Fostering green and social entrepreneurship in school education through a virtual business environment

WP3

"Virtual entrepreneurship for a sustainable world" Curriculum

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Introduction

Welcome to the "Virtual Entrepreneurship for a Sustainable World" curriculum, a pioneering educational program designed to empower the next generation of entrepreneurs. This curriculum is an integral component of the Green and Social StartUps project, aimed at integrating core principles of entrepreneurship with a profound commitment to sustainability and social responsibility.

In today's rapidly evolving global landscape, the need for innovative, environmentally conscious, and socially responsible business practices is more pressing than ever. Our world faces unprecedented challenges, including climate change, social inequalities, and a rapidly shifting economic environment. To address these challenges, we must cultivate a new breed of entrepreneurs - individuals who are not only equipped with foundational business skills but are also deeply attuned to the ethical, environmental, and social implications of their ventures.

This curriculum is structured into two main parts: the theoretical framework and practical application. The theoretical part comprises four comprehensive modules, each tailored to provide students with a nuanced understanding of entrepreneurship in the context of today's societal and environmental challenges. These modules are:

1. Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship: Laying the groundwork for understanding what entrepreneurship entails, including its significance in the modern world and the essential mindset for success.

2. Entrepreneurship for a Greener Planet: Focusing on how entrepreneurial endeavours can align with and promote environmental sustainability, addressing critical issues like climate change and ecological conservation.

3. Entrepreneurship for Social Change: Exploring the role of entrepreneurship in driving social change, solving community problems, and promoting social equity.

4. Inclusive Entrepreneurship: Aiming to empower diverse groups, including those in disadvantaged circumstances, to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

The practical part, the section entitled "Green & Social Entrepreneurship Simulation Activities", is an immersive experience where students apply their theoretical knowledge. Here, they will ideate,

develop, and manage virtual businesses, emphasizing environmental and social problem-solving. This hands-on approach not only reinforces learning but also instills a sense of real-world impact and responsibility.

Our curriculum goes beyond traditional business education. It aims to foster critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and ethical decision-making skills. By integrating these skills with a thorough understanding of sustainability and social responsibility, we are preparing students not just for business success, but for leadership roles in creating a more just, sustainable, and prosperous world. There is a need to shape a future where business success and social/environmental stewardship are not just compatible, but synergistic and mutually reinforcing.

Target Groups

Teachers are a pivotal target group for the "Virtual Entrepreneurship for a Sustainable World" curriculum. As educators and facilitators, they play a critical role in bringing the curriculum's content to life. The curriculum is designed to empower teachers with a rich array of resources, including comprehensive activities and lesson plans, interactive teaching aids, and assessment tools. These resources are tailored to help teachers effectively convey complex concepts of entrepreneurship, sustainability, and social responsibility in a manner that resonates with and engages students. The curriculum also supports teachers in their professional development, offering them new perspectives and methodologies in teaching, particularly in integrating real-world issues with classroom learning. It encourages teachers to not just impart knowledge, but to inspire, guide, and mentor students in exploring and understanding the role of entrepreneurship in addressing contemporary global challenges.

Students, specifically those in middle and high school, are the primary beneficiaries of the "Virtual Entrepreneurship for a Sustainable World" curriculum. This curriculum aims to enlighten and engage students by introducing them to the fundamentals of entrepreneurship through the lens of environmental stewardship and social responsibility. It is structured to stimulate their curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking skills, encouraging them to ponder and propose solutions to real-world

problems. By participating in this curriculum, students are expected to gain not just theoretical knowledge about entrepreneurship, but also practical skills and a strong ethical foundation, which are essential in today's rapidly evolving and interconnected world. The curriculum's blend of theoretical learning and practical application is designed to be accessible and engaging for students from diverse backgrounds, ensuring inclusivity and equal learning opportunities for all.

Learning Objectives for Students

By covering all the educational resources and activities, students will:

- ✓ Understand basic principles and dynamics of entrepreneurship, including its role and impact in the economy and society.
- ✓ Cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset, characterized by creativity, innovation, resilience, and adaptability, along with a proactive approach to problem-solving and opportunity identification.
- ✓ Comprehend the importance of sustainability in business, learning how entrepreneurial activities can contribute to environmental conservation and sustainable practices.
- ✓ Gain insight into the concept and role of social entrepreneurship in addressing social issues, including case studies of successful initiatives.
- ✓ Recognize the challenges and opportunities for entrepreneurship among underrepresented and disadvantaged groups, fostering empathy and inclusivity in business practices.
- ✓ Develop practical entrepreneurial skills, such as ideation, business planning, market analysis, and the execution of business ideas.
- ✓ Enhance critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, applying these skills to evaluate business scenarios, sustainability issues, and practical projects.
- ✓ Improve communication and collaboration skills within a business context, focusing on effective teamwork and leadership development.
- ✓ Understand the ethical implications of business decisions and the importance of social responsibility in entrepreneurship.
- ✓ Apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, assessing the social and environmental impact of entrepreneurial activities.

By achieving these objectives, students will be well-prepared not only for entrepreneurial ventures but also for responsible citizenship in a global community. In other words, they will be equipped with the tools and mindset to create, innovate, and lead in a way that harmoniously blends business success with social and environmental stewardship.

1. Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship

1.1. Overview

This module is meticulously designed to provide students with a thorough grounding in the essential principles and practices of entrepreneurship. The module aims to foster an entrepreneurial mindset and impart the skills necessary to identify and exploit business opportunities effectively.

Throughout the duration of this module, students will engage with a range of critical topics, including definition of entrepreneurship, personal traits of an entrepreneur, roles of an entrepreneurs, relations of business owner to its employees, etc. The curriculum emphasizes the creation of value through innovation and provides insights for navigating the complexities of launching and sustaining an own enterprise form both theoretical and practical point of view.

The instructional approach combines theoretical frameworks with practical applications, utilizing lectures, case studies, collaborative projects, and insights from experts. This multifaceted methodology ensures that students not only understand the theoretical underpinnings of the fundamentals of entrepreneurship but also acquire practical skills and real-world experience.

By the conclusion of this module, students will be equipped with a comprehensive toolkit for entrepreneurial success, whether their goal is to establish their own business, join a start-up, or drive innovation within an existing organization. Students are invited to join this intellectual journey, poised to transform entrepreneurial aspirations into actionable and sustainable ventures.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students will be able to:

- ✓ Define entrepreneurship and recognize its significance in the modern economy.
- ✓ Distinguish between various types of entrepreneurial ventures and their impact on society.
- ✓ Identify and cultivate personal traits and skills essential for successful entrepreneurship.
- ✓ Demonstrate the ability to think creatively and innovatively.
- ✓ Describe the key roles and responsibilities of entrepreneurs in business development.

✓ Assess the relationship between business owners and their employees, emphasizing effective leadership and management.

✓ Gain insights into the complexities of launching and sustaining a business from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

✓ Utilize strategic thinking to address challenges and opportunities in the entrepreneurial journey.

✓ Engage in case studies and collaborative projects to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world scenarios.

✓ Benefit from expert insights to enhance practical understanding and entrepreneurial skills.

1.2. Introduction to Entrepreneurship

The concept of entrepreneurship involves identifying and seizing opportunities to create and grow new ventures. Historically, entrepreneurship has driven economic growth and innovation, from early trade routes to the Industrial Revolution and today's tech-driven start-ups. Key entrepreneurial traits include resilience, creativity, and a willingness to take calculated risks. Entrepreneurs must possess a growth mindset, constantly learning and adapting to changing circumstances. They are often characterized by their passion, persistence, and ability to inspire and lead others. Successful entrepreneurs balance visionary thinking with practical execution, navigating challenges to turn ideas into sustainable businesses.

1.2.1. Concept and Historical Perspective

There are numerous definitions of an entrepreneurship. One of mostly cited is given by Shane and Venkataraman (2000) who stated the entrepreneurship is "how, by whom and with what effects opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated and exploited. (p.218)"

Ratten (2023) classifies definitions of entrepreneurship based on the type of entrepreneurship. In the next table there will be presented several types and also definitions of entrepreneurship.

Table 1: Definitions of types of entrepreneurships

Type	Definition	Source
Artisan	individuals who produce and sell products or services which possess a distinct artistic value resulting from a high degree of manual input	Ratten (2022)
Base of the pyramid	Is defined as entrepreneurship occurring amongst people with low income or scarcity of resources.	Ratten (2023)
Corporate	the process whereby an individual or a group of individuals, in association with an existing organization, create a new organization or instigate renewal or innovation within that organization	Sharma and Chrisman (1999
Craft	the process of utilizing craft-based methods to make products and services	Ratten (2022)
Creative	any kind of business behavior that is done in an inventive and different way	Ratten (2023)

Cultural	the business activity with a cultural connection	Ratten (2023)
Digital	subcategory of entrepreneurship in which some or all of what would be physical in the traditional settings has been digitized based on the use of digital media and technologies	Elia et al. (2020)
Education	an innovative business activity that involves the education sector	Ratten (2023)
Entrepreneurial ecosystem	set of entrepreneurial actors including potential customers and suppliers, universities and research centers, social and cultural operators, institutions and policy makers, large companies, innovative start-ups and entrepreneurs, experts and professionals, investors, and a pool of talented people	Elia et al. (2020)
Environmental	proactive business activity that incorporates some kind of environmental well-being initiative	Ratten (2023)
Family	entrepreneurship amongst a group of people with some form of bond	Ratten (2023)
Female	women who start a business, are involved in managerial decisions, and own a majority of the business	Ratten (2017)
Frugal	an individual trait reflecting one's general preference to (a) conserve resources and (b) apply an economic rationale in the acquisition of resources (i.e., assessing the opportunity cost of newly acquired resources)	Michaelis et al. (2020)
Gender	innovative business activity based on the gender of the entrepreneur	Ratten (2023)
Governmental	governmental related policy and procedure based on entrepreneurial innovation	Ratten (2023)
Health	risk taking and innovation in the health business sector	Ratten (2023)
Heritage	entrepreneurship involving some kind of heritage element	Ratten (2023)
Immigrant	entrepreneurship involving people who are born outside of their residing country	Ratten (2023)
International	a combination of innovative, proactive, and risk seeking behaviour that crosses national borders and is intended to create value in organizations	McDougall & Oviatt (2000)
Minority	a self-employment enterprise run by a person who is not typical of the mainstream society and can therefore be described by the adjective minority	Dana & Vorobeva (2021)
Poverty	assistance to lower-income entrepreneurs	Ratten (2023)
Small business	innovative business activity involving businesses with less than 50 employees	Ratten (2023)
Social	a process consisting in the innovative use and combination of resources to explore and exploit opportunities, that aims at	Mair and Marti (2004)

	catalysing social change by catering to basic human needs in a sustainable manner	
Sport	a sports-related organization acting innovatively in a business context	Ratten (2010)
Sustainable	entrepreneurship that incorporates a long-term perspective to economic, social, and environmental change.	Ratten (2023)
Technological	innovative business activity involving technology	Ratten (2023)
Venture financing	money spent on investments in new business ventures	Ratten (2023)

Source: Authors adaptation according the Ratten (2023)

Entrepreneurship, regardless of the specific definition, shares several common characteristics. It involves identifying and exploiting opportunities for creating value through innovative products, services, or processes. Entrepreneurs take on significant risks to pursue these opportunities, often investing their own resources. Creativity and innovation are central, as entrepreneurs strive to solve problems or meet needs in unique ways. Additionally, entrepreneurship requires strong leadership and management skills to build and grow a business. Entrepreneurs must be adaptable, able to navigate uncertainty, and resilient in the face of challenges. Ultimately, entrepreneurship aims at achieving economic growth and contributing to societal development.

1.2.2. Key Entrepreneurial Traits and Mindset

There is an approach in theory explaining through several theories of entrepreneurship what are main traits, mindset and motivational factors of entrepreneurship (Raimi, 2015):

- **Classical economic theory:** The theory views entrepreneurship as a catalyst and a driving force for all other production factors, especially land, labour, and capital. It emphasizes the 'economic function' of entrepreneurship, which involves taking risks and managing uncertainty by producing goods or buying goods for resale to generate profit. Say coined the term 'entrepreneur' to describe a **creative and discerning individual, a forecaster, an innovator, a project appraiser, and a risk-taker**. These unique qualities place entrepreneurs at the centre of economic theory. Sustainable economic growth relies on the presence of entrepreneurs.

- **Neo-classical economic theory:** The neo-classical theory highlights **knowledge, innovation, and creativity** as key drivers of entrepreneurship in the market system. When these elements combine, they lead to the development of new products, processes, technologies, markets, and businesses, aiming to shift the economy from a static equilibrium to a more advanced stage that fosters economic growth. This dynamic process is known as 'Schumpeter's creative destruction'.

- **Kirzner's theory:** In contrast to the neo-classical theory of creative destruction, Kirzner's theory takes a different approach. It equates entrepreneurship with **'alertness' or cognitive potential** — the ability to recognize and capitalize on economic opportunities within the market. Profits or financial returns are seen as rewards for this diligent alertness exhibited by entrepreneurs.

- **Opportunity-based theory:** Peter Drucker and Howard Stevenson refined Kirzner's concept of alertness and Schumpeter's creative destruction into the opportunity-based theory. Drucker posited that entrepreneurs **simply exploit changing opportunities within the environment**, while Stevenson emphasized that entrepreneurs are **uniquely positioned to seize economic opportunities** due to their resourcefulness, a trait that distinguishes them from others in the market system.

- **Human capital theory:** The theory fundamentally builds on Schultz's work, which characterizes the entrepreneur as a **type of human capital that drives societal change through experience and skills**. It advocates for education, training, skills acquisition, and capacity-building as essential for economic growth, entrepreneurial activity, and technological advancement. Consequently, investing in human capital is seen as a valuable investment to boost productivity.

- **Personality trait theory:** This psychological theory posits that certain individuals possess innate traits or qualities that enable them to succeed in entrepreneurial endeavours. To become successful entrepreneurs, these traits — such as **optimism, mental energy, opportunity awareness, creativity and innovation, management skills, business acumen, hard work, integrity, visionary leadership, competitiveness, and a zeal for continuous improvement** — need to be emulated or learned.

- **Locus of control theory:** This psychological theory suggests that success or failure in entrepreneurial activities is influenced by personal abilities (internal locus of control) and the level

of external support received from others (external locus of control). Individuals with **a high internal locus of control** believe they can shape life events to their advantage, while those with an external locus of control think that external forces like luck, chance, or fate, which are beyond human control, dictate life events.

- **Need for achievement theory:** This theory highlights a relationship between the need for achievement and economic development through entrepreneurial activity. It suggests that entrepreneurial efforts **driven by the need for achievement contribute to economic growth**. Conversely, individuals are motivated to pursue entrepreneurial aspirations due to their desire for achievement.

- **Risk taking theory:** The theory considers entrepreneurship as a mindset that encourages individuals to **take moderate or calculated risks, which can result in either benefits or losses**. The potential stream of benefits serves as a reward for assuming significant risks and responsibilities. Individuals engage in the risks associated with entrepreneurship primarily due to the economic opportunities available.

- **Sociological theories:** The theories demonstrate that the desire to become an entrepreneur, or to exhibit entrepreneurial behaviour and business-oriented actions, is significantly influenced by an **individual's socio-economic, cultural, and environmental conditions**. In essence, the prevailing economic circumstances and social cultures drive entrepreneurship in society by shaping people's attitudes and beliefs, which subsequently affect their entrepreneurial views, behaviour, and perceptions. Scholars have explained these socio-cultural and environmental influences on entrepreneurship through concepts like the social development method, the Schumpeter effect, and the desperation/refugee effect.

- **Anthropological theories:** These theories suggest that entrepreneurship is predominantly **influenced by cultural factors**, which vary in intensity across four clusters: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, and uncertainty avoidance. In essence, cultures promote distinct entrepreneurship clusters, where some cultures naturally exhibit **high individualism, low uncertainty avoidance, low power distance, and high masculinity** that motivate entrepreneurship.

To sum up, entrepreneurs possess a distinctive set of traits and a unique mindset that drive their success. Key traits include creativity, innovation, resilience, and a strong sense of vision. Entrepreneurs are adept at identifying and seizing opportunities, often demonstrating high levels of optimism and mental energy. They are risk-takers who embrace uncertainty, leveraging their resourcefulness and management skills to navigate challenges. A competitive spirit and a commitment to continuous improvement are also central to their approach. This mindset, characterized by a proactive attitude and an internal locus of control, enables entrepreneurs to influence their environment and achieve their goals, ultimately contributing to economic growth and societal progress.

Project partners

1.3. Roles and Responsibilities in Entrepreneurship

In entrepreneurship, roles and responsibilities are diverse and critical for success. Entrepreneurs identify and seize business opportunities, often through innovative solutions. They take on risks and manage resources, including finances, personnel, and time, to build and grow their ventures. Strategic planning and decision-making are key responsibilities, as entrepreneurs set goals and devise methods to achieve them. They lead and motivate teams, fostering a productive and dynamic work environment. Additionally, entrepreneurs must adapt to changing market conditions and customer needs, ensuring their business remains competitive. Ultimately, they drive economic growth and contribute to societal advancement through their entrepreneurial efforts.

1.3.1. As Business Owners and Employees

Business owners have faced the realty in which employees are pulling the enterprise toward success. Therefore, they defined following milestones to be followed (Raghava, 2021):

Creating a friendly workplace culture inside the organization – Entrepreneurs consider its employees to be partners and are incredibly important to us. Employees contributes to the growth and sustainability of a company in the same way as customers have generated income. It is important the entrepreneurs nurture a supportive, family-oriented culture in order to do this. It is a conclusion that excessive pressure and stress were not the best motivators for work. Knowledge workers need to be treated with respect and decency, appreciated for their ideas and contributions, and assisted in doing so. Those who were employed were the best persons to propose better and more efficient ways of doing things. As a result, it is essential to establish systems to guarantee that our workplace genuinely has a friendly atmosphere. Some of the practices that can be implemented for creating a friendly workplace culture are open office, where all employees could walk into the offices of the directors, regular (once a week) open house with random employees, team outings, annual day celebrations with the build-up spread over a few weeks, counselling services, a culture of team work and sharing, by encouraging people to share their knowledge and experience, etc. Becoming cordial with employees, expressing interest in their work, and acting upon their recommendations - many of which were crucial - all came at no expense.

Pursuing operational excellence and growth via ongoing education – Entrepreneurs work in the field of knowledge. Businesses that deal with knowledge require a procedure wherein employees maintain a current level of domain, skill, and personality development knowledge. All entrepreneurs need to make an effort to create a learning organization by implementing procedures that promoted information exchange between teams. Employees should be motivated to sign up for online courses and get further credentials, whether they be general or specific to their line of work. The primary value that should be emphasized by entrepreneur is the personal development of every one of its employees.

Being a responsible and ethical corporate citizen – Entrepreneurs should always make an effort to be good corporate citizens and to give back to the community as much as they were able to, considering their size. Whether this meant using financial resources (as it is the case in many natural disasters to which they can contribute both individually and as a company) or it involved allowing employees to take time off to participate in community-serving activities. It is important that the individual performing the work (in our instance, the knowledge worker) truly understands how to improve a process or provide better service, and as such, they ought to be given the chance to significantly impact the company. This contribution should be acknowledged and rewarded.

Creating a friendly workplace culture is crucial for the growth and sustainability of a company. Entrepreneurs must view employees as partners and treat them with respect, decency, and appreciation. Excessive pressure and stress are not effective motivators; instead, fostering a supportive, family-oriented environment is key. Practices such as open offices, regular open houses, team outings, and a culture of teamwork and knowledge sharing can help achieve this. By becoming cordial with employees, expressing interest in their work, and acting on their recommendations, entrepreneurs can create a genuinely friendly atmosphere that enhances productivity and innovation.

1.3.2. Case Studies: Diverse Entrepreneurial Journeys

Adi Dassler - Adidas

Some of today's leading brands began with modest origins, and Adidas founder Adolf "Adi" Dassler exemplifies this journey. Dassler started his shoemaking career in his mother's washroom in a small Bavarian town in Germany. Here, he began designing and making shoes with the goal of creating the best sports shoes for athletes. Although there were many shoemakers at the time, Dassler distinguished himself by seeking feedback from athletes about their shoe preferences, pain points, and opinions on his initial designs. This valuable feedback enabled Dassler to develop a highly regarded athletic shoe, establishing credibility when he registered "Adi Dassler Adidas Sportschuhfabrik" in 1949 at the age of 49. That same year, the first shoe featuring the iconic Adidas three stripes was registered. Dassler's vision to produce superior shoes for athletes was validated in 1954 when the German national football team won the World Cup final against Hungary wearing Adidas cleats. Adidas's website notes that this extraordinary victory reverberated globally for decades, cementing Adidas and its founder as prominent names in football. Since then, Adidas has evolved into a global brand renowned for high-quality athletic wear. Dassler's story underscores the significance of listening to customers about their aspirations, needs, and challenges. "Adi Dassler's key to success included a personal touch: He engaged with athletes, listened attentively, and constantly sought improvements or innovations to meet their needs", states Adidas's website. "From the start, the best athletes trusted Adidas and its founder".

Steve Jobs - Apple

He highlights the formative experiences and obstacles that shape successful entrepreneurs. Growing up with limited resources or in difficult circumstances often cultivates resilience and resourcefulness, crucial traits for entrepreneurship. For example, financial constraints can drive innovative thinking and efficient startup strategies. Similarly, personal hardships or past failures teach critical lessons in perseverance and adaptability. These early challenges are instrumental in developing entrepreneurial instincts and the ability to handle uncertainty. Entrepreneurs who view these experiences as learning opportunities gain a distinct perspective that fuels their progress in their ventures. In the dynamic tech industry, Apple is renowned for its continuous innovation. The company's success is rooted in an entrepreneurial mindset focused on continuous improvement and forward-thinking. Apple embraces

disruptive technologies, challenges industry norms, and prioritizes user-centric design. By fostering a culture of creativity and risk-taking, they have introduced transformative products that redefine markets. Entrepreneurs can learn from Apple's approach by staying ahead of trends, embracing change, and prioritizing user experience. Success involves agility, big thinking, and constantly pushing the boundaries of possibility.

Ole Christiansen - Lego

Lego was founded by Ole Christiansen in the early 20th century as a wooden toy manufacturer. After a devastating workshop fire, the company shifted its focus solely to plastic toys, introducing the now-famous Lego brick in the 1950s. These interlocking bricks, patented by Ole and his son Godtfried, formed the basis for Lego's innovative play system. Lego experienced significant growth in the 1980s and early 1990s. The versatile Lego brick became a staple in households, adored by both children and adults for its endless creative possibilities. The company's success was amplified by expanding into theme parks, video games, TV shows, and merchandise, such as clothing and watches. Lego's expansion into various products led to a surge in the number of Lego brick shapes and colours. While this broadened the Lego experience, it also brought about increased complexities and costs in production and supply chain management. By the late 1990s, faced with growing competition and industry outsourcing, Lego encountered financial difficulties. Under the leadership of Jorgen Knudstorp, Lego's turnaround strategy serves as an exemplary case of corporate restructuring and strategic redirection. Confronted with escalating financial losses and operational inefficiencies, Knudstorp and his team developed and executed a comprehensive approach to restore profitability and secure long-term success.

Jack Ma – AliExpress

Jack Ma stands out as one of the most influential entrepreneurs in China's history. His charisma and visionary approach have garnered global attention. But how did an English teacher rise to become one of China's top business leaders? In this new alumni series, we spotlight CKGSB's most influential graduates, many of whom now lead unicorn companies – private firms valued at $1 billion or more. According to CB Insights, a leading platform for up-to-date information on the world's billion-dollar private companies, China produced 217 unicorn companies from 2017 to 2021. CKGSB alumni are at

the helm of 39 (18%) of these companies. This includes 35 companies founded or co-founded by CKGSB graduates and 4 companies where alumni hold roles such as chairman, CEO, or president. In 1999, Jack Ma returned to his hometown of Hangzhou to launch Alibaba. Starting in a shared apartment with 18 friends, this venture would eventually transform the e-commerce landscape. Jack Ma's business model for Alibaba was both simple and ground-breaking. Rather than charging buyers, Alibaba imposed membership fees on sellers, enabling numerous small and medium-sized enterprises to flourish. After establishing a stable business-to-business (B2B) market in China, Ma shifted his focus to the customer-to-customer (C2C) market. In 2003, he launched Taobao, an Alibaba subsidiary that provided a platform for entrepreneurs and small businesses to reach Chinese consumers. Taobao outperformed competitors like eBay by not charging transaction fees, instead generating revenue from online advertising. Alibaba's growth was rapid. In 2003, recognizing the potential in online payments, Ma founded Alipay, a third-party payment service. By 2005, Yahoo acquired a 40% stake in Alibaba, and in 2007, the company raised USD $1.7 billion in its initial public offering in Hong Kong. By 2007, Taobao had captured a 67% market share and secured its status as a unicorn. Alibaba's IPO in September 2014 became the largest in US history, raising USD $21.8 billion. Around this time, Alipay was rebranded as Ant Group, becoming China's largest digital payment and money market company, serving over one billion users. In 2020, Alibaba contributed RMB 3 billion to support the fight against the COVID-19 epidemic in China. Additionally, the Jack Ma Foundation, along with the Alibaba Foundation, donated RMB 200 million in epidemic prevention supplies, including test kits and face masks. Forbes recognized Jack Ma as China's most charitable entrepreneur in 2020.

