



# LEARNING MATERIAL

for green entrepreneurs



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# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this **learning material** is to support young Roma entrepreneurs, or youth from vulnerable communities, or anyone interested in green entrepreneurship in general by providing tools and guidelines, reinforced with knowledge and competences necessary in a dynamically entrepreneurship world. Green entrepreneurship is the activity of consciously addressing environmental and social problems and needs, and coming up with new, innovative entrepreneurial ideas to challenge them. The Green Entrepreneurs in Action (GEA) is promoting green businesses with no negative impact on the local or global environment, the community, or the economy.

We highlight the **best green practices** from social enterprises and initiatives from all countries of the project's partnership, as well as from EU, to inform and inspire on the existing practices, understand the logic and aim behind each initiative, and the challenges it addressed and encountered in their journey.

Green entrepreneurship possesses a great potential to mobilize youth to engage in efforts to achieve major social objectives, including job creation, poverty reduction, inclusion and integration. Aimed at serving the common good, green enterprises established by young people can directly contribute to the achievement of a number of Sustainable Development Goals. Hence, the GEA project seeks *for common and innovative solutions to empower young entrepreneurs* to become more competitive and capable of facing economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 crisis.

However, the core goal is to develop digital entrepreneurial skills in order to enable young Roma and non- Roma from disadvantaged communities to learn about green entrepreneurship, the latest technologies in green business and apply their knowledge in developing sustainable businesses with impact in their communities.

We have structured the material in five modules with multiple sessions and exercises to serve as a guiding toolkit to learn the basics of green entrepreneurship:

- 
- Business Modeling providing the main definitions and background of (the green) business logic;
  - New and Improved EU Financing opportunities exploring the current green financial opportunities and the main stages of setting up a business or company;
  - Content Marketing and Storytelling delving into the creation of developing a business brand and communication strategy;
  - Pitching explaining the most important features of a good pitch(ing) presentation;
  - Funding opportunities presenting the main types of funding opportunities and the steps of obtaining EU funding.

Last but not least, we have completed the material by providing further references for those interested of going more in-depth on each topic: examples, case studies, templates and toolkits necessary to each entrepreneur.

Another useful tool that you could find inside this material is a glossary with terms necessary and commonly used in the entrepreneurial world.

# Glossary of Terms

## **GREEN CONSUMER**

A type of consumer who buys green products such as ecological, organic or energy-saving products and therefore consumes fewer natural resources.

## **GREEN ECONOMY**

An economic policy to create sustainable growth while protecting the environment and promoting social justice.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

A lifelong skill that provides daily needs for the current generation while protecting the next generation's needs.

## **GREEN PRODUCT**

A product that consumers prefer because it helps to protect the environment during the manufacture, use, and disposal of the product. Generally organic, ecological, recyclable, and energy-saving products are called green products.

## **ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT**

An indicator that shows the quantity of waste that people generate while they meet their daily needs.

# module 1. Business Modelling: Green Business and Digital Transformation

Throughout this module we will learn about the green economy and the circular economy, about green business models, how to generate green business ideas, a deeper understanding of recycling and the risks of entrepreneurship, how to make a business plan and how to start a digital business, all with case studies and exercises to improve comprehension.

## CONTEXT: THE FUTURE IS GREEN (AND DIGITAL)!

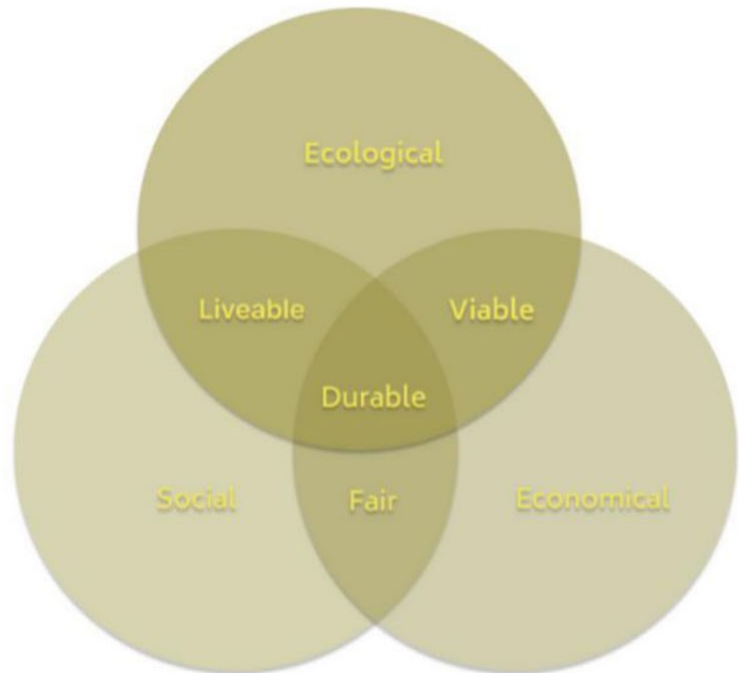
Climate change, biodiversity loss, rising inequalities are serious concerns facing humanity in the coming decades. These problems cannot be tackled separately, as they are all interconnected, whilst our current economies deplete natural resources, encourage excessive consumerism and weaken community relations (The 5 principles of the green economy, 2020). The simplest definition of sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Environmental responsibility is the most important factor that separates green companies from others. There are companies that aim to protect the environment by working towards sustainability whether it relates to purchasing, product development, manufacturing and the provision of products and services.

Green initiatives can not only help protect natural resources, but can also help reduce costs and increase efficiency while preserving resources for future generations.

The targets of the European Green Deal (no net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, economic growth decoupled from resource use, and no people and nowhere left behind) are closely linked to green businesses: recycling, reuse, use of alternative materials and renewable energy, and reducing inequalities of all kinds.

The **Green Economy** is defined as any activity that has no negative consequences for the environment, community, or economy. Low-carbon, resource-efficient, and socially inclusive organizations, whether public or private, are examples of sustainability, created to protect the environment and improve inequalities. A green economy generates wealth for everyone while-taking into account that resources are finite. It is built on three pillars: social equity, economic efficiency, and environmental sustainability.



A lot of the products we use end up cluttering landfills. Finite resources are wasted and discarded products pollute for decades to come. The most popular and sustainable solution is circular economy, defined as a model of production and consumption meant to meet environmental goals via sharing, leasing, re-using, repairing and recycling existing products and materials, thus extending the usable life of said products and materials and reducing waste at minimum levels. Circular economy is the alternative to the current linear model of production which follows a take-make-consume-throw away pattern.





Businesses that adopt the circular economy strategy modify their goods and production methods to maximize the number of recyclable materials that can be recovered for use in new products. Partnering with businesses that have particular technological know-how or who may be best equipped to utilize the materials recovered is a common aspect of this strategy. An example is Adidas's six-year alliance with Parley for the Oceans. Adidas produces their shoes and clothing using Parley's textile thread, which is made from plastic waste. Their collaboration lessens the amount of plastic garbage in the oceans across the planet. <sup>1</sup>

## Linear business models vs circular business models

	LINEAR	CIRCULAR
<b>Step plan</b>	Take-make-dispose	Reduce-reuse-recycle
<b>Focus</b>	Eco-Efficiency	Eco-Effectivity
<b>System boundaries</b>	Short term, from purchase to sales	Long term, multiple life cycles
<b>Reuse</b>	Downcycling	Upcycling, cascading and high grade recycling.
<b>Business model</b>	Focuses on products	Focuses on services

Circular economy follows three principles: eliminate waste and pollution, circulate products and materials (at their highest value) and regenerate nature. It implies a transition to renewable energies and materials, in order to increase reusability and separate economic activity from depletion of resources. Circular economy is a robust system that is beneficial for consumers, companies and for the environment. Its application would help reduce waste and pollution, avoid depletion, prevent biodiversity loss and tackle climate change (Circular economy introduction, n.d.).

[1] Atasu, Dumas and Van Wassenhove, 2021



## EXERCISE

### Exercise: Reimagine a traditional business and improve the business model to make it circular and green

	LINEAR	CIRCULAR
Step plan		
Focus		
System boundaries		
Reuse		
Business model		

**Green growth** refers to the goal of achieving economic growth and development while protecting the environment and ensuring the sustainability of natural resources in which human life relies. It is intrinsically linked to the concept of sustainable development (n.d.). Sustainable development means to improve quality of life, foster economic growth and tackle social issues as well as environmental issues, in order to achieve global prosperity (taking actions towards gender equality, water sanitation, and others).

## THE GREEN ECONOMY BUSINESS MODEL

Changes in the traditional business models are key for the **implementation of green economy and innovation**. A business model encompasses how a company creates, delivers and achieves different forms of value (economic value, social value, etc). A business model is comprised by the products and services it offers, decisions taken on customer segmentation, partnering, resources, channels, cost structure, forms of achieving financial viability and associated value to offer. <sup>2</sup>

Some key factors for the creation of a green business model are the following:

**Design for durability and reuse:** designing products with the adequate materials to facilitate physical durability, resistance to damage and wear, in order to prompt re-use and extend usable life of the product. <sup>3</sup>

**Sustainable, safe inputs:** inputs in business are the elements implied in the production process: material resources, labor, buildings and equipment, among others. An environmentally-friendly supply chain is key to a sustainable business. Eco-friendly materials or ingredients, sustainable transport and sustainable processes of production are important elements that will make a company and its products greener. <sup>4</sup>

**End of use circulation:** recycling is one of the most important and well-known environmentally-friendly practices. Re-manufacturing, repurposing, repairing and, ultimately, incineration for the production or energy are ways to further the sustainability of products.<sup>5</sup>

**Process recovery/reuse:** recovery and reuse of materials or waste in the production processes enhances sustainability of said processes. As an example, water recovery and reuse is a common green strategy. <sup>6</sup>

**Enablers** are factors that promote greener business practices. Managerial enablers, for example, refer to well defined, sustainability management policies that encompasses all activities of the company from training to decision-making. Social awareness, beliefs and values determine attitudes and behaviors inside a company, and a green culture facilitates green business. Information technology can also act as an enabler via the automatization of processes that facilitate follow-up, evaluation and implementation of eco-friendly policies and processes.<sup>7</sup>

**Accelerators:** green or circular economy can be supported through external factors such as legislation, green certifications and partnerships. For example, European Green Deal, the New Circular Economy Action Plan, the Directive on single-use plastics, and mandatory EcoDesign requirements for some industries. <sup>8</sup>

[2]Beltramello et al., 2019

[3]Design for durability - Knowledge Hub | Circle Lab, 2022

[4]Six Steps to a Sustainability Transformation, 2022

[5]Why your circular business may not be as sustainable as you think, 2022

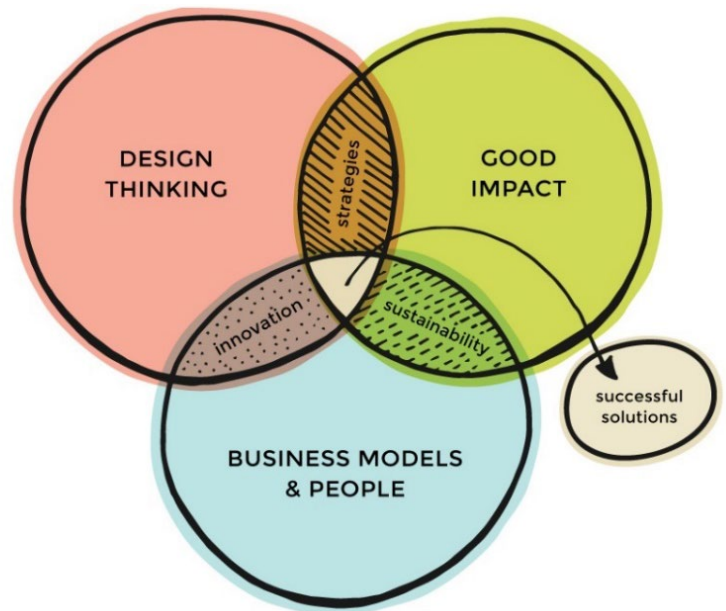
[6]Manager, 2022

[7]Jabeen, Alnuaimi and Almazrouei, 2020

## BUSINESS MODELS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND HOW TO GENERATE BUSINESS IDEAS

Key principles of the circular economy:

