

INTERNATIONAL CURRICULUM



International Curriculum

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INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 2

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1. Executive Summary

IO2-iFEMPOWER international curriculum supports the empowerment of female entrepreneurs. The curriculum is based on the results of a preparatory research and developed by participating partner universities. It can be applied at universities wishing to focus on the empowerment of female entrepreneurs. Thus, it was elaborated in English first to make it easier to use for further universities, while later it was translated to participating partner universities' language in the frame of the project. It is now openly available and easily adoptable by other universities.

The whole curriculum is supposed to rely on an interactive and integrative methodology, analyse case studies, and meet in person with stakeholders and women entrepreneurs. It shall target students from any scientific fields, including humanities, social and economic sciences. The courses that implement the material described in the curriculum, shall instil in the students' transversal competences, entrepreneurial mindset and creative thinking. The curriculum of the module was elaborated by Bifröst University with the support of the partnership. Following the delivery of the output, the module was accredited (ECTS) by each partner university and promoted for students from any scientific field and then it was tested for 2 semesters at each partner university.

For over 30 years, Bifröst University has offered courses and programs that aim to increase the participation of women in society and working life. Since 2004, Bifröst has successfully run a vocational educational program called *Women Power*, where women who are looking to start their own business or acquire new skills in management and business operations, come together for studies and networking. The *Women Power* program has built up a range of experience and competences in the topic of gender and entrepreneurial studies. Furthermore, Bifröst University places emphasis on equal opportunities in all its activities through its Equal Rights Plan.

The target groups for the curriculum are mainly two distinct, but closely related groups; students and teachers at HEIs. The curriculum is meant to serve female students at HEIs already participating in other programs, who want to learn the skills of starting a business and becoming entrepreneurs. The curriculum, and the teaching resources developed within the scope of the project has been made available on the project's website so other universities and educational organizations can adopt the material and use it as part of their educational offering. Throughout the project, teachers got hands-on training in teaching the curriculum, thanks to training events organized within the project.





2. Introduction

In the current document Bifröst University shares its teaching experience as it has a long-standing experience in teaching subjects and topics related to the project's theme, which is support for potential female entrepreneurs. The participating partners also had the opportunity to share the existing know-how and good practice in their institution, hence this is also reflected in this finalized curriculum. The curriculum heavily relies on the outcomes of the Output 1 research and each partner university had a role in adding national views and characteristics to the curriculum (O2) and the teaching material (O3).

The curriculum focuses on two main issues: it builds on knowledge and skills for starting and running an enterprise by creating a business plan and focuses on issues that may be specifically related to the experience of women entrepreneurs. The curriculum is of practical terms involving women entrepreneurs as guest lectures and assignments on preparing a business plan and analysing case studies on best practices of women entrepreneurs.

The aim was to develop an international curriculum, strongly relying on mentorship & project-based learning. This comprehensive module giving ECTS credits reflects on known obstacles faced by female entrepreneurship and empowers students to successfully overcome them. This curriculum is one of the most important innovative characteristics of the iFEMPOWER project.

An international curriculum for a complex module has been developed consisting of more courses which can be accomplished next to major studies from any fields and it was accredited by each partner university giving ECTS to students. The curriculum is unique and innovative since so far none of the previous initiatives targeted to improve not only the knowledge but the hard and soft skill, problems solving capacities of female students from any fields. The curriculum has put a special focus on case studies coming from female entrepreneurs participating as mentors and everyday-life situations, such as harmony between work and family life, role of females in enterprises, etc. The curriculum is one of the most important outcomes of the project which has been applied afterwards at any university wishing to focus on the empowerment of female entrepreneurs.

One of the objectives has been to introduce the target audience with the similarities and differences faced by female entrepreneurs in the different countries participating in this project. The curriculum and the teaching material reflects this diversity and is in relationship to the application form. In the frame of the project description, IO2 relies heavily on the outcomes of IO1. IO2 and IO3 go hand in hand, as the teaching material of IO3 greatly enriched and complemented the curriculum.





3. Contents

Developing an international curriculum and material of a complex common module has been accomplished along the major courses to support the empowerment of females. The focus has been on general course on the necessary knowledge on entrepreneurship, how can the enterprise become successful and self-maintained, how it is possible for young would-be entrepreneurs to launch their enterprises on their own. The emphasis is on key skills to ensure the continuous development of the enterprise: defining a functional business plan, continuously widening the clientele & the customers, continuous fundraising. Boosting entrepreneurial skills: professional, leadership & entrepreneurial skills, hands-on learning in line focus on creative thinking and solutions. Risk management: analysing potential hindrances and risk factors of an enterprise, elaboration of risk management plans and topics concerning the female entrepreneurial lifestyle: what difficulties can be expected in the life of female entrepreneurs, what solutions can help to overcome these factors.

