



LIFELONG LEARNING BUSINESS MODELS

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1. Introduction

The FLECSLAB project documentation announces that a business model for lifelong learning will be developed as part of work package 2. It is assumed that EUTOPIA member universities, as public institutions, have focussed primarily on the education of full-time students. The organisation of teaching and learning processes has been adapted to the young population, who have few other commitments apart from their studies and also little work experience. The lifelong learning business model aims to get universities to place a greater emphasis on continuous educational activities and to involve a greater number of adults in their learning programmes, as called for by the Council of the EU (2021).

The term 'business models' should be viewed with caution. It only partly refers to a typical market situation in which learning services are offered and purchased by a large number of market agents. EUTOPIA connected learning community (CLC) offering its services may have few or no competitors. On the other hand, a buyer of a CLC's services may be an organisation that buys services for its members or employees, rather than individual buyers themselves. The model will elaborate several steps of the organisation of learning opportunities and is not limited to narrow business aspects.

The business model is elaborated from the perspective of CLCs that are located in the university environment and are supposed to offer their services to different target groups, especially adults. The focus is not on the perspective of the individual learner, although one of the main issues is how to motivate and engage them. It is a concern of CLCs and universities to organise learning in such a way that learners play a central role, rather than the concern of individual learners.

The business model presented here should be seen as a work in progress. It has been developed from the bottom up, mapping the practices of individual CLCs, and from the top down, adapting the overall business model to the university's lifelong learning environments and practises. It was developed halfway because it could not accommodate all variations of CLCs. Only when a larger number of CLCs apply it, test its usefulness and provide feedback, can it be developed into a more mature version.

2. Context

The plea for a reorientation of universities towards adult education arises from the changing environment in which European universities operate. Among the most pressing factors are:

- Accelerated technological change requires permanent reskilling and upskilling of workers to maintain employability and lifelong employment. The most recent case is artificial intelligence, which represents a kind of profound digitalisation and will undoubtedly be applied in all production and service sectors.
- The new technologies are not only penetrating the world of work but also the private lives of citizens. Computerised household appliances, the provision of online health services, settling civic issues with public administration, car sharing and public transport available via web-based platforms are just a few examples. To prevent the technology-driven social exclusion of the older generation, citizens need to update their skills for living in changing environments.
- Due to demographic decline, Europe is facing a growing gap between the demand for and supply of labour. This gap is widening from industry to community services to health, social care and education, where there is an increasing shortage of doctors, nurses, carers, teachers, etc. This gap can be filled primarily by immigration. It can be bridged primarily by the immigration of millions of workers and their families from very different cultural and educational backgrounds. Enormous efforts will be needed to train the newcomers and integrate them into our societies.

The adaptation of the workforce and the technological competence of citizens cannot be successfully managed by private training companies and employers' training programmes alone. Universities are increasingly expected to contribute with their educational and training capacities. Furthermore, universities should see these demands as an opportunity for their education and training business, as demographic decline means fewer and fewer full-time students (Claeys-Kulik, Ekman Joergensen, 2024). Given the stagnation of lifelong learning, international institutions are also calling on universities to contribute their capacities to adult education. As the OECD (2021) reports, on average, one in two adults in OECD countries was already disengaged from adult learning before the pandemic.

The introduction of Connected Learning Communities (CLC) as the main building blocks of the EUTOPIA education model offers EUTOPIA universities the opportunity to focus their attention on lifelong learning. "The CLCs provide the organisational and thematic framework for inter-university collaboration and cross-campus learning activities within the Alliance. Teams of faculty, students and other community stakeholders come together in a participatory learning and knowledge-creating process. The CLCs are designed according to the principle of value creation: Their implementation begins with the identification of existing curriculum components at EUTOPIA's home universities and the support of faculty who are motivated to expand their international contacts with colleagues working on related topics at the other universities within the alliance" (Angouri, Moriau, S'Jegers, 2024).

The CLCs build on existing good practise for challenge-based learning within current degree programmes. Most meet the flexibility requirements (Brekke and Zhang, 2024) of LLL, as they include forms of learning such as co-creation of content, flexible learning pathways, active and blended learning, simulation techniques, and competitions and so on. Therefore, as part of the Fleclab project, we have selected 12 CLCs as testing grounds for lifelong learning (LLL). Their experiences in the field of lifelong learning, which were analysed in work package 1, serve as important input for the creation of the business model. They demonstrate to be learner-centred, develop skills demand content and curricula, offer innovative learning and teaching, ensure validation, certification and recognition of acquired knowledge and skills, practise co-creation, collaboration and connectedness, are internationally networked and have sufficient organisational capacity (S'Jegers, van der Brande and Delmas, 2024). The other input comes from analysing the enablers and barriers to LLL identified at institutional, national and supranational levels (Fjellman, A.M., Haley, 2024). In addition to the approach below, we had to consult some general business models adapted to the field of adult learning (Drozdova, 2008; Perepelystia, 2023, Lapovsky, 2024; Miller, McAdam and McAdam, 2014; Jäger, Falk and Lenz, 2021; Peterson, 2021; Faster Capital, 2024).

Although the members of the CLCs come from different EUTOPIA universities, they are mainly active at the universities where they are based. The question therefore arises as to whether a business model should be developed for a CLC or for a university. We have chosen to focus on the CLCs and their experiences and visions, while the universities are seen as their primary environment. They may have their own LLL strategies, organisational and business models. In such a case, CLCs should take these structures into account and try to adopt their approaches and models. In most EUTOPIA universities, lifelong learning has not been put on the first level. The LLL activities and business models of the CLCs can serve as a driving force for the development of LLL.

Each CLC works in its own very specific university and national environment. Therefore, we have elaborated the business model shown in the table below at a level beyond the CLCs – a general model. Its application in individual CLCs depends on their specific environments and learning programmes. At the end of this report, two CLC business models are presented to demonstrate the applicability of the general model. One such approach is proposed by Drozdova (2008), who writes about a three-stage business model.

3. GENERAL LIFELONG LEARNING BUSINESS MODEL (GLLLBM)

“A business model is a description of how a company creates, delivers and captures value for its customers and stakeholders” (Faster Capital, 2024). Some authors distinguish between different types of business models with respect to various money inflows (Perepelystia, 2023) or in terms of how learning services are delivered (Faster Capital, 2024). The structure of the model description varies between the different authors. In the case of Faster Capital, they distinguish four main components: “value proposition, revenue streams, cost structure and key resources and activities” (Faster Capital, 2024). We have opted for a two-dimensional LLL business model that combines the LLL ecosystem structure and the different steps of the business cycle.

The GLLBMB consists of two dimensions and thus forms a two-dimensional 3 x 10 table with 30 cells. The horizontal dimension represents three differently structured CLC LLL ecosystems: regulated, semi-structured and fragmented. These three dimensions represent two extreme points and an intermediate point in the middle of the continuum of ecosystem structure. We assume that each level of the ecosystem specifically determines how the LLL business model is organised. S’Jegers, van der Brande and Delmas (2024) describe ecosystems in the following way.

1. “Regulated ecosystems”

In the regulated ecosystems, learners are well-identified and guided by regulations from authorities and/or professional organisations. Learners look for short programmes that can be combined with work and family commitments. The educational offer often comes from the university, which provides the first degree required to enter the labour market. The ecosystem targets learners who need to update their skills but also offers full degrees/bridging programmes to facilitate entry into the profession. The underlying business model is based on stable contracts between regulators/professional organisations and educational providers. Competition in this segment of lifelong learning is limited and the funds made available to providers often do not cover the needs and full costs of the programmes.

Specific examples of regulated ecosystems include academic provision for first degrees and skills upgrading required by law or professional bodies; regulated professions typical of the public sector, such as health, education and security; and public services facing growing demand due to societal changes, leading to labour shortages. In the regulated ecosystems, LLL has a dual potential for (i) preparing individuals who want to enter the sector but do not fulfil the requirements, and (ii) providing updates and complementary skills for existing staff. The cross-campus, connected learning activities focus on skills needed to deal with diversity, the use of innovative technologies and better management of scarce human resources. EUTOPIA communities such as Nursing Care in Complex Care Situations; Leading Strategic Innovation in Healthcare; or Urban Education are examples of regulated ecosystems.

2. Semi-structured ecosystems

Learners in semi-structured ecosystems are driven by self-perceived needs or a desire to extend/supplement/update competencies acquired in their initial studies. The learner is difficult to

identify, but the ecosystem signals the needs, e.g. through statements from employer associations and evidence of mismatch in the labour market. The educational offer usually has the format of (short) programmes at a postgraduate or co-curricular level. It is embedded in semi-permanent structures such as summer schools, business schools, living labs and learning platforms.

The LLL segment is highly competitive and non-academic players have an important share of the market. The underlying business model refers to permanent facilities that enable access and visibility of the educational offer and promote the offer, as is the case with business schools and living labs. A sustainable approach is often characterised by intensive cooperation between academia, learners and stakeholders in society (public or private).

Examples of EUTOPIA communities that exemplify the semi-structured ecosystem are Technological Business Development; Fundamentals of Television Direction; IMPACT (Interdisciplinary learning platform for sPort 4 sociAl Change iniTiatives) and Design and Science. This group of test communities is characterised by academic partners who have experience in innovation-related activities and are therefore supported by long-term agreements with public and private stakeholders in society.

3. Fragmented ecosystems

Learners in the fragmented ecosystem, like learners in a semi-structured ecosystem, are characterised by self-perceived needs and are difficult to identify. However, the signals indicating the specific nature of LLL needs are less clear than in the structured case. The advocacy groups associated with the fragmented ecosystem are less organised and/or powerful. In this ecosystem, the educational offer is not structured and is “hidden” in learning components spread across a variety of degree programs or summer schools. Due to the lack of an institutionalised approach, the underlying business model highlights the difficulty of combining the potential of higher education institutions and the needs of learners. Private and online competitors organise ad hoc offerings that often focus on “trendy” competencies and use academic experts to develop typically short units. The academic delivery of learning components is fully integrated into the academic curriculum of degree programmes and academic partners are strongly research-led. The development of LLL is hampered by the lack of structural links to stakeholders outside the academia.

