External Evaluation Report

Universities – Companies Crowdsourcing

Reference: AGREEMENT NUMBER 539312-LLP-1-

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1. Overview

This report aims to evaluate the work developed during the twenty-four months of the project. It is expected to evaluate the outputs produced during lifetime of the partnership. By doing this evaluation it is expected to give feedback to the European Commission.

2. Methodology

The evaluation was based on the analysis of the two web pages:

a) http://uc-crowd.iscte-iul.pt/ - the web page that presents the project and main outputs;

b) http://challengeacademy.eu/ - the output number 17th which is the crowdsourcing platform.

3. Outputs evaluation

The project was divided in ten workpackages and each one contribute to the main objective which is to engage the target groups in the platform. The delivery date was given by the coordinator, and was not the date displayed online.

a) Management – along all project lifetime

This workpackage was evaluate along the project by analysing the partnership relationship. The evaluation of the quality of the partnership is very positive, with most of the partners noted that feels satisfied or very satisfied. The opinion in relation to the management and communication between partners is mostly taken as appropriate. Only a minority of partners (3.4%) believes that languages are always or very often an obstacle to the progress of the project. The involvement of partners seems assured when you consider that all fulfil the work that is imputed to him. The clarity regarding the work to be presented is seen as appropriate or very appropriate for about 90% of partners. The same percentage gathers the views of partners on compliance activities relating to the project schedule, as always seen or achieved in most cases. About 93% of the partners feel that so far, the project activities have been well coordinated. Most partners (82.8%) believe that the expectations were met regarding partial results of

the project. The partners agree or strongly agree with the influence that the knowledge that each partner has the involvement of the users of the platform. However, only one partner disagrees with the influence of this knowledge on the commitment to comply with the dates laid down in the schedule of the project. More than two thirds of the partners feel that the impact of the project is the dependent internal management profile. The partners are satisfied and enthusiastic about the platform. Overall, the evaluation of the project carried out by the partners is very positive.

The main outputs were confidential and were not evaluate in this report.

b) Quality – along all project lifetime

By analysing the 5 internal reports displayed publicly at the webpage of the project we can say that:

On the whole, the Internal Quality reports show the project development in its different dimensions, but also signaled difficulties in its execution and pointed reasonable and workable solutions to address them. The first Quality Internal report showed the success in project implementation, but also signaled constraints essentially passed technical issues, organizational and communicational issues of nature. The use of AdminProject showed some weaknesses. The data collection performed through this platform has not proven completely effective, and the partnership decide to use the email as an alternative to sending questionnaires. This alternative was kept as a fallback solution for future surveys, but it was suggested that attendance data collection in project meetings, as can be seen already in the Second Report of Internal Quality. In the first Quality Report Internal solutions were presented to foster communication between partners, including through regular feedback by the coordinator of the role of each partner and on the development tasks. These requirements are set out also the Second Internal Quality Report, which is suggested as a strategy, sending, by the Coordinator, the new schedule and the role of partners for the second year of project implementation. Budget issues were also identified, but

the third Internal Quality Report demonstrate that they were solved. Moreover, following the adjustment of the overall goals after the second Internal Quality Report on the third report the clarity of these objectives was evidenced by all partners. Given communication difficulties the coordinator came to monthly send the distribution of tasks at the beginning of each month and encouraged communication through Skype meetings, in which companies were also involved. In this third Internal Quality Report was appointed difficulty to report platform errors and the measure aimed to overcome this difficulty passed by strengthening the ICT team and the creation of help desk. In the fourth internal quality report it was found that the implementation of adjustment measures, and especially promoting partner communication was successful. The fifth quality Internal Report allowed corroborate what has seemed evident in the previous report, including the success of the measures implemented to overcome initial problems of communication and coordination between partners. Indeed, the satisfaction demonstrated at this stage are not confined to their individual participation as the project's results as a whole. By analyzing the quality of Internal report we can conclude that for the initial difficulties pointed out by the partners, namely the organizational and relational nature, it was designed and implemented measures that have proven to be effective. The necessary adjustments in terms of schedule, in particular those that resulted from technical issues, did not affect the development of the project, presenting themselves also successful.

c) European Business Case – month 1th – 7th

This workpackage finished with a small delay that was solve during the following months. The decision of one only questionnaire was made during the 1st partners meeting and seems to be a good methodological decision to the questionnaire objective.