1.4. Interactive Discussion Guidelines

In the following sections, instructions for structured classroom debate and group activities about entrepreneurship will be presented.

1.4.1. Structured Classroom Debate Topics

Divide students in three groups and give them instructions how to conduct debate. Two groups will be debating participants. After debate, teams will continue defending its attitudes in one more round in more general way as concluding remarks. The third group will be voters, and they will by the majority of votes decide what group will win the debate concerning entrepreneurial venture establishment.

Step 1: Give two groups of students 10 minutes to write list of arguments that are pro and con entrepreneurial venture and entrepreneurship as a career. One group should write pro arguments, and the second group should write con arguments.

Step 2: Two teams will choose who will present their arguments. Other team members will offer varying perspectives and recommendations for a more engaged and organized class discussion.

Step 3: Group opinion presentation

Team One - 10 Minutes - Presentation of "Pro/positive" or "Arguments for" entrepreneurial venture

Team Two - 10 Minutes - Presentation of "Con/negative" or "Arguments against" entrepreneurial venture

Step 4: Teams' Discussion Period - 5 Minutes

This period is used for teams to prepare their responses to the arguments that opposite team stated.

Step 5: Group answer to opposite group's arguments

Team One - 5 Minutes - Response or rebuttal of "Pro/positive" or "Arguments for" entrepreneurial venture

Team Two - 5 Minutes - Response or rebuttal of "Con/negative" or "Arguments against" entrepreneurial venture

Step 6: Whole Groups Discussion – 5 minutes

At the end of debate both groups will make concluding remarks why their opinion and arguments should win. They will talk in a more general way about entrepreneurial venture and entrepreneurship as a career.

Step 7: To determine which team provided the most convincing arguments, the third group of students will vote. 10 minutes

Tips for instructors (educators):

- Tell the students that the purpose of debates in the classroom is not to determine who wins or loses, but rather to determine how well a team prepares and presents their case to prospective supporters of the opposing viewpoint of an entrepreneurial venture.
- Establish rules and guidelines to help students get ready for the discussion.
- Give them a deadline to prepare for the argument and specify how they should present their evidence.
- Permit non-debate students to serve as adjudicators in order to teach them how to evaluate their colleagues' performances objectively.
- Decide whether or not students who are not in debate will be able to cast ballots.
- Give pupils access to materials that will teach them about debates and how they are structured.
- To aid in students' understanding of the procedure, think about hosting an entrepreneur.
- It could be a good idea to assign students to write brief "position papers" that cover how they felt about the debating process and how their team was able to come to an agreement on the issues.
- Investigate contentious, trending, and thought-provoking cases of successful entrepreneurs to promote lively and vibrant classroom discussions. When students argue a topic, they can relate to, they are more likely to be genuine.

- On the day of the debate, go over the previously set debate procedure and make any necessary inquiries or clarifications.
- Before the debate starts, prepare the rating rubrics and give them to the third group that is made of voters.
- Give the kids as much freedom as you can when you start the argument.
- After the debate, lead a class discussion and provide a process debriefing.
- If the discussion gets "hot" and students start arguing instead of debating, have a backup plan ready.

1.4.2. Group Activities and Reflection Exercises

Class moderator should organise students' discussion about entrepreneurial venture and mindset of an entrepreneur.

Every student should get a paper with reflective questions presented above and make concept notes for all answers.

In the next step students should state their opinion about every question.

Class moderator should take notes and at the end of session he/she should make final remarks.

Questions to be discussed by students and class moderator:

1. Reflect on a time when you felt **passionately about a vision or idea**. How did this passion influence your actions and decisions, and what impact did it have on your success or growth?
2. Consider a situation where you **embraced innovation to solve a problem or meet some need (i.e., market need)**. How did your willingness to push boundaries and seek unique solutions influence the outcome, and what lessons did you learn from this experience?
3. Reflect on an instance when you **successfully anticipated and addressed some persons' (i.e., customer) need before they even recognized it.** How did this customer-centric approach affect your relationship with the customer and the overall success of your product or service?
4. Think about a significant **failure you have experienced** in your student's journey (i.e., entrepreneurial). How did you turn this setback into a learning opportunity, and how did it influence your subsequent strategies and outcomes?

5. Reflect on a time when **you built or were part of a talented team**. How did the diverse skills and passions of the team members contribute to collaboration and innovation, and what impact did this have on achieving your goals?

6. Recall an instance when you **simplified a complex product or service** to make it more accessible. How did this simplification impact your users base and overall success, and what challenges did you face in the process?

7. Reflect on a time when you **pursued excellence and refused to settle for mediocrity** in your work. How did this relentless pursuit of perfection lead to continuous improvement, and what were the outcomes or benefits of maintaining such high standards?

2. Entrepreneurship for a Greener Planet

2.1. Overview

This module includes techniques and practices on how entrepreneurship can contribute to sustainability, caring for the natural environment, and addressing climate change.

In no other period in modern history environmental challenges have been so intense. The environment is in crisis. The ever-increasing global concern about climate change, the depletion of natural resources, desertification, loss of biodiversity, and pollution of water resources has put the dilemma of "development or environment" on a new footing. Environmental protection is among the priorities of European and global politics, and it also plays an important role in formulating most national policies for sustainable development.

This attempt could be defined as a multi-level process that deals with creating and exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities that ascend from environmental voids, market failures, or market opportunities. The idea of offering entrepreneurial solutions to ecological problems creates economic and environmental value, which in sequence creates economic and non-economic advantages for the society and the environment. It could be said that sustainable entrepreneurs operate in the orbit of profit, social good, and environmental protection.

The studies that do exist in sustainable entrepreneurship have mainly focused on the challenges faced by start-ups and small businesses running in the eco-sector. For example, eco-entrepreneurs face innovation challenges, remarkably when compared to large enterprises that receive economic funding (Demirel et al., 2019; Schick et al., 2002).

Thus, through this module, students will learn how to set up and run a sustainable enterprise that targets to integrate environmental ethics in business.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students will be able to:

- ✓ Define sustainability as it developed through the years.
- ✓ Examine several ecological problems from different points of view to comprehend their complications.

✓ Learn to identify critical ecological problems that can be addressed through green business initiatives.

✓ Recognise the role of entrepreneurship in addressing progress.

✓ Apply business tools and skills to strategy and implement green entrepreneurship projects.

✓ Encourage creative thinking to develop innovative solutions to social problems.

✓ Participate in projects that provide practical experience in directing school learning to real issues.

✓ Increase talents to collaborate within groups and partners.

2.2. Sustainability in Business

Entrepreneurship

An entrepreneur is defined as an individual who takes an initial idea and develops a business around it, runs the business, taking the risk for its success or failure. Some commentators propose a wider definition that incorporates anyone who sets up and manages a business while others suggest that an entrepreneur is someone that innovates and leads in a certain field. Ethical concerns arise around whether the pursuit and accumulation of profit align with ethical principles and values if profit is generated through practices that exploit or harm individuals or communities. Green entrepreneurs can be mapped to four broad types along two dimensions: Profit-seeking vs. social mission and startups vs. Established firms. Each type of green entrepreneur has different incentives and desired outcomes (Nikolaou, et al., 2018).

Sustainability

Sustainability, as a concept, has evolved in response to various environmental, social, and economic challenges. Early Human Societies, traditional societies often practiced sustainable living out of necessity, relying on natural resources in a way that allowed for their replenishment. Practices such as hunting and gathering, crop rotation, and water conservation were common. Large areas of forest land were used for agriculture or had been cleared for creating settlements. Forests have been degraded and changed. Intensive use as an energy source and for construction purposes littering, had disappeared completely old growth forests. Trees had been cut for decades without being restored.

Hans Carl von Carlowitz was the first one to comprehensively formulate the concept of sustainability in forestry. In the year 1713, he wrote a guide about the cultivation of native trees, a compilation of the forest management knowledge at the time, the famous essay ''Sylvicultura Oeconomica''. It was published almost 300 years ago in Leipzig.

Carlowitz suggested a cautious use of wood. He described wood "as important as daily bread". Practical recommendations were combined with descriptions of useful tree varieties to guarantee a long-term solution to face the lack of timber. He noticed that a balance between planting, growing, and harvesting of trees could be achieved and that the benefits can be enjoyed continuously and perpetually.

The Industrial Revolution marked a significant shift towards industrialization and urbanization, leading to rapid economic growth but also environmental degradation and social inequalities. Increased use of fossil fuels, deforestation, and pollution became major concerns.

The conservation movement (late 19th to early 20th centuries) emerged in response to the depletion of natural resources and loss of biodiversity. Conservationists advocated for the protection of wilderness areas, national parks, and wildlife habitats while the Environmental Movement gained momentum in the mid-20th century, fuelled by concerns over pollution, habitat destruction, and public health. Key events such as the publication of Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" (1962) and the first Earth Day in 1970 helped raise awareness about environmental issues.

The concept of sustainable development gained prominence in the late 20th century, following the publication of the Brundtland Report by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. Sustainable development was defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". International Agreements and Initiatives: The United Nations has played a central role in promoting sustainability through initiatives such as the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (1992), which led to the adoption of Agenda 21 and the establishment of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Subsequent agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and the Paris Agreement (2015) aimed to address climate change and promote sustainable development on a global scale. As environmental pressures become more intense, societies are looking to address a more sustainable way of living. The demand for green products and services increases and global markets are seeking climate-friendly businesses and technologies. For example, the Paris Agreement has led to an estimated 23 trillion USD of investment opportunities in emerging markets between 2016 and 2030 (IFC 2016).

In recent decades, there has been a growing recognition of the role that businesses play in advancing sustainability. Many companies have adopted sustainability practices as part of their corporate social responsibility efforts, including commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve resources, and support community development.

Advancements in Sustainability Science and Technology: Advances in science and technology have contributed to our understanding of sustainability and provided innovative solutions to environmental

challenges. Fields such as renewable energy, green chemistry, sustainable agriculture, and circular economy have emerged to promote more sustainable practices and systems.

Throughout history, sustainability has been an evolving concept shaped by changing social, economic, and environmental contexts. Today, it represents a holistic approach to development that seeks to balance economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental stewardship for the benefit of present and future generations.

2.2.1. Principles of Sustainable Entrepreneurship

Sustainability in business refers to the practice of conducting operations in a manner that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Key aspects of sustainability in business	
Environmental Sustainability	Transparency and Accountability
Social Sustainability	Innovation and Collaboration
Economic Sustainability	Employee Empowerment and Well-being
Stakeholder Engagement	Customer Engagement and Value Creation
Circular Economy	Regulatory Compliance and Risk Management

Businesses strive to minimise their environmental impact by reducing resource consumption, minimising pollution and waste, conserving energy and water, and protecting biodiversity. This may involve adopting renewable energy sources, implementing green technologies, and optimising supply chains to minimize carbon emissions and other environmental pollutants.

Businesses recognise their impact on society and seek to create positive social outcomes for employees, communities, and other stakeholders. This may involve ensuring fair labour practices, promoting diversity and inclusion, supporting local communities, and investing in education, healthcare, and social welfare programs.

Sustainable businesses aim to achieve long-term economic viability while creating value for shareholders, employees, and society as a whole. This may involve balancing short-term financial goals with long-term strategic objectives, investing in innovation and growth opportunities, and adopting business models that generate positive returns while minimising risks and externalities.

A sustainable business actively engages with a wide range of stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, investors, governments, and communities. They seek to understand and address the needs, concerns, and expectations of these stakeholders, building trust and fostering mutually beneficial relationships.

Businesses embrace the principles of the circular economy, which aims to minimise waste and maximise resource efficiency by designing products, processes, and systems that enable materials to be reused, recycled, or regenerated at the end of their life cycle. This may involve adopting practices such as product redesign, remanufacturing, and closed-loop recycling.

Sustainable businesses are transparent about their environmental, social, and economic performance, disclosing relevant information to stakeholders and holding themselves accountable for their actions. This may involve reporting on key sustainability metrics, such as carbon emissions, energy usage, diversity and inclusion metrics, and community engagement efforts.

Businesses embrace innovation and collaboration as drivers of sustainability. They invest in research and development of new technologies, products, and business models that promote sustainability, and they collaborate with other businesses, governments, NGOs, and academic institutions to address complex sustainability challenges. They comply with applicable laws, regulations, and standards related to environmental, social, and economic performance, and they integrate sustainability considerations into risk management processes. This may involve conducting environmental and social impact assessments, identifying, and mitigating risks, and ensuring compliance with industry standards and best practices.

A sustainable business prioritises the health, safety, and well-being of its employees, recognising that engaged and motivated employees are essential to achieving sustainability goals. This may involve providing opportunities for professional development, promoting work-life balance, and fostering a culture of inclusivity, collaboration, and innovation.

Sustainable businesses engage with customers to understand their sustainability preferences and priorities, and they innovate to create products, services, and experiences that deliver value while minimising environmental and social impacts. This may involve incorporating sustainable design principles, offering eco-friendly alternatives, and educating customers about the benefits of sustainability.

By integrating sustainability into all aspects of their operations, businesses can create long-term value for stakeholders, reduce risks, enhance reputation, and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future for society and the planet.

2.2.2. Environmental Ethics and Business

Environmental ethics in business addresses the moral responsibilities that companies have toward the environment. It encompasses the ethical considerations, moral obligations, and responsibilities that businesses should consider when making decisions that impact the natural world. Key points regarding the intersection of environmental ethics and business include sustainability, social responsibility, collaboration, transparency, environmental management, innovation, and green technologies.

Environmental ethics and business	
Natural resources	Collaboration
Social responsibility	Environmental management systems
Biodiversity	Concept of stewardship
Innovation	Continuous Improvement

Businesses should embrace the concept of stewardship, recognising that they have a responsibility to care for and protect the environment for future generations. This involves managing natural resources wisely, minimising pollution and waste, and preserving biodiversity, embracing the precautionary principle, which states taking preventive action in situations where there is scientific uncertainty about the potential environmental impacts of a particular activity. This encourages businesses to internalise the environmental costs of their activities and adopt cleaner and more sustainable practices.

Many businesses adopt Corporate Social responsibility (CSR) initiatives that include environmental goals and commitments and integrate environmental considerations into corporate social responsibility initiatives. This may involve reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving water and energy, minimising waste, and supporting environmental conservation efforts, investing in renewable energy projects. CSR programs demonstrate a company's commitment to environmental ethics.

Businesses should implement environmental management systems (EMS) such as ISO 14001 to systematically identify, monitor, and manage environmental risks and opportunities within the

organization. They should also conduct lifecycle assessments to evaluate the environmental impacts of products and processes from raw material extraction to disposal. This information can be used to identify opportunities for improvement and make more sustainable choices.

Collaboration with other businesses, government agencies, NGOs, and academic institutions facilitates addressing environmental challenges collectively and promoting policies and regulations that support environmental protection and sustainability at local, national, and global levels. Transparency about environmental performance and impacts, disclosing relevant information to stakeholders, and allowing stakeholders to make informed decisions.

Environmental ethics can drive innovation in business, leading to the development of new technologies and practices that are more environmentally friendly. Investing in innovation, research, and development of new technologies and practices can reduce environmental impacts and promote sustainability. This may include renewable energy technologies, green chemistry, sustainable agriculture, and circular economy solutions. Companies that prioritise environmental ethics may invest in research and development of green technologies or collaborate with other organisations to find sustainable solutions to environmental challenges.

Strive for continuous improvement in environmental performance, setting ambitious goals and targets, tracking progress, and regularly reviewing and updating environmental policies, strategies, and practices. By integrating environmental ethics into business operations, companies can minimise negative environmental impacts, contribute to the transition to a more sustainable economy, and create long-term value for both society and shareholders.

2.3. Green Business Models

Green business models are designed to prioritise environmental sustainability while still being economically viable. These models integrate eco-friendly practices into various aspects of business operations, including product design, manufacturing processes, supply chain management, and customer engagement. Apart from private sector efforts, government policies are vital for a green transition. Anderson (1998) identifies the business sector, consumption, and government policy as the main forces in the economic system and the determining factors for environmental protection. Government actions are required to reduce the environmental damage and secure public health, for the development of markets, and greener technologies and services. Even when these policies are done right, investing in the development of new technologies can be expensive and risky for early-stage businesses. As in other areas, specific measures from the innovation policy package may be needed to address market failures that impede the development and spread of new green technologies.

Green business models	
Circular Economy	Green Packaging and Waste Reduction
Sharing Economy and Product as a Service	Carbon Emissions Reduction
Sustainable Supply Chains	Local and Organic Products
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy	Sustainable Agriculture

Circular Economy: Businesses adopt a circular economy model, which aims to minimise waste and maximise resource efficiency by designing products and processes that enable materials to be reused, recycled, or regenerated. This may involve offering products made from recycled materials, implementing take-back programs for end-of-life products, or remanufacturing products to extend their lifespan.

Sharing Economy and Product as a Service (PaaS): Instead of selling products outright, companies offer them as a service, which encourages durability, repairability, and reuse. For example, companies may lease solar panels, energy-efficient appliances, or electric vehicles to customers, providing maintenance and upgrades as part of the service. Companies facilitate the sharing or rental of goods and services among individuals or businesses, reducing the need for ownership and promoting resource sharing. Examples include car-sharing services, bike-sharing programs, and coworking spaces.

Sustainable Supply Chains: Businesses prioritise sustainability throughout their supply chains by sourcing materials from eco-friendly suppliers, reducing transportation emissions, and minimising waste and pollution. This may involve partnering with suppliers who adhere to environmental and social standards, implementing sustainable packaging solutions, and optimising logistics to reduce carbon emissions.

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy: Businesses focus on improving energy efficiency and transitioning to renewable energy sources to reduce their carbon footprint and energy costs. This may involve investing in energy-efficient technologies, such as LED lighting and smart building systems, and installing on-site renewable energy generation, such as solar panels or wind turbines.

Green Packaging and Waste Reduction: Businesses adopt sustainable packaging solutions, such as biodegradable materials, compostable packaging, or reusable containers, to minimize environmental impact. They also implement waste reduction strategies, such as source reduction, recycling, and composting, to minimise waste sent to landfills.

Carbon Offsetting and Emissions Reduction: Businesses offset their carbon emissions by investing in projects that reduce or sequester greenhouse gases, such as reforestation, renewable energy, or methane capture. They also implement measures to reduce emissions internally, such as improving energy efficiency, optimising transportation logistics, and encouraging telecommuting.

Local and Organic Products: Businesses focus on sourcing products locally and/or using organic ingredients to reduce environmental impact and support local economies. This may involve partnering with local farmers and producers and promoting organic and fair-trade certifications. This can significantly reduce the energy, and resources use, reduce the carbon emissions, and at the same time increase the profit of the enterprise, since profit is the financial gain that is obtained after all costs, including operating expenses, have been deducted from total revenue.

Sustainable agriculture: A special reference should be made to sustainable agriculture. Primary sector can also offer many opportunities for implementing greener methods. Sustainable agriculture offers a holistic approach to food production that balances environmental stewardship, economic viability, and social responsibility. By adopting sustainable farming practices and supporting policies that promote agroecology and regenerative agriculture, we can work towards a greener, more sustainable future for generations to come.

Sustainable agricultural practices minimise the use of synthetic inputs such as chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides, which can pollute soil, water, and air. By employing techniques like crop rotation, cover cropping, and integrated pest management, sustainable agriculture reduces environmental degradation and promotes soil health, water conservation, and biodiversity. Special mention should be made of pollination and the protection of pollinators. Companies implement water conservation measures and promote sustainable agriculture practices to minimise water usage, preserve water quality, and protect ecosystems. This may involve using drip irrigation systems, implementing rainwater harvesting techniques, and reducing water-intensive crops.

Businesses educate customers and stakeholders about the importance of environmental sustainability and advocate for policies and initiatives that promote a green economy. This may involve launching awareness campaigns, supporting environmental organisations, and participating in industry associations focused on sustainability. By adopting green business models, companies can reduce their environmental footprint, enhance their reputation, attract environmentally conscious customers, and contribute to a more sustainable future for society and the planet.

2.3.1. Case Studies of Successful Green Enterprises

Several successful green enterprises have emerged in recent years, capitalising on the growing demand for environmentally friendly products and services. These companies demonstrate that profitability and sustainability can go hand in hand, inspiring other businesses to adopt more environmentally friendly practices. These examples illustrate the diverse approaches and significant impacts that green enterprises can have across various sectors. By focusing on innovative technologies, securing investments, and engaging in strategic partnerships, these companies are leading the way toward a more sustainable future.

Nespresso

Nespresso's sustainability initiatives encompass various aspects of its operations, from responsible sourcing and recycling to environmental conservation and community development. While there may be ongoing challenges and areas for improvement, Nespresso's commitment to sustainability reflects a broader trend among companies towards more environmentally and socially responsible business

practices. Nespresso has committed to responsibly sourcing its coffee beans. They work directly with coffee farmers through their AAA Sustainable Quality™ Program, which aims to improve coffee quality, farm productivity, and the livelihoods of farmers while promoting sustainable agricultural practices. This program provides technical assistance, training, and financial support to farmers, helping them implement environmentally friendly farming methods and improve their social and economic conditions.

Tesla, Inc.

Tesla is a leading electric vehicle (EV) manufacturer founded by Elon Musk in 2003. The company's mission is to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy. Tesla's electric cars have gained widespread popularity due to their innovative technology, long-range capabilities, and sleek design. In addition to electric vehicles, Tesla produces solar panels and energy storage solutions, offering a comprehensive suite of products aimed at reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

Patagonia

This outdoor clothing brand is renowned for its commitment to environmental sustainability. Patagonia uses recycled materials in its products, advocates for environmental causes, and implements sustainable business practices across its operations. The company's "Worn Wear" program encourages customers to buy used products, extending the life of their gear and reducing waste. The company's focus on sustainability has resonated with consumers, driving both brand loyalty and profitability.

IKEA Group

IKEA, the Swedish furniture retailer, has embraced sustainability as a core principle of its business model. The company has set ambitious sustainability goals, including sourcing all of its wood from more sustainable or recycled sources by 2020 and becoming climate-positive by 2030. IKEA has invested in renewable energy, energy-efficient lighting and appliances, and sustainable forestry practices. Additionally, IKEA offers recycling and take-back programs for its products, encouraging customers to reduce waste and extend the life cycle of furniture.

Unilever

Unilever has long been a leader in corporate sustainability. The company's Sustainable Living Plan aims to decouple its growth from its environmental footprint while increasing its positive social impact. Unilever has made significant strides in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving water use efficiency, and promoting sustainable sourcing. For instance, as of 2020, 67% of Unilever's agricultural raw materials were sustainably sourced.

All the above mentioned case studies demonstrate that integrating environmental sustainability into business practices can lead to long-term success, including improved financial performance, enhanced brand reputation, and positive societal impact.

2.3.2. Classroom Activities: Designing a Green Business Plan

Education on green entrepreneurship should not be made with the traditional process view but with a practice-based approach, using a selection of practices, which includes play, empathy, creation, and experimentation. A suggested outline for such an activity includes an introduction to Green Business, and a brainstorming session about the business plan development, that must be taken into account by market analysis, financial projections, sustainability and operation plans, and risk management. Designing a green business plan can be an engaging and educational classroom activity that combines elements of entrepreneurship, environmental sustainability, and critical thinking.

