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INTERFACE

Innovation and Entrepreneurship for Fragile Communities in Europe

**FRAGILE COMMUNITIES' CURRICULUM
FOR COMMUNITY COACHES**



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PREFACE

The INTERFACE partnership acknowledges the selected and described 3 to 5 communities in each country to participate in community coach training carried out to target groups of community groups, entrepreneurs and other creative and active people within selected communities enhancing their coaching and communication skills. The community coach training participant will learn how to use coaching methods and gain information regarding opportunities and methods related to innovation, project development and funding.

This present document presents “The community coach curriculum” that can be applied to any fragile community either within the partnership countries or elsewhere. Learning content will be posted on the project website in English.

The INTERFACE partnership

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Training/course context

“The Community coaches’ curriculum” describes a course including 100 to 120 hours of learning that can be evaluated as 4 ECTS credits (EU, 2017). The course is defined within levels 5 within the European Qualification Framework (EQF). Students acquire comprehensive, factual and theoretical knowledge related to community development in fragile/vulnerable communities (Nordregio, 2017) as well as practical coaching methods to use in community settings¹. Students will gain a range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems using coaching and group work methodologies. The course can be part business or management training programmes.

By the end of the study student’s competences include being able to facilitate unpredictable situations in coaching individuals and groups within fragile communities and working on creative solutions in relation to community problems and innovation. They will be trained and mentored to continuously review both their own and others performance.

The course amongst others will build upon the 2 of the 8 key competences for lifelong learning, competences 6 and 7, as follows (EU Lifelong learning, 2017):

(6) **Social and civic competences**, by focusing on knowledge skills and attitudes necessary for community coaches in fragile/vulnerable communities including both coaching of individual entrepreneurs and community groups through community workshops. Students will learn how to recognize different mind-sets, seek and encourage different and alternative perspectives and use coaching methods like active listening, questioning and goal setting within their community and coachees. In relation to community workshops students will learn how to facilitate and encourage collective goal setting, discussions, communication and development of ideas, planning and risk assessments.

(7) **Entrepreneurship competences**, as students will coach local entrepreneurs and acquire knowledge about what products and/or services are in supply/demand at local level. Through their coaching and community workshops they will acquire leadership and coaching skills, where the ability to respect and delegate responsibility to others is the key to successful community coaching.

The key element of the community coach training is to train students in using coaching methodologies. The principle of coaching is a creative process that inspires beneficiaries, that is community groups and entrepreneurs, to maximize their personal and professional potential.

The role of any coach is active listening, asking open and powerful questions and be passionate about helping people pursue their own solutions, ensuring and emphasizing clients’ ownership and responsibility of his/her ideas, solutions and implementation. This approach is crucial as the

¹ Fragility is partly defined by Nordregio mapping of vulnerability.

focus is on self-empowerment within fragile communities wanting to define and reach their own goals (International Coach federation, 2017).

Course profile

The community coach training builds upon a selection of participants, group sessions (GS) or class room training, extensive homework (HW) and a follow up coaching period. The final project will be the organization of community workshops within fragile communities. Between group sessions, students communicate and present their projects using both social media and project website. Following up on their training, students will continue using their skills and competences to coach and enhance innovation and entrepreneurship within their community.

Participants in community coach training, addressed by the curriculum will be:

- a. stakeholders and local team members in each community;
- b. people working on community development with fragile communities;
- c. intermediaries within communities;
- d. entrepreneurs in the communities.

Participants are initially selected using interviews and/or questionnaires focusing on their dedication, skills and experiences related to community development and situation. Therefore the target group for community coach training will be people either living within or working directly with selected communities. Facilitators will oversee the selection process working with community stakeholders.

The role of community coaches implies that a candidate must possess:

- Sufficiently developed general coaching skills,
- Knowledge of the local community’s demographic and socioeconomic characteristics and of its members’ specific problems and identified skill gaps,
- Appropriate communication skills for approaching the specific target group and for delivering effective coaching support.

The selection will also take into account that participants will have to be ready to put in the extra time and effort needed to actively participate and provide coaching to their own community. Participants will not get paid for their involvement although some may be able to use the training as part of their work-based training if employed by local stakeholders. Each participant will sign a training/coaching contract prior to their participation demonstrating time frame, tasks and

responsibilities involved. If participants don't finalize their training they will not be able to acquire ECTS units for their studies nor provide community coaching referring to the INTERFACE training. The facilitators of the coach training should be especially well aware of the need to motivate and follow up on the coaches' learning participation and homework, as most participants are investing their own time and resources to the training.

Group sessions (GS) include presentation of best practices on community projects and initiatives and key skills to support entrepreneurship and innovation within communities. Coaching methods and exercises will be piloted within group sessions and training between classes in community settings.