Examples of EUTOPIA communities that represent fragmented ecosystems are Multilingualism and Diversity; International Journalism; Text and Discourse Analysis; Additive Manufacturing; and Veganism vs. Animal Protein Consumption. This group of testbed communities is committed to cross-campus activities and international outreach for staff and students. The challenge for the sustainability of these initiatives is the lack of a business model that allows them to translate their knowledge into innovative and user-friendly applications in extra academic context.”

The vertical dimension of the business model is composed of 10 phases of a business cycle: (a) identifying the target audience, their learning needs, the need for skills in the market and the demand for learning services; (b) putting learners at the centre by developing/adapting the curriculum; (c) providing flexible learning opportunities, support and guidance to learners, taking into account innovative learning and teaching methods; (d) building partnerships and collaborating with stakeholders to involve them in co-creation; (e) engaging qualified instructors and facilitators and providing for their professional development; (f) Validation and recognition of prior learning and certification and accreditation of learning outcomes; (g) Marketing and outreach; (h) Ensuring financial

and functional sustainability; i) Obtaining feedback and continuous improvement; j) introducing enablers and removing barriers. Each phase is commented on concerning the three LLL ecosystems. In several phases, the LLL ecosystems make no difference in the general model presented. However, these differences may occur in specific CLC business models. Furthermore, the business cycle should not be viewed as individual phases that linearly follow one another, but rather as part of a complex network of interlinked activities.

When developing the business model, we pay attention to the adaptation requirements that characterise lifelong learning. According to the OECD (2021), these are the following:

- Recognise the heterogeneous nature of learners in lifelong learning.
- Empower learners to engage in lifelong learning.
- Promote information sharing with learners and other stakeholders.
- Consider the different goals of learners.
- Embrace inclusiveness.
- Promote affordability.
- Accessibility should be considered in learning programmes.
- Harness the power of technology.
- Create a positive attitude towards lifelong learning.
- Encourage innovation and continuous monitoring.
- Develop information systems.
- Create cross-sector partnerships.
- Encourage employers to support lifelong learning.

There is no doubt that all these requirements are important. However, individual CLCs and the universities in which they are based may consider and manage them to varying degrees.

Table 1. Two-dimensional general LLL business model

CLC LLL ECOSYSTEM / BUSINESS MODEL DIMENSION ¹	Regulated (highly structured)	Semi-structured	Fragmented (low structured)
Identification of the target audience, their learning needs, market skills and the demand for learning services	<p>Establish connections with the relevant regulator and jointly identify target groups and skills needs.</p> <p>Work with the CLC and regulator to assess market demand in terms of the number of learners and their learning needs.</p> <p>Ensure that learner representatives participate in estimating skills demand and learning needs.</p>	<p>Establish links with relevant organisations and/or their representatives (chambers, trade unions, professional associations) and jointly identify the target groups and skills needs.</p> <p>Estimate the market demand in terms of the number of learners and their learning needs using a questionnaire distributed and collected by the representatives of the organisations.</p>	<p>Identify your CLC target audience using professional organisations and/ or statistical data on occupations and employees.</p> <p>Estimate the market demand in terms of skills needs, number of learners and their learning needs in co-operation with professional associations or through a questionnaire distributed and collected by mail/internet in the environments where potential learners are located.</p>
Putting learners at the centre through curriculum development/adjustment	<p>Utilise a team of experts from the CLC / regulatory body to adapt the existing curriculum to meet the current and future learning needs of identified learners. Pay attention to the (sub) groups of learners and their skills needs, methods, duration and time distribution of learning. Take into account that adult learners expect an offer that is adapted to their other life and work tasks.</p> <p>Involve potential learners in the development of the curriculum.</p> <p>Consider breaking up your long programme into smaller units and issuing micro-credentials for each</p>	<p>Set up a team of experts from the CLC and the organisations to adapt the existing curriculum to the current and future learning needs of the identified learners. Pay attention to the (sub) groups of learners and their skill needs, methods, duration and time distribution of learning. Take into account that adult learners expect an offer that is adapted to their other life and work tasks.</p> <p>Involve potential learners in the development of the curriculum.</p>	<p>Set up a focus group composed of identified potential learners to adapt the existing curriculum to current and future learning needs. Ensure that the curriculum is adapted to the needs of individual learners. Take into account that adult learners expect the curriculum to be adapted to their other life and work tasks. Consider breaking up your long programme into smaller units and issuing micro-credentials to each unit that can count towards a full degree.</p> <p>Make a link to the qualifications framework.</p>

¹ This is a general structure of the business model. Each CLC should adapt it to its learning ecosystem, including the specific field of study, the regulatory framework of the national education authorities' regulatory framework, university context and the partners/stakeholders.

	unit that can count towards a full degree. Establish a link to the qualifications framework.	Consider breaking up your long programme into smaller units and issuing micro-credentials for each unit that can count towards a full degree. Establish a link to the qualifications framework.	
Providing flexible learning opportunities, support and counselling for learners, with a focus on innovative learning and teaching methods	<p>Adaptation to organised groups:</p> <p>Place of learning: university, employers, professional organisations, home, combined.</p> <p>Time frame: Block courses, long courses divided into shorter units, evening courses, weekend courses, and summer schools, combined. Agree on the timeframe with the organisation(s) sending learners to the courses.</p> <p>Technology: on-site, online, hybrid, combined. Provide support through digital platforms for all stages of the learning/training cycle. Make the platforms of all alliance members compatible.</p> <p>Methods: lectures, workshops, exercises, seminars, webinars, experiments, on-the-job training, R&D projects, and self-learning, combined.</p> <p>Teaching/learning materials: printed and online textbooks, exercises and tests, challenge cases, development projects, and workshop equipment.</p> <p>Provide support and guidance for individual learners, taking into account their learning path.</p>	<p>Adaptation to ad hoc groups:</p> <p>Learning venue: university, employers, professional organisations, home, combined.</p> <p>Time frame: Block courses, long courses split into shorter units, evening courses, and weekend courses, summer schools, combined. Agree the timeframe with the main organisation(s) sending learners to the courses.</p> <p>Technology: onsite, online, hybrid, combined. Provide support through digital platforms for all stages of the learning/training cycle. Make the platforms of all alliance members compatible.</p> <p>Methods: lectures, workshops, exercises, seminars, webinars, experiments, on-the-job training, R&D projects, and self-learning, combined.</p> <p>Teaching/learning materials: printed and online textbooks, exercises and tests, challenge cases, development projects, and workshop equipment.</p> <p>Provide support and guidance for individual learners, taking into account their learning path.</p>	<p>Adaptation to the individual:</p> <p>Place of learning: university, professional organisations, home, combined.</p> <p>Time frame: Block courses, long courses divided into shorter units, evening courses, and weekend courses, summer schools, combined. Adapt the time frame to the (majority of) learners.</p> <p>Technology: on-site, online, hybrid, combined. Offer support for all phases of the learning/training cycle through digital platforms. Make the platforms of all alliance members compatible.</p> <p>Methods: lectures, workshops, exercises, seminars, webinars, experiments, on-the-job training, R&D projects, self-learning, combined.</p> <p>Teaching/learning materials: printed and online textbooks, exercises and tests, challenge cases, development projects, and workshop equipment.</p> <p>Support and guidance for individual learners, taking into account their individual learning path.</p>
Building partnerships and working with stakeholders to involve them in co-creation	<p>Partnership with regulators, employers, professional organisations, and trade unions. Do not forget learners and their representatives.</p> <p>Collaborate on curriculum design, provision of training experts, mentors, placements, study cases, development projects, and (co-)funding.</p> <p>Make agreements with learner-sending organisations on sharing facilities, IP rights, etc.</p>	<p>Partnership with employers and their representative organisations, professional associations, and trade unions. Do not forget the learners and their representatives.</p> <p>Collaborate on curriculum design, provision of training experts, mentors, work placements, study cases, development projects and (co-)funding.</p> <p>Agree with the organisations sending learners to share facilities, IP rights, etc.</p>	<p>Partnership with government agencies, employers' and professional organisations, and trade unions. Do not forget the learners.</p> <p>Co-operate on curriculum planning, possible provision of training experts, mentors, study cases, development projects, (co-)funding.</p> <p>Set up a joint committee with learner representatives to plan, monitor and evaluate the learning process in order to improve and innovate it.</p>

	<p>Set up a joint committee with the learners' sending organisations to plan, monitor and evaluate the learning process in order to improve and innovate it.</p> <p>Create a communication plan involving higher education institutions, sending organisations and learners that defines the type, means and frequency of communication.</p>	<p>Set up a joint committee with the sending organisations to plan, monitor and evaluate the learning process in order to improve and innovate it.</p> <p>Create a communication plan involving higher education institutions, sending organisations and learners and define the type, means and frequency of communication.</p>	<p>Create a communication plan involving universities, learners and other partners and define the type, means and frequency of communication.</p>
Recruit qualified instructors and facilitators and ensure their professional development	<p>Appoint an LLL project manager/coordinator at the level of the CLC or/and the participating universities. This can be one of the members of the CLC team.</p> <p>Bring additional highly skilled experts/practitioners into your CLC as lecturers, trainers and mentors, especially from the partners' organisations.</p> <p>Provide ongoing training and professional development to teaching team members through their involvement in development projects, occasional internships in work environments, etc.</p> <p>Involve learners as co-creators in the learning process.</p>	<p>Appoint an LLL project manager/coordinator at the level of the CLC or/and the participating universities. This can be one of the members of the CLC team.</p> <p>Bring additional highly skilled experts/practitioners into your CLC as lecturers, trainers and mentors, especially from the partners' organisations.</p> <p>Provide ongoing training and professional development to teaching team members through their involvement in development projects, occasional internships in work environments, etc.</p> <p>Involve learners as co-creators in the learning process.</p>	<p>Appoint an LLL project manager/coordinator at the level of the CLC or/and the participating universities. This can be one of the members of the CLC team.</p> <p>Bring additional highly skilled experts/practitioners into your CLC as lecturers, trainers, mentors.</p> <p>Provide ongoing training and professional development to teaching team members through their involvement in development projects, occasional assignments in work environments, etc.</p> <p>Involve learners as co-creators in the learning process.</p>
Validation and recognition of prior learning and certification and accreditation of learning outcomes	<p>Enable validation and recognition of prior learning experiences of individual learners.</p> <p>Have your programme/units of study accredited by the recognised/national quality assurance agency and regulatory body to ensure credibility and marketability.</p> <p>Subject the programme/units of study to internal quality assurance procedures involving your external partners (employers, professional bodies, trade unions).</p> <p>Issue a certificate/micro-credential / credit supplement for each successfully completed learning unit.</p>	<p>Enable validation and recognition of prior learning experiences of individual learners.</p> <p>Have your programme/units of study accredited by a recognised/national quality assurance agency and be certified by employer representatives and relevant professional bodies to ensure credibility and marketability.</p> <p>Subject the programme/units of study to internal quality assurance procedures involving your external partners (employers, professional associations, trade unions).</p> <p>Issue a certificate / micro-credential / credit supplement for each successfully completed learning unit.</p>	<p>Enable validation and recognition of prior learning experiences of individual learners.</p> <p>Have your programme/units of study accredited by a recognised/national quality assurance agency and be certified by employer representatives and relevant professional bodies to ensure credibility and marketability.</p> <p>Subject the programme/units of study to internal quality assurance procedures involving your external partners (employers, professional associations, trade unions).</p> <p>Issue a certificate / micro-credential / credit supplement for each successfully completed learning unit.</p>
Marketing and outreach activities	<p>Reach an agreement with the regulator and the professional body to offer LLL as a pre-requisite for the renewal /updating of professional licences. Particular</p>	<p>Contact organisations in your CLC area (chambers, trade unions, professional associations). In the case of large companies, it is possible to organise training for groups</p>	<p>Develop a solid marketing strategy that utilises various channels such as digital marketing, social media, email campaigns, fairs and other industry events to reach and</p>