- **Sharing:** clients do not own a product and less waste is generated through maintenance. With sharing models of business, less resources are consumed, and the clients are not responsible for waste: the manufacturer is responsible for the goods, their maintenance and upgrading. Examples: car leasing, Bla-Bla car ride sharing
- **Fixing and maintaining:** reparations support sustainability by reducing demand for new products, extending product lifecycles or allowing for re-sale. Proper maintenance of products keeps them in a good state for use, so that they can be used and re-used for a longer period of time. Repairing in the circular economy combines economic and social benefits as well as environmental benefits, since workshops provide upskilling and training opportunities for those excluded by the job market.<sup>9</sup> Examples: technology, fashion



Testing your business idea is key for evaluating its viability in the long term:

- research and understand the market to which a product or service is dedicated, as well as identify target customers
- create a prototype product or a test service in order to get feedback from potential clients (The principles of Lean Six Sigma).
- customer pain points are specific challenges that potential customers are experiencing and the needs that drive them, and identifying those through surveys, social media listening and other channels is relevant for the company to modify its products, services and improve customer experience.<sup>10</sup>
- design thinking is a strategy to generate new ideas rooted in empathy (human centric business planning) in 5 steps: empathize, define, ideate, prototype and test.<sup>11</sup>

The brewing company Toast is a business that applied design thinking to develop a green economy-based business model. The business started in 2015 has made reducing food waste one of the easiest and most beneficial things we can all do, demonstrating that it can also be enjoyable and delectable. Toast makes premium beer using extra fresh bread to replace virgin barley and distributes all earnings to nonprofit organizations to help them alter the food system on a systemic level; see their yearly Impact Report 2018.

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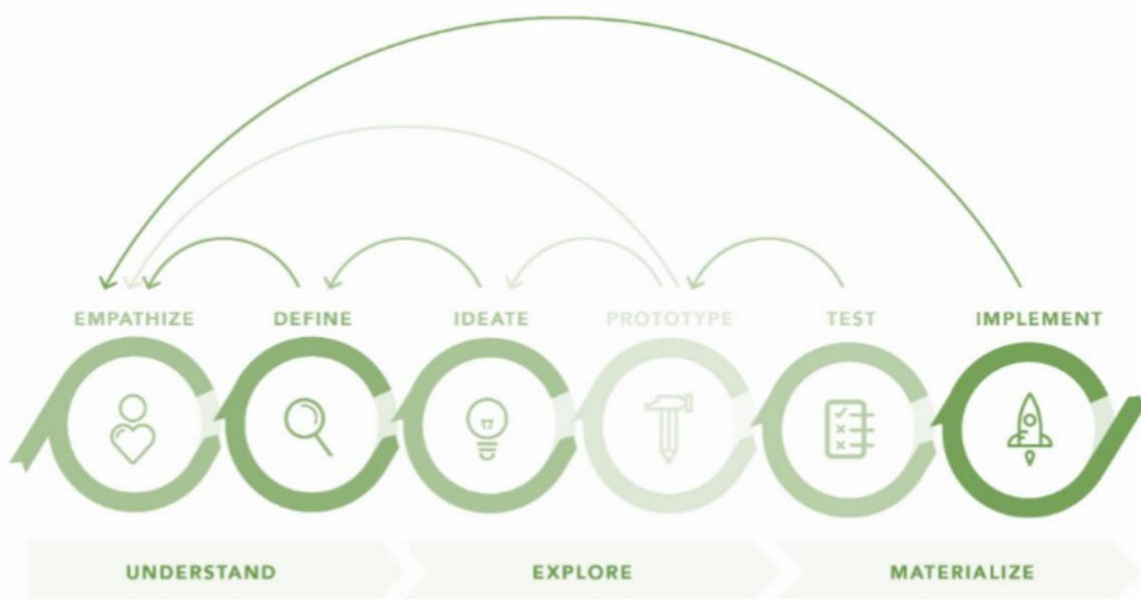
[8] Design for durability - Knowledge Hub | Circle Lab, 2022

[9] A. Rogers, Deutza and B. Ramosb, 2022

[10] Hughes, 2022

[11] Caramela, 2022

[12] Toast Beer – Eco Design Thinking – Sustainable solutions for business



DESIGN THINKING 101 NNGROUP.COM



## EXERCISE

Apply design thinking to come up with ideas for one or more of these pain points, using the table below:

- the difficulty to find affordable vegan food in small towns
- people at risk of social exclusion who have difficulties keeping up with new technologies due to their price and programmed obsolescence
- the high expenditure and waste generated by a family who was to continuously buy new clothes and diapers for their newborn child

FOLLOWING THE GIVEN EXAMPLES, CREATE A STEP-BY-STEP BUSINESS MODEL FOLLOWING THE PROPOSED GUIDELINES.			
RESEARCH	PROTOTYPE	COLLECT FEEDBACK	TEST
(RESEARCH THE IDEA, UNDERSTAND THE MARKET, IDENTIFY TARGET CUSTOMERS)	CREATE A PROTOTYPE TO GET FEEDBACK FROM CLIENTS	EVALUATE THE IDEA AND IMPROVE IT	MAKE IMPROVEMENTS AND TEST THEM

## A MORE IN-DEPTH LOOK AT RECYCLING

Recycling has well-known environmental benefits it actively works against depletion by reusing materials, and tackles pollution caused by waste and landfill, but it can also provide economic benefits. Waste management consists in the collection of residual materials and products that are no longer in use and have to be treated and dealt with.

Recycling, reusing and reducing materials are part of a process known as reverse logistics, in which a company applies these strategies in order to become eco-friendlier and more efficient. Its main aim is to add value to the product that is going to be recovered and reverses the supply chain.

Benefits of the reverse logistics:

- the fewer the materials used for production, the greater the reduction of waste and the possibility of recycling and re-using;
- requires the implementation of a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) that implies an assessment of the materials and components are evaluated from the start of the production process of the product: alternative materials are selected based on the possibility of retrieval of raw materials at the end of the life-cycle of a product;
- if adequately managed means costs-saving for the company in the stages of: supplying, disposal, inventory and transportation; can be handled by the company or outsourced to a third-party.<sup>13</sup>

Challenges<sup>14</sup> of the reverse logistics:

- technical:
  - difficulty of planning the recovery and reverse supply chain: lack of predictability of the time the products are returned by the customer; difficulty in dismantling complex shaped products;
- financial: qualifying personnel, buying equipment and outsourcing;
- principal: finding green companies along the supply chain;
- marketing: convincing clients of the benefits of recycled products.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is an umbrella term that encompasses the legal, economic, social, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities of companies regarding their involvement in the society. Environmental issues are high on the CSR priority list of most socially-responsible companies.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, including a recycling policy or introducing reverse logistics in a company is a form of Corporate Social Responsibility, where the company recognizes its consumption of resources and waste as a negative externality of their economic activity, and takes responsibility and action towards minimizing it via reusing materials, which reduces both waste and consumption.

[13] Alnuwairan, 2021

[14] D'Amico, 2021

[15] Denčić-Mihajlov and Krstic, 2019

## TAKE CALCULATED RISK: DO MARKET RESEARCH

The circular economy reduces waste, fosters innovation and creates jobs, generating a \$4.5 trillion economic opportunity. Rather than being solely economic, these innovative business concepts focus on environmental and ethical goals.<sup>16</sup> There is much scope for innovation in new business models that emphasize reuse, repair, remanufacturing and shared-use models. Transitioning to a circular economy will create (or replace) 6 million jobs by 2030. These will shift investment and employment away from production and manufacturing and towards later stages of the value chain, such as recycling, repair, rental, resale and sorting, or in new enterprises that spring up to make innovative use of secondary materials.<sup>17</sup>

The biggest opportunities for businesses associated with the shift to a circular economy are: <sup>18</sup>

- 1) **Recycling company businesses:** recycling must be a part of this new economic shift.
- 2) **Upcycling businesses:** prolonging the life of the products by developing effective procedures for collection and treatment. Examples of current solutions include: switching out plastics for other materials, engineering plastics to be more easily recyclable, and boosting collection and recycling.
- 3) **Waste to energy (WTE) businesses** convert waste materials into energy, lowering pollution and preserving resources while supplying homes and businesses with power. Such solutions are becoming increasingly in demand as the globe transitions to a circular economy and lowers waste.
- 4) **Sustainable agriculture businesses** use farming practices that have the least negative impact on the environment to produce food and other products. Such businesses typically make more money and benefit from decreased input prices, government incentives, and consumer preferences for green products.
- 5) **New industrial digital technology** that enables machines to gather and analyze huge amounts of data, allowing for quicker, more adaptable, and efficient processes to produce goods of higher quality at cheaper costs. Less energy and raw materials are needed as a result. <sup>19</sup>
- 6) **Nanomaterials and nanotechnology.** By switching to high-performance materials, which are lighter, stronger, more flexible, and have special properties like the ability to repair themselves and serve multiple purposes, as well as replace currently used materials and serve new purposes, these have made it possible to create designs that are friendly to the circular economy. <sup>20</sup>

No matter how big the opportunities are, most companies hesitate to make the change before calculating/estimating the risks. Most of them use market research to assess and manage the potential risks - identifying what could go wrong, assessing the risks that need to be addressed and implementing strategies to deal with those risks.

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[16] Anoop Patil, Seal and Ramakrishna, 2020

[17] McGinty, 2021

[18] Rooks, 2022

[19] Anoop Patil, Seal and Ramakrishna, 2020

[20] Anoop Patil, Seal and Ramakrishna, 2020

Some things to consider in risk management entrepreneurship are:

- investigate similar companies: locations, advertising, staff requirements, hours they are open and their equipment, price range of products/services, target client etc.;
- analyze the prevailing market trends: what appeared to be a popular concept over the previous few months may have been a fad. Can I identify a need that is not covered in this sector?
- be aware of your preferences and strengths as an entrepreneur: Does your kind of business fit with the market? Does it make use of your advantages? Can you fill in the gaps in your expertise with staff, partners, or consultants?
- examine the budget: What size is your financial cushion in case your financial projections show that you won't be able to collect a grant during the first year? What other income can you reasonably anticipate while you are in the implementation phase? Always encourage your partner to have a full-time job with health insurance and other benefits through their company.
- be aware of how changes in the economy may impact business: What would happen to a business in their industry if inflation increased by two points?
- write a business plan: The business plan will assist you in forming your venture, identifying your financial requirements, evaluating your competitors, and developing marketing plans.

The first step to effective risk management after starting your business is recognizing risks in all areas of your company, including management, marketing, contracts, staff, and the specific effects of your product or service on customers and the market. Calculate the likelihood of financial loss in the various failure scenarios after analyzing the risks that are inherent in your company. For market research in partner countries, visit the MRP-EURASIA website for Romania, INE for Spain, and the ESOMAR directory for Italy, Serbia and the Republic of North Macedonia.



## GETTING IT DONE: BUSINESS PLANNING

Planning a business is not an easy task. There are multiple tools designed to assist this process and keeping track of key elements that should be included in your business plan. A business plan is a document in which business ideas are defined, shaped and organized into something that can be put in practice.

