



Key Messages from the DIGA Project Evaluation

The DIGA Learning Programme:

an innovative action learning digital competency programme for Entrepreneurial Trainers and Educators (ETEs)

The DIGA Learning Programme has been developed by the DIGA Erasmus+ Partnership 2014-2017 in response to the EU, National and Regional policy imperatives to enhance entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurial Trainers and Educators (ETEs) digital skills and competencies to operate in digitally-driven economy.

This programme has achieved a number of tangible benefits for Entrepreneurial Trainers and Educators (ETEs) working in across Europe.

- 7 partner organisations from 7 European countries working together
- 482 enterprise trainers & educators, learners and entrepreneurs consulted & responded to our survey, with findings informing the DIGA Learning Programme
- 5-module DIGA Learning Programme developed and materials produced
- At least 93 enterprise trainers & educators completing the 5-module DIGA Learning programme
- 57 enterprise trainers & educators providing feedback on their DIGA Learning programme experience

DIGA Participants feedback can be summarised in four primary themes:

- (i) *Number of Entrepreneur Trainers and Educators (ETEs) upskilled*
- (ii) *Digital Knowledge and Skills Enhancement*
- (iii) *Personal Reflection and*
- (iv) *Development Learning and Delivery Approaches*

(i) Number of Entrepreneur Trainers and Educators (ETE) upskilled

- ✓ 93 Entrepreneur, Trainers and Educators (ETE) completed the DIGA programme (in UK, Slovenia, Spain, Lithuania and Bulgaria)
- ✓ Delivered 8 x 5-module programmes of interactive experiential digital learning.
- ✓ Successful cross cultural partnership collaboration consisting of public and private sector organisations in UK; Ireland; Slovenia; Lithuania; Spain; Bulgaria and Norway.





(ii) **Digital Knowledge and Skills Enhancement**

- ✓ New learning accrued on the overarching digital EU policy which provided context and its impact on digital practice in the entrepreneurial context – *ETEs now see the reason why digital is so important and that it will be a critical entrepreneurial function.*
- ✓ Different and more informed viewpoint of what digital competency means, why it is important and useful to view digital as a competency requiring ongoing upskilling for all in the entrepreneurial firm.
- ✓ Increased awareness and knowledge of the role of and opportunities to apply digital in an entrepreneurial context in an integrated manner.
- ✓ *Important* demystification of the language and jargon of digital in an applied entrepreneurial context; and as a result participants are better equipped to incorporate digital as part of the business narrative – *moving digital from the peripheral to a core business function.*
- ✓ Comprehension of the components of a digital strategy and skills acquired in how to develop one in an entrepreneurial context – *tools and techniques for digital strategy development and implementation.*
- ✓ Acquired knowledge on a new concept, that of the Business Model Canvas, which was viewed very positively as a novel tool that can be used across a variety of enterprises irrespective of sector and in other business development programmes for small businesses.
- ✓ The adaption of digital content and practical examples to country and learner fit was rated highly – *strong in relevance and applicability and thus greater immediate transferability of the learning accrued.*
- ✓ Better understanding of the relationship and impact digital has on the ‘bottom line’ i.e. enterprise performance, growth and profitability.

Supporting comments from Participants:

‘The most useful aspect was to change my own thinking of digital strategy to a holistic way as opposed to primarily relating it to the marketing function and to also realise the limitations of encouraging and enabling entrepreneurs to adopt digital tools in relation to their own digital competence.’

‘I am much more able to empathise with my client’s fears, barriers and lack of knowledge with regards to ICT and am then able to articulate the benefit of both a strategic and practical use of available ICT.’

‘My understanding of how an integrated digital strategy improves business performance dramatically increased.’



'I am better able to demonstrate the importance of and stress the importance of digital strategies and competencies to my clients in my management consultancy businesses.'

'It's an important programme as businesses that embrace and integrate digital into their business will grow a lot quicker and create jobs quicker. It also emphasises that digital is not just about digital marketing, but digital tools can be used across all business functions.'

'It enables the businesses to grow at a faster rate when they embrace digital technologies.'

'It will increase your knowledge of the vast arrange of digital tools and technologies available that will enhance business performance.'

(iii) Personal Reflection and Development:

- ✓ Increased level of digital abilities generating confidence in the ability to support entrepreneurs/small business owners to develop an entrepreneurial digital strategy
- ✓ Greater confidence and ease in proactively discussing digital tools across business functions – making digital part of the discussions between ETE and their clients.
- ✓ Extended beyond 'digital comfort' zone to test newly acquired digital knowledge and tools.
- ✓ The 'Personal Development Plan' was cited as a new tool which has future use and transferability as it can be applied to track and build personal portfolio of training needs and aligned competency development programmes completed.
- ✓ Teamwork and peer learning activities facilitated sharing and exchanging of experiences in an honest and constructive manner.
- ✓ Expanded contacts and networks resulting in new business contacts and referrals for business and 'go to people'

Supporting Statements:

'I have met new people, expanded my Network'.

'It enabled me to build up their knowledge and tool kit of a wide variety of digital tools that can be used for a wide range of business activities – 'improve my personal brand.'

'My approach to teaching is now different taking into account the integration of digital tools into my trainings.'

'As a business consultant I will use my DIGA knowledge by improving [my] company's digital process and using IT.'





(iv) Delivery and Learning Mode:

- ✓ The interactive and practical learning (e.g. video cases studies, Business Model Canvas) provided participants with a better understanding of *when, where, what digital tool to use* and *how to apply* them within and across enterprise functions.
- ✓ The mix of knowledge transmission, peer learning and practical experiential learning activities achieved the simultaneous acquiring of digital knowledge and its application in applied entrepreneurial context.
- ✓ Enhanced confidence in digital skills and narratives and facilitated the expansion of their business services to broader client base – building the personal and business brand.

Supporting Statements:

'Video Case studies: Hearing real life examples of how businesses had integrated digital which resulted in business growth, demonstrated all the learning in short films.'

'BMC: very relevant to business advisers and could immediately see how to use them in work.'

'Segmenting the different business functions was a really useful exercise as it encouraged me to think about applying digital tools and technologies across functions other than just marketing.'

'The Case Studies were very useful as a way of using real examples to highlight the benefits of digital tools.'

'It was useful to do an exercise where we all shared different tools that we had heard of for the different functions as this provided an opportunity to then come back and research and pass on to clients.'

'Business Model Canvas was a useful tool...It is not only exciting for learners, but also motivates and gives energy for them to develop new ideas.'

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