	<p>attention should be paid to motivating learners to participate.</p> <p>Reach out to learners through their employer organisations and the professional association network. Cooperate with the professional organisation to deliver training if they offer it.</p> <p>Offer additional content that goes beyond the requirements of the professional licence.</p>	<p>of their employees. In the case of a more scattered demand for training, an agreement with the relevant chambers and trade unions could be relevant. Learners can be recruited through the networks of their professional organisations.</p> <p>Cooperate with the professional organisations when it comes to approaching and motivating potential learners, as well as in the delivery of training when offered by them.</p> <p>Utilise other channels such as social media, email campaigns, trade fairs etc. to reach and engage the target audience. Highlight the benefits of training and development programmes, such as career advancement, skills improvement, higher job performance, educational attainments, the international and university composition of your training team, flexible training modalities, etc.</p>	<p>engage the target audience. Highlight the benefits of education/training programmes such as career advancement, skills enhancement, increased job performance, educational attainments, the international and university composition of your training team, flexible training arrangements, etc.</p> <p>Cooperate with relevant professional organisations in targeting and motivating potential learners and in delivering training when offered.</p>
Ensuring financial and functional sustainability	<p>Establish a sustainable pricing model that reflects the value of the education/training programme while remaining competitive in the marketplace. Think about your competitors: Universities and other higher education institutions, counselling agencies and professional associations.</p> <p>There could be different payers for the service: individual learners, their employers (based on company interests or trade union agreements) and professional organisations (from membership fees), combined.</p>	<p>Establish a sustainable pricing model that reflects the value of the education/training programme while remaining competitive in the marketplace. Think about your competitors: Universities and other higher education institutions, counselling agencies and professional associations.</p> <p>There could be different payers for the service: individual learners, their employers (based on company interests or trade union agreements), chambers and professional organisations (from membership fees), combined.</p> <p>Apply to public calls for the provision of adult education.</p>	<p>Establish a sustainable pricing model that reflects the value of the education/training programme while remaining competitive in the marketplace. Think about your competitors: Universities and other higher education institutions, counselling agencies and professional associations.</p> <p>There could be different payers for the service: individual learners, their employers (based on company interests or trade union agreements), chambers and professional organisations (from membership fees) and employment agencies, combined.</p> <p>Apply to public calls for the provision of adult education.</p>
Obtain feedback and continuously improve	<p>Implement a robust feedback mechanism to gather insights from learners, instructors, industry partners, professional bodies and regulators and use this feedback to continuously improve the curriculum, learning experience and overall programme quality.</p> <p>Invest in data collection (questionnaires, interviews, focus groups...) and analytics to track key performance</p>	<p>Implement a robust feedback mechanism to gather insights from learners, instructors, industry partners, chambers, trade unions and professional bodies and use this feedback to continuously improve the curriculum, the learning experience and the overall quality of the programme.</p>	<p>Implement a robust feedback mechanism to gather insights from learners, instructors, industry partners, chambers, trade unions and professional associations and use this feedback to continuously improve the curriculum, learning experience and overall programme quality.</p> <p>Invest in data collection (questionnaires, interviews, focus groups...) and analytics to track key performance indicators,</p>

	<p>indicators, monitor learning outcomes and make data-driven decisions to improve the effectiveness of the programme.</p> <p>Organise evaluation conferences involving partners and discuss possible improvements.</p>	<p>Invest in data collection (questionnaires, interviews, focus groups...) and analytics to track key performance indicators, monitor learning outcomes and make data-driven decisions to improve the effectiveness of the programme.</p> <p>Organise evaluation conferences involving partners and discuss possible improvements.</p>	<p>monitor learning outcomes and make data-driven decisions to improve programme effectiveness.</p> <p>Organise evaluation conferences involving partners and discuss possible improvements.</p>
<p>Introduce enablers and remove obstacles</p>	<p>Provide for the additional workload and pay of teachers and instructors involved in LLL activities, or</p> <p>Integrate LLL activities into regular work commitments. Organise discussions with your employees about the importance and purpose of LLL.</p> <p>Provide additional learning facilities: Lecture rooms, workshops, laboratories, workstations at employers' premises, equipment... Make appropriate agreements with employers.</p> <p>Provide a coordinated inter-university / international digital platform that supports the whole learning cycle from registration to mutual recognition and issuing of certificates.</p>	<p>Provide for the additional workload and pay of teachers and instructors involved in LLL activities, or</p> <p>Integrate LLL activities into regular work commitments. Organise discussions with your employees about the importance and purpose of LLL.</p> <p>Provide additional learning facilities: Lecture rooms, workshops, laboratories, workplaces at employers' premises, equipment... Make appropriate agreements with employers.</p> <p>Provide a coordinated inter-university / international digital platform that supports the whole learning cycle from registration to mutual recognition and issuing of certificates.</p>	<p>Provide for the additional workload and pay of teachers and instructors involved in LLL activities, or</p> <p>Integrate LLL activities into regular work commitments. Organise discussions with your employees about the importance and purpose of LLL.</p> <p>Provide additional learning facilities: Lecture rooms, workshops, labs, workplaces at employers, equipment....</p> <p>Provide a coordinated inter-university / international digital platform that supports the whole learning cycle from registration to mutual recognition and issuance of certificates.</p>

3.1. Identification of a target audience, their learning needs, the need for skills in the market and the demand for your CLC services

The target audience should be determined with regard to the content of the CLC programme. In the case of providing trainings for generic competencies development, such as communication or digital skills, learners can be found virtually anywhere, regardless of the business sector and social environment. In the case of occupational, technology, company and organisation-specific competence development, learners are less dispersed and can be found in a limited number of organisations. This is the case with highly structured and regulated lifelong learning ecosystems, such as healthcare, pharmaceuticals, education, architecture, security services and other public administrations. However, these organisations may also seek to develop some general competencies of their employees.

The way of identifying the target audience and their learning needs and estimating the potential number of learners depends on the level to which LLL ecosystem is structured. In the highly structured areas mentioned above, ministries and public organisations such as hospitals, health care centres, elderly care centres, kindergartens and schools, the police, etc. try to control the competencies of their employees. There are special personnel and training departments that analyse skills needs, check the skills of new recruits and require employees to update their existing skills and acquire new skills and competencies. This responsibility is often delegated to professional chambers or other professional organisations. As a result, ministries and chambers often set up their own internal training providers, such as public administration academies. A similar situation can be observed in large industrial companies. However, there is always room for universities and CLCs to showcase some of their most advanced knowledge and develop new skills, especially if offered in a participative way, involving learners and their representatives in the identification of learning needs, the co-creation of learning programmes and the learning process itself.

In the highly structured LLL ecosystems, CLCs should approach regulators with the proposal to jointly identify skills needs and gaps, potential employee interest in learning and which groups of employees need to be trained. They should accurately identify the learning needs of employees in terms of new or upgraded skills and competencies, and estimate how many learners can be expected in the agreed timeframes. In some organisations, learning needs may not be obvious or easy to identify. In such a case, the CLC can start with the learning needs analysis, taking into account both existing and new technologies as well as the prior knowledge of the employees. The learning needs analysis is carried out in cooperation with the regulatory authority and the organisations for which it is responsible. Establishing contacts with the relevant organisations and their authorised and capable experts is crucial, as is the involvement of some potential best performing learners.

In the less structured, fragmented lifelong learning ecosystems, there is no counterpart for CLCs to talk to. CLCs should rely on their professional judgement about the training needs of particular populations and their belief that the knowledge they offer could be beneficial for them. This is a type of free market in which CLCs begin to screen the interests of potential learners through mass media and social media using questionnaires and similar tools, such as focus group interviews. In some cases, CLCs also consult relevant professional organisations, chambers of commerce, employers' associations, trade unions and local community councils in the hope of gaining useful opinions and

advice. The end result they seek is a reliable indication of whether there is an interested audience to whom their learning offer could be directed and how it should be structured. Identifying learning needs is not just about skills and competencies that matter. CLCs should also consider which forms of learning are best suited to the selected target groups. A survey of a group of potential learners using a focus group approach is highly desirable.

3.2. Putting learners at the centre through curriculum development/ adjustment

Having identified the target audience and roughly assessed their learning needs, it is time to take a closer look at whether the CLC curriculum fits and to what extent it should be modified and adapted to the expected needs of learners – current and future. This should be done in close cooperation with audience representatives and/or training experts from the organisations from which the learners come. In the highly structured LLL ecosystems, one can rely on the experts of the organisations where the learners come from, in the low structured ones it would be desirable to involve some future learners or/and consult any professional organisations they belong to. A recommended approach would be to put together a focus group of potential learners. In this way, you can put learners at the centre of the curriculum development phase. Consider forming a curriculum development team made up of CLC experts and learners or their representatives.