**Lean Canvas** is a one-page business plan model that allows an overview of your business idea at a glance. It includes all key points summarized in an easy-to-read way, easy to keep track of and easy to modify and adapt to sudden changes and uncertainty. As a visual tool, it also facilitates providing updates and communicate progress to investors and business partners.<sup>21</sup>

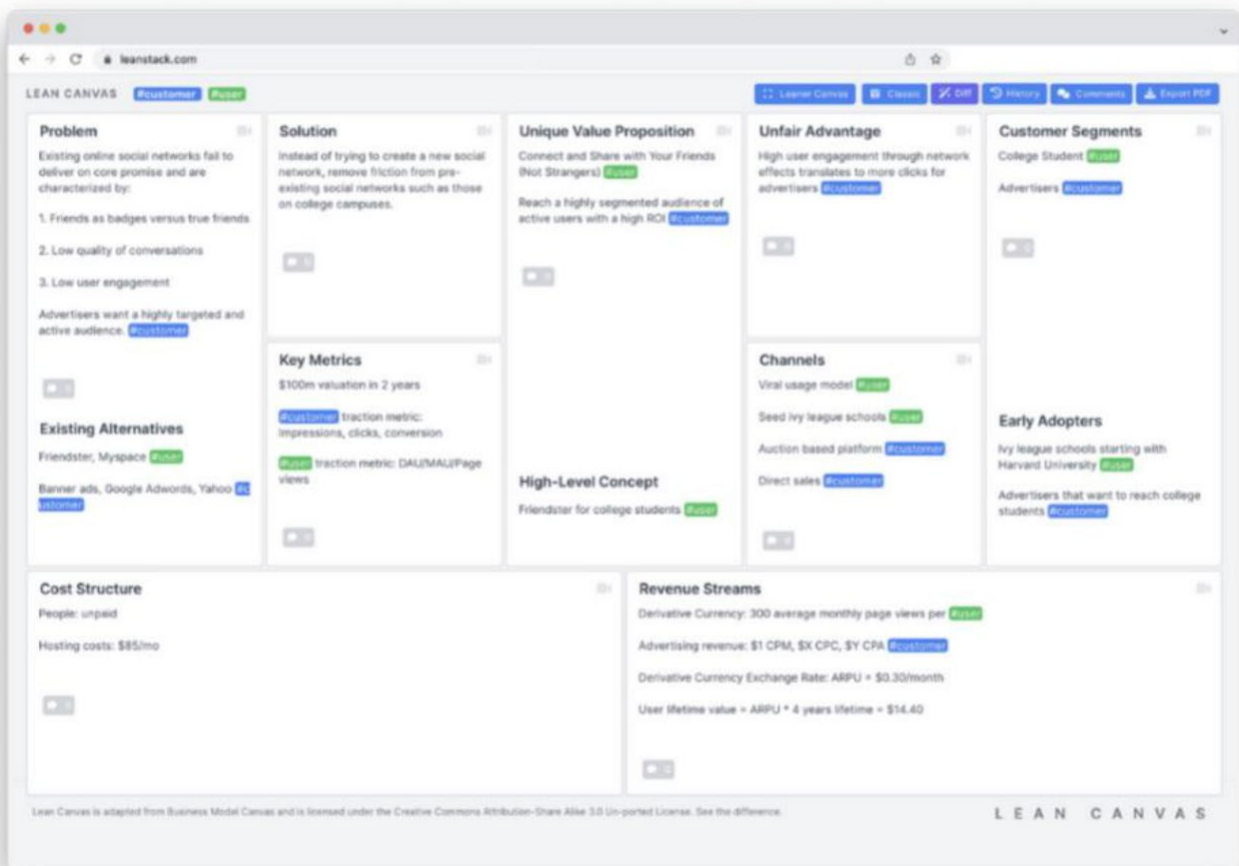
There are a series of key topics that are included in any lean canvas template, which are the building blocks of a lean canvas business plan.

1. The first block is **customer segments**: the target audience for which the product or the service result of your business is intended for.
2. The second block is **value propositions**: the explanation of how this target audience is going to benefit from a product/service offered and its value and how it is unique and differentiated from the competition.
3. The third is **channels**: which channels are going to be used to deliver your product/service? How is it going to reach the target audience?
4. **Customer relationships** is the fourth block: the ways in which the business is going to form and maintain solid relationships with customers.
5. **Revenue streams and cost structure** are other two key blocks, which define how your business is going to obtain revenue, and what are the direct and associated costs of all the economic activities to be carried out.
6. **Key resources and key activities** must also be included in the plan, to be able to grasp which are the essential assets and activities needed for the business idea to function and run efficiently.
7. **Key partnership** is the last building block: networking can provide key allies to bring a business idea to success.<sup>22</sup> All of these factors are to be analyzed and included in the business plan to understand the essentials of your business idea, its viability and the assets or the needed investments.

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[21] LEANSTACK, 2022

[22] Rice, 2022



Following the typical structure of a business plan and adding specific dimensions for the implementation of green goals or strategies, a template for green business planning can be created. Here we present an index of contents to be included in a green business plan:<sup>23</sup>

1. Executive Summary: a summary with key information about the business, its activity, its potential and investments needed
2. Business description: an in-depth description of the economic activity to be carried out, and the company to be created.
3. Vision statement: a statement of the company's vision and objectives in regards to its activity
4. Mission statement: a statement of the company's intentions and goals.
5. Market analysis: definition of the business' target and the market for which the products/services are intended to.
6. Management and organization: how will the company be structured and organized in terms of personnel.
7. Service/Product line and manufacturing: where and how will the products/services be manufactured and what resources and means are necessary for production
8. Sales and advertisement: an advertising and promotion plan
9. Financial needs: a description of the cost structure and financing needs of the company
10. Financial projection: objectives and goals set in relation to revenue, costs and profit at the short to long term.
11. Annex: relevant documentation attached to the plan.

Points 3 and 4 provide room for the declaration of an eco-friendly vision and intention, and this will also permeate all of the steps, since green business implies a rather holistic understanding of environmental awareness as being included in all steps of the process.

[23] Startupback, 2018

# Lean canvas model green business



**SMART Goals** a vital part for any project, including a business venture, and is a strategy that provides structure and traceability to your objectives, setting milestones and schedules to maintain a right track. SMART stands for:<sup>24</sup>

- **Specific:** clear, exact objective for what you are planning to do
- **Measurable:** that there is a means to track progress with specific metrics, which should be decided in advance
- **Attainable:** they are possible within a specific situation or context, but that doesn't mean they shouldn't be challenging
- **Relevant:** every objective, including short-term ones, should be important for long term and end goals
- **Time-Bound:** there is a set, realistic deadline for the completion of said goal.

**SWOT Analysis** is a tool to analyze and identify a company's position in the market and develop a business planning accordingly. It stands for: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. It analyzes internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats) through a fact-based analysis, being able to provide realistic data points, new ideas and fresh perspectives.<sup>25</sup>

[24] Valley First, n.d.

[25] Kenton, 2021



## Hands-on activity: Launching a digital business

A business model that uses digital technologies to enhance various parts of an organization may be referred to as a "digital business model" and includes everything from the company's client acquisition strategy to the goods and services it offers. When digital technology serves to improve a company model's value proposition, it is considered to be digital. Some models of digital businesses are:

- 1) **Free-model (ad-supported)** relies on and is financed by advertisements from websites like Facebook and Google. The purpose of this business strategy is to provide a service without charge, making the customer the final product. The online user gives the business useful data that makes it simple to display tailored adverts.
- 2) **Freemium model** gives customers free access to a product's basic version. This version might be rather constrained, but if the customer wants more features, they can upgrade and pay for a premium version (ex. Spotify)
- 3) **On-demand model** alludes to a virtual good or service like streaming video from websites like Apple TV or Amazon Prime Video for a set amount of time (ex. the freelance and gig economy portal Fiverr)
- 4) **E-commerce model** is one of the most well-known business ideas on the internet nowadays (ex. Amazon)
- 5) **Marketplace model** alludes to a two-sided market where buyers and sellers do business on a third-party platform (ex. product-based eBay and Etsy, service-based Uber)
- 6) **Digital Ecosystem Model** is currently one of the most intricate yet reliable digital business structures: through a variety of services on numerous platforms, they take advantage of the customer through the "vendor lock-in" effects
- 7) **Sharing Model / Access-Over-Ownership Model** revolves around "sharing," but in a work-related manner: users can pay for something for a set period of time without truly owning it (ex renting a vehicle, an apartment, or even equipment for industry)
- 8) **Model of experience:** adding worth to things that would be impossible without the use of digital technologies. (ex. Tesla)
- 9) **Model of subscription:** the user obtains access, updates, services, etc. on a monthly or annual basis (ex Office 365 and Netflix)
- 10) **Model of open source:** the product / service is accessible for download, use, and community contribution worldwide. It spreads swiftly since it is free and has a large community of contributors
- 11) **Model for generating hidden revenue:** gathering and analyzing the data may lead to the emergence of new value streams.<sup>26</sup>

[26] 11 of the Most Popular Digital Business Models and Strategies to Create a Successful One in 2022, 2022

# module 2. New and improved EU financing

The module aims to equip learners with knowledge and understanding of the diverse sources of funding for green business, provide them with the basics of the funding stages of a business, and key tips for getting their idea funded.

## WHERE TO GET FUNDING FOR YOUR GREEN BUSINESS

This section briefly presents the diverse sources of funding available for green business, including funding programmes/grants (EU and other), scholarships, competitions and incubators, small business loans, crowdfunding, government subsidies and green angel investors.

## FUNDING PROGRAMS / GRANTS

Our environment is constantly changing, and the environmental and climate challenges are increasing. We are facing every day the consequences of the environmental changes more significantly than before. All these environmental problems, raise the need of awareness and actions that need to be taken.<sup>27</sup>

With the adaptation of the European Green Deal and the 2021 – 2027 program which is a new growth strategy for Europe, the European Union undertakes the transition to a greener future through funding green projects that tackle various of environmental issues.<sup>28</sup> The following list contain all the support mechanisms 2021-2027 as part of the financial resources for eco-innovation with the NextGenerationEU.<sup>29</sup>

### European Programmes with EU funding for green projects (European Commission, 2021)

#### 1. Horizon Europe

<https://eucalls.net/blog/horizons-europe-calls-environment>

#### 2. LIFE Programme

<https://eucalls.net/blog/eu-life-programme>

#### 3. Innovation Fund (IF)

[https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/funding-climate-action/innovation-fund\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/funding-climate-action/innovation-fund_en)

#### 4. Eucalls

<https://eucalls.net/>

[27] Rinkesh, 2022

[28] Eucalls 2021, European Commission, 2021

[29] European Commission, 2021

## SCHOLARSHIPS

The environmental challenges and the growing importance of sustainable development have changed the economy. This is paralleled in the academia, leading to an increasing number of green scholarships offered to interested students. Many scholarship grants support study programmes in order to provide individuals with the skills and qualification they need: skills in the field of environmental and renewable energy, low carbon, sustainable food, farming, and clean growth.<sup>30</sup> You can find in the following table some suggestions for finding opportunities for young international entrepreneurs and scholarship opportunities across Europe for international students.<sup>31</sup>

### Top 5 EU Scholarship for International Entrepreneurs (Institute of Entrepreneurship Development, 2022)

#### 1. European Development Days (EDD) Young Leaders Program 2020

The programme invites seventeen young individuals each year to present their potential solution to the world and give them the opportunity to visit Brussels and meet EU leaders.

#### 2. Young Entrepreneur Scholarship

The programme is an initiative by the IE University, and students can take part in business start-up projects. The scholarship covers almost 50% of the tuition fees.

