energy and money to develop new ideas that make a difference in a local, national and even international market. Most entrepreneurs believe they are working on a winning product or service, but we know that this is not always true. A very high percentage of new ideas fail: *too many Apps that don't make money, restaurants that close in less than a year, businesses that don't sell and consultancies that don't quite take off, because they lack the most important thing: clientele that is willing to pay for what they offer*. Only a few of these new projects will be successful. And even fewer new products and services will be truly relevant to the market they are targeting. And you, who have been working on your entrepreneurial idea for weeks and even months, discover that after hours and hours of researching the market, reflecting on users and developing the business model, you still can't predict which group you belong to. Well, **it's time to prototype!**

Sometimes, entrepreneurial success is written about as an almost magical process: high doses of passion for what you do, believing in yourself... and "voila", success is guaranteed! But the reality is that behind all the products and services that succeed in the market is a complex history of cycles and changes. Hence, when you start your business adventure it is very important not to fall in love with the first idea or ideas you have, but to explore new alternatives. New projects always benefit from strong critical judgment and it is through trial and error that ideas are iterated and strengthened.

Types of prototypes

ABOUT HYPOTHESES AND WHY TO PROTOTYPE. Before continuing, you should know that so far you have worked on what are called the hypotheses of your entrepreneurial project.

Have you found an opportunity in an unmet need or an unfulfilled desire? Have you discovered a new type of business that is successful in other parts of the world and would also do so in your locality? Have you identified underutilized resources that you could use in novel ways?

Yes, at this point you may already have a great idea in your hands that with time and a lot of work, can also become a great business. But right now, it's just that: an idea. And the statements on which your idea is based, but which you have not yet been able to confirm with potential users, are what we call **hypotheses**.

MOST OF THE ASSUMPTIONS THAT EXIST COVER THESE AREAS:

- PROBLEM HYPOTHESIS: - Who are the users, and what problems do they have (unsatisfied needs or desires).
- SOLUTION HYPOTHESIS: - What type of product or service satisfies that need or desire - How much they are willing to pay for the solution.
- PRODUCT HYPOTHESIS: - What characteristics of the product or service will be valued by users - For which functional and aesthetic characteristics they would be willing to pay a little more.
- MARKET HYPOTHESIS: - Number of potential users that exist - Number of potential users who can become real customers (conversion rate).

There are different ways to prototype, and each one can be adapted to the type of product or service you are developing. To help you follow this process, step by step, and maximize the learnings from each iteration, we've designed a **VISUAL TOOLKIT** for you to download, print, reflect, and complete. Like any visual thinking tool, the important thing is not in the tool itself, but in the reflections it should provoke. It's not about filling each canvas with pretty colored sticky notes; but rather to analyze each point, question yourself, inquire and squeeze the most out of each learning. The tool is only a path, not the end.

The two most important tools in this kit, and which are the backbone of the entire prototyping process, are:

1. **The roadmap for prototyping** where you will have one by one the steps you must follow every time you create a prototype: from the definition of questions, the choice of the prototype to be built and the way to establish the test with potential users, to the reflections of the results obtained.
2. **The validation board**, in which you must incorporate the results of **ALL** the prototypes created, the hypotheses you have validated, those that you have not and the learnings you have obtained throughout the process (from the validation of the hypotheses, to obtaining the definitive solution). This will allow you to have all the information organized and sequentially to make the right decisions in the design of the product or service.

For example:

- ***Customer Journey Map***. It is a visual representation of the journey that a user takes when interacting with a product or service, from the moment they detect a need to the moment they solve their problem. It helps identify key touchpoints, emotions, obstacles, and opportunities for improvement throughout the entire customer experience.
- ***Storytelling***. It is a form of narrative prototype that uses a story to explain how a person would use the product or service. It helps to visualise the context, emotions and experience of the user. It is useful for generating empathy and conveying the value of the idea in a clear and attractive way.