One of the most widespread and widely used taxonomies in the field of learning, which approaches the above concepts (knowledge, skills, attitudes), is the typology of educational objectives proposed by Bloom et al. (1956). Bloom's Taxonomy is a framework used to classify educational goals, objectives, and activities into levels of complexity and specificity. It consists of six levels, moving from lower-order to higher-order thinking skills:

1. Remembering
2. Understanding
3. Applying
4. Analysing
5. Evaluating

6. Creating

By engaging in this classroom activity, students will gain valuable experience in entrepreneurship, critical thinking, and environmental sustainability, while also developing practical skills in business planning and presentation.

Step 1. Remembering

Start the activity with a brief introduction to green business concepts, including the importance of environmental sustainability, the triple bottom line approach (people, planet, profit), and examples of successful green businesses.

Flashcards	Use flashcards to recall facts, terms, and basic concepts (ecology, sustainability, entrepreneurship).
Quizzes	Conduct short quizzes focusing on factual memory.
List-making	Ask students to list key points from a lesson or reading material.
Matching Exercise	Create matching exercises for terms and their definitions.

Step 2. Understanding

Summarising:	Have students summarize a text or a lesson about related topics (climate change, resource consumption, waste, sustainability) in their own words
Group Discussions	Facilitate group discussions where students explain concepts to each other. Divide students into small groups and encourage them to brainstorm ideas for green businesses. Encourage creativity and innovation, and remind students to consider the environmental, social, and economic aspects of their business ideas.
Q&A Sessions	Organize question-and-answer sessions to ensure comprehension.
Summarising	Ask students to summarize paragraphs or sections of a text.

Step 3. Applying

Once groups have selected a business idea, have them develop a detailed business plan. Provide an overview of the business idea and its potential environmental and social impact.

Problem-Solving	Present real-world, environmental problems that could be a business opportunity. Develop a sustainability plan that outlines how the business. will minimize environmental impact, conserve resources, and contribute to social welfare.
Simulations / Role Playing	Use role-playing activities to practice applying knowledge in simulated scenarios. Develop detailed profiles such as the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, marketing director, and outside participants. Detail the day-to-day operations of the business, including production processes, supply chain management, and resource utilization.
Lab Activities	Conduct experiments where students apply theories to practical experiments (recycling, circular economy).
Case Studies	Analyse case studies of Green Businesses.

Step 4. Analysing

Conduct research on the target market, including customer needs, competitors, and market trends related to sustainability. Describe the green product or service being offered, highlighting its environmental benefits and unique selling points.

Compare and Contrast	Have students compare two concepts or ideas.
Mind Mapping	Use mind maps to break down a concept into its components.
Debates:	Organize debates where students must analyse different viewpoints.
Data Analysis	Provide datasets for students to analyse and interpret findings. Outline the marketing and sales strategies for promoting the green business, including branding, advertising, and distribution channels. Identify

	potential risks and challenges facing the green business and develop strategies to mitigate them.

Step 5. Evaluating

Clearly articulate the mission and vision of the green business, emphasising its commitment to sustainability. Prepare financial projections, including revenue forecasts, startup costs, operating expenses, and potential sources of funding.

Peer Reviews	Facilitate peer reviews of assignments where students evaluate each other's work.
Rubric-Based Assessment	Have students assess work using a detailed rubric.
Critical Essays	Assign critical essays where students must evaluate an argument or a piece of work.
Group Projects	Engage students in group projects that require them to critique each other's contributions.

Step 6. Creating

Creative Writing	Encourage students to write stories or essays that synthesise their learning.
Multimedia Presentations	Have students create presentations or videos to demonstrate their understanding. Once the business plans are complete, have each group present their green business idea to the class. Encourage students to explain the environmental and social benefits of their business, as well as its potential for financial success.
Feedback and Discussion	After each presentation, facilitate a discussion where students can provide feedback and ask questions about the green business plans. Encourage constructive criticism and offer suggestions for improvement.

Reflection	Conclude the activity with a reflection session where students can discuss what they learned from the experience. Prompt them to reflect on the challenges and opportunities of designing a green business plan, as well as the importance of sustainability in entrepreneurship.

2.4. Eco-friendly Practices and Innovation

Eco-friendly practices and innovation go hand in hand in driving sustainability across various industries. Support mechanisms for entrepreneurs in those sectors provide a crucial financial motivation to adopt eco-innovation, creating greater market certainty for green start-ups (Ball & Kittler, 2019).

Sectors of Eco-friendly Practices and Innovation		
Sustainable Agriculture	Renewable Energy	Transportation
Circular Economy	Waste Management	Water Management
Traceability	Building Materials	Green Chemistry

Sustainable Agriculture Practices: Agricultural innovation plays a crucial role in promoting eco-friendly practices such as organic farming, agroforestry, and regenerative agriculture. Techniques like precision farming, vertical farming, and hydroponics enable efficient use of resources like water and land while minimising chemical inputs and soil degradation.

Renewable Energy Technologies: Innovation in renewable energy technologies, such as solar, wind, and hydroelectric power, has significantly reduced reliance on fossil fuels and helped mitigate climate change. Advances in solar panel efficiency, wind turbine design, and energy storage solutions have made renewable energy more cost-effective and scalable.

Green Building Materials: The construction industry has seen the development of eco-friendly building materials that reduce energy consumption and environmental impact. Innovations include sustainable materials like bamboo, recycled steel, and reclaimed wood, as well as energy-efficient insulation, windows, and roofing materials.

Circular Economy Solutions: Innovations in the circular economy promote resource efficiency and waste reduction by designing products and processes that enable materials to be reused, recycled, or

regenerated. This includes initiatives such as product redesign for disassembly, remanufacturing, and closed-loop recycling, as well as digital platforms for sharing resources and materials.

Smart Mobility Solutions: Innovation in transportation has led to the development of smart mobility solutions that reduce emissions and congestion. This includes electric vehicles (EVs), autonomous vehicles, car-sharing services, and multi-modal transportation systems that encourage walking, cycling, and public transit.

Waste Management Technologies: Advanced waste management technologies, such as anaerobic digestion, composting, and waste-to-energy conversion, help divert organic waste from landfills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Innovations in recycling and materials recovery also enable the recovery of valuable resources from waste streams.

Water Conservation Technologies: Innovation in water conservation technologies helps address water scarcity and promote sustainable water management practices. This includes smart irrigation systems, water-efficient appliances and fixtures, and water recycling and desalination technologies.

Green Chemistry: The field of green chemistry focuses on developing environmentally friendly alternatives to traditional chemical processes and products. Innovations include bio-based materials, non-toxic solvents, and eco-friendly cleaning and manufacturing processes that minimise pollution and waste.

Traceability and Supply Chain Transparency: Blockchain technology enables greater transparency and traceability in supply chains, facilitating ethical sourcing and sustainable production practices. By providing immutable records of transactions and product origins, blockchain helps consumers make informed choices and hold companies accountable for their environmental and social impacts.

Collaborative Innovation Platforms: Collaborative innovation platforms bring together diverse stakeholders, including businesses, governments, academia, and civil society, to co-create sustainable solutions to complex environmental challenges. These platforms foster knowledge sharing, cross-sector collaboration, and collective action towards common sustainability goals.

Sustainable agriculture and pollination: A special reference should be made to pollination. Sustainable agriculture and pollination are deeply intertwined. Pollination could be described as the procedure that makes the planet green and this relationship should be highlighted.

Highlight the relationship of Sustainable agriculture and Pollination	
Importance of Pollination	Pollinator Observation
Beekeeping Demonstration	Field trips

If possible, arrange for a local beekeeper to visit the classroom and demonstrate beekeeping techniques. Students can learn about the lifecycle of bees, the importance of honeybees as pollinators, and the role of beekeeping in sustainable agriculture.

These activities engage students in hands-on learning experiences that deepen their understanding of the relationship between sustainable agriculture and pollination. By fostering curiosity and awareness about these topics, students can become advocates for environmental stewardship and biodiversity conservation.

By fostering innovation and adopting eco-friendly practices, businesses and organisations can reduce their environmental footprint, enhance operational efficiency, and create value for both society and the planet.

2.4.1. Classroom Activities: From Idea to Eco-friendly Product/Service

Classroom activities on eco-friendly practices can be tailored to fit different grade levels, subjects, and learning objectives, and can empower students to become informed and active stewards of the environment. By presenting green entrepreneurship to students, we offer them the ability to understand the problem and find solutions. Together these practices help students develop the competency to think and act entrepreneurially to create, find, and exploit opportunities about a certain business and environmental issue. These are just a few ideas to get started.

Classroom activities on eco-friendly practices	
Waste Reviews	Energy Consumption – Carbon Footprint
Gardening Projects	Field trips
Recycling Workshops	Environmental discussions
Environmental Campaigns	Community Events and Campaigns

Waste Reviews: Hands-On Learning! Create interactive activities such as waste reviews, where students analyse the types and amounts of waste generated in their school. This can raise awareness about consumption habits and the importance of waste reduction.

Gardening Projects: Establish a school garden where students can learn about sustainable agriculture, composting, and the importance of biodiversity. They can plant native species, maintain the garden, and observe the interconnectedness of ecosystems. Students can research native plant species that attract pollinators such as bees, butterflies, and birds. Then, have them design and plan a pollinator garden for their school or community. This activity teaches students about the importance of pollinators in agriculture and how planting native species can support biodiversity and ecosystem health.

Energy Conservation Challenges: Organise energy conservation challenges where students compete to reduce energy consumption in classrooms and common areas. They can track energy usage, implement energy-saving strategies, and learn about the environmental impact of energy consumption.

Recycling and Upcycling Workshops: Host workshops on recycling and upcycling, where students learn about the recycling process, how to properly sort recyclables, and creative ways to repurpose materials. Encourage them to create art projects or functional items from recycled materials.

Environmental Debates and Discussions: Facilitate debates or discussions on environmental issues such as climate change, deforestation, or pollution. Encourage students to research and present different perspectives, fostering critical thinking and communication skills.

Field Trips to Eco-Friendly Sites: Organize field trips to eco-friendly sites such as recycling centres, renewable energy facilities, or conservation areas. This provides hands-on learning experiences and exposes students to real-world examples of sustainability in action.

Community Clean-Up Events: Coordinate community clean-up events where students and teachers work together to clean up litter in local parks, beaches, or neighbourhoods. This drive into a sense of environmental stewardship and civic responsibility while beautifying the community.

Environmental Campaigns: Launch environmental campaigns within the school community to raise awareness and promote eco-friendly behaviours. This could include initiatives such as "Meatless

Mondays" to reduce meat consumption, "Turn Off the Lights" to conserve energy, or "Bring Your Own Bottle" to reduce plastic waste.

Guest Speakers and Experts: Invite guest speakers and experts in the field of sustainability to share their knowledge and experiences with students. This provides valuable insights and inspiration and exposes students to potential career paths in environmental science, conservation, or sustainability.

Project-Based Learning: Engage students in project-based learning activities where they research and develop solutions to real-world environmental challenges. This could involve designing eco-friendly products, creating awareness campaigns, or proposing policy changes to address environmental issues.

Classroom activities on eco-friendly practices can have numerous benefits for students, educators, and the environment. Turning ideas into eco-friendly products or services can be an exciting and educational classroom activity that encourages creativity, critical thinking, and environmental awareness. Environmental issues, climate change, sustainable development, are some of the most pressing concerns of our times. A suggested outline for such an activity begins with an introduction to environmentally friendly innovation and involves among others a brainstorming session, marketing research, a sustainability plan, feedback and discussion. Educational Case studies should include a Teaching Note (Caffrey et al., 2020). In terms of impact, these are important as it helps get the topic into the classroom.

Example of a classroom activity - Designing an Eco-Friendly Product

By engaging in this classroom activity, students will gain valuable experience in idea generation, innovation, sustainability, and entrepreneurship, while also developing practical skills in project planning, design, and presentation.

Materials Needed:

- Poster boards or large paper sheets
- Markers, coloured pencils, and other drawing materials
- Recycled materials (cardboard, plastic bottles, fabric scraps, etc.)
- Scissors, glue, and tape
- Computers/tablets with internet access for research

- Handouts on sustainability concepts

Duration: 2-3 class periods (45-60 minutes each)

Instructions:

Day 1: Introduction to Eco-Friendly Products

Introduction to Sustainability (15 minutes)

Begin with a brief lecture on sustainability and why it is important. Discuss the concept of the 3Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Show examples of eco-friendly products, such as reusable water bottles, biodegradable packaging, and solar-powered gadgets.

Brainstorming Session (30 minutes)

- Divide students into small groups (3-4 students per group).
- Hand out brainstorming worksheets and ask each group to think about common products they use daily and how these could be made more environmentally friendly.
- Encourage them to consider materials, energy consumption, and waste reduction.

Idea Selection (15 minutes)

Each group presents their top three ideas to the class. Facilitate a discussion and help each group choose one idea to develop further.

Day 2: Research and Design

Research Phase (30 minutes)

Allow students to use computers/tablets to research materials, design principles, and existing eco-friendly products that are similar to their ideas. Ask them to consider the lifecycle of their product from production to disposal.

Design Phase (30 minutes)

Provide poster boards and drawing materials. Each group creates a detailed design of their product, including sketches, a list of materials, and how it will be used. Encourage them to think about branding and packaging, ensuring it's eco-friendly.

Day 3: Presentation and Feedback

Product Prototype Creation (30 minutes)

Using recycled materials, each group creates a simple prototype of their product. This could be a model or a functional prototype depending on the complexity of their product idea.

Presentation Preparation (15 minutes)

Groups prepare a short presentation (3-5 minutes) explaining their product, its benefits, and how it contributes to sustainability. They should also discuss any challenges they faced during the design process.

Presentations and Feedback (15 minutes)

Each group presents their product to the class. After each presentation, the class and teacher provide constructive feedback, focusing on strengths and areas for improvement.

Reflection (15 minutes)

Discuss what students learned about the importance of eco-friendly products and sustainability. Reflect on how they can apply these principles in their daily lives.

Assessment

- Participation and teamwork during brainstorming and design phases.
- Creativity and practicality of the product design.
- Quality and clarity of the presentation.
- Engagement during the feedback and reflection sessions.

Extension Activity

Organize a school-wide eco-fair where students can showcase their eco-friendly products to other classes, teachers, and parents. Invite local entrepreneurs or sustainability experts to judge the projects and provide additional feedback.

This activity not only educates students about sustainability but also empowers them to think creatively and critically about solving real-world problems Introduction to Eco-Friendly Innovation:

Start the activity with an introduction to the concept of eco-friendly innovation and its importance in addressing environmental challenges. Discuss examples of eco-friendly products and services and their positive impacts on the environment.

Designing an eco-friendly service

Brainstorming Session: Divide students into small groups and provide them with an opportunity to brainstorm ideas for eco-friendly services. Encourage students to think creatively and consider different aspects of sustainability, such as energy efficiency, waste reduction, and resource conservation.

Idea Development: Once groups have selected a concept, have them develop their ideas into detailed plans for eco-friendly services. This should include:

Service Description	Clearly define the eco-friendly service, including its features, benefits, and target audience.
Environmental Benefits	Explain how the service contributes to environmental sustainability, such as reducing carbon emissions, conserving resources, or minimizing waste.
Design and Innovation	Describe the innovative aspects of service, such as new materials, technologies, or processes that enhance its eco-friendliness.
Market Research	Research the target market, competitors, and consumer preferences related to sustainability to inform product development and marketing strategies.
Business Model	Outline the business model for bringing the eco-friendly service to market, including revenue streams, distribution channels, and pricing strategies.
Sustainability Plan	Develop a sustainability plan that outlines how the business will minimize environmental impact.
Pitch Presentation	Have each group present their eco-friendly product or service to the class. Students should communicate the environmental benefits, innovative features, and market potential of their ideas. Encourage creativity and effective communication skills during the presentations.

Feedback and Discussion	After each presentation, facilitate a discussion where students can provide feedback and ask questions about the eco-friendly services. Encourage constructive criticism and offer suggestions for improvement.
Reflection and Next Steps	Conclude the activity with a reflection session where students can discuss what they learned from the experience. Encourage students to consider the feasibility of bringing their ideas to fruition and explore opportunities for further development or implementation.

Examples of eco-friendly products and services

Reusable Water Bottles: Reusable water bottles made from materials like stainless steel, glass, or BPA-free plastic help reduce single-use plastic waste. They encourage people to refill and reuse their bottles instead of purchasing disposable plastic water bottles, thereby decreasing plastic pollution.

Solar Panels: Solar panels harness energy from the sun to generate electricity, providing a renewable and sustainable alternative to fossil fuels. By installing solar panels on homes or businesses, individuals can reduce their reliance on grid electricity and lower their carbon footprint.

Plant-based Meat Alternatives: Plant-based meat alternatives, such as burgers, sausages, and nuggets made from ingredients like soy, pea protein, or mushrooms, offer a more sustainable option compared to conventional meat. These products typically have a lower environmental impact in terms of land use, water consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions.

Composting Services: Composting services collect organic waste from households or businesses and process it into nutrient-rich compost. This diverts organic waste from landfills, where it would produce methane gas, a potent greenhouse gas. Compost can then be used to enrich soil health and promote plant growth.

Reusable Shopping Bags: Reusable shopping bags made from durable materials like canvas or recycled plastic help reduce the consumption of single-use plastic bags. By bringing reusable bags to the grocery store or market, consumers can minimise plastic waste and support sustainable practices.

Green Energy Providers: Green energy providers offer electricity generated from renewable sources such as wind, solar, hydroelectric, or geothermal energy. By choosing a green energy plan, consumers can support the expansion of renewable energy infrastructure and reduce their carbon footprint.

Bike-sharing and Scooter-sharing Services: Bike-sharing and scooter-sharing services provide convenient and eco-friendly transportation options for short trips in urban areas. By using these services instead of driving or taking a car ride-hailing service, individuals can reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

3. Entrepreneurship for Social Change

3.31. Overview

This module explores the rapidly growing field of social entrepreneurship, a subset of entrepreneurship that focuses on developing and implementing solutions to address social needs. Unlike traditional entrepreneurship, which is often driven by profit maximisation, social entrepreneurship focuses on creating social value and addressing long-term societal needs such as food, shelter, education and healthcare.

This module explores the different sides of social entrepreneurship, which touches on lots of different areas. It looks at different definitions of social entrepreneurship and how we can use it to create benefits for individuals and society. Another important part of the module is learning about the characteristics and practices of successful social entrepreneurs, who are often called change agents and are introducing new solutions to social issues that need fixing. The material covers both the theory and the practical side, with students getting involved in the community and participating in problem-solving projects.

Students will learn about the challenges and rewards of setting up and running social enterprises that aim to improve community well-being, tackle social injustices and ensure environmental sustainability for future generations. This will give students the knowledge they need to integrate business and social objectives to create effective and sustainable business models.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students will be able to:

- ✓ Define social entrepreneurship and differentiate it from traditional entrepreneurship.
- ✓ Recognise the role of social entrepreneurship in addressing societal challenges.
- ✓ Learn to identify pressing social issues that can be addressed through entrepreneurial solutions.
- ✓ Analyse various social problems from multiple perspectives to understand their complexities.
- ✓ Use business tools and techniques to plan and execute social entrepreneurship projects.

✓ Encourage creative thinking to develop innovative solutions to social problems.

✓ Participate in service-learning projects that provide practical experience in applying classroom knowledge to real-world problems.

✓ Develop leadership skills necessary for guiding social initiatives.

✓ Enhance abilities to work collaboratively within teams and with community partners.

3.2. Introduction to Social Entrepreneurship

What is Social Entrepreneurship?

In recent years, social entrepreneurship, which is a subdiscipline of entrepreneurship, has been getting more and more attention from entrepreneurship scholars. Social entrepreneurship is a new but fast-growing field that involves lots of different sectors, like innovation, technology, public policy, community development, social movements, and non-profit organisations.

Understanding social entrepreneurship begins with its definitions, which vary widely. Although many definitions share similarities, it seems there are lots of different ways of defining social entrepreneurship. Some of these definitions are pretty similar, but each one focuses on different aspects of social entrepreneurship and tries to define it based on those aspects. It could be that different disciplines are interested in looking at the individual and social benefits of social entrepreneurship from different angles.

Social entrepreneurship is about recognising, evaluating and exploiting opportunities that create social value – that is the basic and long-standing needs of society, not personal or shareholder wealth. The idea of social value has little to do with profit. It is about fulfilling basic and long-standing needs like providing food, water, shelter, education, and medical services to those who need them (Austin, et al., 2006).

The main goals of social entrepreneurship are to reduce poverty and illiteracy, improve community wellbeing, tackle social injustices and protect the environment for future generations. By using their skills and resources, social entrepreneurs can make a big impact on society. In other words, social entrepreneurship is about entrepreneurs using their skills to create social value, rather than just making money. They often do this because they are driven by a social mission, and they are willing to work hard. A social entrepreneur is someone who has a real passion for making a difference, and also has the discipline, innovation and determination to succeed in business.

So, who is a social entrepreneur?

Most researchers talk about what makes a great social entrepreneur and what they should be like. Robert Theobald is one of the first to define social entrepreneurship. He says they are "change agents"

who take risks to present new ideas to people, groups, and organisations. He also looks at social entrepreneurship from a broad perspective, pointing out that taking risks and being innovative are key characteristics of social entrepreneurs.

Leadbeater and Goss (1998) highlight that social entrepreneurship is all about community-oriented action. They suggest that social entrepreneurs are the people who work in communities in need or creative volunteer organisations to help meet the community's needs by using resources that would otherwise go to waste.

Glancey and McQuaid (2000) suggest that social entrepreneurs are innovative and use underused resources in the way that other people define them. In their view, social entrepreneurs come up with new solutions to social problems and use resources in ways that benefit the local community. Also, this definition says that social entrepreneurs can work in all sectors, including the government or nonprofit or business.

Bornstein (2004) says that a social entrepreneur is someone who makes a difference. He or she develops new ideas to address main problems and always works until they achieve their goals.

When you really look into the various definitions of a social entrepreneur, it becomes clear that researchers evaluate the character traits, work areas, objectives, and outcomes of social entrepreneurship in different ways. Consequently, we have a wide array of definitions for what a social entrepreneur is. If you take all these definitions into account, it seems that a social entrepreneur should be an innovator, willing to take risks, creative, observant of social problems, able to develop sustainable solutions to social problems, hardworking and skilled.

In a nutshell, there are four key differences between social entrepreneurship and other forms of entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurs (Bacq & Janssen, 2011):

1. driven by a mission. They're all in for serving their mission of making a social impact on those who need it most.
2. act as entrepreneurs by a combination of characteristics which distinguish it from other types of entrepreneurs (see Table 1).

3. operate within entrepreneurial organisations with a strong culture of innovation and openness.

4. Work with independent organisations that plan and execute earned-income strategies. The idea is to deliver the intended social value while staying financially independent. This is done by combining social and profit-oriented activities to become self-sufficient, reduce reliance on donations and government funding, and increase the potential of expanding the delivery of proposed social value.

Table 1. Distinctive and common characteristics of for-profit and social entrepreneurs (Abu-Saifan, 2012)

Distinctive characteristics of for-profit entrepreneurs	Common characteristics of both types	Distinctive characteristics of social entrepreneurs
High achiever	Innovator	Mission leader
Risk bearer	Dedicated	Emotionally charged
Organizer	Initiative taker	Change agent
Strategic thinker	Leader	Opinion leader
Value creator	Opportunity alert	Social value creator
Holistic	Persistent	Socially alert
Arbitrageur	Committed	Manager
		Visionary
		Highly accountable

3.2.1. Social Issues and Business Solutions

It is possible to say that anyone can become an entrepreneur. Every individual learns entrepreneurship by getting lifelong experience and develops their entrepreneurial skills by building the right skills. In that case, if an individual wants to become an entrepreneur, the first step is to get the right education to help them acquire and develop the necessary entrepreneurial skills.

In the same direction, becoming a social entrepreneur starts with education, much like any career. When you study subjects like business, economics, and social sciences, you don't just learn about money and markets; you learn how to identify problems in our society and explore ways to fix them. For example, learning about economics can help you understand why some communities have fewer resources, and studying social sciences can teach you about the challenges different groups face.

However, education is not only about sitting in a classroom. Real-world experience is just as important. This involves stepping into the community, maybe through volunteering at local shelters, joining environmental clean-ups, or participating in school clubs that focus on community service. These experiences let you see firsthand the issues you've learned about in class, giving you a clearer picture of what needs to be done and how you can help.

Armed with knowledge and experience, you can then apply business techniques to solve these social problems. For instance, you might create a small business that builds affordable housing from sustainable materials, helping to address homelessness while also protecting the environment. Another idea is to start a business that sells school supplies, where for every item sold, another is donated to a child in need.