#### 3. International Tech Hub Network Go Global Africa 2020

Students get complete financial coverage during their studies, including accommodation, travel and meals. Total of fifteen small business start-ups from Africa will be selected.

#### 4. Heinrich Boll Foundation Scholarships

The Heinrich Boll Foundation is open for EU and non-EU students to enroll in Master and PhD programs at different universities, including programs on entrepreneurship.

#### 5. DAAD Scholarships in Germany 2020-2021

The DAAD scholarship covers the full-tuition entrepreneurship scholarship. This scholarship is supporting over 100,000 students for postgraduate courses.

## COMPETITIONS AND INCUBATORS

Business incubators are organizations geared toward speeding up the growth and the success of start-up and early-stage companies. They're often a good path to capital from angel investors, state governments, economic development coalitions and other investors.<sup>32</sup> In addition to offering free workspace and advice, and facilitating access to investors and mentorship, some business incubators can issue capital in the form of loans. The table below presents the pros and cons of business incubators:<sup>33</sup>

[30] University of Derby, 2022

[31] Institute of Entrepreneurship Development, 2022

[32] Entrepreneur, 2022

[33] Accion Opportunity Fund

PROs	CONs
Provide a free or low-cost workspace Provide mentorship, expertise, influence and sometimes capital Offer business development programming, ex. workshops and panel discussions Provide administrative support and production equipment Support the alignment of focus and growth	Not all incubators are equal: some provide better benefits than others The application process might be competitive Require submission of a detailed business plan and disclosure of all business activities The whole process might take 1 to 2 years and contain a lot of trainings and workshops

## SMALL BUSINESS LOANS

Small business loans have lower interest rates than other loans and represent a good start up option. From national banks to friendly credit unions, financial offers can be provided in the easiest and fastest way. <sup>34</sup>

## CROWDFUNDING

Crowdfunding is the financing strategy to fund a business or a project by the contribution of a “crowd” rather than one or two major investors. This strategy is usually used by start-ups and small businesses to have cash flow at the beginning of their journey. While there are some risks related to crowdfunding, there are also lots of benefits and a variety of crowdfunding options. <sup>35</sup>

Successful crowdfunding platforms for kick off businesses are:

- [Kickstarter](#)
- [GoFundMe](#)
- [LendingClub](#)
- [Indiegogo](#)

Donation-based funding	Contributors give money without receiving anything in return
Equity funding	Backers get shares of the business
Debt-based funding	Donors are repaid with interest
Reward-based funding	Contributors receive tokens, products or services in return for their donations

[32] Business Spirit News, 2021

[33] Johnson, 2022

## GREEN ANGEL INVESTORS

One-time investments are usually provided by the angel investors to help the start-up of the business. Angel investments are more risky forms of funding and most of the time have access funds available by looking for higher rate of return. Unlike venture capitalist, angel investors usually use their own money.<sup>36</sup>

### WHAT IS AN ANGEL INVESTOR?

Check this video to find more:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cb-6XRacoEU&ab\\_channel=InvestorTradingAcademy](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cb-6XRacoEU&ab_channel=InvestorTradingAcademy)



## GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES

The consequences of climate changes have come with urgency to addressing of the need of the governments to actively promote sustainable development by certain funding options.<sup>37</sup> Funds are usually distributed on different levels: from local, to national and European level. It is crucial to know where to look for funding opportunities and to follow entities which offer entrepreneurship funds: governments which most of the time have the most comprehensive database of funds. Nevertheless, there are many non-profit organizations, institutions of higher learning and corporate entities that offer grants and assistance of small businesses likewise. The form of the fund might be a as a grant, a loan or a leg up competing in a challenging business environment.<sup>38</sup>

[36] Ganti, 2022

[37] Eco Minset, 2022

[38] CO, 2020



## HOW TO GET FUNDING FOR YOUR GREEN BUSINESS

This section elaborates the typical funding stages of a business, including: pre-seeding, seeding, rounds A, B and C funding, and incorporates key tips on getting funding for green business ideas, such as embracing networking, partnership building and research.

### FUNDING STAGES

The first two stages, pre-seeding and seeding represent the “birth” stage of an enterprise: from the conception of the business idea to a rooted business. The financial support is a support for the seed to grow with the given revenue and the business strategy as well as the dedication of the investors, the company will eventually growth further <sup>39</sup>

#### Pre-seed funding



The “pre-seed” stage is the foundation and the earliest stage of the funding of a new company. It refers to the operations off the ground and the company founders. Most of the time and in most cases “pre-seed” funders are the founders themselves, or the closest ones that support the business idea.

#### Seed funding



The official money that the business venture raises is the “seed funding”. The analogy to the “seed funding” is the root breaking through the seed in order to become a potential “stable tree” in the future.

In order to get the initial public offering (IPO) some businesses need to complete various rounds, known as Series A, B, and C, to get the initial investment. In order for the investors to put their money into the business or company the allowance of equity or ownership is needed. The figure below shows the process of passing through each stage. <sup>40</sup>

[39] Reiff, 2022

[40] Nathan, 2022



## KEY APPROACHES FOR GETTING FUNDING

Useful advice for getting funded as a future entrepreneur: <sup>41</sup>

- Embrace networking with other green business entrepreneurs/ other green organizations working with or developing green businesses / incubators / accelerators
- Find out about the funding sources other green business/ other green organizations work with or develop green businesses / incubators / accelerators with
- Explore opportunities for partnership building

Perform research and support your business idea with solid data.



Thinking of your green business idea search for and make a sketch plan of the funding from the pre-seed stage to the growth stage.

# module 3. Content Marketing & Storytelling

The module aims to equip learners with knowledge and practical skills of developing a social media strategy and brand building strategy in concordance with the principles of green marketing. It also introduces tools for developing content marketing and using digital ecosystems.

## PRINCIPLES OF GREEN MARKETING

Green or environmental marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment.<sup>42</sup> The 4 P's of the marketing mix represent the best known and most popular approach to building a marketing strategy. According to this model, the marketing mix is the result of the combination of four marketing decision levers, called the 4 P's: PRODUCT, PRICE, PLACEMENT, PROMOTION.

Green marketing also referred to as environmental marketing refers to the creation of **environmentally sustainable products**, support for environmentally conscious entities and entities at the forefront of eco-friendly actions, emissions abatement, and awareness in production. These terms are used to identify advertising and communication actions that promote the green aspect of a company's products and services or policies.

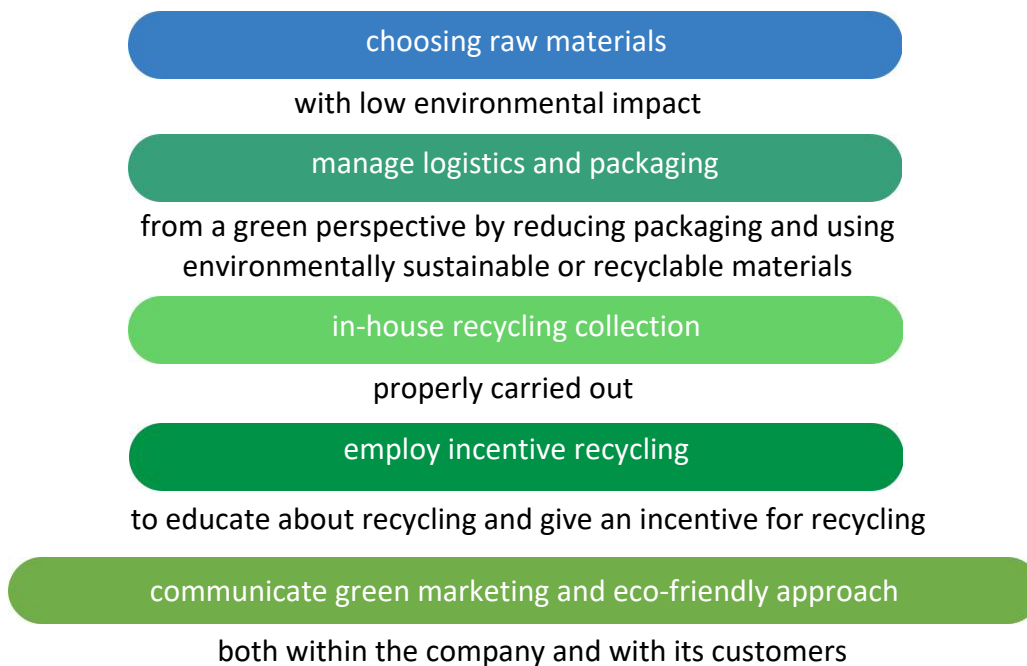
The green marketing mix takes a cue from the traditional 4 P's, adding the element "green" to each of them:<sup>43</sup>

- **Green Product:** products should be made from recyclable materials, and meet the criteria of environmental sustainability;
- **Green Price** takes into account the benefits that the sustainable product gives to the community and the production efficiency, establishing a fair price;
- **Green Placement:** product distribution should be done in such a way that logistics are managed by reducing transport emissions;
- **Green Promotion:** communication around the brand and what it markets must induce consumers to be sensitive and responsible to the environment, and overcome environmental risks.

[42] Polonsky M. J., 1994

[43] Moro E, 2015

Green Marketing Actions are the practical steps to take in order to switch from theory to practice:



## THE TARGET AUDIENCE

The green consumer is the consumer concerned about the impact of his/her choices on the environment. Concerns related to the environment are evident in the increasingly environmentally conscious marketplaces. Over the years, a growing majority of consumers have realized that their purchasing behavior had a direct impact on many ecological issues. While shopping, the green consumer considers buying ecologically compatible products and growing numbers are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products.<sup>44</sup>

A lot of research has been carried out to study the green consumer more, but no significant correlation has been found between age and environmental attitudes/behavior, the gender and the level of education. However, in relation to the matter of interests and opinions about political questions, there is a perception that, in general, environmental themes are part of a 'liberal' political agenda. Some studies suggest that individuals with a liberal political background are more likely to display a strong commitment to the green movement, in contrast to those with more conservative political views.<sup>45</sup> Studies have been done to segment the green consumer and one of the classifications identified three types of such consumers, as described below.

### Segment one: The Eco-Chic Consumer

The consumer in this segment does not care much about environmental impact, but cares a lot about their perceived image as "green". It has a massive presence on social media and shares content to show this sustainable and responsible side of them.

To reach this type of target audience, the product must be stylish and environmentally friendly and the promotion of the products should consider the coolness factor.

[44] Gupta S, 2013

[45] Paco et al, 2009

### Segment two: The economizer

This type of consumer is very conscious about money and is focused on saving them, thus they compare various products and prices to see which one is more convenient. For example, they might consider changing their heating system to have a more efficient one, even though the costs would be higher initially, but they would save money later on.

The promotional messages should focus on the long-term financial impact of buying a product and on their smart capability of making such a good choice.

### Segment three: The idealist

The idealists are the true green consumers: they go green because it is the right thing to do for the environment and for the future generation. They believe in the green movement and all their actions speak on behalf of this ideology. They are willing to pay a higher price for sustainable products. They will do everything possible to make the world a better place to live and they usually are active volunteers and connected with the community.

The promotion of green products for this segment is rather simple: simple messages are sufficient, but the impact the product will have on the environment must be clearly communicated.



## EXERCISE

### PERSONA CANVAS

The persona canvas can be used to give a customer segment a face and a name and make it easier to step into their shoes. Personas make talking about customers and their characteristics more tangible and concrete and easier to refer back to a pattern of characteristics. Personas make it possible to create and share mental models and have a common language about several customer types.

Using the image below develop a persona for an environmentally friendly energy production business or a green business of your choice.