- **Mockup.** It is a static visual representation of a product, usually digital (such as an App or website), which shows its design, colors, structure and arrangement of the elements. Although it is not interactive, it serves to communicate the final aspect of the solution before it is developed.
- **MVP (Minimum Viable Product).** It is a simplified version of the product or service that includes only the essential functionalities to solve the user's main problem. It is used to launch to the market quickly, obtain real *feedback* and validate the proposal with minimal effort and resources.

On the other hand, another of the most accessible and effective techniques for prototyping a product or service is **web prototyping**, which allows you to visually communicate the business idea to a potential audience. Tools like **Canva** and **Mixo** make this process easy without the need for advanced design or programming knowledge. One of the most commonly used formats is the ***landing page***, a single page specifically designed to capture the attention of potential customers. This technique saves time and resources, and becomes an agile way to validate an idea before fully developing it.

Using a *landing page* as an experiment responds to the principle of "**sell before you build**". It consists of launching a page that clearly describes the product or service to be offered, along with a call-to-action button to request more information or make an advance purchase. This type of experiment allows you to quickly test if the public shows real interest.

To increase reach, it is advisable **to rely on advertising on social networks** or other digital media that generate traffic to the page. If the click-through or conversion rate is low, it means that the proposal needs to be adjusted. Conversely, if many people show interest or request information, it's a positive sign that the market values what you offer.

For services with a **local focus**, this strategy can also be applied in a more traditional way, using **physical brochures** with key information and a phone number or WhatsApp to gauge interest. This allows the solution to be validated in a simple way, without the need to develop the product or set up a complete infrastructure.

Designing a *landing page* today is very easy thanks to **free or low-cost tools** that allow you to customize each element without programming. To achieve good results, it is important to follow some practical tips:

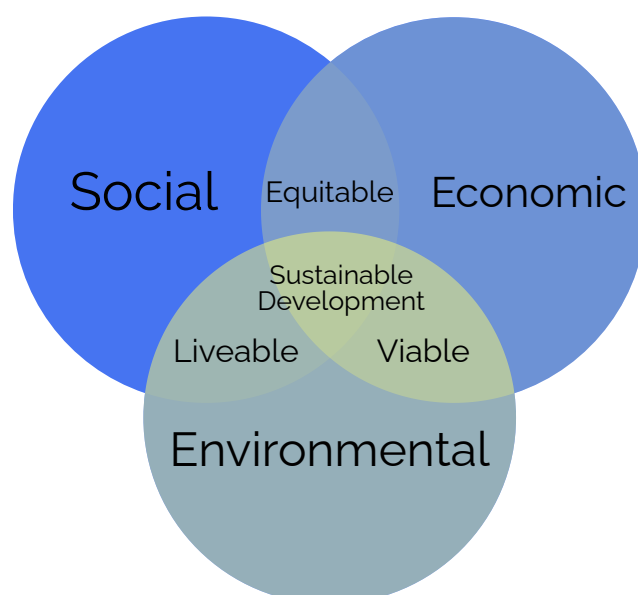
- **Prepare an initial outline** with the key ideas you want to convey.
- **Incorporate relevant and engaging content**, including clear copy, product benefits, and a compelling value proposition.
- **Strategically design the main elements**, such as the title, text blocks, call-to-action (CTAs) buttons, images, testimonials, and forms.

A particularly useful tool is **Mixo**, a platform based on **generative artificial intelligence (GenAI)** that allows you to create a landing page in seconds from a brief textual description of your business idea. Mixo automatically generates the titles, descriptions, contact forms, and images, offering a functional and customizable design that can be used as an initial prototype to validate the proposal.

3.4 Business model design with social impact

Designing a business model with social impact means rethinking how a company can be economically sustainable **while generating positive change in society and/or the environment**. Unlike the purely commercial approach, social entrepreneurship puts at the center **a cause**, a collective challenge or a need not covered by the traditional market.