Nº of output	Description	Delivery date	Evaluation	web page of the project

Nº 8	Business questionnaire	Oct. 2013	Done according with the project planning	The questionnaire is clear and well structured. Available in several languages as expected.
Nº 9	National Model Report – Companies	Mar. 2014	It was finished later than expected, because people take more time to collect the answers	The report match with the purpose described in the application. Is available for all partners who participated in the WP.
Nº 10	European cooperation ICT model between companies/ HEI's – Companies vision	Apr.2014	Consequently the European report was delivered one month later than expected	The report is clear and the tables presented are easy to read it and understand the main conclusions.

d) Teaching Learning case study - Professors - month 1th – 7th

As the previous workpackage was done with a small delay. The decision of one only questionnaire was made during the 1st partners meeting and seems to be a good methodological decision to the questionnaire objective.

Nº of output	Description	Delivery date	Evaluation	web page of the project
Nº 11	Professors questionnaire	Oct. 2013	Done according with the project planning	The questionnaire is clear and well structured. Available in several languages as expected.

Nº 12	National Model Report – Professors	Mar. 2014	It was finished later than expected, because people take more time to collect the answers	The report match with the purpose described in the application. Is available for all partners who participated in the WP.
Nº 13	European cooperation ICT model between companies/ HEI's – Professors' vision	Apr.2014	Consequently the European report was delivered one month later than expected	The report is clear and the tables presented are easy to read it and understand the main conclusions.

e) Teaching Learning case study - Students - month 1th – 7th

As the previous workpackage was done with a small delay. The decision of one only questionnaire was made during the 1st partners meeting and seems to be a good methodological decision to the questionnaire objective.

Nº of output	Description	Delivery date	Evaluation	web page of the project
Nº 14	Students questionnaire	Oct. 2013	Done according with the project planning	The questionnaire is clear and well structured. Available in several languages as expected.
Nº 15	National Model Report – students	Mar. 2014	It was finished later than expected, because people take more time to collect the answers	The report match with the purpose described in the application. Is available for all partners who participated in the WP.

Nº 16	European cooperation ICT model between companies/ HEI's – Professors' vision	Apr.2014	Consequently the European report was delivered one month later than expected	The report is clear and the tables presented are easy to read it and understand the main conclusions.

f) Platform – along all project

The platform was supposed to use the reports provided from WP 3, WP4 and WP5 this activity resides in creating the platform that will gather and support HEI's, companies, professors and students. The platform will be a virtual space where companies set challenges to be solved by professors and their students, creating a knowledge alliance and stimulating innovation by bringing together companies and HEI's. The partnership will enhance the role of HEI's as first choice to companies search for innovation, and promotes the active exchange of knowledge between higher education and business leading to a long-term development in both of them.

http://challengeacademy.eu/

Challenge Academy presents itself as a platform whose purpose is presented in a concise and clear manner. Graphic design is attractive and is characterized by simplicity. The videos embedded on the "Getting Started/ user's manual" help the user to get an idea about how to register themselves, and the existence of a helpdesk allow the support to be customized, if necessary. The registration on the platform is held in an accessible way. In other words, the usability of this virtual environment to achieve specific goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction seems to be fulfilled. By clicking in the About the user has the opportunity to know more about the platform, the goal, and the articulation with the central concept of crowdsourcing and who will be the users. It also brings up the typology of the profiles, the typology of awards and the partners involved in the partnership that supports the platform. The Challenges tab shows the challenges that are open and there is also the possibility to meet challenges past for which a solution has already been defined. In Homepage tab are

challenges which process is open, which may be a replication of information found in the Challenges tab (Open Challenges). Perhaps this content can be reviewed. The platform facilitates communication between individuals and groups from different countries, configured as a space for all users with different profiles, which can benefit in their use. Through interactivity that the platform supports, users have the opportunity to build together innovative responses to the challenges posed. Finally, the platform offers the possibility of setting up a virtual learning community in response to specific problems.

g) Professors workshop – month 7th - 24th

Nº of output	Description	Delivery date	Evaluation	web page of the project
Nº 19	Workshop manual	July.2014	It was finished later than expected but due to the classes calendar wasn't negative because June/ July and August are holidays for most universities	The manual is very easy to understand and has the information needed to develop a workshop.
Nº 20	workshops	Finished April.2015	Partners had made more than 2 workshops as was predicted at the application and so finished later than expected	I didn't was in any workshop.
Nº 21	Workshop evaluation	Aug.2014	As the output 19th finished later, this one was also delayed	The questionnaire is small, but integrate the topics needed to evaluate the usability of

				the platform; the last two questions are open and allow participants to freely present their opinions, at the same time allow them to engage with the platforman and advice it to others.
Nº 22	European Workshop report	Dec.2014 and May.2015	As the output 20th finished later, this one was also delayed	The report fulfil the objective of collect suggestions to the future and to promote future workshops. The participants opinions could be very interesting to the partnership and specially to the coordination.
Nº 23	E-learning	Oct.2015	This was the most delayed output but since this one was developed to contribute to the sustainability was not negative for the project development	The videos is very suitable with the objective and is funny and attractive at the same time,

h) Platform testing – month 8th – 24th

We can't have the idea of how many users are registered at the platform.