**NEGATIVE TRENDS**  
Negative trends from the environment

**POSITIVE TRENDS**  
Positive trends from the environment

**HEADACHES**  
Professional and work related issues

**OPPORTUNITIES**  
Professional and work related positive outcomes

**FEARS**  
Personal issues

**NEED**  
What does this person really want?

**HOPES**  
Personal goals and hopes

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ROLE \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTIONNAIRE

Another tool that could help to reach the target audience is the questionnaire. It could be sent through social media, e-mail and word-of-mouths. The more people fill in the questionnaire, the more accurate the sample will be (See annex “Questionnaire”).

Using the questionnaire in the Annex think about building a customer segment for recycled and upcycled home pieces of furniture.

## BRAND BUILDING

The term brand building refers to all operations concerning the building of a brand that is recognizable and considered trustworthy by users and customers.

Brand building operations include building the actual brand by:

- Choosing a NAME
- Creating a LOGO
- Payoff DESIGN
- Setting and writing the MISSION and VISION



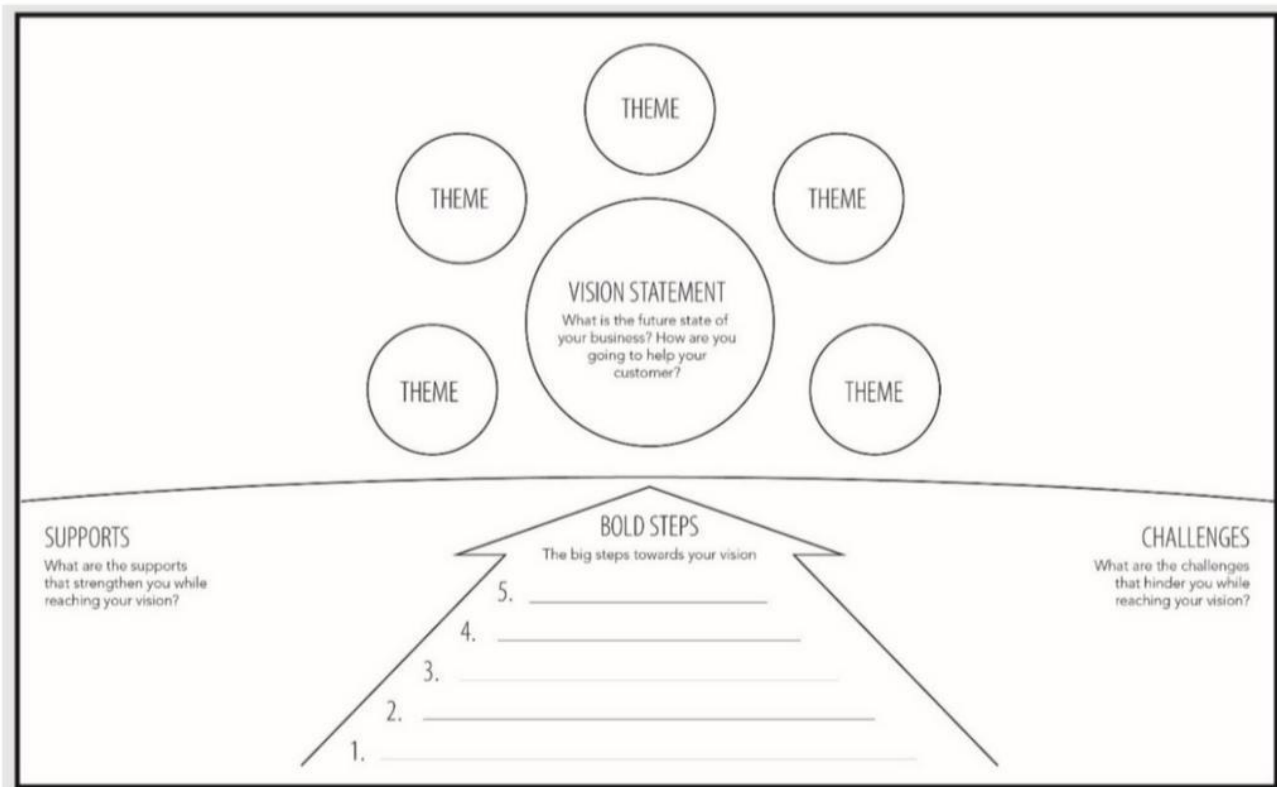
## EXERCISE

A good brand should create an emotional bond with customers, obviously associated with positive emotions, make the product recognizable and differentiate it from those of competitors, create trust and credibility toward the brand itself, and ultimately motivate potential customers to buy the product or turn to the company's services.

The vision canvas will help you co-design the vision as well as the 5 bold steps to achieve that vision. Additionally, using this tool, your team will be able to clarify what supports your vision, what challenges your vision, and what opportunities are created in working toward your vision. <sup>46</sup>

Using the VISION CANVAS template below develop a vision statement for a green business in recycling or a business of your choice.

[46] <https://www.designabetterbusiness.tools/tools/5-bold-steps-canvas>



## CONTENT MARKETING

Content marketing is the set of techniques aimed at creating and sharing textual and visual content related to a brand or a product. However, there is no one-size-fits-all template for a content marketing plan; it needs to be tailored to each specific goal and target audience.

Key elements to consider before creating a content marketing plan are the following:

- What's your product?
- What's your audience?
- How you would like to present your product: using photos, videos, stories ...?
- Which channels you would like to use: social media, Website, Fliers ...?
- Key words

Keywords are important to allow search engines to find the content of website pages. Keyword is a term that is used to refer to the words and phrases that people enter into a search engine to find specific information that they are looking for. Important to notice is that the selection of the keywords is related to the audience: it shows what is important for them to use.

Beside there are some examples of "green" keywords: ecological, green, Ecofriendly, biodegradable etc.

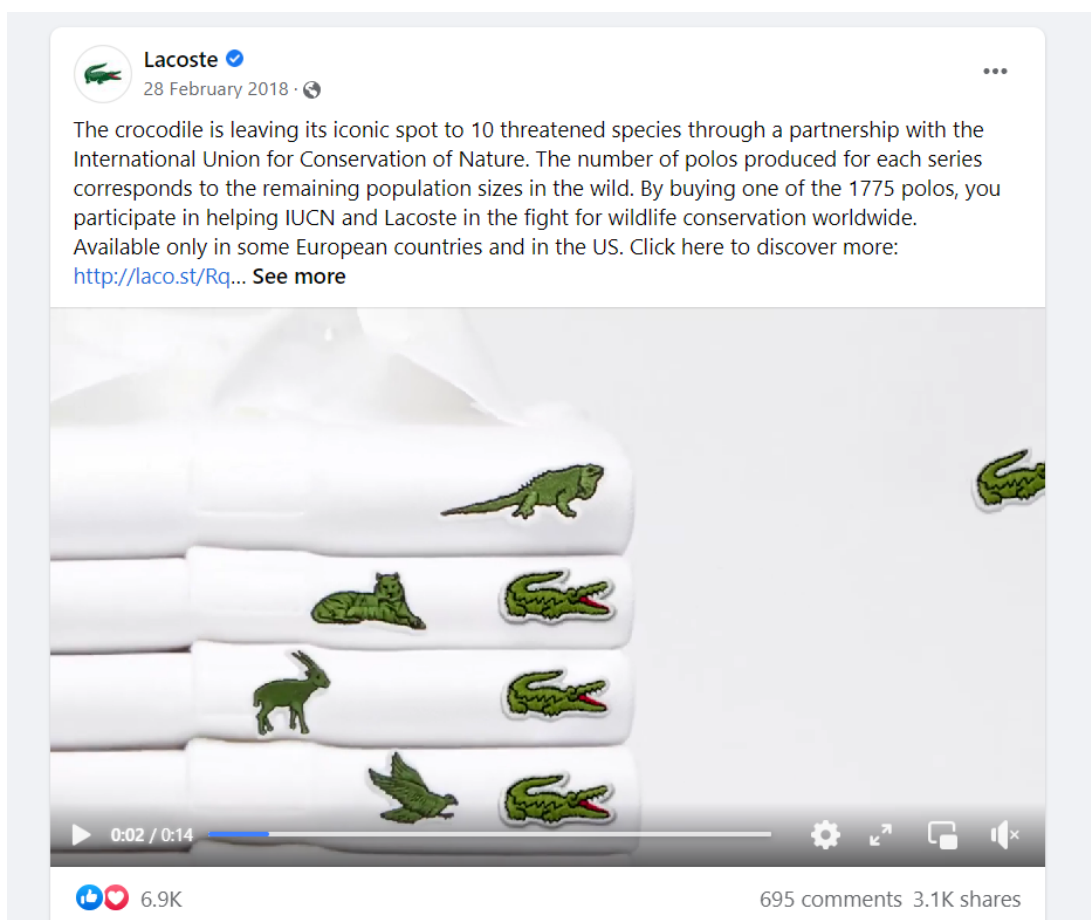


## Same campaign, different channels

One of the successful communication campaigns was the one of Lacoste, launched in 2018, called "Save Our Species". The French brand switched its famous crocodile for 10 endangered species to raise awareness and advocate for nature conservation. Proceeds of the limited-edition polos went to the International Union for Conservation of Nature. A total of 1,175 polos were sold representing rare reptiles, birds and mammals.

Lacoste partnered with a great organization and helped raise awareness for these 10 endangered species; moreover, they donated the profits. The campaign was launched on the International Day for Biological Diversity. The communication was declined differently on the 3 most popular social media, using a different communicative tone depending on the target audience using these platforms (see captions of the three social media below).

## FACEBOOK



The screenshot shows a Facebook post from the official Lacoste page, dated 28 February 2018. The post text reads: "The crocodile is leaving its iconic spot to 10 threatened species through a partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature. The number of polos produced for each series corresponds to the remaining population sizes in the wild. By buying one of the 1775 polos, you participate in helping IUCN and Lacoste in the fight for wildlife conservation worldwide. Available only in some European countries and in the US. Click here to discover more: <http://laco.st/Rq...> See more". Below the text is a video player showing a stack of white Lacoste polo shirts. Each shirt features a different green animal illustration: a crocodile, a lizard, a cat, a rabbit, a bird, and another crocodile. The video player shows a progress bar at 0:02 / 0:14. At the bottom of the post, there are 6.9K likes and 695 comments, with 3.1K shares.



TWITTER

**Lacoste** @LACOSTE

The crocodile is leaving its iconic spot to 10 threatened species through a partnership with the @IUCN. Help us fight for wildlife conservation worldwide. Click here to discover more: [laco.st/RqCjGjTL](https://laco.st/RqCjGjTL) #LacosteSaveOurSpecies



745.9K views 0:02 / 0:14

#LacosteSaveOurSpecies  
A limited-edition polo collection where threatened species hold the crocodile's spot. Follow @lacoste for more.

3:30 PM · Feb 28, 2018 · Twitter Media Studio

5,804 Retweets 1,053 Quote Tweets 11.2K Likes

INSTAGRAM

**Lacoste** @LACOSTE

The crocodile is leaving its iconic spot to 10 threatened species through a partnership with the @IUCN. Help us fight for wildlife conservation worldwide. Click here to discover more: [laco.st/RqCjGjTL](https://laco.st/RqCjGjTL) #LacosteSaveOurSpecies



745.9K views 0:02 / 0:14

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3:30 PM · Feb 28, 2018 · Twitter Media Studio

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EXERCISE

Chris Lake <sup>47</sup> is the author of The Content Strategy <sup>48</sup> Canvas article in which he presents the tool as a real, flexible grid to help content marketers get their bearings, know where they are at and what they are forgetting to focus on, whenever they want to start on the chart.



Using the CONTENT STRATEGY CANVA TEMPLATE above design a plan for an eco-friendly brand of household cleaning product line or a business of your choice.

## CONTENT SOURCE WEBSITES

Knowing reliable websites and source of information is necessary to have a strong brand image and to keep the audience engaged. Check some of our recommendations below.