For this proposal to be viable, it is essential to integrate both business logic and impact logic. This is where the **Triple Bottom Line Business Model Canvas** comes into play, a visual tool that allows you to clearly structure how social and economic value will be created, delivered, and measured.



Essential components of the triple bottom line business model:

You must fill in the 11 blocks of the template by answering the concepts and questions that are posed to visualize all the elements that will intervene in your business model.



IMPACT ENVIRONMENTAL How does your productive activity affect the environment?(was te generated, energy sources used, packaging, raw materials, suppliers, reusable products...) How does my project improve the environment?	COLLABORATORS and PARTNERSHIPS The supplier and partner networks that make my project work. Who might be interested in the success of the project? Strategic alliances between non competitors Partnerships with competing companies Entities that benefit from the project Professional collaborators (consulting firms, technical support, etc.)	KEY ACTIVITIES The most important products, services, and actions for the project to work. What activities do we need to carry out to generate our value proposition? There are three types: - Technical - Administrative - Commercial This is the HOW.	VALUE PROPOSITION It is the reason why customers choose one company or organization over another. What do we offer? Products/Services Why do consumers choose me? How do I stand out from the competition? Do we meet our customers' needs? Do we help them solve a problem? Define your social value and your environmental value.	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS - How are we going to attract customers? (Online, commercial visits) - How are we going to improve our image/build a brand? (Website, social media) - Customer loyalty and referrals	CUSTOMER SEGMENTS Diferent groups of people or organizations (associations, companies, foundations, etc.) that my project aims to reach. Who are we creating value for? Who are our most important customers? It's about the WHO.	SOCIAL IMPACT EXTERNAL How does your project improve the lives of people and society? Who, besides your customers, benefits from your project? Could it have any negative impact on your environment? INTERNAL What policies for caring for people and promoting equality will you incorporate within your business?
KEY COSTS ECONOMIC: - Investment costs: Website, premises renovation, license, computer equipment, machinery, furniture, inventory, etc. - Foxed costs: Salaries and social security, rent, utilities (phone), accounting services, communications, insurance. - Variable costs: Related to sales (purchase of raw materials, payments to collaborators, etc.)		SOURCES OF INCOME ECONOMIC./SOURCES OF INCOME. All the income needed for the project to be economically sustainable (product sales, service fees, subscriptions, commissions, etc.)				

The design of the triple bottom line business model must be kept **flexible and open to continuous learning**. When testing the model in practice, it will be necessary to adapt it, listen to the beneficiaries and **constantly redefine the value offered**. The important thing is to strike a balance between economic sustainability, operational viability and real social transformation. This methodology will not only help you launch a meaningful venture, but also build an organization that is resilient, scalable, and deeply connected to the challenges of our time.

Spain

CABO SUR FILMS, S.L., was created by 2 partners from Canary Islands, dedicated to 'Film and video production activities'. Film and video producer, who explores the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction, telling stories with a powerful social and cultural background. Its objective is to produce short films and nurture the portfolio of young and new directors and develop feature films (both narrative and documentary).



CABO SUR
FILM DISTRIBUTION



Pilar Caamaño and Laura Caamaño have created **Cuarzo Verde**, a non-profit worker cooperative for sustainable living. Their goal is to conserve the environment through sustainable living workshops with practices that can be carried in daily life to reduce the environmental impact to be more sustainable every day. In addition, they organize guided tours to the Cíes Islands to enjoy the environment and get to know it, focused on children so that they can learn environmental education in nature itself. Cuarzo Verde coop story.

Villartesa, is a bakery of traditional sweets in a small town of Badajoz, Alburquerque, where they recover local recipes, and elaborate the products with traditional ingredients and without preservatives. Conchi Román and Ana Fernández created this social economy company, a Labour Society, to fulfill Conchi's dream and to put an end to Ana's job instability.