Learners actively participate in all stages of curriculum development: identifying and describing the competencies they need to develop, including determining the levels at which the development of competencies is expected; choosing the forms and methods of teaching, learning, training and competence development at school and in the work environment; describing the expected learning outcomes and the ways of their assessment (Govekar Okoliš, Svetlik, Deželan, Drobne, 2023). Learners' attention is particularly focused on their prior learning achievements, on the specific needs related to their work/life environment and on the appropriate organisation of the teaching and learning offer concerning the complexity of their roles. This should be considered at the curriculum development stage in order to break up overly long programmes into shorter, self-contained units that lead to micro-credentials and can be cumulated back into full degrees. Learners can help to strike a balance between information-based and experiential learning, they can express their preferences as to where learning should be placed in school, work or life, what learning methods should be used, etc.

At the end of this step, one would expect a curriculum to be created for a relatively homogeneous group of learners that also offers the possibility to customise it to individual learning needs. There should be the possibility to organise learning flexibly.

3.3. Providing flexible learning opportunities, support and guidance to learners, with a focus on innovative learning and teaching methods

The issue of learning provision should be discussed with potential learners before they are fully enrolled. Various organisational issues should be clarified at this stage:

- **The place of learning:** at the university, in the employer's environment, in the premises of professional organisations, at home or in a combination of locations. Learning on the employer's premises is desirable if it involves on-the-job training, which often cannot be simulated in other environments. It creates a working atmosphere and can be more cost-effective for the CLC and learners. This applies to well-structured ecosystems where the CLC can directly make learning arrangements in cooperation with large public or private organisations that enrol their employees for training. However, in the case of systematic information-based learning, employees may prefer to learn on the premises of the university. Learning on the premises of professional organisations is relevant when the professional organisations collaborate with the CLCs in the delivery of learning. Some learning always takes place at home, especially when using distance learning and digital learning methods. However, some face-to-face contact with teachers, mentors and instructors is inevitable. Experience-based learning at home is rather unfavourable. Preferably, a combination of university, workplace and home should be considered as a learning environment. However, in low-structured ecosystems, the availability of work environments for learning purposes could be quite difficult.
- **Learning time frame:** long block courses or long courses divided into shorter units; the choice of learning times within a day, a week, a month or a year (evening courses, full-week seminars, weekend courses, summer schools, combined courses, etc.). CLCs should show maximum flexibility and adapt to the conditions of individual learners and the organisations that send them to the courses. It is important to take into account learners' preferences, which should not significantly affect the quality of the learning offered.
- **Technology:** Learning delivery generally offers a choice of face-to-face, online/distance, hybrid or blended learning. Adults combine learning with other work and life activities. It is therefore important to find a suitable combination of learning opportunities in cooperation with the learners themselves. It can be assumed that some prefer online distance learning and others prefer on-site learning. It should be recognised that not all training can be delivered remotely. The synergy of learning in a group should not be completely neglected.
- **Teaching and learning methods** are diverse and range from lectures, workshops, exercises, seminars, webinars, experiments, on-the-job training, research and development projects to self-learning. The methods should be selected with regard to both the learning content and the other aspects of learning delivery. Adults who have some work and life experience generally tend to favour experiential and practical learning. However, a certain amount of systematic knowledge is desirable for this very reason. They are also keen to be actively involved in the learning process, including a large amount of self-learning.
- **The provision of learning materials and facilities** is essential for successful learning. This includes printed and online textbooks, exercises and tests, examples of good practise, projects, etc. One should also provide fluent access to databases and libraries as well as research and other learning equipment, such as computers, various training and real working machines. Involving learners in real working environments through the support of their mentors can be one of the best solutions. This is possible in highly structured ecosystems and less likely in the low structured ecosystems. In this case, CLCs and their universities should provide adequate facilities or at least simulate real working environments.

CLCs should take into account that the choice between different organisational options for flexible learning delivery cannot be fully determined from the outset. The people involved in the learning process differ in terms of their learning needs, their personalities, their working and living conditions. Therefore, the organisation of the learning offer must allow for change and adjustment to the individual learner. In a CLC, a person must be designated who is available to each learner when they need support, guidance and counselling. This person is also responsible for adapting the learning arrangement if they come to such a conclusion in dialogue with the learner.

3.4. Building partnerships and working with stakeholders to involve them in co-creation

Co-operation with stakeholders and partners is essential for high quality lifelong learning. Partners should be involved in virtually all stages of the business cycle, particularly in identifying learning needs and target audiences, estimating scope, curriculum development, delivery of lessons, provision of instructors and facilitators, and provision of feedback and assessment. However, finding interested and reliable partners is more challenging than it seems (Eutopia Train, 2021). One should look for real promoters and avoid saboteurs among potential partners. Good partners are those who not only give their opinion, but are also willing to take on some tasks themselves. Such a partnership enables close co-operation with the CLC at all stages of the learning cycle, promotes the dissemination of knowledge and generates innovative solutions.

The ideal solution for a CLC is to find a partner (or partners) that has a vested interest in the CLC's learning offer and has the power and capabilities to support this process. This seems to be easier in highly structured ecosystems where one can find a main partner, such as a ministry or an institution authorised by the ministry, e.g. a chamber (medical doctors), a professional organisation from the field (association of accountants), a specialised institution (administrative academy) or a city/county council. However, these potential partners can be both disinterested and interested in co-operation if they are already actively involved in the learning provision of education. If they are interested, they can provide valuable assistance to a CLC in preparing and implementing its business plan. If they already offer some learning services, they may be interested in enriching their offer and increasing the quality. However, they may also see the CLC as a competitor.

In semi-structured ecosystems, CLCs can still opt for an external partner. This can be a large company or a municipality. Although these organisations usually purchase learning services on the market from various training and education companies, an innovative CLC programme can be seen as refreshing and competitive. Partnerships are more challenging in low structured ecosystems where CLCs do not find organised partners and learners come from many different organisations. In such a case, professional organisations and trade unions could be potential partners that can be consulted without expecting their full support. If the learners are scattered, one can try to involve some governmental bodies interested in providing learning opportunities for citizens or workers, e.g. improving digital literacy.

It is recommended that a CLC establishes a joint committee with its partners and enters into a formal agreement with them. The agreement includes the definition of partners' roles, co-operation activities in curriculum development and adjustment, provision of training experts and mentors, internships, study cases and development projects involving learners. It also includes (co-)financing

agreements, sharing of facilities and equipment, agreements on industrial property rights and evaluation, etc. A communication plan covering all partners, the means, modes and frequency of communication is desirable.

3.5. Engaging qualified instructors and facilitators and ensure their professional development

Two roles are required to provide the LLL of CLC. The first is a project manager/facilitator/coordinator. This can be one of the CLC team members. However, there are many organisational and administrative tasks to be done for which a highly qualified teacher/expert would be overqualified. One could use the services of the university which are otherwise responsible for the LLL. In the case of a highly structured LLL ecosystem, where several learners come from one or a few organisations, a facilitator would also be required.

The other important role is teachers/experts/instructors/mentors. This is where the CLC members come in. However, in case of intensive cooperation with the organisations where the learners come from, one should take the opportunity to engage some of their best experts as well. They can offer various services such as mentoring, instruction and project leadership in their work environment. In addition, they can come to the university, give lectures, and lead tutorials and projects. CLC members can take the opportunity to spend some time in the working environments where the learners come from, familiarise themselves with the production processes and initiate new development projects, thus contributing to the exchange of knowledge between university and industry.

It is important to form a mixed group of experts from universities and employers' organisations. In such a group, learners can participate as equal partners, learning themselves, sharing their knowledge and experience and working on development projects. It can be conceptualised as a broader CLC – a community of practice. In such a community, some time should be set aside for teachers' personal and professional development, including reflection on their teaching, learning and counselling experiences.

Such an arrangement is more difficult to organise in low-structured LLL ecosystems. There, the responsibility lies more on the shoulders of the CLC members. Finally, they manage to involve some experts from the working environment, which is an advantage for the learning process.

3.6. Validation and recognition of prior learning and certification and accreditation of learning outcomes

CLCs offer / combine learning programmes that are already accredited at their universities. In the case of new programmes, they are expected to accredit them with the national authorities. Accreditation in one of the states should be sufficient. A prerequisite for accreditation is that the programme and its delivery are subject to quality assurance procedures, including continuous monitoring, regular feedback and occasional in-depth evaluations involving all partners, including learners.

Offering accredited programmes is as important for LLL as it is for full-time students. The certificates awarded to them serve as proof of competence when looking for a new job, as evidence of self-realisation and as a means for career advancement. If longer programmes are broken down into shorter units, which is desirable in the case of LLL, these units should also be accredited and offer the possibility of accumulating them into a full degree. Well-structured and accredited programmes have an advantage over the others. However, adult learners do not always strive for certificates. They can be satisfied with the knowledge and skills acquired without formalities.

The certification of learning outcomes is based on the assessment and validation of acquired knowledge, competencies and skills. This must be included as an integral part of the curriculum. As learners are adults with extensive life and work experience, validation and recognition of their prior learning must be planned for. This can be a good basis for individual learning plans.

Accreditation of CLC programmes is easier in highly structured ecosystems where CLCs can be supported by their key partners. However, it is equally important in the low structured ecosystems for marketing purposes and for the credibility of CLCs as providers of LLL.

3.7. Marketing and outreach activities

Some business models for education focus primarily on marketing and money inflow. They require “customer segmentation, validation, experimentation and optimisation” (Faster Capital, 2024). There can be different models of money inflow, such as subscription, freemium, marketplace, platform, pay-per-use, partnership, sponsorship, ad-based and other models (Faster Capital, 2004; Perepelystia, 2023).

The marketing of CLC programmes is a particular challenge for those CLCs that have no experience with LLL and have only dealt with public learning offerings to date. In highly structured ecosystems where a partnership model can be applied, marketing is a less demanding task. Here, a CLC can enter into an agreement with a ministry or its agency to send a certain number of learners to the courses. The only important question is how learners are recruited: by motivating them through promotion and better pay, by inviting them to gain interesting experience and work-related skills, or by requiring them to renew their professional licences. Recruitment is often done in cooperation with the professional organisations of which the learners are members.