## DIGITAL ECOSYSTEMS

A **digital ecosystem** is a group of interconnected information technology resources that can function as a unit. Digital ecosystems are mostly made up of suppliers, customers, trading partners, applications, third-party data service providers and all respective technologies. Interoperability is the key to the ecosystem's success.<sup>49</sup>

The digital ecosystem can be summarized in three areas: Owned Media, channels that are exclusively played by the company; Paid Media, purchased media services; and Earned Media, such as Word-of-Mouth or viral effects. Each of these areas plays one or more roles in the media strategy.

[47] Econsultancy, 2019, Chris Lake: <https://econsultancy.com/author/chris-lake/>

[48] Lake C, 2016

[49] Brush K, n.d.

# Media Strategy

## PAID MEDIA

- paid advertising space (ex: Facebook Ads) that allows the ad to reach a large number of people.
- It is the medium most similar to traditional advertising in mass media but referred to digital spaces such as social media.

## OWNED MEDIA

- media or channels owned by a brand (website, blog, newsletter, landing page), through which it communicates with the public, users, or those who have subscribed to a service
- company exclusively manages the publication
- the brand proposes its own content
- the company talks about its products, brand, divulge topics related to the company or products, creating an editorial calendar with topics suitable for people interested in the brand

## EARNED MEDIA

- results from the outcome of several factors: a good advertising campaign, well-distributed content, optimal customer experience, and viral content (reviews, mentions,...)

## TOOLS TO CREATE CONTENT FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Canva is an online image editing tool. It allows to create graphics from ready-made templates or with custom dimensions. This visual editing tool can be useful for editing photos, producing image promotional content, and creating custom graphics with logos to upload to social media. It is also a suitable tool for those<sup>49</sup> who are unfamiliar with making graphics.

Here is a useful tutorial to start using Canva: <https://youtu.be/un50Bs4BvZ8>

Filmora is a video editing tool that allows to create and insert dynamic and animated titles, subtitles and text effects, dialogue headers and comics, etc. into your video. Like Canva, this tool can also be used by those approaching video editing for the first time.

Here is a useful tutorial to start using Filmora: <https://youtu.be/c1bm-pSVLMY>

Website Content Management System [CMS]: WordPress is the easiest and most popular tool for creating your own website or blog. WordPress is an open-source content management system which means that anyone can use or modify WordPress software for free. A content management system is basically a tool that makes it easy to manage important aspects of your website, such as content, without the need to know anything about programming. The end result is that WordPress makes building a website accessible to anyone, even non-developers. WordPress powers over 43.3% of all existing websites on the Internet.

Here is a useful tutorial to start using Wordpress: [https://youtu.be/B4MXA\\_yj8ol](https://youtu.be/B4MXA_yj8ol)

## CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

**Social Media Strategy** is the planning of the activity that a company will have to carry out on official social channels following defined objectives. It is an integrated and coordinated strategy, since the presence on a social platform will have to take into account and be aligned with that adopted on other channels, social and otherwise. A social media strategy is a **document** outlining your social media goals, the tactics you will use to achieve them and the metrics you will track to measure your progress.

While designing the social media strategy it is useful to take into account the following steps:

### Step 1. Consider answering the following question and define the following elements

- **SMART Goals** [Specific Measurable Attainable Relevant Time-bound] – What would you like to achieve?
- **Target** [Age, Location, average income, Typical job title or industry, Interests] – Keep in mind that this is the target on social media, that could be different from your product audience
- **Contents** – What would you like to share?
- **Channels** - Which channels are you going to use?
- **Time** - When are you going to share?

### Step 2. Competitor analysis

A **competitive analysis** allows understanding who the competition is and what they are doing well or not so well – What do your competitors do? What does work for them?

### Step 3. Set up accounts and improve profiles









Decide which channels you will use, and create a profile – remember that it is your shop window!

### Step 4. Create a social media content calendar

To give a consistent brand image, it is necessary to create a quality editorial plan.

This includes the content to be published, the timing, and the channels to be used.

Social media canvas

<p><b>Goal</b> Write what success looks like for you.</p> 	<p><b>Content Topics</b> Jot down a few key categories you can post around.</p> 	<p><b>Team</b> Pick who will coordinate.</p> 
<p><b>Channels</b> Select which channels you want to leverage.</p> 	<p><b>Content Format</b> Identify what post formats your users prefer.</p> 	<p><b>Budget</b> Outline your spending.</p> 
<p><b>Rhythm</b> Plan when you will post on social media.</p> 	<p><b>Content Tone</b> Choose a tone to create the feeling users want.</p> 	

Social Media Canvas | © Orange Cube Group | orangecube.com

## TARGETED ADVERTISING

Targeted advertising is a type of paid online advertising in which advertisers designate certain audience characteristics that they would like to reach with an ad campaign. Social media (Facebook, Instagram) allow to target the audience in an easy way. Pretty much any consumer trait can be targeted including demographic information such as: <sup>50</sup>

- Race
- Age group
- Educational background
- Generational information
- Sex
- Income
- Religion

## TARGETING ADS ON FACEBOOK

Facebook Audience Insights gives you aggregate information about two groups of people—people connected to your page and people on Facebook—so you can create content that resonates and easily find more people like the ones in your current audience. Facebook will show automatically the ads to the audience that could find them pertinent.

How to create a targeting Ads on Facebook: <https://adespresso.com/guides/facebook-ads-beginner/demographic-targeting/>

## CREATING GOOGLE ADS

Google Ads is the tool, provided by Google, to plan advertising campaigns on Google's network of partner sites or for campaigns on the search network.

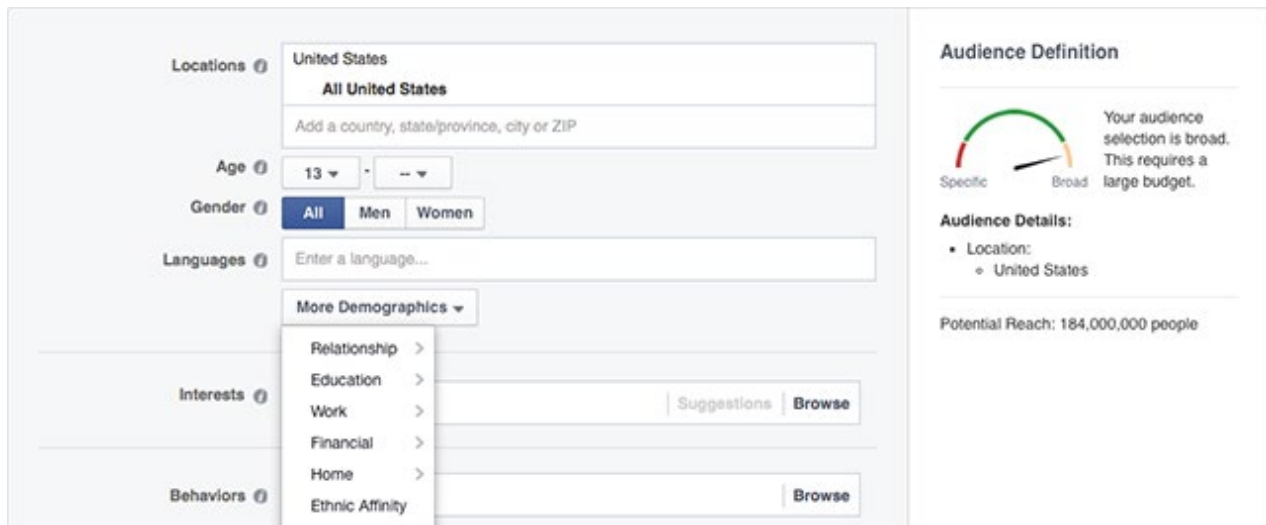
Ad ranking is determined by five factors:

- Budget available for the campaign: the budget is scaled every time a user clicks the ad (pay per click) or views it (pay per view)
- The quality of your ads and landing page: relevance and usefulness Minimum
- quality thresholds of ad ranking
- Search context: geographic location at the time of the search, the type of device used, other ads and search results displayed on the page
- ad extensions - additional information [phone number, links to pages...]<sup>51</sup>

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[50] Wess Sydney, 2022

[51] [https://ads.google.com/intl/it\\_it/home/](https://ads.google.com/intl/it_it/home/)

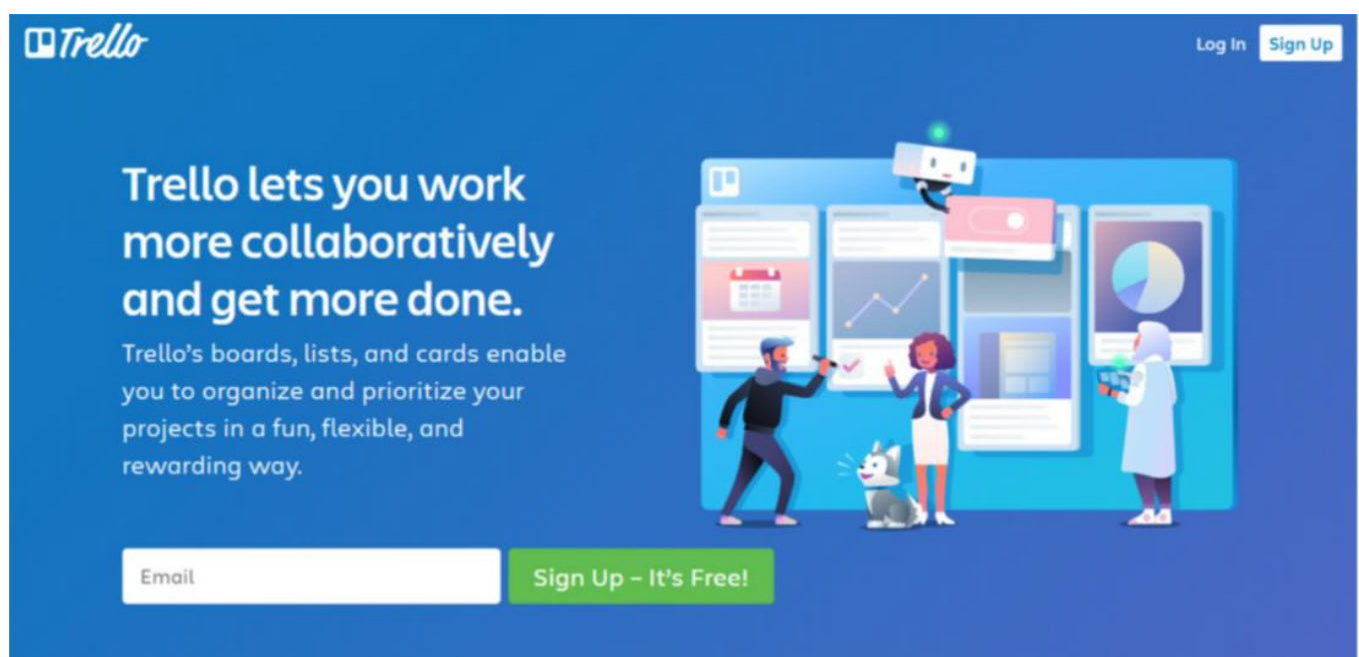


How to create a search campaign: <https://www.lodgify.com/blog/google-adwords-tutorial-search-campaign/>

## LANDING PAGES

In digital marketing, a landing page is a standalone web page, created specifically for a marketing or advertising campaign. It is the place where a visitor “lands” after they click on a link in an email, or ads from Google, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter, etc.

Unlike web pages, which typically have many goals and encourage exploration, landing pages are designed with a single focus or goal, known as a call to action [CTA]. For this reason, landing pages are a good option for increasing the conversion rates of your marketing campaigns and lowering the cost of acquiring a lead or sale.



