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Enhancing skills intelligence and integration into existing PhD programmes by providing transferable skills training through an open online platform

Rapports

Informations projet

DocEnhance

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[Site Web du projet](#)

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Make scientific and technological careers attractive to young students, and foster sustainable interaction between schools, research institutions, industry and civil society organisations

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Ce projet apparaît dans...



Favoriser le développement des compétences dans l'UE pour des sociétés plus durables, résilientes et équitables

Periodic Reporting for period 2 - DocEnhance (Enhancing skills intelligence and integration into existing PhD programmes by providing transferable skills training through an open online platform)

Période du rapport: 2021-04-01 au 2022-12-31

Résumé du contexte et des objectifs généraux du projet



In recent years, the European employment landscape for doctoral graduates has gone through significant change. Whereas the number of research and professorship positions available within universities has been reduced, non-academic sectors and industries show growing interest in recruiting various doctoral graduate profiles. However, PhD training is not always fully adapted to an increasingly mobile and global research environment. Early career researchers often lack the interpersonal, capacity or business skills that are crucial to transition into employment. Their network is also often limited to the academic area.

Over the last two decades, transferable skills training has thus become one of the most significant aspects of doctoral education reform in Europe. These skills – that apply to a broad variety of work situations – enable researchers to be more adaptable to the non-academic labour market's needs, but also more effective in their research.

The DocEnhance project supports Higher Education Institutions' (HEIs) efforts to enhance early-stage researchers' skills intelligence by developing transferable skills courses and integrating them into PhD programmes. This will be achieved over three years by developing an employment and innovation-orientated curriculum for PhD programmes, facilitating business-education partnerships through a sustainable network of academic and non-academic actors, and tracking of PhD graduate career paths. Improving the assessment of PhD graduate career paths and alumni networking is a key starting point for HEIs to improve their skills training.

All resources developed within the project are provided as Open Educational Resources through the DocEnhance Platform. This online platform function as a comprehensive and user-friendly access

point for transferable skills training in research education on the one hand, and a community and networking site with non-academic partners on the other. It is designed to live beyond the project lifetime.

To ensure interaction with the non-academic sector and adequacy with HEIs needs, the project courses have been designed through a co-creation approach, involving regional recruiters, and piloted among several European universities for proof-of-concept.

Travail effectué depuis le début du projet jusqu'à la fin de la période considérée dans le rapport et principaux résultats atteints jusqu'à présent ▼

During the first stage of the project, partners have deepened their understanding of the specific skills needed on the labour market by organising regional workshops with non-academic stakeholders in four different European countries. Each workshop focused on a different career sector chosen to represent the crucial challenges of the 21st century. These meetings provided state-of-the-art knowledge that served as a base to design recommended curricula and pilot courses, and ensure that the end-user needs are met. They also aimed at involving non-academic stakeholders in the project and strengthening the project's network.

In the second period, the project has released the DocEnhance Platform, providing freely accessible online resources for doctoral education, including three transferable courses on data stewardship, career management and entrepreneurship, and supervision. The platform builds on the existing PhD Hub platform, and is enhanced with ESCO classification, to find matching transferable skills courses and to link the available courses to relevant offers on the PhD Hub.

Over the last two decades, as the employment landscape for doctoral graduates has shifted, the need for their training in transferable skills has become crucial for them to transfer their knowledge to non-academic settings. The project has developed and piloted three courses for doctoral education:

- Data Stewardship presents the theory and concepts of data management and teaches how to collect, analyse, and manage research data.
- Career Management & Entrepreneurship helps graduates to reflect upon their personal strengths, weaknesses and life goals, develop critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication and self-management skills, and act upon entrepreneurial ideas and opportunities and transform them into value.
- Supervision provides PhD supervisors with resources to identify and embed pedagogical, practical and up-to-date skills, and to gain knowledge of a variety of supervision practices from the non-academic sector.

This career-oriented curriculum aims to address the future needs and competences of researchers. Aligned to the principles of open access and innovation, each of the DocEnhance courses is structured upon three interlinking learning modules:

- The first open education module consists of online resources: lectures, tools and case studies. A set

of short videos that can also be used for self-learning.

- The second interdisciplinarity module consists of local group work, with exercises and discussion topics.
- The third mobility module is a regional assignment with potential employers.

The courses have been designed as open educational resources and can easily be adapted and integrated to existing curricula and Moodle platforms.

Summary of Key Exploitable Results, available through the Horizon Results Platform

- The DocEnhance Platform, evaluated and validated by internal and external stakeholders,
- The DocEnhance courses, evaluated and validated by course participants and course providers,
- The DocEnhance career-tracking survey, piloted within 9 European universities,
- A good practice recommendation for implementation of career-tracking survey of doctorate holders (will be officially published as a CWA on the GEN homepage in mid-March),
- The DocEnhance course concept, proved by 3 pilot courses that were each piloted twice at minimum two universities.

Progrès au-delà de l'état des connaissances et impact potentiel prévu (y compris l'impact socio-économique et les conséquences sociétales plus larges du projet jusqu'à présent)

By the end of the project, DocEnhance provides solid state-of-the-art intelligence on skills mismatches, through literature, regional stakeholder workshops and a career-tracking survey performed within 9 European universities. The key exploitable results are relevant for the ongoing activities within the European Research Area. The Final roadmap for implementation of the DocEnhance resources guides the interested reader on how to map skills needs among PhD candidates, and how to develop and get access to transferable skills courses for PhD candidates and researchers.

The career-tracking survey helps universities collect information about employability inside and outside academia, advance and develop doctoral programmes and skills training, offer better-informed career advice and wider career options, and establish links with alumni and benchmark with other universities. The survey framework and a good practice recommendations for other higher education institutions to implement their own survey is made available.

Higher education institutions will easily be able to access and adapt the DocEnhance courses to their own teaching environment, which will reduce the duplication of efforts and enhance further exploitation.

Collaboration between academia and regional non-academic actors should be facilitated through the regional assignments included in the courses and the broad network, lowering the threshold immersion into different working environments, and improving regional innovation.



Project logo

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