In the less structured ecosystems, a much more detailed and robust marketing strategy is required. There is not just one agency to focus your marketing efforts on, but dozens of potential learners spread across different organisations. CLC should utilise multiple channels to reach potential learners and motivate them to enrol. These include traditional mass media, trade magazines and newspapers, digital marketing, social media, email campaigns, fairs and other industry events. It is important to find a good combination of all of them and take into account the costs, which vary greatly depending on the channel. To attract the attention of potential learners and motivate them, it is important to highlight the benefits of the education and training offered, such as “the quality of the content, delivery method, accreditation, personalisation, convenience, affordability, social impact, reputation of the provider” (Faster Capital, 2024), skills enhancement, career advancement, higher work proficiency, educational attainments, international and university composition of training teams,

flexible training modalities, etc. In some cases, cooperation with relevant professional organisations can help to attract learners.

In the case of a medium structured ecosystem, marketing activities lie somewhere in between. The CLC may approach a large company, a municipality or some of them and carry out similar training activities as in highly structured ecosystems. The CLCs do not have to recruit the learners themselves. If there are a larger number of organisations from which the learners come, CLCs can approach their associations, e.g. chambers, trade unions or professional associations. They can open the door to potential learners and do some of the internal promotion. However, the role of CLCs in this case is more demanding and also includes direct promotion and recruitment of training programmes to groups of potential learners. Mass media and social media can also be used in this case.

3.8. Ensuring financial and functional sustainability

Financial sustainability means that the payments received cover the full cost of providing learning services that can be maintained over time. However, the prices set should be realistic. A simple method of pricing is to look at comparable services offered by competitors, e.g. other universities, consultancy and training agencies and professional organisations. The parameters of comparison vary from the duration of the learning provision, the involvement of learners and other partners in the learning process in the form of sharing staff and facilities, the quality of staff, facilities and equipment, the provision of learning materials and information support for learners, the reputation of the learning provider, etc. If the university where the CLC is located offers other LLL services, there may not be much scope for free pricing above or below the price of comparable services.

The other method is an analytical method where all costs of inputs to the learning process are considered step by step. These include: Content development, platform development, maintenance and hosting, labour costs (experts, coordinators, administration, staff training), costs of equipment, premises and other facilities, learner hospitality, overheads, etc. The calculation may also take into account situational factors such as the reputation of the CLC and the participating universities, the demand for certain learning services and their specificities, the international composition of staff and students, etc. The price calculated based on costs may exceed the prices of comparable services. In such a situation, a recalculation or reorganisation of the learning process is necessary to reduce some costs.

Proper pricing is especially important in the low structured ecosystems where a free market situation is expected and a CLC faces multiple competitors. It is to be expected that dispersed learners will compare the offers of different learning providers when paying for the service themselves. In highly structured ecosystems, a CLC will not charge learners directly for the learning service. It will negotiate the price with partners, e.g. public service organisations, ministries, municipalities, large companies, etc. The negotiations will take into account the cost of the CLC's services, from which the cost of the services provided by the partners (facilities, experts, etc.) will be deducted.

As mentioned above, there can be different payers for the learning services: Individuals, their employers and the state or municipality. In the case of the state or municipality, they do not always pay for the service as employers, but through their programmes aimed at educating and training citizens, such as improving digital literacy and language skills, increasing political participation,

culture and civic skills, retraining of redundant workers, training for work in high-demand occupations, etc. The state and its authorities usually arrange the payments from such programmes themselves. However, in low-structured ecosystems, there are CLCs that should apply for funding from public funds. We are still waiting for the introduction of citizens' learning accounts, which would simplify the learning process for all stakeholders.

In general, there are several ways to charge for learning services: "tuition fees, subscription fees, advertising fees, sponsorship fees, licence fees, certification fees, donation fees or commission fees" (Faster Capital, 2004). A CLC must decide which business model to choose. This will depend on the type of learners, the mode of delivery and the agreement with partners, which may involve a lump sum payment for the course or a payment for individual learners.

Functional sustainability means that a CLC should not only plan for cost efficiency. It should also pay attention to the other conditions necessary to continuously replicate and improve learning services. This includes maintaining good relationships with partners, especially the organisations that send learners to the courses and the experts involved in delivering the services. Equally important is the satisfaction of learners who may return to the courses and recommend them to others. The challenge is "to create loyal and satisfied customers, build strong and lasting relationships with partners and stakeholders, and contribute to social and environmental causes" (Faster Capital, 2024).

3.9. Obtaining feedback and continuously improving

To ensure functional sustainability and continuous improvement of services, a CLC must implement a quality assurance mechanism. This includes monitoring and ongoing assessment of the learning process as well as various forms of final evaluation. It is necessary to spend some time and resources to obtain feedback from learners, experts and partners. Different methods and tools can be used, e.g. questionnaires after each course provided by learners and experts/mentors, final evaluation questionnaires also provided by partners, ongoing evaluation meetings of coordinators with learners and experts, final evaluation meetings conducted with each partner separately or in a joint evaluation panel, interviews with learners' representatives and with partners, focus group evaluations, etc. It is important to collect reliable information on the strengths and weaknesses of the learning process, focusing on learning outcomes. Particular attention should be paid to the (dis)satisfaction of learners and sending organisations. It is helpful if indicators are defined for each input, process and output. They enable analytical work and more reliable conclusions. The information gathered and the analyses carried out form the basis for improving curricula and their implementation. When applied in each learning cycle, they enable longitudinal analyses of curricula and their implementation developments.

3.10. Introducing enablers and removing obstacles

To ensure that the business model functions smoothly, you should pay attention to various enablers and possible obstacles. Firstly, you should check whether all outstanding issues with external partners have been clarified. In particular, if external partners are involved in sending learners, providing learning facilities and their experts, it is important that the CLC is in full agreement with

them. It is desirable to have a formal agreement that includes the responsibilities of each partner, the sharing of costs, the agreement on the price of the service, the method of payment, the form of certificates, etc.

The most important internal partners are the experts, the members of the CLC and others, as well as the coordinators and administrative staff. They should first be informed about the LLL plans and encouraged to actively participate in their implementation. For them, the provision of LLL is not only a new professional challenge, but also an additional workload in unusual time slots for which they expect remuneration. They should receive additional remuneration or be able to reduce their other work commitments. Universities that already offer LLL can apply existing practise to the new CLC activities, including any adaptations.

The provision of LLL will require some additional facilities and flexible use of existing facilities to suit learners' schedules. If premises and equipment are shared with other departments, they should be available at irregular times during the day or week when access to support services in libraries, computer rooms, laboratories, etc. is enabled. It is important that employers provide training places in work environments, including access to the required technology.

Ideally, the entire learning cycle is supported by a digital platform, starting with advertising the programme, recruiting and enrolling learners, providing learning materials and enabling interactive learning and communication between students, experts and coordinators, submitting assignments, assessing individual assignments and the learning process, its organisation, the facilities and the teachers involved, issuing certificates, reporting, etc. If universities already use such platforms, they can also be used for CLC activities.

One important question remains unanswered, namely how CLC activities can be harmonised beyond the university where it is mainly located. It would be desirable for CLCs, which are composed of experts from different EUTOPIA member universities, to involve learners from different countries in their LLL activities and to issue certificates that are recognised in all states from which the learners originate. This is an additional challenge that should also be addressed from a business model perspective.

4. Pilot examples of CLCs' Business Models

The relevance and applicability of the general business model must be tested in specific CLCs. Two CLCs at the University of Ljubljana were tested using the proposed business model: i) Veganism vs. animal protein consumption, led by Modest Vengušt and ii) Design & Science, led by Boštjan Botas Kenda.

The methodology used was: we organised a workshop in which both leaders of the CLCs participated and were introduced to the FLECSLAB business models and the potential of LLL in a transnational context. The nature of the ecosystem in which they operate was presented by both leaders. Then, according to the guidelines, both leaders were given a template with questions and dimensions to fill in. Recently, we have got the two reports in the given template. Without further ado, we have included them on the following pages. Both communities are presented with the key dimensions that make up their potential for LLL in the business plan.

The first report sent in by the CLC on veganism and animal protein consumption provides relevant answers to some of the questions in the template. However, this CLC was only founded a year and a half ago. It has not yet consolidated and has not yet gained enough experience to draw up a detailed business plan. The coordinator believes that a business plan is useful if it is understood flexibly, but at this stage it would be premature.

The second report comes from the CLC for Design and Science. This report elaborates the business model more in detail. This has been made possible due to longer experiences of the CLC and its consolidation. This case shows also that the authors elaborated the model beyond its narrow business frames towards a wider model on the organisation of learning services for mixed groups of adults. It cannot be overlooked that the authors understand some questions in their own way along with their practical experiences. This can be understood as a shortcoming of the general business model and related template, but also as a basis for their improvements. We certainly need more detailed discussion with the CLCs before they start with the implementation of the general business model.

4.1. Veganism Vs Animal Protein Consumption

Veganism is a movement with a growing social footprint that spreads its cause through activism and politics. Some social interactions of vegans have also contributed to the development of vegaphobia, especially within communities directly or indirectly dependent on animal production for food consumption. The European Union relies on small to medium-sized farming to feed its population and to sell surplus agricultural produce outside the EU. Small to medium sized farms are more easily transformed into more modern and sustainable farming units than large intensive farms. However, a reduction in the production of meat and food of animal origin (milk, eggs, etc.) would cause significant economic hardship for farmers. Currently, there is no EU policy aimed at reducing the production of meat and food of animal origin, nor are active measures being taken to change farming practices away from the production of animal proteins in line with the vegan philosophy. EU agricultural policy is mainly aimed at optimizing food production in terms of market regulation and protection of nature and vulnerable rural communities. It is also important to note that the vegan

market in the EU is growing rapidly and should not be ignored. The extreme opinion tendencies of vegans and their opponents have arisen from the diversity of opinion dynamics and the presence of individual "stubbornness". However, some people and professions are caught between opposing groups and opinions because they cannot afford to choose sides, or they would lose their purpose and mission. Veterinary medicine is one such profession. Veterinarians are tasked with protecting animals, yet most of them consume animal proteins. Veterinarians must also treat carnivorous pets that are fed vegan diets by their vegan owners, thus transferring the eating disorders common in the vegan community to the animals. These practices are also at odds with the vegan philosophy, as they can harm animals. The differences of opinion are becoming so great that they should no longer be ignored. Adjusting to these differences should begin with discussion, education, research, and policies based on reliable and transparent data (EUTOPIA, 2024).