## STORYTELLING

Storytelling is a methodology that uses narrative as a means of telling a story. It is possible to describe corporate storytelling as the „art of using narrative schemes and models in order to communicate the image of a brand and its products“. Each form of narration has its own structure that blends rationality and emotionality as well as fiction within it.

An effective story involves, excites, inspires: it is not difficult to understand how high the potential of storytelling is for the purposes of business promotion and sharing values with potential customers.

How do you do that?

Think about what, among the activities you deal with, is able to fascinate your audience, how to impress a positive memory to a reader, how to guide the potential customers to action.

Starting from the classic schemes of definition of the narrative model we can say that all stories should have a development that, from a starting situation, leads the reader to recognize the existence of a problem to be solved or a challenge to overcome, with a character - the protagonist / hero - who works to overcome them in the name of the set of values he embodies; the culminating moment of the story resolves, positively or negatively, this tension and the reader can derive a moral from this process.

Thus, in order to produce a concrete effect in your audience, storytelling must respect certain communicative functions: the conative one, linked to persuasion and the call to action; the poetic one, to draw attention to the form of the story; that effort, connected to maintaining contact between narrator and interlocutor in relation to the chosen channel.<sup>52</sup>

Translated into marketing terms, the hero's path is that of yours brand; your brand is the protagonist, which tries to solve, thanks to what it is able to offer, an adverse situation determined by the presence of a real problem, arousing an emotion.

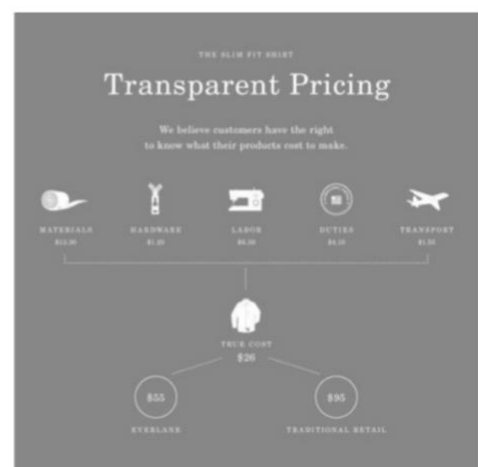
Examples of telling stories with:

Images

Videos

Ikea <https://youtu.be/AsN0SDVpS8M>

Disney <https://youtu.be/G4qMqbl9ACo>



[52] <https://www.referralcandy.com/blog/storytelling-examples>

## TRANSMEDIA NARRATIVE

The term **transmedia narrative**, or **transmedia storytelling**, coined in 2003 by MIT professor Henry Jenkins, denotes a form of storytelling that uses multiple platforms, media and formats with the aim of providing the user with a pervasive experience and different entry points to the story. ***The platforms and channels used do not tell the same story but tell different points of view or different moments in the story.***

Transmediality makes it possible to reach different audiences that usually do not have exchanges with each other, so each media platform may correspond to a different slice of the market. As Mac Luhan had already taught, it is the diversity of media, rather than the content, that amplifies participation. Additional products are not always proposed by producers; sometimes they emerge from consumers, with spontaneous aggregations based on word-of-mouth and user-created content.



### EXERCISE

Using the one or more of the resources below create a story for your green business idea.

To create a linear and engaging story it is necessary to include the 5Ws used in journalism:<sup>53</sup>

- WHO - Who is the protagonist of the narrative?
- WHAT - What happens in the story? The use of an a priori decided plot is essential so as not to leave everything to chance.
- WHEN - When does the narrative take place?
- WHERE - Where is the story set?
- WHY - Why does your story take place?

How to use the story telling canvas template below follow the link:  
<https://www.designabetterbusiness.tools/tools/storytelling-canvas>

STORYTELLING CANVAS				
<b>SUBJECT</b> What is the story about?		<b>GOAL</b> What do you want to achieve with this story?		<b>AUDIENCE</b> What is your story's audience? What are their needs?
<b>BEFORE</b> What does your audience think, feel, know, want, before they have experienced your story?	<b>1. SET THE SCENE</b> What do you need to introduce? What should be set up or explained?	<b>2. MAKE YOUR POINT</b> The audience's A-Ha moment.	<b>3. CONCLUSION</b> The end of your story. What is the conclusion? What is your call to action?	<b>AFTER</b> What does your audience think, feel, know, want, after they have experienced your story?

Further resources:

Storytelling: <https://business.treedom.net/en/services/green-branding-storytelling>

Marketing tools: <https://www.digital-discovery.tn/42-online-marketing-tools-for-digital-marketers-infographic/>

Templates: <https://www.designabetterbusiness.tools/tools>

[53] Marchessi M, 2015



# module 4. Pitching: presentation of business ideas

The aim of this module is to introduce you into the pitching process step by step from planning to presenting and finding the right pitching audience. It presents a couple of tasks and exercises to guide you in the art of pitching.

Long story short: what is a pitch and what is it good for?

This section presents the purpose of pitching, different types of it and different ways to translate a business idea into a story.

So, let's start from the very beginning: **What is a business pitch and why do we need it?**

In business, **the pitch** is commonly understood as a method for presenting and proposing new ideas, aimed at gaining the support we need for their realizations. As a professional in the green economy or a prospective green entrepreneur, you will be in situations in which you have to present your ideas to different audiences, to sell yourself and your business idea to different stakeholders. Developing and delivering an effective pitch is one of the key skills one should have if one aspires to succeed.

Here is an incredible story about an aspiring young illustrator, who started his career at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1920, he got fired from his job at one newspaper.

During the next seven years, this young man was working different jobs to pay bills, while pursuing his dream of becoming an animator. In the period of seven years, he presented his product (cartoons) countless times to banks, motion picture companies, and other potential supporters.

The legend says that he had over 300 pitches, all rejected, until finally in 1928, he gave a successful pitch to a motion picture company who agreed to use his animations in a film synchronized to music. The film succeeded in the market, and this is how one career of a young artist, later planetary famous, started!

The guy we are talking about was none other than Walt Disney. Not only that he did not give up his dream, but more importantly he used previous failure pitches to learn and constantly improve. Through practice and persistence, Disney was able to turn his 300 rejections into what would ultimately become one of the most valuable brands in the world. That is **the power of a great pitch!**

## WHOM DO YOU PITCH FOR?

## TYPES OF PITCHES

As a professional or green entrepreneur, you can pitch your business idea to different audiences (your target groups), for different reasons. Some target groups may be external, and they require external pitches:

- Investors: you may pitch a business because you need resources: financial or other types of resources
- Potential customers: if you are trying to sell your product in the market, you will pitch to potential customers.
- Other organizations, potential partners: you may also pitch to potential partners because you need them to help you accomplish your mission.

Beside external target groups of pitching, you may also have reasons to deliver internal pitches, to internal audience. Who can be your internal target group: colleagues, associates, employees for whom you might need to explain new directions, or you want to address a new vision, new strategic goals, new project ideas to your staff, etc.

### Sales / elevator pitch

- a brief message that attracts the attention of your target group and addresses your business plan or the products and services you offer. The goal is to make the audience invest in your business or purchase your products/services.
- "Elevator pitch" is another term for sales pitch because its duration is compared to the duration of an elevator ride. An elevator pitch is commonly up to 3 minutes long.

### Pitch deck

- a slide presentation that outlines your business plan to potential investors.
- should include research related to your product, competition, marketing plans, and company finances to provide a complete view of the current state of your business/company and the potential value it holds for investors to persuade them.

### Interrogative pitch

- a pitch that starts with a series of questions to your audience.
- the questions usually focus on the problems the audience faces and how you/your product/service can solve them.
- the point of the questions is to raise the attention of your audience and make them want to learn more about your offer.

### Networking pitch

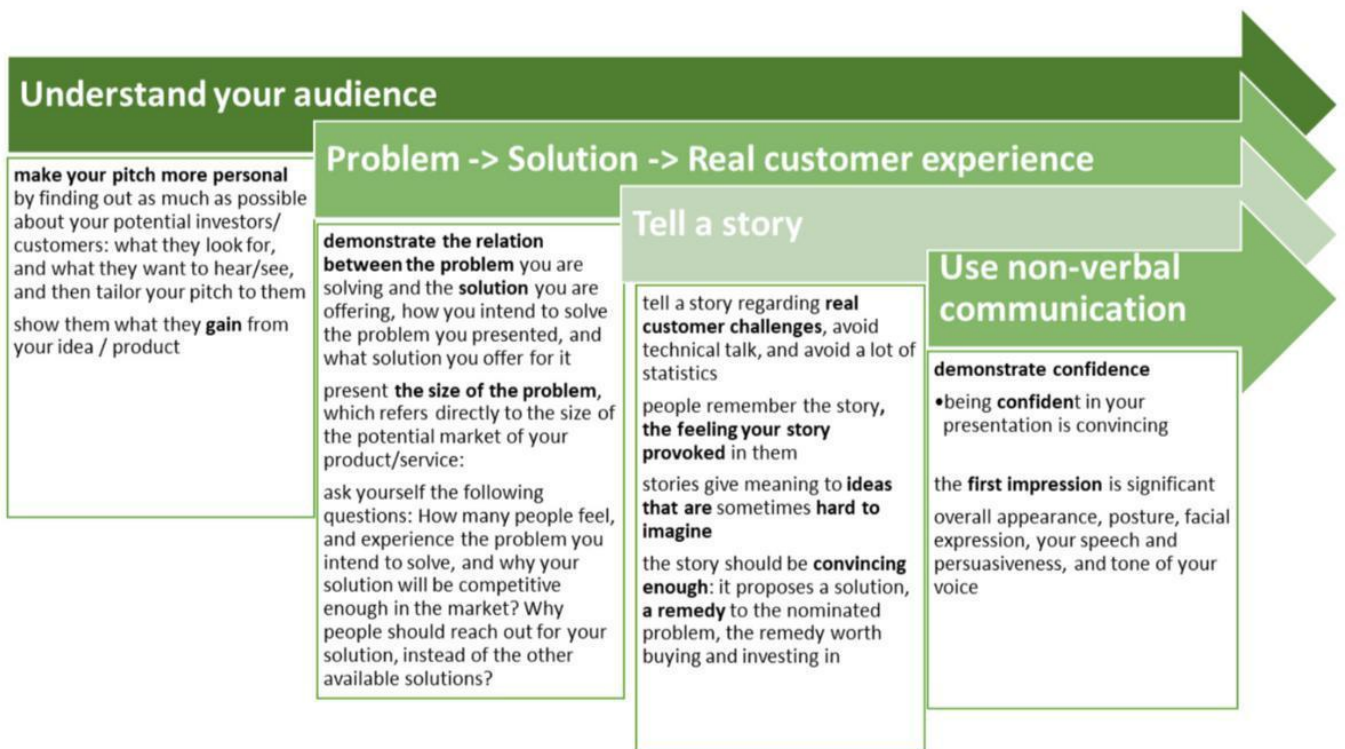
- is a variation of the elevator pitch.
- can be used to sell yourself to a potential partner, or connection.
- in 30 to 60 seconds, this pitch provides an overview of the unique qualifications or accomplishments that make you valuable.
- the goal is to make a memorable impression that could lead to new opportunities.
- after your pitch, it is recommended to offer a business card to provide a tangible reminder of who you are.

## HOW TO TURN A BUSINESS IDEA INTO A STORY?

Create a narrative path from what is to what will be

The main question you should ask yourself once you have the great business idea is how to get your audience acquainted with it, and how to ensure they fully understand your business and feel the same as you feel about it.

