Grant Agreement number: 611527

Project acronym: ICT2B

Project title: Bridging the Entrepreneurial Gap: Transforming European ICT Research into Investment Opportunities

Funding Scheme: Coordination and support action

Work Package	WP3: Organisation of "ICT Start-up" events
Deliverable	D2.2.2: 11 Webinars for support of business plan development
Lead Beneficiary	P4. The University of SH
Related activity	(Copied by DOW)

Document version
1.1

Deliverable main objectives
Activity 2.2 Webinars for support of business concept development (Activity Leader: UoS) The project partners will organise 10 webinars aiming to support the working teams in developing business concepts and investment plans. Each webinar will be followed by a mentor chat section in which the webinar organisation experts will engage in discussions and reply to questions. The webinars plus a Q&A section will be recorder and be made available on the ICT2B platform for further reference. Six webinars will be prepared by UoS and the other partners will prepare one webinar each, indicatively to cover the following issues: • IPR protection for ICT R&D results • How Venture Capitals operate and what are they looking for. • How to prepare an effective business plan and an investment plan • Business teams collaboration practices • How to estimate potential market for an ICT product or service • Entrepreneurial strategy management • Recovering from entrepreneurial failure • Presentation of investment success stories: Difficulties, drawbacks, strategies, tips etc.

Deviations from initial plan (if any)
No subcontracting was used to edit the webinars.   An additional webinar was hosted on scaling up

Webinar Programme Review

The University of Sheffield has been responsible for the design and delivery of the webinar program. By way of background to hosting the webinars, the primary reasons for participating in webinar and other online learning events were reviewed. The findings were:

- To get information about specific ideas
- To understand new issues
- To learn about industry trends
- To learn more about a service
- To explore new ideas
- Because they were required to do so

In acknowledging that the motives to participate in the ICT2B webinar series are likely to be a combination of these factors, to maximise participation a series of further steps were taken:

- Start promotions two weeks in advance and promote from different angles.
- Embed social media links on landing pages to enable registrants to share your event.
- Use "same-day" email reminders to registrants to improve attendance conversion.
- Cross promote with partners and guest speakers.
- Remove any barriers to access by making available from mobile devices to increase attendance

Prior to hosting the webinars the University of Sheffield team reviewed a number of different platforms to host the webinars. There are a growing number of different services available with different price points –the products can be split into three categories: 1) **High End**: Adobe Connect, Saba, Cisco WebEx. **2) Mid-Range**: Fuze Meeting, MegaMeeting, GoTo Meeting, Blackboard Collaborate; **3) Open Source**: Big Blue Button. We elected to use WebEx due to the capacity and ability to use simultaneous video channels and user interface that was accessible on.

In reviewing the broad content of venture creation and start up modules currently taught at leading institutions across Europe a series of key themes were identified for the focus of each of the webinars. These themes were discussed at the project meeting in Twente and subsequently agreed. The topics of the initial webinars delivered by the University of Sheffield are detailed below and the summaries are available online:

Recruitment webinar. This webinar was run twice to enable potential participant to ask questions before registration NOT RECORDED

Webinar 1: Introduction. This webinar gave participants an opportunity to ask any questions about the ICT2B programme once selected. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G67w0rG98wY

Webinar 2: Ideation. This webinar discusses where ideas and opportunities come from. We will explore what makes for a good idea and consider what factors are important when trying to develop an entrepreneurial idea into an opportunity. If you have any questions about how to present and develop your idea in advance of the Seeheim event we will be happy to discuss them with you! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ro-SDp8Phck

Webinar 3: Business Canvases. This webinar is focused on mapping ideas on a business canvas and looking at steps towards business creation. We will introduce the idea of the business canvas and explore how they can help support the development of entrepreneurial ideas. We will utilise business canvas frameworks at the Seeheim event so this webinar will introduce the basics! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TcpPUWLp-OM

Webinar 4: Business Model Testing. This webinar will focus on evaluating the strength of underlying technologies by encouraging participants to work through a series of questions to assess technology readiness. The ability to address such questions associated with technology readiness of the project which is likely to affect investor readiness. The webinar will also look at the development of business models and how to ensure that the model is most appropriate for the technology. https://youtu.be/1PnjLZ1ESiQ

Webinar 5: Intellectual Property. This webinar is focused on the importance of IPR protection in ICT and the challenges and opportunities that this presents. We will explore how to assess the IPR position of your idea and consider what factors are important when trying to protect your IPR. If you have any questions about ICT2B you will also be able to discuss Interested in participating in a webinar? Than with the webinar host and ICT2B coordinator!