Table 2. The nature of the CLC ecosystem - Veganism Vs Animal Protein Consumption

<p>Identification of target audience, learning needs and market demand for your CLC services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify potential learners and estimate their number per year ▪ Estimate their learning needs in terms of knowledge and skills ▪ Define the methods of learners and their needs estimation 	<p>Primary target audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students of veterinary medicine or other biomedical sciences, estimated number 100/year. This is an important need for the target groups, as current knowledge is insufficiently integrated into the curricula. ▪ Veterinary chamber as representative of the profession in the public sector and industry. This target group is more complex and requires a systems approach. Estimated size of target group 50/year. This is a critical need for the target groups as human welfare is not seen as a priority or a priority over ethical considerations towards animal patients. It is seen as a taboo subject. <p>The primary target audience would directly benefit from the solutions developed by this learning community.</p> <p>Secondary target audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educational/healthcare regulators at local and national levels or legislative bodies. The target audience is small but potentially influential. <p>The secondary audience has a significant impact on the delivery of services to the primary audience.</p>
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<p>Putting learners to the centre by curriculum development /adjustment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describe the method of curriculum adjustment including learners involvement ▪ Describe how the curriculum is adjusted to learners with respect to: length and time of learning, learners life and work roles ▪ Present curriculum adjusted to the identified learners ▪ Insert your curriculum into the qualification framework 	<p>Based on the needs of the primary audience:</p> <p>The knowledge gathered by the learning community is already integrated into the core and elective curricula. The core curriculum currently utilizes resources provided by members of the learning community. The delivery of education will be transferred to internal staff by the end of 2025, with collaboration with external parties in line with further collaboration agreements and lifelong learning requirements.</p> <p>Knowledge from the learning community should remain an integral part of the curriculum. This was also part of this learning community's proposal to the European Commission, which is considering regulatory changes in veterinary education and accreditation at EU level.</p> <p>Recognition of learning achievements for students will continue to be in the form of ETCS or in the form of licensing credits for the professional organization (i.e. Veterinary chamber). The purpose of this agenda is to formally implement knowledge into core educational strategies, which goes beyond the strategies of models based on the recognition of achievements through micro-credits.</p> <p>Technology: on-site, online, hybrid, combined. Regulatory requirements make the framework and tools compatible within the EU and robust for cooperation outside the EU.</p> <p>Methods: lectures, workshops, exercises, seminars, webinars, on-the-job training, R&D projects led by established experts in the field, self-study, combined.</p> <p>Teaching/learning materials: Online textbooks, exercises and tests, development projects, workshop handouts.</p>
<p>Providing flexible learning delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify learning locations, learning time frames, learning technologies, learning and teaching methods learning / teaching materials ▪ Is there a digital platform supporting learning planned for? 	<p>The learning community was created for a teaching institution that has all the prerequisites to maintain physical and digital standards to facilitate learning. The aim of the learning community was to gather means from the engagement of experts with different relevant backgrounds to better enable learning technologies, learning and teaching methods and learning/teaching materials. The digital platform will be established in 2025 according to plans agreed between the members of the CLC.</p>
<p>Establishing partnership and collaboration for co-creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which partners are / will be engaged in your CLC? ▪ Is there a formal partnering agreement / committee previewed? 	<p>The partners were strategically invited to become members of the CLC based on their expertise. The partners come from UL, Unive and Warwick. The content of the collaboration is to break down the objectives appropriately, design a curriculum and then implement it. This part of the objective is now being implemented as part of the accredited degree program. As the CLC currently operates mainly on the basis of donations of time and money, all the work depends on the variable availability of members. The next phase</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the content of collaboration: curriculum design, curriculum implementation (experts, placements, study cases, projects, financing...), facilities sharing, monitoring and evaluation ▪ Is there a communication plan previewed? 	<p>of CLC activities will be to establish a framework for formal collaboration between the institutions and to divide the tasks between improving teaching and preparing proposals for financially supported projects.</p>
<p>Engaging qualified instructors and facilitators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who is the CLC coordinator / project manager? ▪ Are external experts engaged – in which roles and for which contents? ▪ Is the circulation of experts between CLC and external partners planned for and how? ▪ Is the training of trainers previewed and how? 	<p>The CLC coordinator comes from the institution that has recognized its curricular problems and the inadequacies of its expertise to address the deficiencies. External members of this and other CLCs have been selected to improve the knowledge needed to address the problems identified by the coordinator’s institution. This is an active CLC that has implemented several activities and is actively planning the final phase of CLC activities in 2025, which will include appropriate training for members and non-members of this CLC to further benefit from the work of the CLC.</p>
<p>Providing for certification and accreditation of learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How the learning outcomes are / will be evaluated internally and externally? ▪ Will the curriculum be accredited externally and how? ▪ How the acquired knowledge and skills will be certified? ▪ Is a micro credentials approach planned for? 	<p>Learning outcomes are evaluated as per official strategies employed by the institution and external stakeholders. The institution’s curricula and activities are national and internationally accredited.</p> <p>A microcredit-based learning environment was an important part of the original plan for the CLC activities. However, the administrative problems in the allocation of microcredits were an obstacle to further focus on this activity within the time allocated for this CLC activity .Further CLC activities can create the environment that will implement the microcredit-based learning environments morally and transnationally.</p>
<p>Marketing and outreach activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define how your training offer will reach the potential learners: through which organisations, by which communication means. ▪ Design the operational plan of marketing activities. ▪ How the offer will be designed: which benefits for learners will be put forward and how? 	<p>The CLC has not yet reached the level of sufficiency and know-how that would justify a meaningful marketing of its products.</p> <p>The CLC’s outreach activities have been divided into three phases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Informing veterinary students of the Veterinary faculty about the opportunities offered by the CLC, with the possibility of active participation in the form of seminar work. CLC members also reached out to graduates and postgraduates from Eutopia partner universities, but this was not successful due to problems related to microcredits. This phase was successfully completed by organizing several student activities that formed the basis for integrating the CLC main theme into core and elective courses. 2. Outreach to the professional community outside the institution and the general public. This was accomplished by organizing the Eutopia section at the National Veterinary Congress and participating in live interviews in the national media explaining the background for the creation of the CLC and its goals.

	<p>3. This next phase serves to reach the global public and discuss the CLC's goals on a platform that is easily accessible worldwide. The information and ideas gathered will be documented and resources will then be created to provide a long-term framework for the unit's work after it is no longer part of the Eutopia community. This phase should also serve as a marketing tool and create further resources for sustainable operations in the future.</p>
<p>Providing for financial and functional sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify the unit(s) of your service to be offered on the market ▪ Calculate the price of your service units taking into account the costs and competitors ▪ Identify payers for the services and methods of payment. 	<p>As already mentioned, after just over a year of this CLC work, we are not yet at a stage that would justify setting marketing targets. We also need to make a clear distinction between the moral/ethical commitment of CLC members to their working community and the transactional pieces that can be marketed for the benefit of the community. The members are familiar with the main objectives of Eutopia and will work towards creating a sustainable teaching, research and business environment for the community to transform itself into a self-sufficient and independent entity.</p>
<p>Obtaining feedback and making continuous improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define the methods of how the feedback on the curriculum and its implementation will be collected. ▪ Define how the collected information will be processed and how the results will serve for the curriculum improvements. 	<p>This has already been explained in the above section of this document. The results of CLC engagement are a public good and will remain available as such. This includes finding better solutions for implementation in the curriculum.</p>
<p>Introducing enablers and removing barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How the CLC members will be motivated and remunerated for the (extra) work in CLC? ▪ How the needed facilities for the CLC curriculum implementation will be provided? ▪ Will a learning platform supporting curriculum implementation will be provided for the entire learning cycle? 	<p>This too has already been explained in the above section of this document. We have a moral obligation to continue to seek solutions to the problems that this CLC is working on. In the next phase, funds will be sought from public and private stakeholders to remunerate professional activities related to the work of the CLC.</p> <p>The activities related to the CLC that are included in the core and elective courses will remain in place and thus subject to the obligations that the University and Faculty have to their students.</p>
<p>Any other element of the business plan?</p>	<p>Please note that this community was founded more than a year after the start date of the Eutopia Learning Communities project (March 2023). It only consolidated its membership in the summer of 2024 with an aggressive and meaningful recruitment of experts at Eutopia partner universities. Therefore, the data collected so far is not sufficient to lay the foundations for a thorough business plan and future independent and sustainable activities.</p>

4.2. Design & Science

This Community is situated within the context of a transdisciplinary summer school focusing on building an understanding of visual communication design in correlation with various scientific fields. Among these, each year a different topic is set. Design methods are introduced to achieve interpretation of scientific processes and findings and integration of visual theory with science.

Students will develop a clear understanding of how to design a visual communication language to appeal to users of scientific knowledge on the one hand, and how to introduce the principles of design thinking into scientific methodologies. This community offers students the opportunity to improve knowledge in the field/s of synergy between science and the arts, tackling the interdisciplinary fields where science enlightens the public and society through visual communication (EUTOPIA, 2024).

Table 3. The nature of the CLC ecosystem – Design & Science

Identification of target audience, learning needs and market demand for your CLC services

- Identify potential learners and estimate their number per year
- Estimate their learning needs in terms of knowledge and skills
- Define the methods of learners and their needs estimation

The target audience of our D+S Summer School are primarily master's and doctoral students, as well as young professionals, who are interested in the intersection of design and various scientific fields. These individuals would be seeking opportunities to engage in multidisciplinary collaboration and gain practical skills in design and research. The learning needs of this audience would include acquiring a deeper understanding of the connection between design and science, developing interdisciplinary teamwork skills, and gaining practical experience through hands-on projects. The market demand for this profile is driven by the increasing recognition of the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and the demand for professionals who can bridge the gap between design and scientific fields to solve complex problems.

The potential learners for our program would be master's and doctoral students, as well as young professionals, from diverse backgrounds such as design, science, architecture, art, computer science, social sciences, natural sciences, and related practices. It is ideal to have groups ranging in size from 20 to 25 participants, divided into three groups with approximately 5 to 9 members each. This allows for effective communication and group work. However, it is worth noting that if there are fewer participants, the group size can be smaller. Conversely, if there is a larger number of participants, it is advisable to divide them into multiple smaller groups. To ensure optimal learning and guidance, each group should have its own mentor. Taking into account previous interest in our activities and considering market demand, we estimate that we could attract approximately 100 learners per year. This number is subject to variation depending on specific marketing efforts, available resources, and the capacity of the program.