Many young entrepreneurs have found innovative ways to use business for social good. Take, for instance, the story of a teenager who started a company to make reusable metal straws to reduce plastic waste. This small step not only helps the environment but also raises awareness about pollution. Another young entrepreneur set up an online platform that connects surplus food from restaurants with local food banks, ensuring that less food is wasted, and more people get the meals they need.

3.2.2. How to be a social entrepreneur?

Right now, our local and global communities are up against a lot of complicated social issues. These issues need creative and driven people to come up with new ways to make a positive, long-lasting impact. Social entrepreneurs are people who can spot problems within communities and set up businesses that generate profits while also addressing these issues and supporting social change. So, social entrepreneurs are big hearted. They are passionate about making a difference. They care more than just about profit.

However, becoming a social entrepreneur is not easy. To succeed, you need more than a great idea. If you want to change the world and make money doing it, you need to plan your journey. Below are some important steps that anyone who wants to become a successful social entrepreneur should follow.

It all starts with a **clear mission statement**. In other words, you need to decide who you want to help and where and how you want to help them. In addition to who, you need to be equally clear about the problem you want to solve for this target audience (target group) through the service or product your organisation will offer. In order to find the right problem for you to try to tackle, you need of course consider your own preferences, natural talents, strengths, professional skills and education, and resources you have at your disposal. Think about some simple questions to help you get started. What will you do? How will you do it? Who will you do it for? What value will you provide? What are the values and principles that guide you? These questions will help you create your mission statement.

A next important step is to **research the area/direction** you have chosen to focus on. You should understand as much as you can about the social business landscape in which you want to operate, as well as who is leading and changing the world. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. If you see a social entrepreneur doing precisely what you want to accomplish, utilise that as motivation and fuel to develop your own unique purpose-driven offering. Existing good practices can always be used to improve and evolve our efforts.

You have in your hands a tool that can help you. Google is your friend here for finding a plethora of relevant information, examples, best practices, as well as those you might consider competitors or collaborators. Consider this: if you wanted to get involved with a company/organisation offering that you wish to provide, what would you look for online? Which exact terms would you use? Consider yourself your ideal client or beneficiary, then search the internet through that lens. This exercise will help you view your project from the perspective of those you aim to help, ensuring your efforts are targeted and effective.

Furthermore, don't overlook the importance of connecting with professional networks. Join social entrepreneurship forums, LinkedIn groups, and local or national associations. These groups often host valuable resources and networking opportunities that can provide guidance and support as you

develop your venture. Understanding who the members are and the types of social enterprises they manage will give you insights into the standards and expectations within the industry.

Additionally, consider attending industry conferences and seminars that relate to your area of interest. These events are tremendous opportunities to learn from seasoned experts, gain exposure to new ideas, and meet potential mentors who can offer practical advice and possibly even partnerships.

Now that you know enough information, you are ready to **design your own unique offer**. It would help you out a lot to think about what sets your social enterprise apart. How can you do something different from what others are already doing? The more detailed you are in describing what you want to do and how you plan to do it, the more distinctive your social enterprise will be.

Using sticky notes to brainstorm and refine your ideas for a social enterprise can be an effective tool. Write a key word on each sticky note that captures an essential aspect of your project's goals. Place these notes on visible surfaces like walls or windows where you can rearrange them as your ideas evolve.

As you move forward, continually adapt your sticky notes to reflect new insights and directions for your enterprise. Focus on what makes your initiative stand out or how it specifically addresses the needs of your target community. Consider what unique angle or value you can bring to the existing landscape.

There is no need you your concept to be completely unique, you can think about how you can enhance or complement the work of others already in the space. Collaborating with established organizations might open new avenues for impact that you hadn't considered before. This approach not only helps fill gaps but also builds on the strengths of current efforts, potentially leading to more significant changes and successes.

However, it is important to remember that social entrepreneurship is about more than just making a profit. It's about creating a positive social impact too. That's why it's a good idea to **use social impact metrics** alongside conventional business metrics, such as profit, to measure your progress. These measures will help you evaluate the effectiveness of your initiatives and effectively communicate results to your stakeholders.

Balancing your social mission with your business goals is often tricky, but it's one of the most rewarding things about being a social entrepreneur. By putting your social mission at the heart of what you do and using it as a unique selling point, you can make sure you're fulfilling both your social and business goals.

Remember that the path to a career in social entrepreneurship is a gradual journey, not a destination. It takes a lot of dedication, enthusiasm, and a strong commitment to creating social impact. Along the way, it is good to keep learning and adjusting to new information. This helps you grow personally and also makes your business more successful.

Of course, you don't have to embark on this exciting journey alone. Reach out to team members for **feedback and support**. A team member doesn't have to be a partner or an employee; they can simply be a steadfast supporter of your mission-driven venture. This person could be a family member, a friend, or even a business partner who consistently encourages and supports your efforts. Having someone in your corner who believes in what you are trying to accomplish can provide invaluable encouragement and guidance as you move forward. Additionally, building a network of such supporters can expand your resources and perspectives, enhancing your ability to succeed.

To gather external support, reach out to people who are already in your life and career and whom you consider trusted mentors and advisors. Or they may be some of the competitors and partners you met when you researched the field, or members of relevant professional associations you considered. They could also just be like-minded souls who also want to make a difference or have already done so.

Group members are people to whom you can freely and openly exchange ideas and ask for feedback and advice. People who have been in your shoes before and can help guide you to success, ideally opening up their networks and resources along the way to propel you forward.

Present your supporters and mentors with your mission statement and just see what they think of it. You need to have thick skin when you do this, because some may be very harshly critical of you. Remember that your team members probably have good intentions and want to see you succeed.

Certainly, it is crucial to **develop a clear and detailed business model** for your social enterprise. A business model acts as a blueprint that outlines how your business will generate revenue. Consider the scope of your services or products. Are you planning to operate on a small scale, serving customers

directly within your local area as a sole proprietor? Or, do you envision expanding your operations, hiring staff, and reaching a broader audience to maximize impact?

Clearly define the financial goals of your social enterprise. Determine how much revenue is needed to sustain the operation, compensate yourself and any employees, and potentially allow for future growth. What business model will enable you to achieve the desired profitability?

Furthermore, think about who will be paying for your services or products. Will the direct beneficiaries of your business be the ones paying, or will you implement a model where one group of customers pays and another benefits? For example, TOMS Shoes uses a one-for-one model where buyers fund free shoes for those in need — a prevalent approach in social entrepreneurship.

Another model is seen in micro-lending businesses, where the beneficiaries themselves are customers who pay back loans with interest. This interest not only covers the cost of the loans but also generates profit and funds further lending activities.

Once you have selected the most suitable business model for your social enterprise, consider sharing and testing your model through local social enterprise competitions. These events can offer critical feedback and opportunities to refine your approach, ensuring your business model is as effective as possible.

Once you have calculated the amount you will need to start your organisation/enterprise, you will then need to **look for sources of funding**. You will need to think about different ways to raise the funds needed to get started.

You could consider a few options. For instance, you might take out a business loan if you can, or maybe you can use your own savings to fund your project. Another possibility is asking friends and family if they can lend you some money, or you could look for investors who are interested in helping startups like yours.

Crowdfunding is another option. This is where you use websites like Kickstarter or Indiegogo to ask a lot of people for small amounts of money to support your project. Keep in mind that crowdfunding works best if you have a lot of people who know about your project and want to help, so it might not raise a lot of money if you don't have a big group of supporters yet.

No matter which way you choose to get funding, make sure that the people giving you money understand and support what you want to do with your project. It is important that they care about your goals and not just about making money.

Moreover, in addition to what has already been mentioned, you should develop a **detailed action plan** and, of course, stick to it throughout your entrepreneurial journey. An effective action plan not only sets the foundation for a structured approach to launching and growing your social venture but also acts as a dynamic tool that guides your daily decisions and actions.

When developing your action plan, start by defining clear, actionable goals. For instance, if your social enterprise aims to improve literacy, your action plan might include specific tasks such as securing partnerships with schools, designing educational materials, and scheduling training sessions for volunteers. Each goal should have a corresponding set of activities, responsible parties, and deadlines.

Include milestones that mark significant phases in the development of your venture, such as completing initial funding rounds, launching a pilot program, or reaching a specific number of beneficiaries. Attach key performance indicators (KPIs) to these milestones to measure progress and ensure your actions are driving the desired outcomes.

Set regular intervals (e.g., monthly or quarterly) to review the progress of your action plan. This review allows you to adjust your strategy in response to feedback, challenges, or changes in the market. It is also an opportunity to celebrate achievements that keep your team motivated.

Break down daily or weekly tasks in as much detail as possible. For example, instead of a vague task like "work on marketing", specify "draft blog post for upcoming literacy event" or "update social media with success stories from recent workshops".

Anticipate potential risks or obstacles that could derail your plan. Include contingency strategies for critical risks, such as funding shortfalls or partnership withdrawals, to ensure you can quickly pivot and keep your venture moving forward.

Clearly outline the resources (time, money, personnel) allocated to each activity. This helps prevent resource shortages and ensures that key tasks have adequate support to succeed.

By making your action plan as detailed and structured as possible, you not only set a clear path to follow but also build a framework that can adapt to the evolving needs of your social enterprise. This comprehensive approach is essential for turning your vision into a tangible, impactful reality.

3.3. Designing for Social Change

3.3.1. Workshop: Identifying Social Problems and Solutions

When you are teaching students to solve social problems, it's basically the same thing as teaching them to solve problems in other subjects like maths. The teacher can start by showing the students each part of the social problem-solving process and then repeat this often.

Let's take a closer look at how we learn to solve social problems. Social problem solving is a cognitive-behavioural process that helps us deal with social issues. There are five main steps in this process (education.ufl.edu, n.d.):

1. Recognising the problem: Identifying the issue that needs to be solved.
2. Describing the problem: Naming and describing the problem.
3. Generating solutions: Finding several possible solutions to the problem.
4. Evaluating the solutions and implementing the selected solution: Looking at each possible solution to see which is the best one to solve the problem and then putting it into practice.
5. Evaluation of the result: Checking whether the problem has been solved or not. If it has, there is no need to do it again. If it hasn't, or if something else comes up, you might need to start over.

However, keep in mind that delving into the complexities of social problems can be difficult: from assessing their impact to competing societal interests, understanding these concerns necessitates careful attention. The following are some of the reasons why investigating social problems is difficult (O'Donoghue, n.d.):

- Multiple perspectives: varied people may have varied ideas on what constitutes a societal problem, which may be impacted by their values, experiences, and origins.

- Multiple factors: Social problems can have several roots and causes, making it difficult to determine the main cause or causes of the problem.

- Dynamic nature: social problems are frequently emotional and fluctuate over time, making it difficult to clearly describe and track any changes.

- Lack of data: Some social problems may be difficult to understand and characterize due to a lack of data or research.

- Subjectivity: Some social problems are subjective and susceptible to interpretation, making it difficult to characterize them in a universally agreed manner.

A Social Problem-Solving Workshop

This guide is intended to assist teachers in organizing a Social Problem-Solving Workshop centred on the ideas of social entrepreneurship. The workshop seeks to empower students by increasing their understanding of social challenges and their ability to conceive and implement innovative solutions. Teachers are encouraged to make use of all of the materials in this document, as well as additional deliverables from the Green & Social StartUps project, to enhance the workshop experience.

Step 1: Define the objectives

Before you start organising the workshop, you should set clear, measurable goals. These may include:

- Increasing students' awareness of social issues both locally and globally.

- Developing critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills.

- Introducing students to the fundamentals of social entrepreneurship.

- Encouraging students to think about sustainable, impactful solutions to real-world problems.

Step 2: Prepare the Workshop materials

Collect all necessary materials in advance to ensure a smooth workflow during the workshop. This includes:

- Educational content on social entrepreneurship (provided by the Green & Social StartUps project).

- Case studies highlighting successful social enterprises (provided by the Green & Social StartUps project).

- Brainstorming tools such as sticky notes, markers, and whiteboards.

- Digital resources including access to computers, projectors, and the internet for research and presentations.

Step 3: Organising the workshop

The following suggested organisation of the main points of the workshop can be used. Of course, the teacher can make any changes, such as organising all phases in 1 day or splitting them into several days, varying the suggested durations, and adding other relevant activities or removing some of the suggested ones.

- **Introduction to Social Entrepreneurship** (30 minutes):

  Start with a basic introduction to what social entrepreneurship is. Use examples from the Green & Social StartUps project to illustrate successful enterprises and the impact they have made.

- **Identifying Social Problems** (45 minutes):

  Guide students to identify pressing social issues. This session should involve discussions about why these issues exist and why they matter, encouraging students to think deeply about the roots of these problems.

- **Brainstorming Session** (1 hour):

  Lead a dynamic brainstorming session where students can suggest initial solutions to the problems discussed. Encourage them to think creatively and consider the feasibility of their ideas.

- **Group Work** (1 hour):

  Have students form small teams to develop a preliminary business plan (a template can be found in section 5.1.2, and it is also uploaded as a separate editable document on our project's website) or project proposal that addresses one of the identified social issues. They should

consider aspects such as the mission, target audience, potential products or services, and basic financials.

- **Presentation and Feedback** (1 hour):

  Each group presents their business plan or project proposal to the class. Provide constructive feedback on each presentation, discussing the strengths, weaknesses, and potential impacts of the proposed solutions.

Tips for enhancing engagement

An interesting idea is to invite local social entrepreneurs to talk about their experiences. Their real-world insights would provide valuable learning and could inspire students to pursue their own ideas.

Also, embedding interactive activities could multiply students' interest. You could for example include a role-playing game where students take on different roles in a hypothetical social enterprise to understand the different aspects of running a business. More ideas for organising a role play can be found in the next subsection.

Also, problem-solving games are quite fun because you can create scenarios that students have to navigate through, simulating real-life problem solving in social contexts. Another interesting activity is to organize a pitching event (a template can be found in section 5.3 and is also uploaded as a separate editable document on our project website). Here students present their ideas to virtual investors (e.g. teachers or parents) to practice persuasive communication and improve their proposals.

You can also look for and distribute additional resources for students who wish to explore social entrepreneurship beyond the workshop. Include literature, online resources and information about upcoming events and competitions.

Of course, it is always helpful to maintain interaction with students after the workshop to support those who are interested in developing their projects further. Offer additional sessions or one-to-one coaching for passionate students.

3.3.2. Role-Playing: Negotiating Social Business Challenges

Role-playing exercises are an effective teaching method, particularly for illustrating the complexity and dynamic nature of managing a social enterprise. This exercise invites students to step into the roles of various stakeholders in a social enterprise, confronting and negotiating solutions to a range of challenges. The scenarios are designed to develop critical skills such as negotiation, communication and strategic thinking, while highlighting the balance between maintaining a profitable business and achieving social goals.

The main objective of this role play is to immerse students in the practical challenges of running a social enterprise. It aims to improve their problem-solving skills and encourage innovative thinking in the face of social, economic and ethical dilemmas.

Step 1: Preparation

- **Create character profiles and scenarios**: Develop detailed profiles for the various stakeholders involved in a social enterprise, such as the CEO, CFO, marketing director, community liaison, and external stakeholders such as investors and local community leaders.
- **Design challenge scenarios**: create several scenarios of challenges that social enterprises may face. These could include funding shortages, ethical dilemmas, stakeholder disagreements, supply chain disruptions and community reactions.
- **Distribute materials**: Provide students with character profiles and background information about their roles and challenges in advance to prepare them for the role play.

Step 2: Implementation

Again, the following instructions are suggested, and the teacher can make any changes he/she wishes.

- **Introduction to the Scenario** (30 minutes):

  The workshop should start with a brief introduction to the context of the social business and an overview of the scenarios. Each student, or group of students, is assigned a character and given time to review their profiles and the challenges they will face. This preparation phase is critical as it sets the stage for the role-playing, allowing students to fully inhabit their roles.

- **Role-Playing Session** (1 hour 30 minutes):

Briefing: Each student reviews their character's objectives, motivations, and resources. They prepare their strategy for how to achieve their goals within the scenario.

Interaction: Students enter the role-play, interacting with other characters to negotiate solutions to the challenges presented. Encourage them to use dialogue, persuasion, and negotiation tactics.

Challenge Rounds: Introduce new, unexpected challenges through "event cards" that students must respond to spontaneously, adding complexity to the negotiation process.

Examples of event cards:

→ Technology Disruption: A new technology has been released that could render your current product obsolete. Negotiate with tech developers to innovate or pivot your product line.

→ Market Competition: A competitor has launched a similar product at a lower price. Strategize with your marketing team to enhance your value proposition or reconsider your pricing strategy.

→ Intellectual Property Issue: Another company claims that your new product infringes on their patent. Discuss with legal advisors to negotiate a settlement or to explore design alternatives.

→ Unexpected Resignation: A key team member resigns unexpectedly at a critical phase of product development. Negotiate with remaining team members to redistribute responsibilities and discuss incentives for meeting the project deadline.

→ Funding Milestone: Your investors have set a critical milestone that must be met within the next quarter to release the next round of funding. Plan and execute strategies to meet this milestone.

→ Data Breach: Sensitive company data has been hacked, risking client trust. Work with PR and IT to manage the fallout and reassure stakeholders.

→ Partnership Dilemma: A potential partner can increase your distribution network but has questionable ethics. Decide whether to partner and how to mitigate any ethical concerns.

→ Community Backlash: The local community has voiced concerns that your project benefits external stakeholders more than the local population. Hold a town hall meeting to address these concerns and realign your project's objectives with community needs.

→ Scaling Challenges: You have the opportunity to scale your solution to another region, but local customs and regulations differ significantly. Formulate a plan to adapt your operations to these new conditions without compromising your social mission.

→ Funding Cut for Social Projects: Government funding for your main social project has been cut. Negotiate alternative funding solutions or scale down operations in a sustainable manner.

→ Sustainability Setback: A supplier of eco-friendly materials goes out of business. Scramble to source new suppliers without compromising your environmental values.

→ Legislative Changes: New legislation increases the costs of employing part-time workers, which comprise most of your workforce. Work out a strategy to handle the increased costs while maintaining workforce stability.

● **Debriefing and Reflection** (1 hour):

Conclude the exercise with a feedback session where you can provide insights into each group's negotiation techniques and decision-making processes. Ask students to reflect on how their decisions aligned with the social mission of the enterprise and what they could have done differently. Discuss the real-world implications of their strategies and the importance of balancing business needs with social objectives. This final phase is crucial for reinforcing the lessons of the workshop and ensuring that students can apply these insights in real-world settings.

3.3.3. Service-Learning Projects: Planning and Implementation

Service-learning is broadly defined as a form of experiential education in which the actual provision of a service to the community is integrated into the curriculum. Service-learning involves two key elements: engagement with the community (service) and reflection on that engagement (learning) (Preradovic, 2015). These elements must be balanced with the expectation that students will engage in an organised service activity that responds to identified community needs, and that they will reflect on the service activity in a way that provides them with a deeper understanding of the course content, a broader appreciation of the subject matter, and an enhanced sense of social responsibility (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995).

In a nutshell, service learning is a way of combining academic goals with community service. Lessons on relevant community issues are combined with existing course content to make learning more engaging and relevant. At the same time, students get practical experience by doing service projects to address community issues and bring about positive change.

Therefore, service-learning projects are a great way to teach social entrepreneurship values to students. By doing projects that combine learning with community service, students not only get to learn some basic stuff and develop some skills, but they also get to understand how they can make a difference in society. These projects get students to use their academic knowledge to solve real-world problems, which helps them to feel responsible and engaged with society.

To effectively implement service-learning projects on social entrepreneurship, teachers should first develop an organised methodology. Begin by selecting important curriculum objectives that address real-world social challenges. Then, undertake community outreach to form partnerships with local groups ready to engage in projects that advance their mission while simultaneously providing kids with learning opportunities.

A necessary stage is to co-design the initiative with students and community partners. This includes establishing clear goals, defining responsibilities, and determining the resources required. It is critical to ensure that projects are doable within the students' timeframes and skills while also being truly valuable to the community.

What is more, teachers should organise reflection sessions during and after the project. These reflections allow students to connect their experiences to more expansive principles of social entrepreneurship, which promotes deeper learning and personal development. Furthermore, evaluations should be integrated into the project to measure both the learning outcomes and the social impact accomplished.

Let's delve deeper into how a teacher can organise service-learning projects, while presenting interesting project ideas on social entrepreneurship.

Step 1: Curriculum Integration and Objective Setting

The first step is to integrate service learning into the curriculum. Teachers should identify areas in the existing curriculum that can naturally incorporate social entrepreneurship concepts. This could include subjects such as social studies, economics or environmental science. The aim is to find synergies between educational content and practical service activities that address community needs.

Step 2: Community Partnership and Project Design

Effective service-learning requires building partnerships with local organisations that are active in relevant social areas. Teachers can contact non-profit organisations, local businesses and government agencies to discuss possible collaboration. The key is to design projects that not only help these organisations achieve their goals, but also align with educational objectives. For example, if the focus is on environmental conservation, partnering with a local park or community garden can provide hands-on opportunities for students.

Step 3: Student Engagement and Role Definition

Once the framework of the project is set, involve students in the planning process. This promotes ownership and increases their motivation. Assign roles based on the needs of the project and the strengths of the students - some might work on field activities, others on data collection or project reporting. For example, in a project to help a local animal shelter, some students could handle food drives while others could develop publicity campaigns to raise awareness.

Step 4: Action Plan and Resource Allocation

Develop a detailed action plan outlining each phase of the project, including timelines, resources required and specific student responsibilities (a template can be found in section 5.1.1, and it is also uploaded as a separate editable document on our project's website). Ensure that the plan is realistic, taking into account students' academic workload and available resources. This may include scheduling activities during school hours or integrating them into specific class sessions.

Step 5: Execution and On-Field Learning

Carry out the project according to the action plan. Teachers should supervise and support students and facilitate learning opportunities in the field. For example, during a project to improve local recycling rates, students could run educational workshops for community members, learning and teaching about sustainable practices at the same time.

Step 6: Reflection and Assessment

Regular reflection sessions are essential. They can be structured as group discussions, individual essays or presentations in which students analyse their experiences, the impact of their work and how it relates to their studies. This reflection helps to deepen their understanding of social entrepreneurship and its impact. Evaluate both project outcomes and student learning to measure success and areas for improvement.

Step 7: Reporting and Celebration

Conclude the project with a formal report that students can present to the school community and external stakeholders. This should outline what has been achieved and the learning outcomes. Celebrating the project not only recognises the students' hard work, but also raises awareness of the social issues addressed.

Service-Learning Project Ideas on Social Entrepreneurship

- **Eco-Friendly Initiative**: In this project, students engage with local businesses to encourage the shift from plastic to eco-friendly, biodegradable packaging solutions. The project begins with students researching alternative packaging materials and identifying local suppliers. They then conduct outreach to local business owners, presenting the benefits of switching to sustainable

options – not only for the environment but also for attracting eco-conscious consumers. Workshops or presentations could be organised to demonstrate the effectiveness and cost implications of these alternatives. Students might also initiate a recognition program that publicly commends businesses that commit to eco-friendly practices, encouraging broader community participation.

- **Financial Literacy Campaign**: Students could organise a series of workshops aimed at improving financial literacy in underprivileged areas. This would involve first conducting surveys or focus groups to identify specific community needs – whether it is budgeting, saving or understanding credit. The curriculum for these workshops would be designed to be accessible and practical, ensuring relevance to participants' everyday lives. Students could partner with local financial experts or banks who might be interested in participating or sponsoring the programme. This project would not only improve the financial skills of community members, but also provide students with real-world teaching and organisational experience.

- **Tech for Good**: In this project, students collect, refurbish and redistribute used computers to the elderly and disadvantaged youth. The initiative begins with a hardware collection drive, followed by a period in which students work to refurbish the equipment, learning technical skills in the process. Once the hardware is in place, the students develop training programmes to teach basic computer skills, internet safety and how to use online resources. This project helps to bridge the digital divide and opens up new opportunities for the recipients, while the students gain valuable technical and educational experience.

- **Social Awareness Drive**: This project focuses on raising awareness and advocating for solutions to local social issues such as homelessness or mental health. Students would carry out research to understand the causes and effects of the chosen issue, and then develop a multi-faceted campaign to address it. This could include organising public talks, setting up information stands at community events and launching a social media campaign to raise awareness. The project could also involve working with local NGOs or governmental agencies, providing a platform for students to influence policy or direct community efforts.