Luz Nieto, from Almeria (Spain) and with her partner, have set up an Andalusian cooperative, under the domain and trade name INBIOTA, which is dedicated to selling agricultural bio-inputs based on microorganisms, designed to improve soil health and agricultural productivity. These products are focused on promoting sustainability and reducing the use of chemicals in agriculture. In addition, they offer personalized services such as advice, soil analysis, and training in sustainable agricultural practices, adapted to the specific needs of each client.



inbiota.com

Imma Carpiniello, from Naples (Italy), founded the **Lazzarelle** cooperative after identifying, through the Italian Observatory on Prisons, the urgent need for stable employment among women deprived of liberty, many of them victims of domestic violence and with few job opportunities, especially in southern Italy, where female unemployment exceeds 40%. Thus was born Lazzarelle, a coffee roaster run entirely by women inside the Pozzuoli women's prison.



LAZZARELLE

lazzarelle.org

Terra di resilienza is a social cooperative based in Morigerati (SA), in the Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park, South Italy. It is involved in social farming, experiential tourism and all activities aimed at reviving traditional rural practices and developing social inclusion. The cooperative is involved in agriculture, producing extra virgin olive oil, viticulture and the production of ancient grain flours, training in eco-sustainable agricultural practices and the promotion of sustainable agri-food products.



**MONTE • FRUMENTARIO
TERRA • DI • RESILIENZA**

montefrumentario.it/la-cooperativa-terra-di-resilienza/

Ginger People Food is a restaurant in Agrigento, Sicily, run by the Al-Kharub cooperative, offering quality food based on traditional preparation techniques. The project is run by the Al Kharub social cooperative, whose aim is to create job opportunities for socially disadvantaged people, including people with disabilities, migrants and refugees. The cooperative also runs a beekeeping business with Sicilian honeybees, a Slow Food presidium, whose honey, produced by bees from the flowers of the very famous Valley of the Temples.



AL KHARUB
COOPERATIVA SOCIALE

alkharub.it/cooperativa/
gingerpeoplefood.com

Assurd, based in Potenza, Basilicata region, is a restaurant focused on social inclusion. It is managed by the social cooperative Ricco dentro. Assurd was established in 2013 by two previous social workers with experience in the framework of projects of inclusion for people with Dawn syndrome. Assurd ties strong relations with rural areas in purchasing local and quality products from Basilicata region, in the South of Italy.

<https://assurdpucceria.wixsite.com/website>

Hungary

The **Hatpöttyös** Restaurant, established in 2012, serves as an exemplary good practice in Hungary's Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE). As one of the first restaurants in the country to employ 15 individuals with disabilities and reduced working capacity, it demonstrates the potential for inclusive employment in the hospitality sector. Its commitment to inclusivity has helped challenge societal stereotypes about disability and employment. By creating a supportive work environment tailored to the needs of disabled employees, Hatpöttyös has set a benchmark for other businesses aiming to combine social impact with economic sustainability

<https://mail.hatpottyos.hu/home>

Old Blue is a Hungarian company specializing in handmade products crafted from 100% recycled denim. Their range includes a variety of unique, eco-friendly items such as bags, household goods, gifts, jewelry, home decor, and hobby materials. It takes about 10 cubic meters of water to make a pair of jeans. Approximately one billion pairs of jeans are produced worldwide every year. Their goal is to recycle as many of these as possible. Old Blue is driven by a commitment to environmental sustainability, aiming to reduce textile waste by transforming discarded denim into valuable new products.

<https://oldblue.myshoprenter.hu/>

Old Blue

BeSweet Chocolate Manufacture, founded in 2021 in Szekszárd, Hungary by the Kék Madár Foundation, produces premium chocolates crafted by people with disabilities. The manufactory combines quality, ethical sourcing, and social responsibility, supporting equal opportunities locally and fair trade globally. BeSweet's diverse products reflect both dedication and inclusivity, building connections between people through chocolate



<https://besweet.hu/>

Völgység Kincse Cooperative, founded with support from the Social Renewal Operational Programme (2007–2013), operates in Kisvejké, Hungary. It increases rural employment by producing fruit juice and supporting local small businesses. The cooperative runs a local product shop, supplies schools, and provides processing capacity for local farmers, strengthening the region's economy and community ties.