The curriculum has been elaborated by Bifröst University due to its already existing expertise in the field of women entrepreneurship educational programmes. Each partner university had a strong role in shaping the scheme. The curriculum heavily relies on the outcomes of the Output 1 research and each partner university had a major role in adding national views and characteristics in the topic. Between M12 and M18 (project months) each partner universities made the accreditation and integrated the module to their course offer, and then the module was taught from M19 for a small group of students per partner university (the aim was not to exceed a group size of 20, however in some cases the courses were so popular that lager sizes of groups were admitted). Based on the first year of testing, assessment has been conducted and based on the outcomes, the curriculum and the teaching material has been updated. The modules thus include interactive and integrative methodology, analyse case studies, and meetings in person with stakeholders and women entrepreneurs. The curriculum of the module has been elaborated mainly around the above topics with a strong involvement of transversal and non-formal education. Bifröst provided the English and Icelandic version of the curriculum, whereas the rest of university partners provided translations to their countries' languages.

An international curriculum including complex modules was developed consisting of courses that can be accomplished next to major studies from any field. The modules were accredited by each partner university giving ECTS to students. The curriculum has put a special focus on case studies coming from female entrepreneurs participating as mentors and everyday-life situations, such as harmony between work and family life, role of females in enterprises, etc. The curriculum is one of the main deliverables of the project and it is suitable to be applied at universities wishing to focus on the empowerment of female entrepreneurs.

The module is comprised of two main parts that can be taught in parallel in a classroom setting, and then supported and enriched through a mentorship programme that offers a student the opportunity to learn from an experienced mentor, and see the concepts covered in the module being applied in practice.

One part places emphasis on the managerial aspect of entrepreneurship and fosters skills and competences required to ideate, initiate and maintain an entrepreneurial venture. The following outline is meant to focus on practical topics, rather than theoretical or conceptual ones, thus instilling with the students' abilities needed to initiate their own ventures.



- Entrepreneurship
 - o Entrepreneurial skills and mindset
 - o Team development
 - Presentation Skills
- Sales and marketing
 - o 4Ps, Place, Promotion, Product, Price
 - Segmentation, targeting and positioning
 - Sales management
- · Business plan and risk management
 - Business model of the new venture
 - o Developing a business plan
 - o Risk and risk management
- Establishing and financing SMEs
 - o Regulation and taxation
 - o Types and strategies of entrepreneurial ventures
 - Cash Flow Analysis
 - o Break Even Calculation
 - Financing a business

Students attending the programme can go through a curriculum based on general knowledge of female entrepreneurship involving general rules as well as knowledge on relevant practical issues and solutions to enable them to have all the tools required to start a business. The proposed curriculum consists of 10 modules, and some key topics covered in each are listed below. In terms of ECTS credit points, the workload of the modules is equal. A proposed 1 ECTS credit point per module suggests a workload of 25-30 hours per module, including hours spent in the classroom as well as working hours that students must allocate for their own work on reading and acquiring the material and working on assignments or activities that make up each course. The content of each course is further elaborated in IO3 which is the International Teaching Material for the Curriculum.

The courses focus on how knowledge and skills can be built to start a business plan based on experience and case studies of women in entrepreneurship. Students can gain an understanding of the nature of entrepreneurship and the participation and role of entrepreneurs in the economy. The characteristics of women entrepreneurs are discussed and the gender challenges in society today are also addressed, especially in the business environment, i.e. gender issues regarding the barriers that women in entrepreneurship often face, both in their private lives and also in the public sphere, e.g. regarding business opportunity financing, business and private coordination, external partnerships and more.

The course is based on entrepreneurial education, but also case studies are used systematically during the teaching. Practical projects can be prepared and students are introduced to the thinking that comes with being an entrepreneur, a creative and solution-based approach to decision-making and how to take the first steps in setting up business. Emphasis is placed on teamwork,



networking and students can be trained in developing eco-strategies and assessing risk-related operations. Emphasis is placed on examining the barriers women face in establishing and operating businesses and how to overcome them.

For the teaching material in IO3 of the iFEMPOWER project, the following 11-week syllabus has been proposed for the managerial aspect of the curricula. The eleven sessions are then followed by a 3-week period where students work on, and present, a case study or their own business concept, thus putting the material of the course to the test and experiencing first-hand how to implement the methods and analyses presented through the curricula. This outline can be used as a syllabus for the part of the iFEMPOWER curricula that covers the managerial aspect of entrepreneurship. Alternative variations could cover the content of the curriculum, but for this syllabus, a comprehensive set of teaching tools and methods are described in IO3.