Best practices, training and community workshops will include the following key topics and approaches based upon the results of the FIERE project, instructors' and learners' handbooks (FIERE, 2017):

- to enhance students understanding of the role of creativity and innovation in community development
- to train students in analytical thinking and resourcefulness and their enhancement through personal and community (group) coaching
- to train the skills of leadership and resilience in students, for them to be able to successfully use community coaching to enhance innovation

Students will be presented a GAP analysis from fragile communities in order to develop their own work process and work plan throughout their studies, including a community case study presented to other students and facilitators using social media. The case study will further demonstrate available support to innovation, students profile and existing knowledge and their focus area in the training such as target group, field of expertise etc.

Coach training will include class room training in active listening, coaching presence, powerful questioning, designing actions, goal settings, planning and accountability. Students will reflect on, and present their own core values, key values of coaching and community values. The final project is organization of community workshops, where coaching principles, training topics and open space facilitation methodologies will be used to facilitate goal setting, planning and innovation within a community (Openspace World, 2017). Results of community workshops will then be disseminated within the communities using social media and on the project/course website, while students will also continue to coach and work with entrepreneurs and community groups as a follow up.

Learning outcomes

Participants in community coach training will develop the following outputs:

- organization of community workshops in cooperation with key stakeholders, facilitators and partners in each country/community.
- implementation of community coaching within fragile communities, including provision of information on available support and funding.
- networking with community coaches in other communities/countries.

The emphasis within the community coach curriculum will be on dissemination of knowledge about relevant support and training coaching methodologies, in order to enable community beneficiaries or coaches to work with communities, individuals and groups in the following:

- setting up social enterprises, micro or small firms;
- putting business/social entrepreneurial ideas to projects;
- realisation of project ideas
- project writing, implementation and management;
- identification of funding opportunities and in application for grant funding;
- the establishment of public-private partnerships, etc.

The outcome will be to create a network of community coaches working together on enhancing innovation, entrepreneurship and community participation in fragile communities in Europe. Following up on their studies, learning and disseminating best practices and involving new candidates in the INTERFACE community coach training.

Course structure Learning, teaching & assessment

The course will be structured both centrally and locally, that is;

- General training in Coaching Methodologies, entrepreneurship, community development and open space facilitation methodologies. Material centrally produced in English, translated in participants national languages and supplemented by distance learning. All material will be published on project website and promoted through social media.
- Decentralized/Customized coaches’ training linked with identified local skill needs and community members’ characteristics. Material produced by facilitators in cooperation with local stakeholders and participating learning institutions.

Local facilitators will prepare material on funding sources and procedures, National and European Programmes promoting entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship and extrovert local production and other projects addressing regional development needs etc. Training/coaching will be provided by appropriately prepared facilitators and community stakeholders.

Learning assessment will be continuous throughout the training as student reflection on their own learning and coaching is crucial for homework assignments, their pilot coaching and results from community workshops. Assessment will also be conducted in the selection phase and through questionnaires for 3 times over the course duration, including assessment on both teaching and learning of students. Facilitators need to be active in to motivating the coaches in their progress and use coaching methods to link the training to their individual needs and objectives related to community development.

Monitoring and follow up

Students will become members of a community coach network as part of their studies and the objective is that they will continue to communicate after the training ends as well as using their new skills to continue to provide coaching within their communities.

Training organizers will follow up on results through monitoring communication on Facebook as well as through surveys conducted in 6 and 12 months after the finalization of the training.

Learning modules

The training can be implemented in 4-8 months depending on time frame.

Training schedule and content will be divided into 9 modules including 4 preparation modules or 6-8 hours group sessions (GS), 3 homework assignments (HW) and a final project including preparation and implementation of a community workshop and community coaching:

1. Preparation, interviews/selection (questionnaires) with/of potential participants based upon the GAP analysis. Selected students will prepare a proposal and a CV in their local language and answer questionnaires prior to the interview (6 hours)
2. GS presenting training material, best practices on community and presentation of a GAP analysis of represented communities. (6 hours)
3. HW personal work-cycle (task/effort) and community case study, learning about available support, development models and funding. Dissemination of results to participants in different countries through the project platform (or Facebook). (10 hours)
4. GS focusing on coaching, presence, active listening, powerful questions and direct communication. Practical exercises based on findings from GAP analysis and homework assignments. (6 hours)
5. HW coaching exercises tried out, personal work-values, coaching values as well as exploring community values through conversations and observations. Creating a short CV in English including key personal values. Discussed and disseminated to other participants using the project platform (or Facebook). (10 hours)
6. GS focusing on coaching in facilitating learning by creating awareness, designing actions, organizing events, planning and goal setting, managing progress and accountability. (6 hours)
7. HW coaching exercises tried out, organization of community workshop. (10 hours)

8. HW/GS Community workshops implementation in cooperation with country specific facilitators (10 hours). The duration of each workshop will be(2-4) hours.
9. GS presentation of community workshops agendas and ideology, discussions/exercises related to coaching experiences. This process will be followed up by cc facilitators in each country. (6 hours)

Teaching and support material will be presented on the INTERFACE platform and project website.

Students are expected to provide at least 30 hours of coaching (either paid or voluntary) after the finalization of the community coach course and community workshop. Follow up evaluation and facilitation will support the coached in implementing this task.

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