Yfantourgeoio TheWorkplace is a pioneering co-working and creative community space based in the old city of Nicosia, Cyprus. It brings together social entrepreneurs, creatives, NGOs, start-ups, and activists under one roof to collaborate, innovate, and build sustainable impact-driven initiatives.

The initiative acts as both an incubator and a knowledge-sharing hub for social and solidarity economy (SSE) actors. It offers flexible working space, training opportunities, and community events, creating a dynamic ecosystem for cross-sectoral collaboration and inclusive entrepreneurship.

<https://workspaces.join2share.eu/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Yfantourgeoio>

SocialTech Lab is an innovation centre in Cyprus's Buffer Zone that combines technology, design, and social ventures. They maintain a physical space (since 2021) with coworking, ideation lounges, podcasting studio, and host community events.

The Lab serves as a safe and collaborative space where young people, educators, entrepreneurs, and marginalised voices can come together. Its mission is to spark civic innovation, amplify underrepresented stories, and promote community-led social entrepreneurship using both digital and creative tools.

<https://socialtechlab.org/>



Te Xhoni" Café is a social enterprise established by Jonathan Center. Te Xhoni Café was launched on the global day of Down Syndrome (DS), on 21 March 2017. It is a place where youngsters with Down Syndrome could attend life-skill courses, and an environment where parents of the children could spend time with one another while their children attend therapy sessions. Te Xhoni Café offers employment opportunities to people with the Down Syndrome. It also serves as a place that contributes towards raising awareness on the potential of youngsters with Down Syndrome to be independent and be employed, and to generate revenue that would support the main activity of the organization in support of the DSA community.

Bar-Cafe"Te Xhoni"

"Te Xhoni"

Center for Culinary Education, acts as a Revolutionary Culinary Education Center that besides the goals of culinary education uses other resources to increasingly get involved in sustainable food systems and sustainable livelihood. QEK provides VET programs based on the best culinary systems, as well as the proper practice of professionals.

Tirana Green Living (TGL) is an innovative social entrepreneurship project initiated by the Centre for Culinary Education.

The project aims to foster social values, community integration, and support the local economy by providing high-quality, affordable food products to those in need. By establishing a community shop, TGL has been able to reach over 1,800 individuals and families, positively impacting their lives through food donations, meal provisions, and culinary training sessions. Additionally, TGL focuses on promoting environmental sustainability by encouraging waste reduction, food preservation, and responsible consumption. Through a combination of community engagement, skill development, and employment opportunities, Tirana Green Living is transforming the way communities come together to create a sustainable and inclusive environment.



**Center for
Culinary Education**

<https://gek.al/tirana-green-life-community-in-tirana/>

Tradita Ime Artizanale is a social enterprise established in Elbasan, dedicated to preserving Albania's rich craft heritage while empowering local women from vulnerable and marginalized communities.

Operating in a confiscated asset from organized crime, this initiative transforms a former illicit asset into a hub of creativity, inclusion, and social change.

Through training and employment, women artisans produce traditional handmade items such as carpets, tablecloths, crochet bags, and wool accessories, while also engaging in recycling practices that turn discarded fabrics into new products.