Date	Lectures/Seminars
	INTRODUCTION
1st week	1. Course Introduction
	2. Economic panorama – SMEs in focus
	ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET
	1. The Entrepreneurial perspective: the entrepreneur
2 nd week	2. Clarifying entrepreneurial skills and attitudes – self-knowledge
	3. Developing business thinking – Case Study on identifying alternatives and decision making
	ENTREPRENEURIAL TEAMS
3 rd week	1. Recruitment
3 rd week	2. Team development model
	3. G.R.P.I. tool
	BUSINESS IDEA
4 th week	1.Creating, collecting business ideas
4" week	2. Business Idea vs Business Opportunity
	3. Value proposition
5 th week	MARKET RESEARCH
5 week	1. Segmentation, targeting and positioning
	PRODUCT MARKET FIT
6 th week	1. Validating product or service
	2. Validated learning
7 th week	SALES AND MARKETING
7 ··· week	1. Placing, pricing and promoting
Otho.l.	BUSINESS CONCEPTS
8 th week	1. Business model of the new venture
	BUSINESS PLANS
9 th week	1. Developing a business plan
	2. Risks and risk management
10th work	FINANCING SMALL BUSINESSES
10 th week	1. Cash Flow Plan



	2. Break Even Calculation
	3. Potential financial resources
	4. Financing a business
	5. Presentation Skills
	6. Syllabus for Presentations
	ESTABLISHING SMALL BUSINESSES
11 th week	1. Regulation and taxation
	2. The Entrepreneurial perspective: Types and strategies of ventures

Another part of the module's classroom content examines issues of female entrepreneurship. It also covers a range of soft skills that have been identified as important for entrepreneurial success, in part by the findings of the interviews in IO1.

- The entrepreneurial woman of the 21st Century
 - o Characteristics of women 's entrepreneurships
 - o Gender equality
 - o Gender-related challenges
 - Work-life balance

As part of IO3, a syllabus is proposed that covers the module's topics, through facilitated discussion, reflection on readings and work on assignments.

	Entrepreneurship (25 hours)		Start
In class	Sales and marketing (25 hours)	Gender equality and women	
in class	Business plan and risk management (25 hours)	entrepreneurs (25 hours)	
	Establishing and financing SMEs (25 hours)		
Project	Case study or business concept (25 hours)		
Internship	Mentorship programme (30 hours)		

Towards the end of the module, a mentorship programme is recommended to be implemented, alongside the teaching material covered. The mentorship programme provides students with an opportunity to experience first-hand how the knowledge they acquire from lectures, seminars and assignments has been applied in practice. Students work closely with the mentor('s organization), and complete tasks led by the mentor. Students also have the opportunity to seek advice from the more experienced entrepreneur, on how to apply the knowledge acquired when implementing their own business venture. This final component of the iFEMPOWER curricula is supported by



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the handbook developed under IO4. The mentorship programme is also internationally useable but also potentially tailor-made to address national circumstances.

- A mentorship programme for female entrepreneurship
 - o Goalsetting
 - o Creative thinking
 - o Resourcefulness





4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The curriculum writing was coordinated by Bifröst University due to its already existing expertise in the field of women entrepreneurship educational programmes. Each partner university had a strong role in shaping the scheme. Country specific examples, case studies and topics for class room discussion or deliberation have been created by each partner. The presence of seven different European countries within the consortium made this aspect of the curriculum and teaching material a valuable tool for intercultural learning. The curriculum is based on access to various teaching material e.g. videos on case studies of best practice, stakeholders and female entrepreneur interviews databases or resources available to support training and education. The content of the curriculum needs to remain flexible, so it can be adopted by an educational institution and be useful and suited to the course.

The curriculum of the modules was elaborated mainly around the previously introduced topics, with a strong involvement of transversal and non-formal education. The Final Report includes conclusions drawn from the piloting and recommendations on specific action to be taken by different stakeholders. Those conclusions are a logical extension of the information contained in the report and recommendations are a logical extension of the conclusions.

To recognize and validate the learning outcomes of the enrolled students, each of those who actively participate in the courses and comply with the requirements set out in the description of the curriculum receive ECTS credits that is recognized by partner universities. Seminars apply such methods like teamwork in small groups, project-based work, task analysis, as well as case-based methods. The content is organized to follow the job-context principle, namely the order of the actions in the real job and entrepreneurial environment. In addition, tutored individual activities can be also applied, in which a challenging situation is presented to develop a solution to the problem. In addition, those students who participate in the intensive study programmes get extra ECTS.





5. Annexes

5.1. Annex I - Learning outcomes, skills and competences

The knowledge, skills and competences acquired by students completing the curricula are the following.