The methods of learners and their needs estimation are essential for the evaluation process in our summer school. This process involves the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of information to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of our activities.

The methods of learners and their needs estimation are integral to the implementation of our innovative D+S teaching method in our summer school. D+S is a flexible approach that promotes interdisciplinary networking among students from various disciplines, including arts, humanities, and scientific branches. This collaboration is fostered through teamwork, learning by doing, condensed and interactive learning, and peer-to-peer interactions.

The structure of the D+S method incorporates modern interactive elements of teaching, such as field trips, workshops, education through nutrition, experiential learning, multimedia content, and design sprints. The implementation of the summer school is designed to facilitate constant socialization and interaction among participants, experts, and the organizers throughout the duration of the program.

	<p>Our evaluation process is one of the most important aspects of our summer school program, encompassing pre-activity, ongoing, and overall evaluation. Pre-activity evaluation starts with a participant questionnaire to understand their competences and expectations, helping us customize the program to their specific needs. Ongoing evaluation allows us to monitor progress in real-time, identifying challenges and making necessary adjustments. Overall evaluation ensures quality implementation and achievement of set objectives, shaping future adaptations. This comprehensive evaluation approach is ingrained in everything we do, from pre-event planning to the course of the event and post-event reflections. The primary objectives of these evaluation methods are to understand participants' needs, preferences, and challenges and to deliver a personalized, high-quality learning experience. Through these evaluations, we aim to create an engaging summer school program that promotes interdisciplinary collaboration, meets individual learning needs, and achieves our educational objectives.</p>
<p>Putting learners to the centre by curriculum development /adjustment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describe the method of curriculum adjustment including learners involvement ▪ Describe how the curriculum is adjusted to learners with respect to: length and time of learning, learners life and work roles ▪ Present curriculum adjusted to the identified learners ▪ Insert your curriculum into the qualification framework 	<p>Method of Curriculum Adjustment Including Learners' Involvement</p> <p>The curriculum is adjusted through a multidisciplinary approach, involving various stakeholders such as participants, professionals from academia, civil society, the cultural sector, and businesses. By involving a diverse group of experts, the curriculum ensures a holistic and interactive learning experience. The involvement of learners is integral, and they are placed at the centre of the process, contributing to discussions, participating in workshops, and engaging in peer-to-peer learning.</p> <p>Curriculum Adjustment to Learners with Respect to Length and Time of Learning, and Learners' Life and Work Roles</p> <p>The summer school is carefully planned in advance, with a known and fixed duration of 5 working days. However, to ensure a comprehensive learning experience, participants are asked to provide some input prior to the event itself and also after it. This includes pre-event tasks and post-event reflections to solidify their learning experience. During the summer school, a significant emphasis is placed on providing feedback. Participants are constantly engaged and are actively involved in the project-making process throughout the duration of the program. This active participation not only enhances their learning experience but also ensures that they can apply their knowledge and skills in a practical, real-world context.</p> <p>This approach ensures that while the formal instruction time is structured and fixed, the overall learning journey is continuous and interactive, accommodating the ongoing involvement of learners in various roles.</p> <p>Present Curriculum Adjusted to the Identified Learners</p>

	<p>The curriculum includes various innovative and interactive teaching methods such as field trips, workshops, multimedia content etc. The focused topic or research question is broken down into smaller sections, making it easier to understand and engage with. Topics are selected to allow the inclusion of diverse participant profiles and are addressed by inviting professionals from various relevant fields to give short lectures or conduct workshops. This enhances the learning experience and makes it relevant to the real-world scenarios faced by learners in different roles.</p> <p>Inserting the Curriculum into the Qualification Framework</p> <p>To align the curriculum with the qualification framework, it integrates competencies that are crucial for professional development in the modern era. Key learning outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of creative self-confidence ▪ Understanding the role of design and science in social contexts ▪ Skills for effective participation in interdisciplinary teams ▪ Practical learning and application of knowledge in real-life situations ▪ Adaptability to different learning environments ▪ Active participation in interactive tasks <p>The curriculum also emphasizes the importance of partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation, ensuring that learners gain a broad perspective and in-depth understanding of the subject matter. This comprehensive approach ensures that the curriculum meets the standards of the qualification framework and equips learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their fields.</p>
<p>Providing flexible learning delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify learning locations, learning time frames, learning technologies, learning and teaching methods learning / teaching materials ▪ Is there a digital platform supporting learning planned for? 	<p>Learning Locations</p> <p>The summer school is a multidisciplinary program that promotes research and experimentation at the intersection of design and various scientific fields. The method includes interactive elements such as field trips, workshops, and design sprints. The participants are constantly socializing and interacting with experts and organizers throughout the course of the school, which generally suggests that the learning occurs in various physical locations tailored to the activities being conducted.</p> <p>Learning Time Frames</p>

The summer school has a fixed duration of 5 working days. However, participants are asked to provide active input both prior to the event and after it. This creates a continuous learning experience that extends beyond the formal timeframe of the summer school.

Learning Technologies

Considering the interdisciplinary and modern approach, various interactive and digital tools are regularly employed to facilitate learning and communication among participants.

Learning and Teaching Methods

The curriculum employs a variety of innovative and interactive teaching methods, including:

- Field trips
- Workshops
- Multimedia content
- Design sprints
- Teamwork and peer-to-peer learning
- Hands-on practical learning exercises

Participants engage in lectures or workshops conducted by professionals from academia, civil society, and businesses. The teaching methods are highly interactive and participatory, encouraging active learning and project-based approaches.

Learning/Teaching Materials

The teaching materials include a mix of lectures, multimedia content, workshops, and interactive sessions. The materials are tailored to the specific topics of the summer school and are designed to be engaging and relevant to the learners' needs. The structured curriculum allows for the integration of various teaching materials to support the diverse learning activities conducted during the program.

Digital Platform Support

	<p>Digital platforms are usually integrated to facilitate communication, collaboration, and access to learning materials before, during, and after the summer school sessions. This aligns with the need for participants to provide input and feedback continuously throughout the learning experience.</p> <p>By integrating all these elements, the summer school offers a comprehensive, interactive, and flexible learning environment that supports the diverse needs and roles of learners.</p>
<p>Establishing partnership and collaboration for co-creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which partners are / will be engaged in your CLC? ▪ Is there a formal partnering agreement / committee previewed? ▪ What is the content of collaboration: curriculum design, curriculum implementation (experts, placements, study cases, projects, financing...), facilities sharing, monitoring and evaluation ▪ Is there a communication plan previewed? 	<p>Partners Engaged in the CLC Design+Science Creative Learning Community (CLC) is a collaborative effort led by the University of Ljubljana, in partnership with association PiNA, University of Split, and FH Joanneum. Additionally, colleagues from CY Cergy Paris Université and Warwick University actively co-create the summer school as official partners within the Eutopia alliance. Formal partnerships are established through signed Letters of Intent involving the University of Ljubljana, association PiNA, University of Split, and FH Joanneum, ensuring a structured and committed collaboration.</p> <p>Formal Partnering Agreement/Committee</p> <p>The partnership is formalized with a Letter of Intent signed by the main collaborating institutions (University of Ljubljana, association PiNA, University of Split, and FH Joanneum).</p> <p>Content of Collaboration</p> <p>The content of collaboration spans several areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Curriculum Design and Implementation: The organizing committee for each year's edition is responsible for developing the curriculum content and selecting the topic, mentors, and external speakers. Each collaborating institution contributes people in various domains depending on the year and the topic. ▪ Experts and Placements: External experts from academia, civil society, and business sectors are engaged to provide lectures, workshops, and practical learning experiences. ▪ Study Cases and Projects: Collaborative projects and study cases are integral parts of the curriculum, ensuring practical application of knowledge. ▪ Financing and Facilities Sharing: Partner institutions share resources, including finance and facilities, to support the smooth execution of the program. So far it was combination of Cohesion funds, UNI development funds, Eutopia and scholarship funds

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and Evaluation: Continuous feedback mechanisms and reflection sessions involving expert commentators ensure thorough monitoring and evaluation of the program. <p>Communication Plan</p> <p>Our focus is on regular interaction and feedback, combined with structured organizational efforts, implies the presence of an effective communication strategy. This is reflected in the ongoing socializing and interaction between participants, experts, and organizers throughout the duration of the summer school. By dividing the responsibilities among the organizing committee, mentors, and external speakers, and involving each partnering institution in specific roles depending on the topic and year, the CLC ensures a flexible and effective collaboration that promotes high-quality, interdisciplinary learning experiences.</p>
<p>Engaging qualified instructors and facilitators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is the CLC coordinator / project manager? Are external experts engaged – in which roles and for which contents? Is the circulation of experts between CLC and external partners planned for and how? Is the training of trainers previewed and how? 	<p>The Creative Learning Community (CLC) is coordinated by a core team comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boštjan Botas Kenda - coordinator: Professor of visual communications at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana, and a driving force behind the Design+Science methodology. Co-lead of Design+Science Eutopia Learning Community Marina Klemenčič: Associate Professor of biochemistry at the Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology, University of Ljubljana, and co-founder of the Design+Science summer school. Co-lead of Design+Science Eutopia Learning Community Borut Jerman: President of the association PiNA, specializing in fostering cross-sectoral collaboration in art, culture, and critical reflection and co-founder of the Design+Science summer school. Emil Kozole: Designer and Assistant Professor at Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana, a core team member actively contributing to the development and implementation of Design+Science programs and co-founder of the Design+Science summer school. Jernej Kejžar: Assistant at Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana, Member of the Design+Science team, contributing expertise in interdisciplinary collaboration, member of Design+Science Eutopia Learning Community Maja Drobne: Head of Education at association PiNA, facilitator and co-founder of the Design+Science summer school Dominique Sciamma, Professor, director of CY School of Design, Paris, F, keynote speaker at the Design+Science summer school, member of Design+Science Eutopia Learning Community

- Adela Glyn-Davies, Associate Professor, Head of Design Studies of University of Warwick, UK, speaker at the Design+Science summer school, member of Design+Science Eutopia Learning Community
- Ivica Mitrović, Associate Professor, Head of Design Studies of University Split, CRO, co-founder of the Design+Science summer school.
- Birgit Bachler, Head of Information Design programme, FH Joanneum, Graz A, co-founder of the Design+Science summer school.