This was the numbers expected to be achieved during the lifetime of the project:

Objective 1st+2nd				
	Companies	Universities	Professors	Students
P1 ISCTE	5		12	190
P3 UoS	4			
P4 AHE	5		12	190
P5 USGM	5		12	190
P7 IRSA	4			
P8 VFU	5		12	190
P10 AP	5		12	190
P11 UoW			12	190

The information provided by the coordinator in September related with the users was:

Results by Partner				
	Companies	Universities	Professors	Students
P1 ISCTE	37	33	84	474
P3 UoS	6	4	12	202
P4 AHE	6	3	12	163
P5 USGM	8	9	72	319
P7 IRSA	20	10	22	15
P8 VFU	6	1	32	320
P10 AP	8	1	23	190
P11 UoW	6	4	12	202

Most partners had more users than expected with the exception of Poland. This should be reflected at the final report to European Commission.

Nº of output	Description	Delivery date	Evaluation	web page of the project
Nº 24	System of incentives	July.2015	It was finished according with the schedule	The presentation is clear and adequate by analyzing the different types of users.
Nº 25	Challengers and solvers resume	Sept.2015	It was finished according with the schedule	The document is complete and easy to read and analyze.

i) Dissemination – month 2nd -24th

By analysing the description of the dissemination the conclusions are that a huge effort was made during the lifetime of the project to disseminate the platform and the partnership achieve their objective of spread the word around Europe.

Nº of output	Description	Delivery date	Evaluation	web page of the project
Nº 26	Facebook	Nov.2013	It was finished sooner than programed	It could be interesting to have the link to the facebook at the webpage.
Nº 27	Newsletter	various	It was finished according with the schedule	The newsletter show the main milestones of the project and the evolution of the activities.

Nº 28	Online presentation	Sep.2014	It was finished according with the schedule	The form and content are well organized
Nº29	Consultancy		It was finished according with the schedule	Since all activities are displayed at this document is not easy to find the evidences of the consultancy done. It could be interesting to have this separate in the final report to the EC.
Nº30	European congress	Sep.2014	It was finished according with the schedule	I wasn't at the EC, but presentations seems interesting.
Nº31	European companies roadshow		It was changed with the authorization of European Commission	The main objective was fulfilled.

j) Exploitation – 10th – 24th

Nº of output	Description	Delivery date	Evaluation	web page of the project
Nº 32	User protocols	Sep.2015	It was finished sooner than programed	The objective of the user protocols was achieved.
Nº 33	Scientific presentation_1		It was finished according with the schedule	Maybe the coordinator could display the program or other evidence about where was presented.

Nº 34	Scientific presentation_2		It was finished according with the schedule	Maybe the coordinator could display the program or other evidence about where was presented.

4. Conclusions

The project is based on a collaborative construction of a virtual platform. Its implementation and evaluation aimed create a community of sharing that potentiate the relationship between teachers and students of higher education and companies. Based on the concept of crowdsourcing, a virtual space has been made available which can generate creative and innovative solutions to problems presented by the business world, for which the Institutions of Higher Education and its agents may provide an added value. Similarly, the participation of the platform can be translated into an asset for teachers, allowing to diversify their teaching strategies, namely the possibility of using strategies focused on solving problems, in this case real-world problems. Also students can benefit from this collaboration with the business world and realize more concretely the applicability of their learning. Since is a project that involves institutions of higher education, will necessarily to meet the assumptions of Bologna, in particular as regards their responsibility to contribute to the process of innovation and creativity with social impact and the solidification of the European Higher Education Area by competitiveness and cooperation. With regard to students, it is also reflected the Bologna process with regard to the centrality of the student in autonomous learning process throughout life and focus on creating new opportunities that reflect the socio-cultural diversity of students. In project development emerged obstacles, however overtaken by the implementation of well-defined adjustments and measures. The systematic consultation process, and respective hearing instruments, formed the basis of its success. The work seems to have been well monitored and the difficulties experienced displayed on the quality reports, generated solutions that have proved effective.

The UC-Crowd site is very easy to use, with access to the Challenge Academy platform, one of the central and operational outputs of the project. Explains the project and its phases of execution, and to publish the multiple outputs, rich in content, form and diversity. The outputs are available and organized by categories. Overall, the project objectives were achieved, which was reflected in the satisfaction expressed by the partners involved in the final stages of its implementation.