Knowledge:

- Insight into theories of gender equality and women's entrepreneurship
- Familiarity with core concepts of marketing, analysis of demand and preferences
- Understanding of the regulatory framework that governs European SMEs

Skills:

- Capacity to analyse markets and propose a business plan using analytical tools and methods
- Proficiency in conducting cash flow analysis, break-even calculations and other financial management methods
- Ability to communicate and present a business plan in an organised and comprehensible manner

Competences:

- Insight and understanding of entrepreneurship required to be able to spot and evaluate entrepreneurial opportunities
- Ability to assertively manage an SME or venture
- Ability to form teams, lead and inspire

The core competences and skills being developed by the curriculum can be divided into theoretical and practical ones:

Theoretical knowledge and understanding:

- understanding the concept of entrepreneurship
- understanding the importance of entrepreneurship for the economy
- recognizing the differences between a business idea and opportunities;
- knowledge about the characteristics of women's entrepreneurships
- knowledge about the gender-related challenges for women entrepreneurs
- the entrepreneurial mindset and developing business thinking

Practical skills and competences:

- · Market research; segmentation, targeting and positioning
- Sales and marketing e.g. product, place, price and promotion
- Developing a business plan and risk management
- Financing SME e.g. cash flow plan, break-even-calculation, potential financial resources for financing a business
- Establishing SME in terms of regulation and taxation

Upon completion of the courses, a student will have acquired a set of skills and competences in the field of entrepreneurship, as well as knowledge of the factors that affect female entrepreneurs in today 's society and economy.

5.2. Annex 2 - Dissemination Plan for Intellectual Output 2, the International Curriculum

As the project progressed, the deliverables of this intellectual output has been disseminated among relevant stakeholders, to materialize the project's intended impact. The form and level of engagement varied for stakeholders, and therefore so did the means of dissemination. The main stakeholders and means of dissemination are listed below.

Who should be reached?	How do we reach them?	Comments (e.g. main messages?)
University teachers	Email. Newsletter. Social media. Personal meetings within the universities of the partnership. Multiplier events	
University Deans and Program Directors	Email. Newsletter. Social media. Multiplier events	
University students	Email. Newsletter. Social media. Multiplier events	
Directors of vocational programs	Email. Newsletter. Social media. Multiplier events	The curriculum is intended for bachelor level studies but can be adapted to other levels.
Female entrepreneurs	Email. Newsletter. Social media. Multiplier events. Follow-up to IO1 interviews	Interviewees have been updated about the progress of the project,
Business accelerators, development banks and innovation agencies	Email. Newsletter. Multiplier events	Some are specialized in female entrepreneurship, e.g. Willa from France (https://www.hellowilla.co/)

Table 1 – Communication to stakeholders and target audience



5.3. Annex 3 - Women in the international curriculum of ifempower

SELF-EXPERIENCE GROUPS ABOUT "WOMEN & POWER"

Past research has highlighted that regardless of cultural or socioeconomic background women respond to the opportunity to take a leadership position with much greater ambivalences than men. What is more, the proportion of women among business owners all over the globe is still significantly lower than that of men. The reasons are manifold, but when taking the perspective of psychology and psychotherapy one might emphasise a specific factor, namely that women and men tend to have different identity development, which is reflected in a different attitude and approach towards power and influence.

While masculinity is socially associated with assertiveness and the pursuit of power and dominance, femininity is associated with motherhood, caring, and the world of relationships and a balancing approach. As a result of this attribution, when women assume leadership positions, they quickly become involved in an <u>internal conflict</u> with their gender role. They tend to think that they must be "female" and "male" at the same time.

Psychoanalytic self-awareness groups within the iFEMPOWER curriculum could, where possible, serve to liberate women from their potentially <u>unconscious inhibitions</u> so that they experience responsibility and leadership less ambiguous and threatening, and positively evaluate and influence the culture of leadership in their organization over the long term.

The group analysis would be a form of self-exploration, which allows in the group setting to reflect on the own life story and on the internalized social images and norms with the different experiences, attitudes and conflicts.

In dealing with herself and the group, the psychoanalytical method of free association is used to explore one's own emotional worlds, fantasies, conflicts and relational patterns on their unconscious and social dimensions in order to enable self-determined thinking and acting.

Questions that could arise in the context of self-experience, would be the following:

- What do I associate with a leadership position?
- How do I deal with phenomena of envy and competition?
- What causes the idea of profit thinking and certain thematic complexes associated with "capitalistic ideas"?
- Is a leadership position with the associated decision-relevant needs to be considered critically?



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 How does a potential leadership position influence any family-related decisions and thoughts?

These and many other questions could be raised in the context of the question posed and raise certain questions and reflections into space on the basis of a "classical" role of femininity assigned to this as a society of female identity.

This can be seen as a brief thought experiment on the topic under discussion and may give users some incentives for the subject matter to further formulate and follow up the relevant topic.

Written by Erzsébet Fanni Tóth and Petra Roscheck in April, 2019