- **Cultural Heritage Project**: Students undertake a project to document and preserve local cultural heritage, which could include oral histories, traditional practices, local cuisine or crafts. This may involve interviewing community elders or cultural keepers, researching local archives, and perhaps even creating visual or written documentation of cultural artefacts. The end goal may be to create a digital archive or physical exhibition that makes this heritage accessible to the wider community and future generations. As well as helping to preserve important cultural knowledge, this project will develop students' research and project management skills.

- **Community Health Advocate Program**: Students can work to improve health outcomes in underserved communities by organising health screenings, fitness classes, and nutrition workshops. This project can partner with local health clinics and gyms to provide resources and expertise. The goal would be to equip residents with the knowledge and tools to maintain their health, thereby reducing health disparities.

- **Sustainable Urban Gardening Initiative**: Create a project that involves students in setting up and maintaining urban gardens in spaces provided by local businesses or municipal areas. The aim would be to promote local food production and sustainable living practices. Students could also run educational sessions for community members about the benefits of urban gardening, how to start their own gardens, and the importance of sustainability in urban settings.

- **Youth Mentorship and Entrepreneurship Hub**: Develop a mentoring programme where students are paired with young local entrepreneurs to provide guidance, resources and support to start their own business. This project could include workshops on business planning, marketing and financial management to foster an entrepreneurial spirit among local youth. The project could culminate in a 'pitch day' where young entrepreneurs present their business plans to local business leaders and potential investors.

4. Inclusive Entrepreneurship

4.1. Overview

This section shows types of obstacles which may appear in the way of people who want to start their own business. Entrepreneurship is a vital driver of economic growth, innovation, and societal development, offering individuals the chance to transform ideas into successful businesses, create jobs, and contribute positively to their communities. However, the path to entrepreneurial success is often obstructed by a range of obstacles and barriers. These challenges can vary significantly based on factors such as gender, disability, geographic location, disability, financial status, and experience level, each presenting unique hurdles for aspiring entrepreneurs.

For women entrepreneurs, gender-based challenges can range from societal norms and expectations to limited access to funding and mentorship. In rural areas, entrepreneurs often face unique difficulties, including inadequate infrastructure, limited access to markets, and scarcity of resources. Despite financial capability, some individuals encounter non-financial barriers such as regulatory hurdles, lack of business knowledge, and insufficient networks. Disabled individuals aspiring to become entrepreneurs encounter accessibility issues, discrimination, and a lack of tailored support services. Additionally, individuals with no prior business experience may struggle with the complexities of starting and managing a business, facing steep learning curves and a lack of confidence.

Recognising and understanding these diverse barriers is essential for creating supportive ecosystems that promote inclusive entrepreneurship. By addressing these challenges, we can build a more equitable and dynamic entrepreneurial landscape, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of gender, location, financial status, disability, or experience, have the opportunity to thrive and succeed.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students will be able to:

✓ identify and understand diverse barriers

✓ analyse gender-based challenges

✓ evaluate rural entrepreneurship barriers

✓ understand non-financial and financial barriers

- ✓ examine challenges for disabled entrepreneurs
- ✓ address challenges for inexperienced entrepreneurs
- ✓ develop inclusive strategies and policies
- ✓ learn how to deal with emerging problems

By achieving these learning objectives, students can be better equipped to understand and navigate the multifaceted challenges in entrepreneurship, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for all entrepreneurs.

4.2. Entrepreneurship in Diverse Contexts

4.2.1. Types of Obstacles and Barriers

Entrepreneurship is often celebrated as a pathway to innovation, economic growth, and personal fulfilment. However, many aspiring entrepreneurs face a variety of obstacles that can hinder their progress. These barriers are multifaceted and can be influenced by factors such as gender, geographical location, financial resources, disability, and experience. This chapter aims to identify and understand the diverse barriers in entrepreneurship, offering insights into how they affect different groups and what can be done to reduce their impact. A person who intends to run their own business should be aware of the existing barriers, but should not be discouraged by them, but learn to overcome and deal with them.

Gender barriers

Societal expectations and traditional gender roles can significantly impact entrepreneurial aspirations and opportunities. Women, for example, often face stereotypes that question their capability to lead and manage businesses. These biases can limit their access to networks, mentors, and investors.

Depending on the country and the society's attitude towards women, women have easier or more difficult professional development. Women entrepreneurship can be defined as "a confident, innovative and creative woman capable of achieving self-economic independence individually or in collaboration, generates employment opportunities for others through initiating, establishing and running the enterprise by keeping pace with her personal, family and social life" (Sharma, 2013).

Women entrepreneurs often encounter greater challenges in securing funding compared to their male counterparts. This can be due to biased perceptions held by investors, as well as a lack of collateral and credit history. Women are also more likely to be offered smaller loans and higher interest rates. Comparing the stress levels between male and female entrepreneurs, Parasuraman and Simmers (2001) found that women experience greater stress due to the imbalance between family life and work life. This imbalance is exacerbated by a lack of professional connections and the limited time they can dedicate to their businesses because of their multiple duties. Fasci and Valdez (1998) discovered that many women started businesses from their homes in an effort to achieve work-life balance, though

this often resulted in lower income. The responsibility of balancing work and family obligations disproportionately falls on women. This can limit the time and energy they can devote to their business ventures, thereby impacting their growth and sustainability. Furthermore, several researchers have studied the association among women entrepreneurs and various factors influencing their stress levels and business outcomes.

When compared to men regarding the acquisition of financial resources, women who believe they have a higher probability of success in low-growth and low-capital-intensive businesses often opt for financial resources from their networks rather than formal sources. Since women entrepreneurs may find it challenging to compete with men in attracting key resources (such as employees and suppliers) through financial incentives, they tend to focus on attracting and building relationships by adopting different and improved HR practices.

Geographical Barriers

Traditionally, rural areas have been characterised by specific resource-based economic activities like agriculture and forestry, as well as open spaces such as moorlands and mountains. Alternatively, rural areas can be defined based on socio-spatial characteristics, including population densities and proximity to major cities. Recent approaches, however, define "rural" more as a social construct, emphasising how people pursue and embody a rural ideal in their daily lives. However rural space is no longer confined to agricultural activities and land uses, but is extended to include multi-sectoral activities. Small and medium towns integrated into their rural hinterland are fit for inclusion in rural areas (Labrianidis,2003). The specific characteristics of rurality — such as small labour and output markets and less developed infrastructure compared to urban environments — limit the available opportunity structures. Additionally, the supply of potential entrepreneurs willing to confront the challenges and seize the opportunities in rural areas is not guaranteed. Many individuals who might be expected to take on entrepreneurial roles are often the first to migrate to more appealing urban areas. Therefore, the key economic challenge for rural areas is how a small number of entrepreneurial individuals can adapt to and exploit the characteristics of their external environment.

Entrepreneurs in rural areas often struggle with limited access to essential resources such as high-speed internet, reliable transportation, and modern infrastructure. These limitations can hinder their ability to operate efficiently and reach broader markets.

Rural entrepreneurs may find it challenging to connect with business networks, mentors, and support services that are typically more accessible in urban areas. This isolation can lead to a lack of critical knowledge, support, and opportunities for collaboration.

The smaller and less diverse customer base in rural areas can restrict market opportunities for entrepreneurs. This can make it difficult to scale businesses and achieve sustainable growth.

Financial barriers

Securing initial funding is a common challenge for many entrepreneurs. Without sufficient capital, it can be difficult to start and grow a business. Traditional lenders often require collateral and a strong credit history, which many new entrepreneurs lack. The founder's wealth is inherently tied to the success of the business, creating a tangled financial web if proper systems are not established.

Many aspiring entrepreneurs lack the financial literacy needed to effectively manage their finances, create realistic budgets, and develop viable business plans. This can lead to poor financial decisions and business failure. Businesses often need to borrow money periodically, whether to bridge temporary cash flow gaps, purchase raw materials, or seize growth or expansion opportunities. Rather than waiting until the need for financing arises, it is wiser to plan ahead and secure financing in advance.

One of the cardinal financial rules of running a business is that business and personal finances should always be kept separate. Combining business and personal finances can result in several financial challenges. Firstly, it complicates the monitoring of cash flow, as it becomes difficult to distinguish between personal expenses and business income and expenditures. This lack of clarity can hinder accurate financial reporting and planning.

Barriers faced by disabled people

Disabled entrepreneurs may face physical barriers that impede their ability to access workplaces, networking events, and other business-related environments. Inadequate accommodations can limit their ability to participate fully in entrepreneurial activities.

Prejudices and misconceptions about the capabilities of disabled individuals can create significant barriers. These biases can affect their ability to secure funding, gain customers, and establish partnerships. Starting a business as a person with a disabilities can also present a unique challenge. Despite the growing awareness of disability inclusion and diversity in the workplace, entrepreneurs with disabilities continue to face unique obstacles that can hinder their efforts to start or operate a successful business. These obstacles include physical and social barriers, systemic discrimination, and lack of access to funding and resources. They may also face stigma and discrimination from potential customers, investors, or partners. Disable people undertake mainly for survival needs because they have less income and higher expenses derived from their disabilities, as well as their self-realisation needs (Martínez-León, et al., 2019)

Financial challenges pose a significant barrier for disabled entrepreneurs, mirroring the broader difficulties faced by all individuals in accessing necessary resources (Martínez-León et al., 2019). Disabled entrepreneurs encounter distinct financial hurdles due to several factors, including limited access to traditional funding sources, higher costs associated with accommodations and assistive technologies, and discriminatory practices in lending and investment.

Securing adequate financial resources is particularly challenging for disabled entrepreneurs. Traditional lenders and investors may be reluctant to extend credit or funding due to perceived risks associated with disabilities or lack of familiarity with adaptive technologies and accessibility requirements. This reluctance often stems from biases and misconceptions about the capabilities of disabled individuals in business contexts.

Furthermore, the additional costs associated with accommodations and assistive technologies necessary for disabled entrepreneurs can strain limited financial resources. These expenses include modifications to workspaces, specialised equipment, and transportation accommodations, all of which contribute to higher startup and operational costs.

There is often a lack of tailored support services and resources for disabled entrepreneurs. This includes accessible training programs, funding opportunities, and mentorship that address their specific needs and challenges.

Experience Barriers

Many new entrepreneurs lack essential business knowledge and experience. This can include understanding market dynamics, regulatory requirements, and effective management practices. Without this knowledge, they may struggle to navigate the complexities of running a business. Experience within a specific industry can be crucial for entrepreneurial success. Those without industry experience may find it challenging to understand market trends, customer needs, and competitive landscapes.

Mentorship can provide valuable guidance and support for new entrepreneurs. However, access to experienced mentors is not always readily available, particularly for individuals who are not well-connected within business communities.

Understanding the diverse barriers to entrepreneurship is crucial for developing effective support systems and policies that foster inclusive economic growth. By recognising and addressing these obstacles, we can create a more equitable entrepreneurial landscape that allows individuals from all backgrounds to succeed. Efforts should focus on enhancing access to resources, providing targeted support, and challenging societal biases to ensure that entrepreneurship remains a viable and rewarding path for everyone.

Cultural Barriers

Cultural barriers to entrepreneurship are differences in cultural norms, values, practices and expectations between groups or regions. These barriers affect how businesses operate and are perceived in different markets. For example, a marketing strategy or business practice that is successful in one cultural context may not work in another due to different social norms and consumer

behaviours. These differences can affect how businesses communicate, negotiate, manage, and serve customers.

Overcoming these cultural barriers is essential for entrepreneurs who aim to expand their business to different geographical locations or who work in multicultural environments. Misunderstandings or mismatches in expectations can lead to conflicts, missed opportunities and potentially damage a brand's reputation. In addition, cultural barriers can also affect team dynamics and collaboration within a company, especially in diverse teams where varying cultural perspectives can either enrich or complicate decision making and innovation. Recognising and respecting these differences through informed strategies and adaptive business practices is vital to overcoming these barriers, ensuring effective communication, promoting a harmonious working environment and achieving business success in a global marketplace. This means understanding the cultural norms, values and expectations of people in the regions where they intend to operate. For example, business practices that are acceptable in one country may be frowned upon in another because of cultural differences in communication, negotiation or formalities. Conduct thorough market research to understand the cultural nuances that may affect your business. This includes preferences for communication style, buying behaviour and service expectations. Understanding these aspects can help you adapt your business model to better meet local preferences and expectations. Adapting your products or services to local cultures can significantly improve market acceptance. This may involve modifying marketing strategies, adjusting product features, or even changing your business model to ensure cultural compatibility. For example, global food chains often adapt their menus to reflect local cuisines and food preferences.

4.2.2. Overcoming Gender, Geographic, and Socio-Economic Barriers

Starting a business can be both exciting and daunting, especially when faced with a multitude of potential obstacles that can seem insurmountable. Gender stereotypes, geographical constraints, financial limitations, disability-related challenges, lack of experience and cultural differences are just some of the barriers that aspiring entrepreneurs may face. However, each of these barriers also represents an opportunity for growth and innovation. By adopting targeted strategies, cultivating resilience and utilising available resources and networks, you can effectively address these challenges.

Below we explore specific tactics and creative solutions that will enable you to overcome these obstacles and pave the way for a successful and fulfilling entrepreneurial career.

Overcoming Gender Barriers in Your Entrepreneurial Journey

Gender barriers can have a significant impact on your ambitions, but a proactive approach can help overcome them. Explore research and case studies that highlight the successes and strategies of women entrepreneurs who have successfully overcome these challenges. This knowledge can provide actionable strategies, such as negotiation skills or ways to effectively present your proposals to predominantly male investor groups.

Create and/or actively participate in networks that support women in business. These networks offer more than just mentorship - they can provide opportunities to collaborate on projects, share resources and gain access to investors interested in supporting women-led businesses. Participating in leadership and entrepreneurship development workshops and seminars, often organised by these networks, can greatly enhance your skills and confidence.

Participate in competitions designed to promote women in business. These activities and connections will not only help improve your business plan and presentation skills, but will also expose you to an audience that can open doors to media exposure, mentorship and even funding. Winning or even participating in such events can add credibility and visibility to your business.

Navigating Geographic Barriers as Future Entrepreneurs

You can easily harness the potential of technology to overcome geographical limitations. Use digital marketing strategies to easily reach a global audience. This includes creating an integrated online store, using SEO strategies to increase visibility and engaging customers through regular content on social media platforms.

In addition, you can form local alliances to advocate for better business infrastructure in your region. Work with other local businesses to push for improvements such as better internet connectivity or

transport services. These improvements not only benefit your business, but also boost the local economy.

Take advantage of local uniqueness by turning geographic isolation into a selling point. For example, if your business is located in a rural area, promote your products as unique offerings that can't be found in urban centres, such as handmade goods, local crafts or organic products. This approach can create a niche market and attract customers looking for authentic and traditional experiences or products.

Facing Financial Barriers Head-On

Develop and improve your financial skills through targeted training – take financial management courses, understand the basics of equity and debt, learn how to manage cash flow and deal with the financial challenges faced by start-ups. This knowledge is vital when approaching investors, as you will need to explain how their money will be used and the expected return on investment.

Consider bootstrapping as a way to start and grow your business. This method involves minimising your overheads and finding cost-effective ways to operate until the business is self-sustaining on its own cash flow. Use free or low-cost business management, marketing and communications tools. You can find a wealth of such tools online that are either free or low cost - saving you money compared to hiring an expert.

You can also explore community-based financing options. For example, local crowdfunding events where community members support businesses that bring value to the area. In addition, you should consider microfinance options that are available through local banks or online platforms that specialise in providing small loans to entrepreneurs.

Overcoming Barriers Faced by Disabled Entrepreneurs

In any case, it is important to prioritise accessibility in every aspect of your business. From physical locations that are accessible to wheelchair users, to your website and online resources that are easy

to use for people who are visually or hearing impaired. Technologies such as screen readers, text-to-speech and adaptive interfaces can make a huge difference to the way you run your business.

One of the most beneficial things you can do is to look for grants and financial support that are specifically designed for business owners with disabilities. These funds can help you cover additional costs associated with making your business accessible or purchasing special equipment. Networking with organisations that focus on disability rights and entrepreneurship can lead you to such funding opportunities.

Also, if you are experiencing any disability, you are well aware of the difficulties you face on a daily basis. Therefore, you can leverage these negative experiences and create awareness about the potential of entrepreneurs with disabilities by organising workshops, speaking at events and maintaining an active online presence. This not only helps to change social perceptions, but also encourages other disabled entrepreneurs to take the leap and start their own business.

Bridging Experience Gaps in Entrepreneurship

To overcome problems and difficulties related to lack of experience, you can seek and establish a relationship with a mentor who has experience in the industry you are entering. This person can not only offer advice and guidance based on real-world experiences, but can also offer networking opportunities and possibly introduce you to investors or partners.

In addition, it is always a good idea to gain direct experience in the industry through internships, part-time positions or volunteering before you embark on any entrepreneurial journey. This hands-on experience is invaluable, providing insights into the challenges and demands of the industry and helping you develop practical skills that will help you manage your own business.

Of course, you should always keep up to date with the latest trends and technologies in your industry by attending workshops, seminars and relevant trade fairs. These events are also great opportunities to network with industry leaders and potential customers, which can lead to partnerships and new business opportunities.

Overcoming Cultural Barriers

Adopting an integrated mindset that considers both your own business culture, and the culture of your target market is the best way to overcome cultural differences. This approach involves finding a common ground where your business practices and local cultural expectations intersect, creating a synergy that respects cultural norms while maintaining your brand identity.

Always remember that culture is dynamic and what works today may not work tomorrow. Maintain a continuous learning mindset and be prepared to adapt as cultures evolve. This may mean keeping abreast of cultural trends through ongoing research or feedback from local customers and partners.

When entering a new market, work with local companies or consultants who have a deep understanding of the cultural landscape. Rather than imposing your existing business model, work together to develop approaches that are culturally respectful and commercially viable. This collaborative approach not only eases market entry, but can also enhance your brand's reputation and acceptance.

Finally, building a culturally diverse team can provide insights and ideas that prevent cultural mistakes. Team members from different backgrounds can offer perspectives you may not have considered, leading to more informed decisions and an inclusive business environment.

In concluding this sub-section, it is important to note that implementing these strategic measures to overcome barriers to entrepreneurship requires a proactive approach, resilience and a willingness to continuously adapt and learn. By actively participating in networks, using technology, improving financial literacy and promoting inclusivity and accessibility, you will not only pave the way for your own success, but also contribute to a more equitable and dynamic business landscape. As you embark on this journey, remember that every challenge you overcome sets a precedent for future entrepreneurs, helping to pave the way for others to follow. Embrace these opportunities to grow, lead and innovate, knowing that your efforts to overcome these obstacles will not only realise your entrepreneurial dreams, but also inspire and enable others to do the same. With determination and the right strategies, you can turn potential obstacles into stepping stones to achieving business excellence and making a meaningful impact in your community and beyond.

4.3. Empowerment through Enterprise

The preservation of the sharing of entrepreneurship, which has an important place among the skills in the 21st century, in the educational environment came to the fore. While teaching entrepreneurship to students, it is inevitable to teach the skills sought in people who are called entrepreneurs. As a result of the surveys we did in WP2, these skills were combined under certain categories. Below we have listed the most basic skills:

Risk Taking / Courage	Problem Solving Skills
Creativity and Innovation	Persuasion Ability
Communication Skills	Openness to innovations and learning
Being patient	Self-Confidence

The features mentioned above also show that the most important feature that determines a person's being an entrepreneur is individual characteristics. The classroom environment also includes many students with different individual characteristics. For this reason, it is very important for inclusiveness that the activities to be carried out in the classroom environment are of a quality or variety that will support different individual characteristics.

The characteristics that individuals are born with or the characteristics that are transferred to them through their culture and the environment in which they grow up can sometimes turn into obstacles to entrepreneurial activities. For example, in Turkey, it is a fact that men start more businesses than women. Observations show that the businesses established by women entrepreneurs are relatively smaller and their growth tendencies are low. Due to gender roles, women are often exposed to discrimination in business life and are especially prevented from reaching senior management positions (Güneş and Şekerdil,2021).

As a result of his study, Güven (2022) found that the ratio of the well-educated population to the total population and population density affect entrepreneurship. In other words, the social environment that individuals have can be a supportive opportunity for an individual's entrepreneurial activities, but it can also be a disadvantageous situation.

When studies conducted with disabled individuals, another disadvantaged group, are examined, it has been revealed that physical problems arising from disability, discriminatory attitudes towards disabled

people, problems related to physical access and lack of state support affect entrepreneurial activities (Durak, 2021).

Another factor that affects an individual's entrepreneurship is financial factors. When financial elements are mentioned, it may be misleading to think only of capital. It is also important for the entrepreneurial individual to have financial knowledge and financial literacy in terms of evaluating the risks he can take. Not having a sufficient background in financial knowledge and financial literacy also puts the individual at a disadvantage in terms of entrepreneurial qualities. In other words, as the levels of financial literacy, financial knowledge and financial attitudes decrease, individuals' risk-taking tendency and tolerance towards uncertainty also decrease (Kıran and Bozkurt, 2020).

This section includes various classroom activities that can be used when conveying entrepreneurship in disadvantaged situations. Teaching entrepreneurship to disadvantaged students is an important initiative that has the potential to improve their economic and social conditions. Here are some steps and methods that can be followed in this process:

1. **Conducting a Needs Analysis:** Determining the needs and interests of disadvantaged students makes the education program more effective. With this analysis, it can be determined which subjects and skills are prioritized.

2. **Using Appropriate Educational Materials and Methods:** Entrepreneurship education should include practical applications as well as theoretical knowledge. Students can be enabled to experience learning by using interactive lessons, workshops and simulations.

3. **Role Models and Mentoring Programs:** Providing the opportunity to meet successful entrepreneurs and hear their stories can inspire students. Additionally, through mentoring programs, students can receive support from mentors.

4. **Collaborations and Networking:** By establishing collaborations with local businesses, NGOs and educational institutions, students can be provided with access to a wider support network. These networks are important for accessing resources and opportunities.

6. **Providing Practical Experience:** Opportunities such as internship programs, project work and establishing micro businesses can be offered to enable students to gain real-life work experience. These experiences help them develop entrepreneurial skills.

7. **Financial Literacy Education:** As part of entrepreneurship education, basic financial management skills should be taught. Topics such as budgeting, cost calculation and financial planning may be covered.

8. **Creating a Supportive Learning Environment:** It is important to create a learning environment where students can express themselves, not be afraid of making mistakes, and share their creative thoughts freely.

9. **Teamwork and Leadership Skills:** Training should also be given on the teamwork and leadership skills required to be successful in entrepreneurship. This can be encouraged through group projects and collaborations.

10. **Technology Use and Digital Skills:** Today, digital skills are very important for entrepreneurship. Students should be trained on subjects such as basic technology use, digital marketing and e-commerce.

11. **Increasing Motivation and Self-Confidence:** Organizing activities that will increase the motivation and self-confidence of disadvantaged students enables them to take bolder steps towards entrepreneurship.

These methods can help disadvantaged students reveal their potential to be successful in the field of entrepreneurship and provide them with a sustainable future.

4.3.1. Classroom Activities: Building Confidence and Entrepreneurial Skills

Activity 1:

Materials: Worksheet- Evaluating Myself

✓ The "I evaluate myself" worksheet is distributed to the students (you will find it below).

✓ "Dear students, today we will evaluate your characteristics in terms of entrepreneurial experience. We all have different characteristics that make us special. While these features we have make it easier for us to do some tasks, they may cause us to experience difficulties in others. Now, in the worksheets I have given you, I want you to think about your own characteristics and identify your strengths that will help you become an entrepreneur and your weaknesses that will challenge you to become an entrepreneur. Then, I want you to fill out your worksheets by considering the conditions around you and identifying the threats that may prevent you from becoming an entrepreneur and the opportunities that will support you." The instructions are read to the students.

✓ Students are given 15 minutes to fill out the worksheets.

✓ After 15 minutes, volunteer students share their SWOT analysis with the class.

After the sharing is completed, the following questions are asked to all students:

1. Do you think you have enough strengths to become an entrepreneur?

2. Are there ways to change the characteristics that you consider weak in becoming an entrepreneur?

3. If it is not possible to change your weaknesses, do you think there are people/institutions from which you can get support regarding these aspects?

At the end of the event, it is shared with the students that young entrepreneurs may encounter some problems during their entrepreneurship, arising from their individual characteristics or the environment they live in, but that it is possible to overcome these problems.

Suggestions for young entrepreneurs to overcome these problems can be listed as follows:

- One of the biggest problems of entrepreneurs is finding capital. Borrowing to find capital should be avoided, and government incentive/support programs should be investigated instead.