This multidisciplinary team collaborates to design, implement, and continuously improve the CLC program, ensuring its alignment with contemporary educational and professional standards.

External experts are engaged in various capacities:

Lectures and Workshops:

Professionals from academia, civil society, the cultural sector, and business sectors are invited to deliver lectures or conduct workshops on topics pertinent to the summer school's theme.

Evaluation:

External experts provide feedback and critical commentary during closing events, offering diverse perspectives and ensuring the quality of outcomes.

Mentoring:

Experienced professionals act as mentors, guiding participants through the learning process, stimulating discussion, and ensuring quality results.

The circulation of experts is integral to the program's multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaboration.

This is facilitated through:

- Interactive Sessions: Inviting professionals to share their expertise via workshops and lectures.
- Partner Contributions: Partner institutions contribute experts for curriculum design and implementation, fostering an exchange of knowledge and practices across sectors and disciplines.

	<p>The training of trainers is one of a key component. Experts are selected based on their expertise in academic work, workshop facilitation, and familiarity with design-thinking methods. The methodology emphasizes preparing mentors to lead interdisciplinary group work effectively. Training activities are embedded in the process to ensure mentors understand the goals and interactive nature of the curriculum.</p>
<p>Providing for certification and accreditation of learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How the learning outcomes are / will be evaluated internally and externally? ▪ Will the curriculum be accredited externally and how? ▪ How the acquired knowledge and skills will be certified? ▪ Is a micro credentials approach planned for? 	<p>Providing for certification and accreditation of learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Internal Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning outcomes are assessed through multiple levels of evaluation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pre-Activity Evaluation: Participants complete a questionnaire on their competencies and expectations, which helps customize the program to their needs. ■ Ongoing Evaluation: Real-time feedback is collected during the program to monitor progress, identify challenges, and make necessary adjustments. ■ Final Evaluation: At the end of the program, a full assessment is conducted to ensure quality implementation and the achievement of objectives. Participants also engage in self-reflection and peer review. ● External Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ External experts participate in the final presentation, offering critical feedback on the participants' work. Their input provides validation of outcomes and identifies areas for improvement. ○ The collaboration with partner institutions, such as EUTOPIA universities, supports external evaluation through a structured and comparative review process. <p>Will the curriculum be accredited externally and how?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The curriculum is accredited externally through the ECTS points. Participants can earn 3 ECTS credits, which are recognized by participating institutions. The process involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Submission of the curriculum to the Senate of the University of Ljubljana for approval.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Fulfilment of requirements, including active participation, submission of assignments, and attending an induction event. <p>How will the acquired knowledge and skills be certified?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon completing the program, participants receive a certificate that details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The number of hours of participation. o The specific activities completed. o The names of organizing professors or team members. o The awarded 3 ECTS credits, where applicable. o This certification aligns with professional and academic standards, making it a valuable asset for career development. <p>Is a micro-credentials approach planned for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, we are planning, that in the future, we would as well integrate the micro - credentials approach, but this was not yet done.
<p>Marketing and outreach activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define how your training offer will reach the potential learners: through which organisations, by which communication means. ▪ Design the operational plan of marketing activities. ▪ How the offer will be designed: which benefits for learners will be put forward and how? 	<p>How will the training offer reach potential learners?</p> <p>The training offer will be disseminated through a multi-channel approach to ensure broad visibility and targeted outreach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Partner institutions such as the University of Ljubljana, University of Split, FH Joanneum, and association PiNA will actively promote the program. o International networks like the EUTOPIA alliance and collaborating academic, civil society, and business organizations will serve as distribution channels.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Professional associations and student organizations in relevant disciplines (e.g., design, science, technology, social sciences) will help target master's and doctoral students. • Communication Means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Digital Platforms: Dedicated program website, social media campaigns (LinkedIn, Instagram), and academic mailing lists. o Newsletters: Distributed by partner institutions and related organizations. o Printed Materials: Flyers, posters, and brochures distributed at universities, conferences, and workshops. o Events: Presentations at relevant academic and industry events, webinars, and info sessions for prospective participants
<p>Providing for financial and functional sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify the unit(s) of your service to be offered on the market ▪ Calculate the price of your service units taking into account the costs and competitors ▪ Identify payers for the services and methods of payment. 	<p>Operational Plan for Marketing Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparation Phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design a compelling and visually engaging digital branding package, that is each year created by Studio Ljudje, together with Nejc Prah (e.g., website, banners, templates). ▪ Develop key promotional materials such as infographics, FAQs, testimonials, and program videos. ▪ Maintain a dedicated website https://designscienceschool.webflow.io/ with details about the curriculum, application process, and program benefits. 2. Awareness Campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launch a pre-registration campaign to capture interest and collect contact details for further engagement. ▪ Post regular updates on social media, highlighting program benefits, past successes, and partner contributions. ▪ Share content on partner websites and include promotional banners on their digital platforms. 3. Engagement Phase:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disseminate success stories and case studies from past participants to build credibility. ▪ Share countdowns and reminder posts as application deadlines approach. <p>4. Application Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offer a helpdesk to assist applicants with queries about the application process. ▪ Send email reminders and provide detailed guidance on completing applications. <p>5. Follow-up and Conversion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Send personalized thank-you notes to applicants after registration. ▪ Conduct follow-ups with shortlisted candidates to ensure they complete all formalities. <p>How will the offer be designed: which benefits for learners will be put forward and how?</p> <p>The offer will highlight the following key benefits for learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interdisciplinary Learning Experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A unique blend of design, science, and other fields, fostering innovative problem-solving skills. ● Practical Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hands-on learning through projects, design sprints, and real-world case studies. ● Networking Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interaction with renowned experts, mentors, and international peers. ● Career Advancement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Certification with ECTS credits, enhancing academic and professional profiles. ● Customizable and Flexible Learning:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Tailored curriculum with modern experiential teaching approaches that adapt to participants' needs. ● Enhanced Creativity and Collaboration Skills: o Building creative confidence and the ability to work effectively in diverse teams.
<p>Obtaining feedback and making continuous improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define the methods of how the feedback on the curriculum and its implementation will be collected. ▪ Define how the collected information will be processed and how the results will serve for the curriculum improvements. 	<p>Methods for Collecting Feedback on the Curriculum and Its Implementation</p> <p>Pre-Activity Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participants will complete a pre-event questionnaire to assess their expectations, competencies, and specific learning needs. This ensures the curriculum is aligned with participant goals from the start. <p>Ongoing Feedback Mechanisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily Evaluations: Participants will provide daily feedback through short surveys or interactive feedback tools, focusing on the effectiveness of sessions, relevance of content, and overall satisfaction. ● Facilitated Feedback Sessions: Scheduled group discussions or feedback circles with participants, mentors, and organizers to address real-time challenges and gather qualitative insights. ● Observation: Organizers and mentors will observe group interactions and session dynamics to identify areas needing adjustment. <p>Post-Activity Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comprehensive Survey: Distributed to participants, mentors, and external experts to evaluate overall satisfaction, perceived value, and the impact of the curriculum. ● Structured Debrief: Involves organizers, mentors, and experts to review feedback, identify successes, and pinpoint challenges. ● Focus Groups: Small groups of participants may be invited for in-depth discussions about their experiences and suggestions for improvement.

	<p>Collected feedback will be systematically processed to ensure meaningful improvements in the curriculum. Quantitative data, such as satisfaction scores, will be compiled and analysed to identify trends, strengths, and areas for improvement, while qualitative data, including open-ended responses and group discussions, will be coded and categorized to highlight recurring themes and unique insights.</p> <p>A comprehensive feedback report and publication will summarize key findings, actionable recommendations, and metrics such as participant satisfaction rates, session effectiveness, and mentor performance. This report will be shared with the core team, mentors, and partners for collaborative review and informed decision-making.</p> <p>Based on feedback, topics and activities with low satisfaction or effectiveness will be revised or replaced, while high-performing sessions and methodologies will be emphasized and expanded. Additionally, insights will inform further training for mentors and experts to address delivery gaps.</p> <p>Structural adjustments, such as modifying timing, session formats, or group dynamics, will also be implemented. Pilot changes will be tested in subsequent sessions, with further feedback collected to ensure continuous refinement. Finally, results and insights will be integrated into planning for future iterations, fostering a progressively enhanced learning experience.</p>
<p>Introducing enablers and removing barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How the CLC members will be motivated and remunerated for the (extra) work in CLC? ▪ How the needed facilities for the CLC curriculum implementation will be provided? ▪ Will a learning platform supporting curriculum implementation will be provided for the entire learning cycle? 	<p>Motivation and Remuneration of CLC Members:</p> <p>CLC members will be motivated and supported through several measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional Growth Opportunities: Members will gain exposure to interdisciplinary collaboration, enhancing their skills and credentials. Participation in CLC activities will also contribute to professional visibility and career advancement. ▪ Recognition: Contributions will be acknowledged through formal certificates, public mentions in reports, and opportunities to co-author publications or present results at conferences. ▪ Supportive Work Environment: Flexible working arrangements, regular feedback, and team-building activities will ensure a positive and motivating environment for CLC members. <p>Provision of Needed Facilities for CLC Curriculum Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical Spaces: Partner institutions will provide access to classrooms, labs, workshops, and other specialized facilities required for hands-on activities and group work.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Technology Infrastructure: Essential equipment such as projectors, computers, and internet access will be made available to support interactive and multimedia teaching methods. ▪ Logistical Support: Resources for field trips, prototyping sessions, and other experiential learning activities will be secured in advance to ensure seamless implementation. ▪ Shared Resources: Facilities and materials will be shared among partner organizations to optimize resource utilization and minimize costs.
<p>Any other element of the business plan?</p>	<p>/</p>

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, we believe that wider testing of the general business model for lifelong learning is essential to evaluate, review and update it. We need more feedback from practitioners to check which elements of the model are incomprehensible or need to be understood and explained differently, which elements may be outdated and which should be elaborated in more detail. In this way, the model can be made more user-friendly and eventually simplified. It has become clear also that the general business model contains a significant heuristic power as demonstrated in the second presented case. However, closer and deeper collaboration with the CLC's representatives will be needed to enhance its comparable implementation.

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