https://www.facebook.com/traditaimeartizane/?locale=sq_AL

<https://madeinalbania.shop/stores/traditaime-artizane>



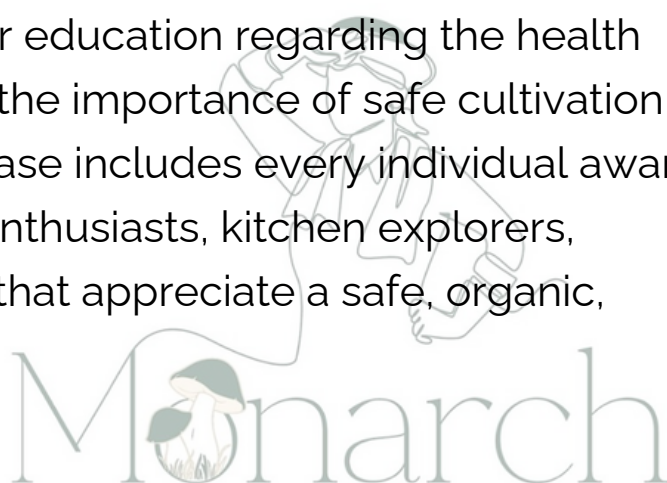
Mushroom farm has the vision to enhance urban agriculture by cultivating mushrooms that serve as a nutritious, safe, and locally sourced product.

Established by Rexhina Gjolla, its mission is to address the growing demand for fresh organic food, by using eco-friendly techniques. The main objectives are: (i) The provision of fresh and safe mushrooms for the Albanian consumers; (ii)

Contribution to the reduction of the carbon footprint through local cultivation practices; (iii) Empowerment of individuals to get closer to agriculture and raise awareness about connecting deeper with healthy practices for the good of the community.

(iv) Contribution to consumer education regarding the health benefits of mushrooms and the importance of safe cultivation techniques. The customer base includes every individual aware of the environment, health enthusiasts, kitchen explorers, organizations, communities that appreciate a safe, organic, local and nutritious product.

<https://www.instagram.com/monarchfarm.al/>





Interactive Exercises

Exercise 1

Try designing your own landing page with the online graphic design tool Canva. It has a landing page designer with pre-designed mockups, where you just have to upload the graphic resources of the project, decorate them with other graphic elements available in the tool and publish them.

Exercise 2

Fill out your own **Triple Balance Canvas** by answering the questions in each of the blocks of the template. Download the template and get started!

DEFINE YOUR IDEA AND PROTOTYPE | Action Against Hunger

Exercise 3



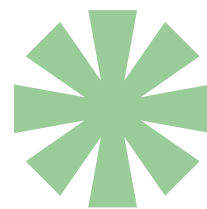
What social or environmental impact will result and who will be the beneficiaries? Define economic, social and environmental indicators, to know how you are going to measure these results, like any other part of the business model.

Try to keep it simple, so that you know that you can know how much it is worth without major complications. Then, find out its value.

Exercise 4

Make an ***Elevator Pitch*** about your sustainability strategy in your business model.

An elevator pitch is a very brief presentation that aims to present a project, a strategy or a business. Its name comes from the time it takes for an elevator to make a tour, since you never know where you are going to find someone with an interest in your project. The idea is to give a short but impactful speech, which conveys the main ideas and does not beat around the bush. Take advantage of the strategy you've designed and find a way to tell it in a maximum of one minute.





Self-Assessment Exercise

1 – What is social entrepreneurship?

- A) A legal formula for a company
- B) form of business that seeks to solve social or environmental problems
- C) An NGO with social impact
- D) A system of innovative solutions

2 – What tool in a problem-solving methodology?

- A) The Canvas
- B) A Landing Page
- C) Impact Measurement Tool
- D) El Design Thinking

3 – What are the stages of Design Thinking?

- A) Design, Ideate, Prototype and Test
- B) Empathize, Define and Ideate
- C) Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype and Test
- D) Design, Ideate, Define, Validate and Execute

4 – Designing a Landing Page is a technique to:

- A) Prototyping a product or service
- B) Web Design
- C) Design business ideas
- D) Promote your business from the start

5 – The Triple Balance Canvas will allow you to:

- A) Manage your business easily
- B) Measure the environmental impact of your business with the defined indicators
- C) Know what your potential clientele wants
- D) Design, analyze and create your business model including the economic, environmental and social aspects.

Solutions: 1B, 2D, 3C, 4A, 5D



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