- When setting up a business, a SWOT analysis should be made regarding the business to be established, like the work we are doing today. Market research should also be included in this analysis.

- You may not have all the knowledge and skills necessary for the job you intend to do. Therefore, collaborating/forming a team with people who have this knowledge, and skills will ease your burden and lead you to success.

- Although you can run your business through collaboration, it is important to be financially literate in order to master the financial stages of your business. You can attend courses/trainings that will help you improve in financial literacy.

- In today's world, it is possible to create a global market for yourself through technology (e-commerce). In this way, you can make big profits with less capital. For this, it is enough to increase your technological knowledge and experience and become a digital literate - digital citizen.

Worksheet: Evaluating Myself

MY STRENGTHS	MY WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

Activity 2: Entrepreneurship Simulation

Purpose: To teach students business management and decision-making processes.

Materials: Paper, pencil, computer (if simulation software is available).

✓ Students are divided into small groups and each group establishes its own business that is friendly to nature or provides a solution to a social problem (for example, women's employment).

✓ They choose the type of business (e.g. cafe, store, service provider).

✓ They determine the startup capital, product or service prices, costs and other business plan details for the business.

✓ Each group manages their business and makes decisions (e.g. advertising budget, employee salaries, product prices) for a certain period of time (e.g. 4 weeks).

✓ The financial situations of the groups are evaluated weekly, and the results of their decisions are analysed.

Outcomes of this activity:

• Students experience business management and decision-making processes.

• Students' financial literacy and strategic thinking skills improve.

Activity 3: Market Research Project

Purpose: To teach students target audience analysis and product/service development processes.

Materials: Survey forms, internet access.

- ✓ Students divide into groups and choose a specific product or service (They prefer this product or service to be environmentally friendly and/or a product/service that provides solutions to social problems).
- ✓ They conduct market research to determine who the target audience is for this product or service.
- ✓ They prepare and conduct surveys to understand the needs and expectations of the target audience.
- ✓ They analyse survey results and make improvements in their products or services.
- ✓ They present the results in class and receive feedback.

Outcomes of this activity:

- Students develop skills in conducting market research and analysing data.
- Customer-oriented thinking and innovation skills increase.

Activity 4: Starting a Mini Business

Purpose: To provide students with real work experience.

Materials: Start-up capital (can be provided by the school or sponsors), materials needed for the product or service.

- ✓ Students divide into small groups and each group starts a small business (e.g. lemonade stand, selling handmade items).
- ✓ They prepare a business plan for the business (costs, prices, target audience, marketing strategy).
- ✓ They sell their products or services for a specific period of time (e.g. 1 week).
- ✓ They analyse sales results and evaluate their profitability.
- ✓ They share and discuss their experiences in class.

Outcomes of this activity:

- Students gain experience doing business in the real world.
- Customer relations, sales and marketing skills improve.
- Students (especially those who are economically disadvantaged) evaluate ways to access capital.

Activity 5: Business Fair

Purpose: To enable students to communicate with business owners, associations and non-governmental organizations.

In today's world, where individualization is rapidly developing, trust has become one of the greatest needs. Having an environment where they can get support, especially at the beginning of the journey and when faced with difficult situations, will give entrepreneurs strength. For this reason, it is vital for entrepreneurs to create an environment in which they can trust before their business fails. For the entrepreneur looking for capital for his business idea, effective relationships now take priority over money. The reason why many people in the business world join professional associations and non-governmental organizations is; to meet, cooperate and produce projects that are beneficial to society (Belen, 173).

- ✓ Representatives from surrounding business owners, associations and non-governmental organizations are invited to the school, and a business fair is organized within the school.
- ✓ Students meet with participating employers and representatives and listen to their entrepreneurship stories.
- ✓ They collect business cards from participants in line with their own interests and abilities.

Outcomes of this activity:

- • Teachers can create collaboration-oriented environment for success.

4.3.2. Peer Learning: Sharing Experiences and Strategies

Activity 1:

✓ Students are divided into groups of two or three depending on the class size.

✓ By meeting with entrepreneurial women around them, they collect information about the general characteristics of these institutions and the problems they face in business life.

✓ In the next lesson, a leader from each group shares the information they collected in the classroom environment.

Then the following questions are asked to the students:

1. What did they pay attention to when sharing the work that needed to be done within the group?
2. How did they reach the entrepreneurial women around them?
3. What were the most difficult issues for them while conducting this activity? How did they overcome the difficulties they experienced?

Outcomes of this activity:

- Students work in teams and cooperate.
- Collect information about the problems women face in the business world.
- Evaluate the methods they use to solve the problems they encounter.

Activity 2:

✓ Students are divided into groups of three or four depending on the class size. If there are students with different areas of disability, care is taken to ensure that they are not in the same group.

✓ Students are asked to create a survey via Google forms to be applied to entrepreneurs who establish and run their own businesses in their immediate surroundings.

✓ During the creation and implementation of this survey, the importance of distributing tasks according to the individual characteristics of the students within the group is emphasized.

✓ They can benefit from different types of surveys in the study.

In this survey;

● Characteristics that an entrepreneur should have,

● Advantages of starting your own business for a person,

● Difficulties faced by a person when starting his own business,

● How to access the necessary capital to establish your business,

● It is shared with the students that they can answer questions about the entrepreneur's previous knowledge about his work.

After the surveys are administered, the following questions are asked to the students:

1. How did they proceed during the execution of this activity?

2. What challenges did they face? How did they overcome these challenges?

3. If we were to collect the factors affecting entrepreneurship into certain categories, what would these categories be?

4. Considering the results of the surveys, what are the factors affecting entrepreneurship?

5. Can the factors affecting entrepreneurship be transformed into a situation where the individual can be advantageous?

6. Are there any institutions and organizations that an entrepreneurial individual can get support from to overcome economic difficulties?

Outcomes of this activity:

- Students work in teams and cooperate.

- Collect information about the characteristics of entrepreneurial people.

- Collect data on a specified topic and analyse the data.

- Understand the relationship between the entrepreneurial characteristics of the individual and other concepts.

5. Green & Social Entrepreneurship Simulation Activities

With all the above-mentioned materials on developing an entrepreneurial mindset, green entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship and ways of inclusion at the beginning and during the entrepreneurial journey, here is a useful and detailed guide with step-by-step instructions on how the teacher, in close cooperation with the students, can help them develop their own businesses in a simulation of a real-life framework.

Essentially, the teacher will be able to use all the material in this document. However, it is suggested to start with the modules 1-4, which deal with training in entrepreneurial mindset, green entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship and overcoming possible obstacles in the entrepreneurial journey. The first part of this document can provide an opportunity for students to explore and clarify all relevant concepts, both in a theoretical context and in a practical context through the engaging activities included. Then, once all the relevant concepts have been explored and all the students' questions have been answered, the teacher can move on to using the material contained in this section, which deals with simulation activities in an educational context around green and social entrepreneurship. Again, it is recommended that the teacher follows the suggested order of the sub-sections, as this can give students a structured way of thinking about the stages they need to go through when starting their entrepreneurial adventure.

It is worth noting that the simulation framework is not about opening a real business. Obviously, it is not possible for students to set up their own real businesses. However, the application of the following procedures, with the parallel teaching of all the above modules, is able to simulate the real conditions of the business world and the way a person who wants to open her/his own business thinks and acts, but in a simplified version and in a protected context, so that everything can be understood by primary and secondary school students, but also by primary and secondary school teachers who do not have a relevant knowledge background.

Thus, starting from the clarification of terms related to entrepreneurial mindset, green and social entrepreneurship, through brainstorming activities to develop ideas for green and social enterprises, and ending with suggestions on how to overcome possible obstacles during the entrepreneurial journey, the practical training activities for the development of virtual businesses by students in the protected school environment follow. By following the sequence of activities below, teachers and

students will be able to gain an in-depth understanding of the mindset and initial necessary processes that a new entrepreneur should adopt. The following activities include both detailed instructions and useful ready-to-use templates.

5.1. Business Idea Generation and Development

5.1.1. Brainstorming Sessions for Creative Ideas

Ever wanted to know how the most successful businesses get started? It is all down to one simple thing: **creative thinking!** Idea generation is a brilliant, practical method that businesses use to generate smart ideas and get off the ground. It is a creativity lab where new ideas can really shine! It is the secret ingredient that adds that extra special flavour to business success!

Picture this: you are an entrepreneur looking to start a business. You might have some vague ideas, but no solid plan of action. That is where entrepreneurial brainstorming comes in. It is a way to get your creative juices flowing and generate a bunch of ideas in a matter of minutes.

To get a handle on what brainstorming is all about, it is helpful to have a basic understanding of what it involves. It is a creative process where a person or a team comes up with solutions to a project or a problem. Brainstorming often involves putting together a list of ideas, usually at the start of a project.

In this case, the goal is to explore opportunities to start a business - or to enhance an existing business idea. This means coming up with lots of ideas that could lead to results. Brainstorming is a way of thinking that allows you to come up with lots of ideas without worrying about whether they are good or not. The aim is to come up with as many ideas as possible and then choose the best ones later.

Why You Should Brainstorm Business Ideas

The business world is always changing, so it is really important for businesses to stay up to date. One way to do this is through brainstorming. It helps businesses and entrepreneurs to keep track of what is going on in the market and to think of new products and services. They will be able to spot chances to grow and make the most of them, before competitors get there.

What is more, brainstorming lets you think in new ways and get creative with ideas you wouldn't normally consider. It creates a space where ideas flow freely, encouraging innovation. In a team setting, it brings different perspectives together, leading to some pretty impressive results.

The one-of-a-kind ideas you come up with during brainstorming can put you ahead of the competition. If you keep innovating, you will stand out in dynamic markets. You also have to be ready to embrace

new trends and tackle any obstacles that come up on the way. With a proactive approach, you can spot new trends before anyone else and adapt to them quickly.

Your business ideology is the key to spotting those untapped opportunities in the market. You will be able to explore new areas and customer groups, as well as potential partnerships that might otherwise go unnoticed. Uncovering these opportunities will help you identify new ways of doing things.

It is also worth saying that brainstorms are often an ongoing thing, not just one-off events. They encourage a culture of continuous growth and improvement. When you brainstorm business ideas regularly, it makes you more adaptable and committed to finding new ways of doing things.

Steps of Idea Generation Process

Before we get started, remember that there is more to it than just following a series of steps. **It is a creative process that evolves over time.**

Now, let's dive into the specifics of how you can drive innovation and get some great results for your business:

1. Set Your Goal: First, decide exactly what you want to achieve. Whether you are trying to solve a problem, make something better, or create something totally new, knowing your goal helps guide all your ideas.

2. Build a Team: Gather a group of friends who bring different skills and views to the table. Having a mix of people can lead to more interesting ideas and ways of doing things, which makes coming up with cool solutions even more fun.

3. Create a Brainstorming Zone: Make a special spot where everyone feels comfortable shouting out their ideas. This could be a corner of the classroom or even a chat on the computer where you all can type out thoughts freely.

4. Think Up Lots of Ideas: When you are brainstorming, remember that no idea is too silly. Try to think of as many ideas as you can. Right now, it's all about quantity — the more ideas, the better!

5. Work Together: Good ideas can become great ones when you combine them with suggestions from friends. Working together lets you mix different ideas to come up with something really awesome.

6. Choose the Best Ideas: After you have thought of lots of possibilities, take some time to figure out which ones are the best. Think about which ideas are doable, could make the biggest splash, and really help you reach your goal.

7. Make Your Ideas Better: Once you have picked your best ideas, it is time to make them even better. Plan out the details, think about what might go wrong, and how your idea fits with what you are trying to accomplish.

8. Test Your Ideas: Before you show your idea to everyone, try it out in a small way. Ask a few people what they think so you can make changes if you need to. This helps make sure your idea works, and that other people will think it is cool, too.

9. Go For It: Now, you are ready to make your idea happen. Keep an eye on how it is going and be ready to tweak things if you need to. This is how you learn and get better.

10. Celebrate and Learn: When you have made your idea a reality, take some time to celebrate with your team! Also, think about what went well and what you could do better next time. Learning from what you've done helps you do even better in the future.

Action Plan Template

To organise their ideas and structure their approach, students can use the following general template for an action plan. This template will guide them through defining the problem they want to solve by creating a business and developing strategies to address it effectively. By using one or more of the following techniques, students can ensure that their action plan is comprehensive, well thought out and feasible. This structured approach will help students to clearly outline their business objectives, target audience, resources required and planned milestones, providing a solid foundation for their entrepreneurial ventures.

About

Your Team's Name: **Project/Company Name:**

Goal

Why

Motivation

Obstacles to overcome

Resources

Big Steps

Small Steps

Notes

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Methods for Brainstorming Business Ideas

1. Brainstorm Cards

Start by setting a time limit for your brainstorming session. Usually, 15 to 60 minutes works well, depending on the complexity of the issue at hand. This helps keep everyone motivated and on track.

Then, clearly define the goal. It is important that everyone knows exactly what we are trying to achieve and sticks closely to discussing ways to solve this particular issue. It is important to stay on topic to make the most of your time together.

While you are brainstorming, it is important to make sure that everyone agrees to refrain from judging or criticising each other. This includes negative comments and even negative body language. We are open to all ideas, no matter how unusual or out there they might seem. In fact, get everyone to share their most creative or wacky thoughts – sometimes the best ideas start out sounding a bit crazy!

The goal here is to come up with as many ideas as possible. As they say, the more ideas you have, the better. You will be looking at all the suggestions later to pick the best ones, so the more ideas you can come up with, the better.

Get everyone to build on each other's ideas. It is all about making connections and expanding ideas, which can lead to some pretty unexpected and innovative solutions. Instead of saying "**but**", which might stop someone's thought in its tracks, use "**and**" to build on someone else's idea. This way of doing things helps everyone work together and makes sure that lots of different thoughts and viewpoints help make the ideas better.

It is a good idea to keep things visual. Using diagrams, Post-Its or other visual aids can really help to bring ideas to life. They also make it easier for everyone to see the concepts in different ways, which can spark even more ideas.

Finally, make sure that only one person speaks at a time. This keeps the session on track and shows respect for the speaker's ideas. It is really important for making sure you get some solid results from your brainstorming session.

2. Blue Sky Thinking

In this method, participants are urged to unleash their imaginations and think without boundaries. They are invited to visualise perfect scenarios where anything is possible, emphasising creativity and innovation. This strategy highlights the importance of generating a plethora of ideas, encouraging students to think divergently and embrace unconventional concepts. The focus is not on the feasibility of ideas at first but on the sheer volume of possibilities, fostering an environment where innovation thrives by pushing beyond the usual limits. Students are motivated to explore new territories and think creatively about challenges, making this an excellent exercise for developing problem-solving skills and encouraging a growth mindset among young learners.

3. First Principles

This method of generating ideas centres on dissecting a problem into its core parts, critically examining assumptions, and crafting solutions from the basics. Essential steps involve:

Deconstruction: Pinpoint and break down the key components of a problem or scenario.

Challenge Assumptions: Critically question the existing beliefs surrounding the problem to encourage new viewpoints.

Reconstruction: Develop solutions using the insights gained from reevaluating the fundamental aspects, often resulting in creative and innovative results.

This approach enhances a thorough comprehension of challenges and stimulates inventive problem-solving by developing solutions grounded in foundational truths. It is particularly effective for fostering analytical and creative thinking skills, as it pushes participants to look beyond surface-level understanding and reconstruct solutions from the core principles.

4. Role Playing

This idea generation strategy uses role-playing to help team members adopt unique perspectives and boost creativity. Here's how it works:

Role Assignment: Each team member assumes a specific role that relates to the problem or scenario at hand. These roles are defined to encompass different viewpoints within the context of the challenge.

Perspective Adoption: Participants fully engage in their roles, embracing the thoughts, viewpoints, and emotions that come with them. This deep immersion helps to see the problem from new angles.

Interactive Dialogue: As team members interact and discuss within their roles, they naturally begin to uncover new ideas and insights. This process often leads to creative and unconventional solutions that might not surface in a traditional brainstorming session.

Reflection and Innovation Extraction: After the role-playing, everyone comes together to reflect on the experience and identify the innovative ideas that emerged. This step is crucial for translating imaginative role-play into actionable solutions.

Role-playing encourages participants to transcend their usual ways of thinking, fostering a lively and experiential approach to problem-solving. By exploring different identities and viewpoints, team members can discover unexpected solutions, making this technique particularly effective for stimulating creativity and dynamic thinking in group settings.

5. SCAMPER Technique

This is a great way to change existing ideas, concepts, or processes. The idea behind SCAMPER is to make specific changes to the current idea or process to get the best result. SCAMPER is an acronym that stands for: Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify/Magnify, Purpose, Eliminate/Minimise, and Rearrange/Reverse.
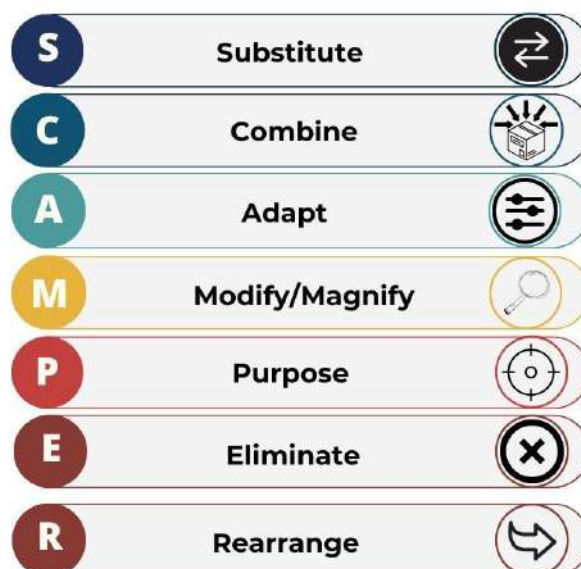
Where each step involves:

Substitute: Think about swapping parts of an existing idea with alternatives to spark different possibilities. This might involve changing materials, methods, or even outcomes to see how these alterations can offer new solutions. You can ask "What happens if I replace X with Y?".

Combine: Take elements from different ideas and blend them together to form a composite solution. This hybrid approach can integrate strengths from various concepts, leading to innovative outcomes. You can ask "What happens if I combine X and Y?".

Adapt: Make adjustments to current ideas to better address specific issues. Tweaking features or processes can tailor solutions more closely to the needs of the problem. You can ask "What should I change to adapt the plan to a different context?".

Modify: Experiment with changing the physical characteristics of an idea—such as its size, shape, or colour — to explore various versions and enhancements. This can help visualise new possibilities and applications. You can ask "What can I modify to create more value on this plan?".

Put to Another Purpose/Use: Consider different applications or uses for an existing idea. Repurposing a concept can lead to unexpected innovations and extend its usefulness. You can ask "What other uses can the project have?".

Eliminate: Streamline an idea by removing redundant or non-essential elements. This simplification often leads to a more efficient and focused solution. You can ask "What can I remove from the project to make it more simple?".

Reverse/Rearrange: Look at the idea from a different angle by reversing its components or rearranging its steps. This can reveal hidden flaws or opportunities, providing fresh insights into potential improvements. You can ask "How can I reimagine the plan to make it more effective?".

Each of these steps encourages a dynamic rethinking of current ideas, facilitating creative problem solving by reconfiguring, refining, and reimagining concepts in various ways. This technique helps you think in new ways about your project. Each question makes you think more deeply about the problem and consider new possibilities. For example, if you want to make a hiking compass, you might ask yourself "What if I used environmentally friendly materials?".

6. Storyboarding

One great way to get ideas is to create a visual story. In this approach, the team works together to create a visual story that shows how the idea will unfold step by step. This visual mapping lets you explore how an idea develops and changes over time. When you lay out a concept visually, it is easier for the team to collaborate, refine, and enhance the clarity and impact of the ideas presented. This technique turns abstract thoughts into tangible visual representations, making it easier to come up with creative ideas that evolve and become more concrete through the collective effort of constructing a shared visual narrative.

7. Questioning the assumptions

This technique is all about rethinking and questioning what you know to find new ways of looking at things. Instead of just accepting the usual ideas about a problem or situation, this approach encourages you to doubt and look closely at those ideas. When you question these beliefs, you can find new ways to see challenges or problems and come up with creative solutions. This shift in perspective often helps you see things you might have missed. The process not only helps you understand more but also gets you thinking in new ways.

8. Idea Challenge

This method uses a structured competition to get teams or individuals thinking in new ways. In this competitive environment, participants are encouraged to come up with solutions or ideas to tackle a specific challenge or goal. They are given a set amount of time to come up with and present their ideas, which gets them to think fast and work hard. The competition makes them push themselves and think in new ways, leading to lots of different ideas for how to tackle the challenge. The "Idea Challenge" technique uses the excitement of competition to get people creative, encouraging them to think outside the box and come up with original solutions within the set time.

9. Mind Mapping

This technique uses a visual approach to group ideas around a central theme. It starts with a main idea, which then leads to other concepts. These concepts then split into sub-ideas, which are filled with keywords. By using different visual elements, this method creates a non-linear layout that encourages creative thinking and links different ideas. As a visual tool, it helps people think in a more dynamic way, which makes it easier to come up with new ideas and solve problems.
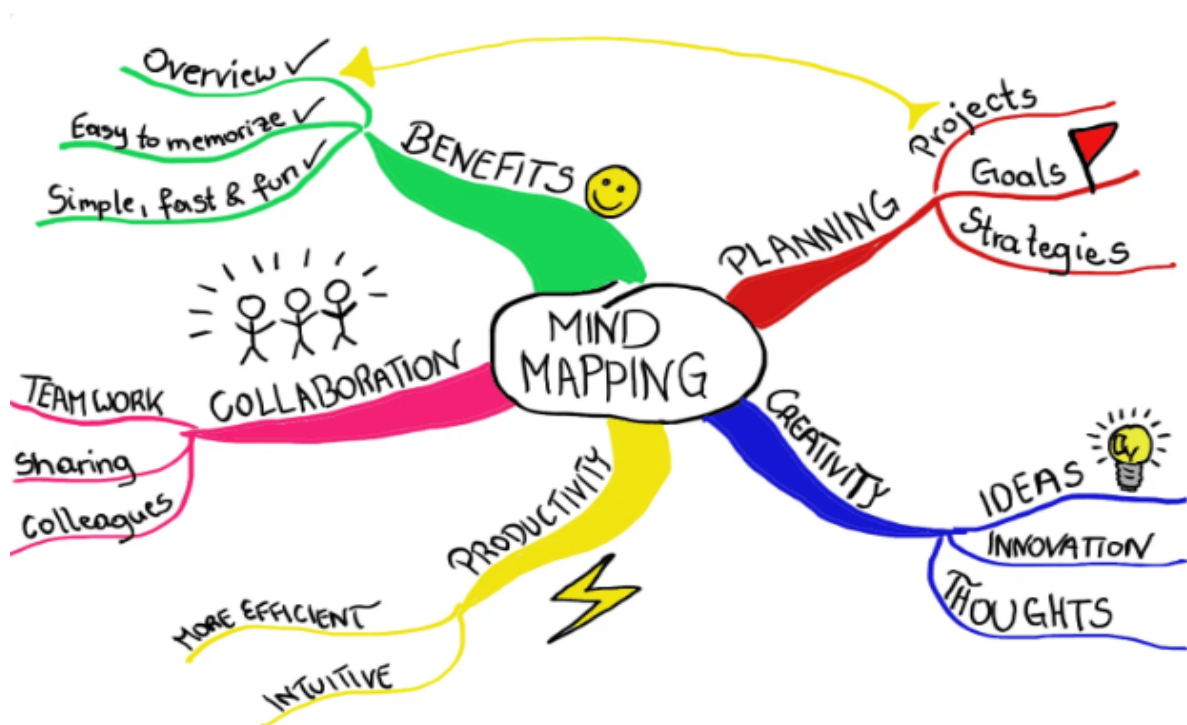
To create a mind map, begin by noting down the solution you aim to develop or the problem you are looking to solve at the centre of your whiteboard or piece of paper. For instance, let's say your goal is to launch an eco-friendly product line. Write "Eco-friendly Products" at the centre.