Webinar 6: Entrepreneurial Strategy. This webinar is dedicated to exploring the entrepreneurial strategy of (pre) start-up ventures. By considering the nature of (pre) start-up activities, otherwise referred to as intuitive planning, to develop a sense of an unsatisfied need in the market and the relevant customer segment. By thinking through this process participants should be able to enhance their approach towards business planning. https://youtu.be/Wk_56KMc8Jw

Webinar 7: Funding & Finance. This webinar is provides details about funding, finance and investment readiness of new start-ups. Since raising funding is one of the first hurdles business face the webinar will explore different business financing options from grants and loans to angle investment, to help you decide the best way to raise finance and fund your opportunity. https://youtu.be/AWAFJtYrBVE

Webinar 8: New Venture Marketing. Startup marketing is hard: Especially when you're an engineer. You're building a new technology, struggling to find product-market fit, and need to get to your first users without a marketing budget. In this webinar you'll bridge the gap between theory and practice, learn how to kickstart your startup's growth engine with 5 methods that you can implement in less than one day**. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLXeLsbvJxw&feature=youtu.be**

Webinar 9: Feedback. Seeking and using feedback is an important aspect of the entrepreneurial journey. This webinar focuses on the ways to seek feedback in a meaningful way and how this can be appropriated to improve the development of an entrepreneurial product, process or service. By considering how different influences and feedback loops inform decision-making is an important aspect of the entrepreneurial journey. https://youtu.be/kwUgS-1TPiA

Webinar 10: Finalising Business Plans. This webinar focuses on finalising the business plans and learning from mistakes. An integral aspect of entrepreneurial success is not just the business plan but understanding the importance of planning and continuing to ensure that the business plan evolves with the business. This penultimate webinar considers the final aspects of the business plan and role of planning moving forward. https://youtu.be/5qnpr0SeXbg

Webinar 11: Scaling Up. Having undertaken the entrepreneurial journey with ICT2B, this final webinar considers the challenge of growth and scaling up. While much of the emphasis of ICT2B has been on ideation and idea development, this concluding session focuses on things to think about for business growth. The presentation highlights common challenges in growing a business and outlines key factors for entrepreneurial growth. The webinar also makes links to other EU funded projects that may be able to offer support in developing your business concept. https://youtu.be/mGWq4wLhvd0

Details of webinar attendance and YouTube views are presented in the table below:

Webinar	Lead	Title	Attendance	YouTube
1	Dr Tim Vorley	**Introduction to ICT2B**	88	103
2	Dr Nick Williams	**Ideation: Making and identifying opportunities**	76	104
3	Dr Tim Vorley	**Business planning: From Canvas to Creation**	73	139
4	Mr Alain Le Loux	**Technology evaluating and business model testing**	81	45
5	Dr Gunnar Brink	**IPR protection in ICT (challenges and opportunities)**	40	-
6	Dr Nick Williams	**Entrepreneurial strategy & market identification**	47	20

7	Mr Andreas Bofinger	**Funding, finance and investment readiness**	39	18
8	Mr Shai Haim	**New Technology Marketing: The Startup Playbook**	42	76
9	Ms Andrea Drencheva	**Acting on Feedback**	37	10
10	Dr Nick Williams	**Finalising business plans**	30	18
11	Dr Tim Vorley	**Scaling Up (video only)**	-	17

For the purpose of the webinars and the web summary is the primary view is a slide deck created using PowerPoint (see recordings). All of the slides used adhere to the ICT2B communications and branding manual and are in keeping with materials used during the event. All partners involved in delivering webinars will use this temp late that has been developed by the University of Sheffield. The University of Sheffield will support partners in delivering their webinars and developing summary recordings to post on the ICT2B web platform.

The webinar contributed to the overall ICT2B project by engaging with participant before both of the events. In the case of those webinars held before Seeheim, these provided the foundations for many of the concepts used with the teams formed. As a result the emphasis of event was more about facilitating and putting ideas into practice that teaching the concepts as they had already been covered. Between the two events the webinars focused on elements of building business plans, with each of the presentations going into more depth. The webinars themselves also included more engagement with participants seeking clarification in relation to their own business concepts. The summary webinars tended to focus on those aspects of the webinars where participants had questions or queries. Again, working in this way the webinars supported the mentoring of teams between the events and meant that the event in Halkadiki was more productive as there was a good level of understanding. Finally, the last webinars held following the Halkidiki event were intended to support teams in completing their business concepts.

During the event in Seeheim we sought feedback on the webinars from the participants examples of which are below:

The webinars so far have been interesting

It is good that we can type questions as well as talking to the host of the seminar

It is good that we are able to participate in the webinars as well as at the event

Because the webinars are always at the same time we know when to expect them

It was good that the webinars introduced the topics that we worked on in Seeheim

Sometimes the presenter talks quickly so it is good that the summary is available online

During the event in Halkidiki we sought feedback on the webinars from the participants examples of which are below:

The webinars have been useful in developing our business plan

I like the recordings of the webinars available on YouTube.

It is good to talk about the Webinars with our team mentor

Overall the webinars were a productive aspect of the ICT2B project and webinar summaries will serve as an informational resource that will exist beyond the end of the project. Prior to the Seeheim event attendance at the live webinars was very good, although despite timetables of webinars being posted on line participation was almost exclusively limited to the ICT participants. At the webinars following the event, the level of participation was reduced as many of those participants not continuing to develop their ideas as a part of the ICT2B project dropped out. Despite continuing to be invited to the webinars, attendance inevitably reduced to a level at which was sustained for the remanding webinars. As the above comments reflect the webinars were positively regarded by the participant.

It is of course difficult to mandate attendance at webinars, and even then active participation of difficult to achieve. The project team worked to facilitate an engaging and structured programme of webinars that enhanced the project. Overall the webinars were successful in this respect, although a major challenge was in promoting their reach within and beyond those participating in the ICT2B events. That said the only non-staff cost associated with the webinars was the WebEx platform, and the allocated budget was reallocated given the cost savings.