Around this central idea, add related terms or elements that describe what you need to consider. Examples could include "sustainable materials", "local suppliers", and "biodegradable packaging".
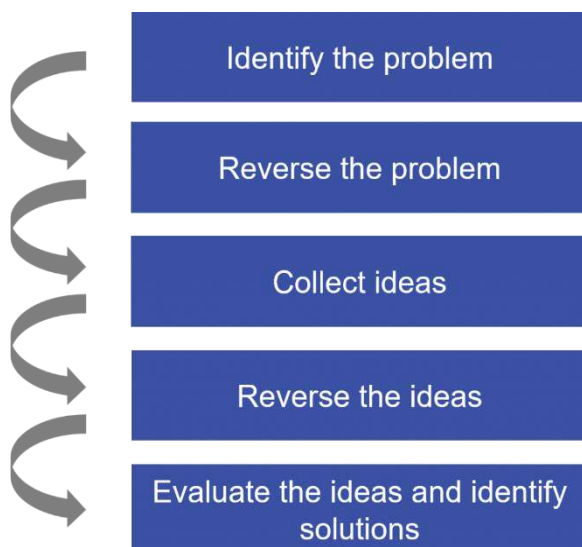
Once you have set up the initial layer of your mind map, expand further by adding a second layer that delves into how you can tackle each of these aspects. For "sustainable materials", you might add branches like "bamboo" or "recycled plastics". Near "local suppliers", you could list potential local businesses or criteria for choosing them.

Continue to build on your mind map by adding more layers that detail further actions, potential challenges, and solutions. This method systematically breaks down the complexities of your project, allowing you to creatively and effectively plan your approach to launching an environmentally friendly product line. Mind mapping is an excellent tool for unpacking and organizing a project, especially one that might initially seem overwhelming or mundane.

10. Opposite/Reverse Thinking

This way of coming up with ideas involves consciously thinking about the opposite of what you normally think or do to spark creativity. It challenges people to move beyond the usual ways of thinking. When people try it, they often find unusual and innovative solutions that might be missed when you think in the usual way. This approach encourages a complete shift in perspective, often leading to great ideas and new problem-solving strategies.

Let's say you want to promote a new product or service. As a marketer, you have got lots of different channels you can use to spread the word. But you might not know where to start. In reverse brainstorming, you might decide to avoid adding links to the landing page, refrain from posting about it on social media, and criticise its features.

Identify the problem

Reverse the problem

Collect ideas

Reverse the ideas

Evaluate the ideas and identify solutions

Next, you will explore the reverse of these strategies to find some excellent launching points for your promotional campaign. This involves integrating the product or service into several blog posts, initiating an Instagram campaign around it, and emphasising its most captivating features. This approach provides a fresh perspective by flipping conventional promotional tactics, ensuring that your campaign stands out and effectively captures the audience's interest.

11. Social Listening

The idea is to pay close attention to online platforms to understand what people are saying about a brand, product, or industry. It is really important for businesses to keep an eye on what people are saying about their brand, product, or industry across different online platforms. This includes social media, forums, blogs, and other online communities. They then look at the overall mood of these conversations through something called sentiment analysis. This helps them understand what customers think about them, their products, or their industry in general. It also helps them identify what their customers need or want, and how they feel about the products or services they offer. With this knowledge, companies can make changes to their strategies to better align with what their customers expect from them.

12. Analogy Thinking

This technique helps people come up with ideas by making links between things that don't normally seem to be related. Teams start by looking at the challenge or idea they are working on and thinking about things that are completely different. Then, they bring insights and solutions from these other areas back into the original problem. Using links between different areas of thinking helps people come

up with new ways of seeing things and ideas by connecting the familiar with the unfamiliar, thus broadening the scope of potential solutions.

13. Six Thinking Hats

The Six Thinking Hats method was developed by Edward de Bono. It offers a structured approach to brainstorming and decision-making through a unique role-play system.

Six Perspectives: This technique involves assigning distinct "hats" to participants, with each hat symbolising a different way of thinking: White focuses on objective facts, Red explores emotions and feelings, Black scrutinises potential pitfalls, Yellow emphasises the positives and benefits, Green is used for creative thinking, and Blue oversees and organises the overall thinking process.

Sequential Focus: By wearing one hat at a time, participants can concentrate on one aspect of the problem or decision. This sequential approach might start with gathering hard data under the White hat, before moving on to explore emotional impacts with the Red hat.

Role-Based Thinking: Each hat directs the wearer's thought process in a specific direction, which ensures a thorough examination of the topic or decision from multiple perspectives. This role-based approach helps uncover different facets of a problem or opportunity.

Reduced Conflicts: The Six Thinking Hats method helps to reduce personal conflicts by structuring communication around specific thinking roles rather than personal stances. This promotes more constructive discussions and leads to more balanced and well-rounded decision-making outcomes.
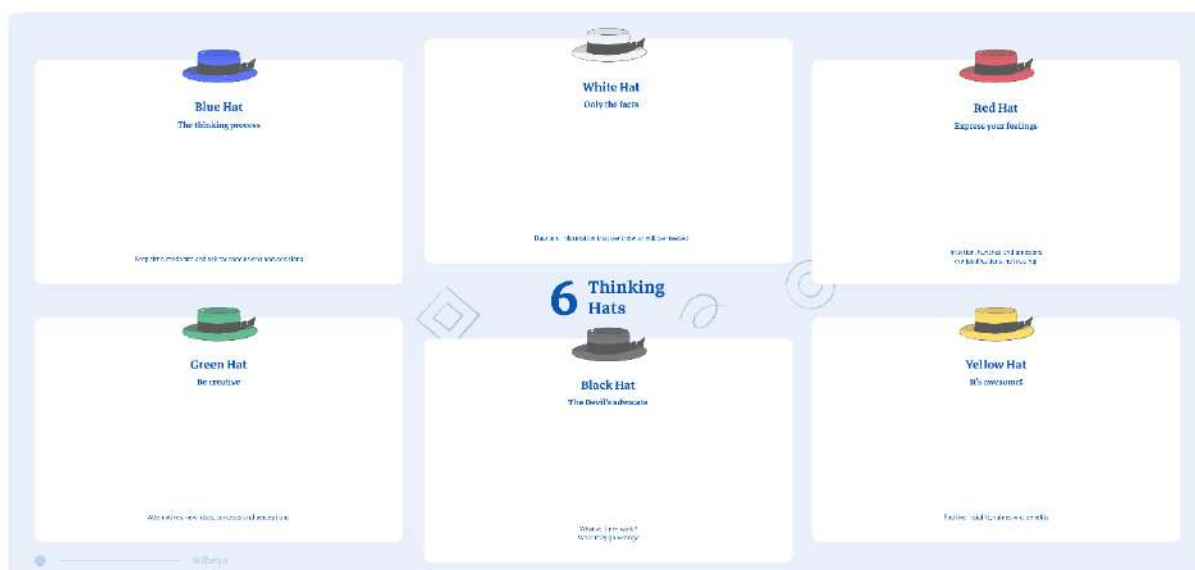
14. Product Trend Approach

Keeping an eye on market trends is a great way to get new ideas and get the innovation process going. The Product Trend Approach is all about making sure product development strategies match up with what consumers want now and in the future. If businesses keep their finger on the pulse and focus on customers, they will be better at coming up with new ideas and adapting to the ever-changing market. This method helps companies stay relevant and competitive by making sure they are always improving their products based on what consumers want and how they behave.

15. Yes, and…

This technique is really effective in situations where you are working with others, creating a positive and encouraging atmosphere that helps people think in new ways.

Participants start by saying "Yes" to ideas or statements, showing they are on board. Then, they build on the conversation by adding new ideas or information ("and").

This approach makes everyone feel supported, so everyone's ideas are heard. It encourages a smooth flow of creative thoughts, free from judgment, so people can freely exchange ideas and come up with solutions.

16. The 5W's and the H

The 5Ws and the H technique is a key questioning strategy used to gather detailed information and gain a deep understanding of any situation or problem. It involves exploring six essential questions:

Who: This means figuring out who's involved, whether that's individuals or groups, and making sure we know who the stakeholders or participants are in the scenario.

What: This question is all about getting to the heart of the matter. It helps us to clearly define the subject or action at the heart of the discussion, giving a straightforward description of what exactly is occurring.

Where: This helps us to identify exactly where the events are taking place, and what the physical or environmental conditions are like there.

When: Asking about the timeframe or when the events occurred helps us understand the sequence and causality.

Why: Asking why helps us understand the reasons behind the actions.

How: Asking how helps us understand the mechanics or techniques used.

A few tips for brainstorming new business ideas

When it comes to brainstorming, it is better to get lots of ideas than a few good ones. This doesn't mean that quality is unimportant, but getting bogged down in quality at this stage might stop you from coming up with new ideas. So, just get as many ideas on the table as possible, because the best ideas will become apparent further down the line.

If you want to encourage true ingenuity and creativity, it is best to let people think freely during brainstorming. This means giving voice to silly ideas and encouraging people to think in new ways. Sometimes, the best business ideas are the ones you might not expect.

There are no bad ideas in a brainstorming session. Remember, discovering the perfect business idea is a process that you must trust. Thinking of an idea that might not work is a step toward finding one that

does. If you simply force the finest ideas to come out, you will be stuck. That's why you should think freely now and reserve judgment for later.

Last but not least, if you can, it is always a good idea to brainstorm with at least one other person. We all think differently, so it is useful to get input from a few teammates. This helps you explore ideas you might not think of on your own.

5.1.2. Building a Business Model Canvas

Once you have decided which environmental and/or social problem you will try to solve, choose the type and content of the activities of the business you want to start and define its activities clearly, it is crucial to assess the **sustainability** of your business model. This is where the business model canvas proves invaluable.

The business model canvas is a simple framework that makes traditional business plans easier to understand. It helps you to identify the most important parts of your business and show them on one page. This makes it easier to see how everything in your business is connected, from your value to your customers and how you make money.

More specifically, the business model canvas is a structured template that helps you get all the important info about a business model in one place. The value proposition is the heart of the business model canvas. It explains what your product does for customers. This is the building block of your business model. From here, you will add more details about your business operations and your target customers. The entries on the canvas are like hypotheses: given the market and your customers, can your business model work? Using the canvas helps you quickly assess if your business idea is feasible.

It consists of nine standard elements:

- Value proposition
- Key partners
- Key activities
- Key resources
- Customer segments

- Customer relationships
- Channels
- Cost structure
- Revenue streams

The page is divided into boxes, and they are always laid out the same. On the left are things like business infrastructure — that is, partners, activities, resources. On the right are things like customer-related elements, which includes segments, relationships and channels. At the bottom are finance-related elements, like financial projections. In the centre is the value proposition — that ties everything else together.

So, what goes into each part of your business model canvas?

Value Proposition

What are you offering your customers? What problem are you helping them solve? Try to explain that as clearly and briefly as you can (aim for just one sentence!). That's your value proposition. It should guide every part of your business plan. Think of your value proposition as your north star.

Key Partners

It is rare that you will be able to handle every part of your business by yourself. You will likely need help from others, whether it is suppliers, distributors, or other types of partners. For example, consider a neighbourhood lemonade stand. The kids running it aren't growing their own lemons; they buy them from a grocery store. They might also use a table and pitchers from their parents. In this scenario, both the grocery store and the parents are key partners.

To figure out if someone is a key partner, just ask: Could the business still run without them? If the answer is no, and things would fall apart without their contribution, then they are definitely a key partner.

Key Activities

Key activities are the things you need to do to make your value proposition a reality.

Let's go back to the lemonade stand example. What needs to happen for the lemonade stand to work? Someone has to make the lemonade, serve it to customers, and handle the money. These tasks are all key activities because they are essential for running the stand.

To figure out if an activity is "key", think about whether the business could keep going if that activity wasn't done. If the answer is no, then it is a key activity.

Key Resources

When you list the resources needed for your business, think beyond just the physical stuff. You are also going to need people (human resources) to help, knowledge or expertise (intellectual resources), and money (financial resources) to fund everything. Make sure you consider all these types of resources as they are all important for helping your business succeed.

Customer Segments

Who are you creating your product or service for? For example, someone working at a lemonade stand probably isn't looking for a product designed for software engineers.

Your customer segments include all the people and businesses who would benefit from what you're offering. To better understand who these people are, it might help to create buyer personas—these are detailed descriptions of your ideal customers.

Customer Relationships

Once you know who your customers are, the next step is figuring out how you will interact with them. How will you communicate with your customers? Do they need any support after they buy something from you? To manage this effectively, you can create a customer journey map. This tool helps you visualise the customer's experience from start to finish, allowing you to identify key interactions and see how those relationships evolve over time.

Channels

Think about how you first get in touch with potential customers. Are you reaching them through social media, search engine optimization (SEO), or maybe at conferences? These methods you use to connect are called your channels. Typically, while sales teams work on building and keeping up customer relationships, the marketing teams usually handle the channels.

Cost Structure

Running your business will definitely cost money—often more than you would expect. You will need to spend money to keep up your key activities, resources, and partnerships. This includes paying employees, buying materials, and other expenses. All these costs together are what you call your cost structure.

Revenue Streams

Of course, the goal isn't just to spend money but to make it too. For your business to succeed, you need to earn money. Your revenue streams are the different ways you make money. For example, maybe you have a subscription service where customers pay regularly, or perhaps you charge a one-time fee for your product or service. It is important to identify and list all the ways you bring in money because being clear and thorough with your financial planning is crucial.

1   **Business Model Canvas Template**

Business Model Canvas

| KEY PARTNERS | KEY ACTIVITIES | VALUE PROPOSITIONS | COSTUMER RELATIONSHIPS | COSTUMER SEGMENTS |

ABOUT

Company Name:

Your slogan:

KEY RESOURCES

CHANNELS

COST STRUCTURE

REVENUE STREAMS

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Business Model Canvas

KEY PARTNERS

Who are our key partners?

ABOUT

Company Name:

Your slogan:

KEY ACTIVITIES

What activities are needed for our value propositions?

KEY RESOURCES

What resources do our value propositions need?

VALUE PROPOSITIONS

What value do we deliver to the customer?

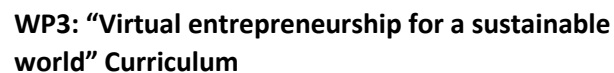**COSTUMER RELATIONSHIPS**

What kind of relationship do our customers want us to have with them?

CHANNELS

How should we communicate with our customers?

COSTUMER SEGMENTS

For whom are we creating value?

COST STRUCTURE

What are the main costs in our business?

REVENUE STREAMS

What price are customers willing to pay?

Green & Social StartUps Erasmus+ Project (Nr. 2022-1-PL01-KA220-SCH-000087194)

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5.2. Market Research and Planning

5.2.1. Tools and Techniques for Market Analysis

After you have thoroughly analysed your business idea, you have studied important dimensions through the Business Model Canvas, then you need to study in detail the market in which you intend to operate. One of the best ways to learn more about a market is to do a **market analysis**.

A market analysis is when you really get into a specific market and study it in depth. It is pretty common for companies to do a market analysis before launching a new product. They want to figure out if it will do well in that market or if it needs a few tweaks before they start selling it to people. This kind of analysis can also help a company decide if it is a good idea to start doing business in a new market. It gives them the lowdown on how things work there and what companies are doing well.

To do a market analysis, you might look into various aspects of the market. This includes checking out who lives there (demographic data), what other companies are in the space (information about competitors), and how those companies are doing financially by comparing their numbers with others in the same market.

Market analysis is really useful for companies because it helps them make smart choices about where to focus their future business efforts and marketing strategies. For example, if a company wants to launch a new product in their current market, market analysis can help them figure out the best way to make sure the product does well and really connects with customers. Market analysis is also really important for companies thinking about entering a new market. It can give company leaders a clear picture of how their business might do by looking at how competitors in that market are performing. This way, they can make informed decisions backed by solid data.

There are lots of different ways to do this, so businesses can choose the one that suits them best. So, you can pick whichever method you like to analyse the market for your business idea. You can even use more than one method to collect as much information as you can!

1. Market research surveys

One common way to do a market analysis is by using surveys to gather information. Surveys are a fantastic tool to learn directly from customers about their thoughts and experiences with a business or product. For example, a market research survey might ask people about their shopping experience, how easy a product is to use, or how happy they are with their purchase. There are lots of different kinds of surveys a company can conduct, and each type provides a lot of data that can be really useful. Here are a few examples of surveys you might use for analysing the market:

- In-person surveys
- Telephone surveys
- Mail-in surveys
- Online surveys
- Email form surveys

2. Interviews

Personal interviews are another popular way to carry out market analysis, especially useful if you are trying to start your own company in a simulated environment like we are doing. In a personal interview, a company talks directly with consumers to learn more about their thoughts and experiences. These interviews usually last about an hour and are often recorded so you can go back and listen to them later. They can happen in person, over the phone, or online through video calls.

During these interviews, you typically start with a set of specific questions you have prepared beforehand. Along with these, you might also ask some open-ended questions that don't have a set answer, allowing people to freely share their thoughts and experiences.

Companies use personal interviews to ask several consumers the same questions. Later, they look at everyone's answers to spot any common trends or patterns in what consumers are saying. This helps understand what's working well and what might need changing in their approach or product.

3. Focus Groups

A focus group is another effective tool for gathering market analysis information from several consumers simultaneously. In a focus group, you bring together a group of consumers in a neutral place and lead a discussion about a specific product or service. This setup encourages customers to openly share their opinions and learn from others who might have similar experiences or views.

4. Observations from customers

Consumer observations help you understand customer behaviour. This method involves watching consumers when they buy or use a product. You can collect unbiased information by doing observations because you are not interacting with customers. This shows you what people really do, not what they say they do. This is often influenced by their emotions or what others say.

Businesses often use video to observe customers in a store. They watch how customers move around, what they buy and even how often they return items. They then review the videos to spot patterns and behaviours that help them understand their customers and make smarter business decisions.

5. Field trials

Field trials help you understand how a new product will sell in the market, especially when you are launching a company. This method involves placing the new product in a few stores to see what customers think about it. You can gather useful information by watching how the product sells in a real-life situation. For example, you can find out how many people buy the product, which types of customers are interested, whether your pricing is right, and if there are parts of the product that need improvement.

6. Social media engagement

Monitoring social media is a modern way to analyse the market. Social media is big worldwide, with lots of users talking about products and brands on different platforms. Monitoring how people interact

with your posts helps you see which marketing efforts are working and which products people like. This feedback helps you plan future marketing and see what your business is doing well online.

To keep track of social media engagement, you can check the analytics section of your social media accounts. This shows you how many people are interacting with your posts, which types of users are most engaged, and which social media platforms are driving the most traffic to your company. These insights can help you connect with your audience and boost your company's online presence.

7. Competitive analysis

Competitive analysis is about what other companies are doing, not what customers say. This process can be technical and complex, so many businesses hire experts to handle it, especially when setting up a simulated company. A competitive analysis is about looking at similar products or services and how well the companies selling them are doing. You look at how well they are selling, what their strengths and weaknesses are, and what strategies they are using that you could learn from. This helps you figure out how you can stand out and do better than them.

8. SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis helps you understand your business, product or service. You can use it to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to your product or service. In other words, a SWOT analysis can help you see where you stand against the competition.

To do a SWOT analysis, you set up a table with four sections: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. You fill in each section with details about your business and competitors. This helps you prioritise elements and strategies.

Strengths

What are you doing well? What makes your product/service special?

Weaknesses

What can you do better? Do you have enough resources? What can others do better than you?

Opportunities

What are your goals? Are demands changing? How can it be improved?

Threats

What are the obstacles? What are the factors outside your control?

5.2.2. Developing a Feasible Business Plan

Now that you have carefully thought through your business activities and considered some of the key issues, it is time to move forward with the development of a business plan that clearly addresses all the dimensions of your business venture.

In other words, a business plan is a written document that outlines what your business is all about, how it plans to make money, and who your customers are. When you are setting up your own simulated company, creating a business plan can really help you get clear about your goals and organise your steps to reach them. You can also show your business plan to potential investors to prove that you have a solid plan in place.

But remember, business plans aren't set in stone; they are meant to evolve. Especially for startups, it is common to update your business plan often as you learn more about your customers and what products or services they really need. This flexibility can help you adjust your strategies as your business grows and changes.

We know that putting together a business plan can seem like a huge task, but it is a great way to get your ideas down on paper and start turning them into reality, especially if you are a student trying to launch a simulated business. Here's how you can develop your own business plan step-by-step:

1. Executive Summary:

Start with an executive summary. Think of this as a kind of snapshot of your whole business. Give a quick overview of what your business does and what you hope to achieve. Even though it comes first, it is usually easiest to write this part last, once you have figured out all the details.

2. Business Description:

Next, provide a detailed description of your business. Explain the type of business you are starting, what products or services you'll offer, and what makes your business unique. Think about what you want your business to be known for and what values you want it to uphold.

3. Market Analysis:

This is where you get to know your potential customers, your competitors and the market as a whole. It is important to show that you have done your homework and understand where your business fits into the market. You can include data on customer demographics, market trends and competitor analysis.

4. Organisation and Management:

We need to know how your business will be structured and who will manage it. This part should include information about the legal structure of your business (like whether it is a sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation). Also, create an organisational chart that shows who is in charge of what. If it is just you, explain how you plan to handle various tasks.

5. Service or Product Line:

What are you selling or offering? Provide details about your products or services. Explain the benefits of what you are offering, detail the product lifecycle, and discuss any research and development activities that might be relevant.

6. Marketing and Sales Strategy:

How will you attract and retain customers? This section should outline your strategies for entering the market, pricing your products or services, promoting your business, and making sales. Be specific about the types of marketing tools you will use, like social media, flyers, or email campaigns.

7. Funding Request:

If you are looking to get funding, specify how much money you will need over the next five years and what it will be used for. Outline whether you need debt or equity, terms you would like applied, and the length of time your funding request will cover.

8. Financial Projections:

Convince your readers that your business will be financially successful. Provide financial projections that include future income statements, balance sheets, cash flow statements, and capital expenditure budgets. If you have any data from a few months of running the business or past ventures, include that here to back up your projections.

9. Appendix:

An appendix is optional, but it is a handy place to stick any relevant supporting documents. You might include resumes, permits, leases, or other legal documents, depending on what's relevant to your plan.

A business plan helps you run your business and show potential investors or lenders why it will succeed. Make sure you are clear about what you say and that your goals are realistic. This plan can change as your business grows, so make sure you can come back to it and adjust it easily. That way you can adapt to changes and keep moving forward.

You can use the following business plan template by creating a file with the suggested sections and trying to answer the questions in each section.

Business Plan Template

1. Executive Summary

- What is the name of your business?
- What products or services do you offer?
- What is your mission statement?
- What are your business goals and objectives?
- Who are the founders, and what is their professional background?

2. Company Description

- What type of business structure have you chosen (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation)?
- What needs does your business address?
- Why will your business succeed?
- Who are your potential customers?
- What is your business model (how will you make money)?

3. Market Analysis

- Who is your target market (age, location, gender, income level)?
- What are the current trends in your industry?
- Who are your competitors? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- What is your potential market share?
- How will you differentiate yourself from competitors?

4. Organization and Management

- What is the organizational structure of your business?
- Who are the key team members, and what are their roles?
- What relevant experience does each team member bring to the business?
- Are there any advisors or consultants involved?

5. Service or Product Line

- What are the details of the products or services you plan to sell?
- What are the benefits of your products or services to the customer?

- What is the product lifecycle?
- Do you have any patents or copyrights?
- Are there future products or services planned?

6. Marketing and Sales Strategy

- How will you attract and retain customers?
- What are your marketing and promotional strategies?
- What sales tactics will you employ?
- How will you position your product or service in the market?
- What channels will you use to reach your customers (online, store front, mail order)?

7. Funding Request

- How much funding do you need to start or expand your business?
- What will you use the funding for?
- Over what period will the funding be used?
- Are you seeking debt or equity financing?
- What are your terms for repayment?

8. Financial Projections

- What are your projected revenues for the next 1-5 years?
- What are your projected expenses for the next 1-5 years?
- Include projected income statements, balance sheets, cash flow statements, and capital expenditure budgets.
- How will you manage cash flow to ensure sustainable business operations?

9. Appendix

- Include any additional information that helps support your business plan.
- Possible additions: resumes of key team members, legal agreements, technical drawings, marketing materials, detailed financial tables.

5.3. Implementation and Management

Now that each of these businesses has been fully formed, it is time for them to implement their activities. Teachers and students can implement the following suggested techniques and activities in order to start the entrepreneurial interaction within the groups and the respective companies.

5.3.1. Role-Play: Running a Virtual Business

Role-playing is an effective learning method that allows learners to test their knowledge, skills and abilities by solving problems in specific situations. It is an invaluable tool for improving communication, understanding complex concepts and decision-making. Role-playing allows students to test their knowledge, skills and abilities by solving problems in concrete situations. It also allows students to gain practical experience in a safe environment, preparing them for real-life scenarios. Whether it is customer service, sales, conflict resolution or leadership training, role-playing is an engaging way for students to gain practical experience in a safe environment, preparing them for real-life scenarios (Gadson, 2024).

Techniques and Approaches

Role-play can be applied in a variety of ways, and the techniques and approaches used can be adapted to suit different educational or training contexts. In more detail:

1. Structured Role-Play

This approach involves specific roles and scenarios that are pre-defined by the teacher, who acts as a facilitator. Each participant is assigned a role that comes with a set of objectives, background information, and potential challenges they might face. The scenarios are designed to replicate real-life situations that might occur in the workplace or in social interactions. This method is an effective way for students to practise particular skills such as negotiation, sales, or customer service interactions.

2. Spontaneous Role-Play

Spontaneous role-play is a powerful tool for assessing and developing quick-thinking skills and adaptability. Unlike structured role-playing, it does not involve pre-determined scenarios or roles.

Instead, participants are given a situation on the spot and must react without prior preparation. This type of role-play is invaluable for those who need to handle unexpected situations, such as emergency services or customer complaints.

3. Reverse Role-Play

Reverse role-playing is a technique that allows participants to step outside of their comfort zones and explore different perspectives. It is an effective way to gain empathy, which is essential for roles that involve interacting with others and providing excellent customer service. Imagine a manager taking on the role of an employee or a customer service representative playing a dissatisfied customer. In this way, participants can understand different viewpoints and develop the skills needed to build strong relationships and customer service.

4. Guided Discovery Role-Play

This method mixes role-playing with guided reflective learning. Participants explore roles and scenarios with minimal guidance from the facilitator, who leads the discussion and exploration without giving direct instructions. This approach encourages learners to discover behaviours and solutions through their interactions and experiences within the role-play, which helps them understand and remember the lessons being taught better.

5. Multi-Stage Role-Play

Multi-stage role-playing is a technique where scenarios develop over time, often over several sessions. This allows participants to develop a role and adapt to changing circumstances within the same story. It is particularly effective for complex training that requires understanding long-term consequences and developing strategies over time.

6. Online Role-Play

As digital educational platforms have become more popular, online role-playing has become a great way to learn. Participants can take part in role-playing games through forums, video conferences or specialised software that simulates virtual environments. Online role-playing lets students interact in new ways and can include students from different schools and places, which makes the experience even richer.

7. Evaluation Role-Play

This approach uses role-play as a way to assess students' skills, decision-making abilities and how well they apply their knowledge in a practical situation. Teachers watch the role play and give feedback based on set criteria. This method is often used as part of performance reviews.

Practical Implementation

The following exercise aims to engage students in the management of a virtual business that focuses on green or social initiatives.

Duration: Approximately 3-4 hours, ideally conducted over two class sessions.

Materials Needed:

- Whiteboards and markers.

- Computers with internet access for each group.

- Role cards detailing responsibilities (find more details after the exercise's description).

- Scenario sheets for initial business conditions (find more details after the exercise's description).

- Feedback forms for evaluations.

Setup Instructions:

1. **Team Formation and Role Assignment:**

   Ensure that each group acts as the management team of a separate virtual company, based on the companies that the students have formed. The business could either focus on selling eco-friendly products or providing socially impactful services.

   Assign specific roles within each group, ensuring all aspects of a business are covered: CEO, Marketing Manager, Operations Manager, Customer Service Representative, Sustainability or Social Impact Officer, and potentially a Financial Officer for handling budgets and forecasts.

2. **Extended Role Descriptions:**

- **CEO:** Oversees overall strategy, ensures team alignment with the business's goals.

- **Marketing Manager:** Crafts marketing strategies, handles advertising and social media engagement.

- **Operations Manager:** Manages production, inventory, and logistics, negotiates with suppliers.

- **Customer Service Representative:** Manages customer inquiries and feedback, ensures high satisfaction levels.

- **Sustainability/Social Impact Officer:** Guides the company's ethical mission, proposes sustainable practices or social programs.

- **Financial Officer:** Manages financial accounts, budgeting, and economic feasibility studies.

3. **Initial Briefing:**

Provide each team with a scenario sheet that outlines their business's current status, including market performance, customer feedback, and a list of challenges needing strategic responses.

Activity Flow:

1. **Research and Strategy Development (60 minutes):**

Each team researches effective practices and market trends related to their business type. They develop a strategic plan addressing the challenges presented in their initial scenario.

2. **Detailed Role-Playing Simulations (90 minutes):**

Conduct in-depth role-playing sessions where teams face various simulated business scenarios:

- **Supply Chain Crisis:** A sudden shortage of sustainable materials forces teams to negotiate with new suppliers or innovate alternative solutions.

- **Customer Service Challenge:** Handle a scenario where a batch of products receives widespread negative feedback, requiring immediate customer service and public relations management.

- **Marketing Launch:** Introduce a new product line and devise a marketing campaign that emphasizes the product's green benefits or social impact.

- **Financial Dilemma:** Address unexpected financial shortfalls through cost-cutting measures, additional funding requests, or strategic pivots.

Each member acts according to their role, making decisions and interacting with simulated stakeholders like customers, suppliers, and media.

3. **Strategy Presentation and Peer Feedback (60 minutes):**

Groups present their business strategies and discuss how they handled the role-play scenarios. Each group provides feedback on another group's performance based on creativity, ethical alignment, and problem-solving.

4. **Debrief and Reflection (30 minutes):**

Discuss what strategies worked well, which were less effective, and the lessons learned about ethical business practices.

Assessment:

Evaluate teams based on the feasibility and creativity of their business strategies, the effectiveness of their role-play interactions, and their ability to integrate sustainability or social concerns.

Extension:

Students can refine their strategies based on feedback and simulate further scenarios using an online business simulation tool to dynamically see the results of their decisions.

Role Cards for Virtual Business Simulation

The following role cards should be distributed to students before the simulation begins to allow them to familiarize themselves with their specific duties and responsibilities. Encourage students to fully embody their roles, as understanding and performing these responsibilities will be critical for the success of their virtual business.

1. CEO (Chief Executive Officer) - Responsibilities:

- Oversee the overall business strategy and operations.

- Make final decisions on all aspects of the business.

- Lead team meetings and ensure that all departments are aligned with the company's goals and objectives.

- Represent the company in external communications and during stakeholder meetings.

- Monitor the business's financial health and seek funding opportunities.

2. Marketing Manager - Responsibilities:

- Develop and implement marketing strategies to enhance brand awareness and market share.

- Manage advertising campaigns and coordinate with the media.

- Oversee social media presence and direct digital marketing efforts.

- Analyse market trends and adjust marketing strategies accordingly.

- Engage with customers to understand their needs and preferences.

3. Operations Manager - Responsibilities:

- Manage day-to-day operations of the business.

- Oversee production, inventory management, and supply chain operations.

- Negotiate with suppliers to secure the best prices and terms.

- Ensure that all operations adhere to legal and environmental standards.

- Implement efficiency improvements across production processes.

4. Customer Service Representative - Responsibilities:

- Handle customer inquiries and complaints.

- Provide detailed product and service information to customers.

- Maintain high levels of customer satisfaction through excellent service.

- Keep detailed records of customer interactions and transactions.

- Analyse customer feedback and coordinate with other teams to improve product offerings.

5. Sustainability or Social Impact Officer - Responsibilities:

- Develop strategies to incorporate sustainable practices into all aspects of the business.

- Monitor and report on the social impact of the business.

- Work with the operations team to ensure that products and processes are environmentally friendly.

- Educate team members about sustainability and social responsibility.

- Engage with community organizations and initiatives to enhance the company's social impact.

6. Financial Officer - Responsibilities:

- Manage the company's financial accounts and budget.

- Prepare financial statements and reports.

- Analyse financial data and provide insights for cost reduction and revenue enhancement.

- Ensure compliance with financial regulations and standards.

- Assist the CEO in financial planning and decision-making.

Examples of Scenario Sheets for Initial Business Conditions

The following scenarios can be used as examples and provide a backdrop for each group's business, setting the stage for the challenges and opportunities they will encounter during the simulation.

Scenario 1: Eco-Friendly Clothing Line

- **Business Background:** You are the management team of a startup focused on producing sustainable, eco-friendly clothing. Your products are made from organic cotton and recycled materials.

- **Current Situation:** The business has been operational for one year and has gained some local popularity. However, you are struggling to scale production and maintain profitability due to high material costs.

- **Challenges:**

  Finding affordable, sustainable materials.

  Expanding market reach beyond the local community.

  Differentiating your brand in a crowded market.

Scenario 2: Solar-Powered Gadgets Store

- **Business Background:** Your company specializes in solar-powered gadgets, such as chargers, lights, and small home appliances. You aim to promote cleaner, renewable energy solutions.

- **Current Situation:** Sales are steady, but competition from larger electronics manufacturers is intensifying. There is a need to innovate to stay relevant and appealing to eco-conscious consumers.

- **Challenges:**

  Innovating products to stay ahead of competition.

  Educating consumers about the benefits of solar power.

  Managing costs while sourcing high-quality solar components.

Scenario 3: Organic Food Subscription Service

- **Business Background:** You operate an organic food subscription service that delivers fresh produce and other organic products directly to consumers' doors.

- **Current Situation:** While there is a growing interest in organic foods, logistical challenges in food distribution and maintaining product freshness are impacting customer satisfaction.

- **Challenges:**

  Improving the logistics of food delivery to ensure product freshness.

  Sourcing organic products at a scalable level.

  Building a brand that resonates with health-conscious consumers.

Scenario 4: Reusable Packaging Company

- **Business Background:** Your business produces reusable packaging solutions aimed at reducing plastic waste. Your products include reusable shopping bags, containers, and refillable dispensers.

- **Current Situation:** Awareness of plastic pollution is driving interest in your products, but larger competitors with more resources pose a threat to your growing market share.

- **Challenges:**

  Competing against larger, more established companies.

  Encouraging more consumers to switch to reusable options.

  Innovating product designs to increase consumer appeal.

Scenario 5: Social Enterprise Café

- **Business Background:** You run a café that employs homeless individuals, giving them a chance to rebuild their lives. The café serves organic, fair-trade coffee and locally sourced pastries.

- **Current Situation:** The café has become a community hub, but operating costs are high, and funding is limited. You need to find a balance between social mission and financial sustainability.

- **Challenges:**

Balancing the social mission with profitability.

Securing ongoing funding or sponsorship.

Expanding the café's reach and influence within the community.

5.3.2. Decision-Making Exercises: Real-World Scenarios

For each agreed scenario, students should be divided into groups, with each member adopting a different business role or stakeholder perspective. They should use facts, research, and creative thinking to argue their positions and work towards a group decision. Each group should then present their decision and rationale to the class, highlighting how they balanced various factors and the potential outcomes of their chosen path.

1. Sustainable Fashion Dilemma

- **Situation:** Your sustainable clothing brand prides itself on ethical sourcing. A supplier offers a significant discount on organic cotton, but their labour practices are questionable.

- **Task:** Students must assess the implications of either decision: maintaining ethical standards or reducing costs to enhance profitability. They should analyse how each choice impacts their brand reputation, customer trust, and long-term sustainability. Students should debate the pros and cons in groups, considering factors like ethical responsibility, financial health, and potential media reaction.

2. Renewable Energy Expansion

- **Situation:** You own a solar panel installation company with an opportunity to significantly expand by partnering with a larger company known for its less-than-stellar environmental practices.

- **Task:** Students should evaluate the trade-offs between rapid business growth and staying true to environmental values. They need to discuss potential strategies for mitigating negative impacts if they choose to partner and explore alternative growth opportunities if they decide against it. Students can role-play negotiation scenarios to explore how they might influence the larger company's practices.

3. Organic Cafe Growth Strategy

- **Situation:** You're considering a second location for your organic café in a prime area that lacks proper recycling and composting facilities.

- **Task:** Students should analyse location vs. sustainability practices. They can explore potential compromises, such as investing in portable sustainability solutions or negotiating with the property owner for necessary modifications. They should create a list of criteria that the new location must meet and propose how they might adapt operations to align with their sustainability goals.

4. Product Packaging Challenge

- **Situation:** A major retailer is interested in your biodegradable straws but requires non-biodegradable packaging for distribution purposes.

- **Task:** Students need to debate the implications of altering their product's packaging. They should research and propose alternative packaging materials that could meet the retailer's requirements without compromising the product's environmental benefits. Additionally, they can develop a pitch to convince the retailer of the advantages of sticking with biodegradable packaging.

5. Fair Trade Funding

- **Situation:** An investor is interested in your fair trade coffee business but requires cutting off small-scale growers who aren't officially fair trade certified.

- **Task:** Students must consider the ethical and business implications of excluding non-certified growers. They should evaluate the importance of certification versus the impact on small

growers and explore ways to include these growers in the fair trade movement. Role-playing exercises can help students negotiate with potential investors to find a compromise.

6. Eco-Tourism Project Risks

- **Situation:** You have the opportunity to develop an eco-tourism resort that could impact local wildlife.

- **Task:** Students should assess environmental, economic, and social impacts. They need to consider how to minimize environmental damage while maximizing economic benefits. They should develop an environmental impact assessment and propose sustainable tourism practices that protect local wildlife. Discussions should include how to engage with the local community and incorporate their needs and preferences into the project planning.

5.4. Social and Environmental Impact Analysis

As we saw in the last section, there are lots of risks and things to think about when you are running a business. Some of these are easy to see coming, while others are trickier to predict.

Assessing and reporting on the social and environmental impact of a business is crucial in understanding how a company's operations affect the world around it and aligning with the growing demand for corporate responsibility. This process involves a detailed analysis of both the positive and negative outcomes of a business's activities on social communities and the environment. Teachers can guide students through this exploration by helping them set up systems to monitor various aspects of their simulated businesses. This could include tracking resource usage, such as water and energy, assessing waste production, and evaluating the social implications of their business practices, such as community engagement and employment opportunities.

To make this analysis more tangible for students, they can be encouraged to create sustainability reports or social impact statements as part of their project deliverables. These reports should highlight the methodologies used for gathering data, present the data in an understandable format, and interpret what the data means in terms of the business's impact. Students should also consider the

long-term implications of their business decisions and propose strategies for mitigating negative impacts while enhancing positive outcomes.

For example, if a student's virtual business involves producing clothing, they might investigate the source of their materials, the labour practices at manufacturing facilities, and the efficiency of their shipping methods in terms of carbon footprint. They would gather data on these elements, perhaps using surveys, research, or hypothetical data sets, and then compile their findings into a report. This report would not only assess current practices but also recommend improvements, such as switching to sustainable fabrics or implementing fair trade labour practices.

Integrating practical techniques and practices into students' learning about assessing and reporting on business social and environmental impacts can provide them with tangible skills and insights. Here are some relevant techniques and practices that students can implement:

1. **Carbon Footprint Calculations:** Teach students how to calculate the carbon footprint of a business operation, which involves quantifying the total greenhouse gas emissions caused directly and indirectly by a business. Students can use online calculators or formulas that account for energy consumption, transportation methods, and material production processes associated with their virtual business. This practical skill helps them understand the environmental load of different business activities and explore ways to reduce emissions.

   Questions that students should answer:

   - How much electricity does your business use per month (in kWh)?
   - What type of energy sources are used in your operations (renewable or non-renewable)?
   - How many kilometres do your business operations involve traveling by vehicle each month?
   - What types of vehicles are used for business operations (e.g., gasoline, diesel, electric)?
   - Estimate the amount of waste produced by your business each month.

2. **Life Cycle Assessment (LCA):** Introduce students to Life Cycle Assessment, a technique used to assess environmental impacts associated with all the stages of a product's life from raw material extraction through materials processing, manufacture, distribution, use, repair and

maintenance, and disposal or recycling. Students can conduct a simplified LCA for a product or service in their simulated business to identify hotspots of environmental impact and opportunities for improvement.

Questions that students should answer:

- What raw materials are used in your product/service?
- Where do these materials come from?
- What is the process of manufacturing your product or delivering your service?
- How is your product packaged and distributed?
- What is the expected lifespan of your product or service?
- How is the product disposed of or service terminated?

3. **Sustainability Auditing:** Guide students through the process of conducting a sustainability audit for their virtual business. This involves reviewing business practices to ensure they meet certain sustainability criteria, such as energy efficiency, waste reduction, and ethical supply chain practices. Students can create checklists based on sustainable business standards and evaluate their business practices against these criteria.

Questions that students should answer:

- Does your business have a policy for energy efficiency?
- How often do you review your suppliers for sustainability practices?
- Does your business have a recycling program?
- Are there any ongoing initiatives to reduce water usage?
- Are employees trained on sustainability practices?

4. **Social Impact Analysis:** Encourage students to analyse the social impact of their business by considering factors like job creation, community engagement, and contributions to local economies. They can conduct surveys or hypothetical interviews with 'stakeholders' to gather data on employee satisfaction, community benefits, and any potential social issues like labour rights violations.

Questions that students should answer:

- How many jobs has your business created?

- What percentage of your workforce is from the local community?

- Does your business have any community outreach programs?

- How do you ensure fair labour practices in your operations?

- Have there been any complaints regarding social issues within your business?

5. **Sustainable Procurement Practices:** Teach students about sustainable procurement, which involves selecting products and services that are produced and supplied in a sustainable fashion. This includes considerations like ethical sourcing, purchasing local goods, and choosing suppliers with strong environmental and social records. Students can develop procurement policies for their simulated businesses that prioritize sustainability.

Questions that students should answer:

- Do you prioritise local suppliers when making purchasing decisions?

- Are the products/services you purchase produced in a sustainable manner?

- Do you evaluate the environmental and social practices of your suppliers?

- How often do you review your procurement policies?

- Do you have criteria in place for selecting sustainable products?

6. **Stakeholder Engagement Activities:** Show students how to engage with stakeholders — anyone impacted by the business, including customers, employees, suppliers, and community members. Students can plan and simulate stakeholder meetings or community forums where they present their business impacts and gather feedback to improve their practices.

Questions that students should answer:

- Who are the key stakeholders of your business?

- How often do you engage with your stakeholders?

- What methods do you use to engage stakeholders (surveys, meetings, forums)?

- Have you received any feedback from stakeholders on environmental or social issues?

- How does your business respond to stakeholder feedback?

7. **Developing Sustainability Reports:** Guide students through the process of compiling sustainability reports, which document and detail the environmental and social effects of their business operations over a certain period. This report should include data collected from the above activities, analysed and presented in a clear, professional manner. Teach them to set goals for improvement based on their findings, creating an action plan that outlines specific steps to enhance their business's sustainability.

Questions that students should answer:

- What key performance indicators (KPIs) do you track for sustainability?

- How often do you plan to publish sustainability reports?

- Who is responsible for compiling and analysing sustainability data?

- What goals will you set for the next reporting period based on past performance?

- How will you communicate your sustainability achievements to stakeholders?

5.3. Organising a Pitching Event

Organising a pitching event is an excellent way for students to experience the real-world process of seeking funding and support for their entrepreneurial ventures. By presenting their business ideas to parents, local community members and stakeholders, students not only gain valuable public speaking experience, but also receive direct feedback and potentially secure symbolic financial contributions to move their projects forward.

Below you will find clear instructions on how to organise a Pitching Event, followed by a useful template.

1. **Event Setup:**

   - **Choose a Location:** Host the event in a familiar school setting such as the auditorium – event hall, library, or a large classroom that can accommodate your audience comfortably. Make sure the space has good acoustics and enough seating.

   - **Schedule the Event:** Pick a date that does not conflict with other school events or exams. Consider a time that allows for maximum participation from the community, perhaps in the late afternoon or early evening.

2. **Preparation for Students:**

   - **Business Development:** Since students have already developed their business ideas and researched critical elements like market analysis, target demographics, and financial plans, ensure they integrate this information effectively into their pitches.

   - **Pitch Template:** Provide students with a structured pitch template. You may wish to use the template suggested below. This template can guide them on how to organise their presentation logically and persuasively, including sections for introducing their business, explaining the problem and solution, showcasing market potential, and detailing their business model.

   - **Rehearsal:** Encourage students to practice their pitches in front of peers or teachers to gain confidence and receive initial feedback. This practice will help them refine their delivery and anticipate questions.

3. **During the Event:**

- **Pitch Presentations:** Allocate a specific amount of time for each pitch, typically 5-7 minutes, followed by a 2-3 minute question-and-answer session with the audience. This structure keeps the event moving smoothly and allows each student or team enough time to showcase their ideas without rushing.

- **Technology Setup:** Ensure that all necessary technological equipment, such as projectors, microphones, and speakers, are working properly before the event starts. Have a backup plan in case of technical issues.

4. **Encouraging Community Support:**

- **Symbolic Financial Contributions:** During the event, emphasise the opportunity for audience members to make symbolic financial contributions to support the students' business projects. These contributions, while modest, can provide practical assistance and motivational boost to students, showing tangible belief in their ideas and efforts.

- **Contribution Mechanism:** Set up a simple and transparent system for collecting contributions. This could be a designated area at the venue with a secure collection box where audience members can leave their contributions.

- **Acknowledging Contributions:** Ensure that all contributors are acknowledged during the event, perhaps with a thank you note or a mention during the closing remarks. Consider also sending personalised thank-you messages post-event or creating a 'Supporters' board' displayed in the school to recognise their support continually.

5. **Engagement with the Audience:**

- **Feedback Forms:** Provide feedback forms to the audience to fill out after each presentation. These forms can include questions about the clarity of the presentation, the viability of the business idea, and how compelling the pitch was. This feedback is invaluable for students to understand the impact of their presentation and areas for improvement.

- **Interactive Sessions:** Allow time for networking after all pitches are completed. This session can help students engage one-on-one with audience members, discuss their ideas in more detail, and potentially gain supporters or mentors.

6. **Post-Event Activities:**

- **Review Feedback:** Encourage students to review the feedback collected to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This reflection is crucial for their ongoing learning and development in entrepreneurship.

- **Certificate of Participation:** Provide certificates to all participants to acknowledge their effort and encourage their entrepreneurial spirit.

Pitch Template

Problem

Solution

About

Your Team's Name:

Project/Company Name:

One-sentence Pitch - Slogan:

Product/Service

Market Analysis

Call to Action!

Why Us?

Investment

Green & Social StartUps Erasmus+ Project (Nr. 2022-1-PL01-KA220-SCH-000087194)

Co-funded by
the European Union

About

Your Team's Name:

Project/Company Name:

One-sentence Pitch - Slogan:

Summarise your idea/project in one compelling sentence.

Problem

Problem Statement:
Describe the problem you are addressing.

Relevance:
Explain why this problem is important and to whom.

Solution

Your Solution:
Outline how your idea/project solves the problem.

Product/Service

Short Description:
Present the product/service and its characteristics.

Market Analysis

Target Audience:
Define who will benefit from your solution.

Market Size:
Provide an overview of the market or audience size and potential for growth.

Call to Action!

End with a clear call to action or what you want from the audience.

Why Us?

Unique Value Proposition:
Highlight what makes your solution unique and better than existing solutions.

Investment

What You Need:
Specify what you are are going to need (funding, support, partnership, etc.).

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Project partners

5.4. Bringing Virtual Businesses to Life

Having implemented all the above activities, the moment of transferring the virtual businesses to real life offers an exciting phase where students can test their entrepreneurial skills and business ideas in a realistic environment. To facilitate this transition, consider organising fairs and local markets where students can exhibit and sell their products or offer their services for small tokens. This approach not only provides hands-on business experience, but also allows students to engage directly with the community, receiving first-hand feedback on their offerings.

Students should be encouraged to create a variety of goods that can be produced at school level, such as handicrafts, recycled products or digital services. Services could include tutoring, art performances or digital design. By setting up booths at school fairs or local community centers, students can interact with real customers, practicing sales and customer service skills that are vital for any entrepreneur.

In addition, the organisation of information days can help to promote the services developed by the students. During these sessions, students can present their business models, discuss the social or environmental benefits of their services and engage with attendees through presentations and live demonstrations.

To enhance the educational and social impact of these activities, the profits collected from these events could be donated to local charities or used to fund community projects. This not only teaches students the importance of social responsibility, but also shows how businesses can make a positive contribution to social well-being.

By implementing these activities, students can see the tangible results of their hard work and creativity, gaining confidence and real-life experience in running a business. This experiential learning process is invaluable as it not only enhances understanding of business dynamics, but also instils a sense of achievement and community involvement.

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