The trick is to **turn your business idea into a compelling story**, to create emotions and to incite the interest of the audience for your business idea. Make sure that your pitch, the story you want to tell and share, relate to your audience. How will you manage this? Check the following important steps:



[Here](#) is an example of a pitching delivered by a representative of Bizimply who won the International BETA PITCH competition at Web Summit 2015 with this fantastic pitch from co-founder Mikey Cannon. He really shows the problems in work scheduling and then demonstrates how they solve them. Plus, he validates the market well, he presented a lot of data and knowledge about the status of employees, the needs of companies and the problems of finding employees, how to manage their schedule, how to fit them all from different locations and in different functions, without making the stats seem boring.

Skillfully, he presented how they solve problems for companies with employees, all in one package: Scheduling, Time Tracking, Human Resources, and Shift Management. In the presentation, he accurately chose the amount of important data that he will present, without tiring the listeners and making it sound interesting.



## EXERCISE

Here is the link to the 20 best pitches of all times: <https://www.twine.net/blog/the-20-best-startup-pitches-of-all-time/>

Pick two of them and analyze how they build tension, how they create a story, and how they connect with the audience. Write down your impressions. What parts of their story were the most compelling to you and what will you use from these pitches in your future pitch?

## THE NITTY-GRITTY, HOW TO PLAN THE TEXT FOR YOUR PITCH DECK

Introduction: Initial Questions that your pitch must answer

The introduction aims to **build credibility**: the shorter the intro, the better since you want to focus on the business idea, not yourself. Give a one-sentence overview of the business / company, along with the value it provides. The objective is to give an overview of how the product/service solves customers' problems, improves their life, and/or delivers specific benefits. Consider the following questions to start:



Define the problem: investment thesis, problem-solution

The **problem** is where you start **building your story**. In a PowerPoint presentation use whatever visual cues you need to showcase your problem in the best possible way. You can start with a story that puts your investors in your customers' shoes. Or begin with your story of how you encountered this problem. Images are great for conveying emotion too. Tell it in a personal story. One that your investor audience can relate to.

Ideally, these slides make it clear to your audience that market participants are spending real dollars on imperfect products that do not adequately address their needs. Remember, investors generally like big markets that allow a market entrant to grow a large business by **solving pain points and friction** that is not being adequately addressed by existing players. Since your slide space is so limited, your **verbal pitch and presentation** are where you get to talk around your slides and bullet points and really drive it home.

Once you've presented the problem your investors / customers are faced with, it's time to follow up with a **viable solution**: your service or product. You can introduce the solution in any number of ways: share your product MVP or a list of the features you offer; whatever you think makes a convincing case.

When you describe your solution make it at a high level, address the unmet market demands that you have described before. The idea here is to convince your audience that you have a better “mouse trap”. And to do so, you have to describe what you have done to improve on the art of trapping mice. Approach the investors / customers with a critical eye, question all of your assumptions, challenge yourself.

### Back up investment thesis: the business model

This is where you show how big this problem is, and how much it is growing: define the revenue stream and back investment thesis with data / conceptually. Use big data points. Be specific about the segment of the market which you plan to appeal to and can serve.





## EXERCISE

Case study: Analyze how Linked-In was pitched <https://www.reidhoffman.org/linkedin-pitch-to-greyllock/>  
How entrepreneurs should approach the pitch: process the evolution of LinkedIn as a company the consumer internet landscape in 2004 vs. today?

## TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PRESENTATION

- 1) **Have a Goal:** EVERY pitch should have a goal behind it. They could include raising awareness, getting funding, convincing someone to work for you, or even just validating your idea. No matter what the goal of your pitch is, stick to it and cater everything else in your pitch to that goal.
- 2) **Know Your Audience:** This goes hand in hand with knowing your goal. If your audience is a group of investors who would potentially help fund your idea, your pitch would look different than if your audience was a group of web developers who would potentially help build/develop your idea.
- 3) **Include an Engaging Story:** Even though your pitch should not take too much time, it is still easy for some people to lose interest if they are not engaged. Stories let the audience picture things in their mind, let them see a different perspective, or make something more relatable to them. Perhaps, instead of just explaining how your business/product fills a certain need, tell a story of how it really did.
- 4) **Use Numbers:** Numbers are a great way not only to give information more simply, but numbers also to add credibility to your pitch. Numbers indicate that research, surveys, or studies have gone into generating them which assures listeners that you aren't just making stuff up.
- 5) **Only Use 3-5 Main Points:** This one is hard to follow but will help your audience stay engaged and focused. Limiting your pitch to only having 3-5 main points will help your audience stay organized and better remember your entire pitch. It may also be a good idea to start your pitch by introducing your main points, so they know what to look for throughout your presentation and understand the flow.
- 6) **Add A Call to Action:** You could tell your audience of investors that you are seeking funding but their call to action is simple to contact you with any questions they may have. You can state that you are looking for investors, but don't make them feel like they are being pressured into it.
- 7) **Make It Memorable:** If your pitch is memorable, it's more likely your desired goal will come to fruition. Along with methods we have already discussed such as keeping it short, telling a story, using key numbers, etc. you can also be creative. Try involving your audience by asking them questions, band ring in visuals or samples. You can include sound, video, or ANYTHING that is relevant and adds to your pitch!

## VISUALS FOR YOUR PITCH DECK

A Pitch Deck is a short-written presentation, used by entrepreneurs to pitch their business ideas, most often to investors. The basic purpose of the pitch decks is to fundraise capital for your business idea. Alejandro Cremades advises that entrepreneurs should prepare two types of pitch deck presentation:<sup>54</sup>

- one very detailed you will send by email and
- one with more pictures and visual display, used to present your idea in person.

Potential investors usually will ask you to send them a detailed pitch deck, based on which they will decide if they want to meet you at all. Regardless of whether it is detailed or one for meeting in person, the presentation should be easy to follow and understand. One research, conducted by DocSend, found that investors spend on average 3 minutes and 44 seconds per pitch deck.

## Features of the presentation:

- the presentation is visually presented in a way that is logically structured, visually well presented, with graphs and pictures used properly and to the point, well balanced;
- for in a person meeting, it is recommended to keep it up to 20 slides, although some experts advise that the ideal would be 10 slides;

Alejandro Cremades advises that your pitch deck should last up to 5 minutes, although you should have in mind that in case of certain programs and competitions, donors and organizers set their rules referring to the length of presentation and speech.

There are different digital tools you can use today to make your presentation clear and easy to digest.

The most often used tools are PowerPoint, Canva, Prezi, and Keynote.

## Tips to make high-quality presentations

One slide per idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enables the audience to follow your presentation more easily</li> <li>• each slide has a message</li> </ul>
Well-structured presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by topic: problem, solution, budget</li> <li>• use introductory slide to present the content of the presentation</li> </ul>
Typical topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the problem, solution, market,</li> <li>• the business model, competition, the budget</li> <li>• marketing plan</li> <li>• the team</li> </ul>
Appearance of the presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• should look like one consistent and connected whole</li> <li>• use a personalized template of presentation (your own)</li> </ul>
Pictures instead of text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not too many words on a slide</li> <li>• use graphic presentation to keep the audience engaged</li> </ul>
Visibility and readability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• font size and color should be clear to make it easy to read</li> <li>• use different fonts for different topics, titles, and main text</li> <li>• the color selection and the contrast between background and font color should be visible on low power projectors as well</li> </ul>

[54] Cremades A, 2016



## EXERCISE

Create your Pitch Deck and present your own business idea using some of the tools: Canva, Prezi, PowerPoint, and Keynote, using as examples in the following link: <https://www.canva.com/learn/pitch-deck-examples/>

Further, analyze some of the best pitch decks and make your review of Do's and Don'ts: <https://visme.co/blog/best-pitch-decks/>

Exchange with your colleague each other's pitch decks and make peer-review. Give feedback to your colleague, on what do like about his/her pitch deck and what you suggest he/she should improve.

### Tips for effective public speaking and negotiation

Case study: Analyze several speeches and pitches made by ecological activists. Jot down the most convincing phrases. Starting from the examples you watched, what makes for a good public speaker? What happens if you win? How will the world be different if your idea were realized?



## EXERCISE

Use your imagination and tape a 2-minute speech in which you pitch an idea with the conviction that it will make the world a better place.

### Tips for effective public speaking

<b>Define the Overall Goal</b>	define your end goal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•What do you want the audience to do after they leave the room?</li> <li>•What information should they walk away with?</li> </ul>	
<b>Be Giving, Instead of Taking</b>	build a presentation that offers real value to your audience
<b>Prepare Slides as a Support, not a Crutch</b>	use keywords, instead of sentences or paragraphs on your slides
<b>Practice, Practice, Practice</b>	practice your presentation in front of several groups of people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•ask for honest, constructive feedback on the good, the bad, and the ugly of your presentation</li> <li>•record yourself during one of your practice runs so that you can review it</li> </ul>	
<b>Take Your Time to Acclimate</b>	approach the stage in silence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•take a deep breath, and get used to being in front of an audience</li> </ul>	
<b>Be Conversational</b>	use inflection in your voice and engage in natural, friendly body language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•walk casually back and forth in front of your audience</li> <li>•gesture with your hands</li> <li>•make eye contact with individual people in front of you</li> <li>•don't recite your speech word for word: understand the concepts, know the presentation structure and speak freely</li> </ul>	
<b>Enjoy your First Mistake</b>	acknowledge your first mistake and view it as permission to relax and move on with your presentation
<b>Tell Stories &amp; Make It Personal</b>	make your presentation personal and remind the audience that you're human
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•they remember and share stories you tell</li> <li>•when in doubt tell a story</li> </ul>	
<b>Speak Slowly &amp; Pause Often</b>	a slower speed makes it easier for your audience to understand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•find your pace and cadence</li> </ul>	
<b>Repeat Audience Questions</b>	irrespective of the audience dimension repeat their questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•keeps them engaged with and invested in your answer</li> <li>•gives you an extra few moments to gather your thoughts</li> <li>•actively listen to the needs of your audience members</li> </ul>	
<b>Support Key Points</b>	repeating key points multiple times throughout your presentation helps your audience retain what's most important
<b>Close Early &amp; Say Thanks</b>	be respectful of the time and always end early
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•allow more time for Q &amp; A</li> </ul>	





## EXERCISE

Peer reviews the videos, which you only recorded as a pitching test for 2 minutes, and show it to your friends and colleague and ask for constructive feed-back.

### BE A MASTER OF NEGOTIATION!

#### How to answer potential questions from investors and how to deal with objections

The objection questions are very often the final hurdle standing in between you and closing a given investor or buyer your round. The objections are a good sign and an indicator of investors or buyers' interest, so it is crucial for every entrepreneur to know how to handle objections.

*This is a three-step process to handle any investor objection:*

**First:** align with the objection. This maintains connection while opposing it strengthens the objection, and gives you an opening. Once you have aligned with the objection the next thing to do is to present some new information relevant to the objection.

**Second:** present some new information relevant to the objection, and widen your opening

**Third:** ask a follow-up question. This is an incredibly powerful way to handle investor objections in a way that feels nice for the founder and the investor.

## HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF AND OVERCOME POTENTIAL BLOCKS

If you're having problems with your train of thought, you can still overcome them with a few simple techniques.

**Check Your Notes:** to prevent the embarrassment of not knowing what to say next, it's all right to refer to your notes occasionally, especially for your major points.

**Pause for Effect:** it may seem counterintuitive but pauses in your speech can also help you get over your mental block. Pausing creates anticipation for what you're about to say.

**Don't Forget to Breathe:** One of the leading causes of presentation mental block is anxiety. Calming your nerves helps you remember anything you might have forgotten because of panic. Research shows that breathing helps relax the mind and increase productivity.



## EXERCISE

Role play exercise: Pitch an already existing service or institution. Have your colleagues ask investing questions. Then pitch your idea. Compare, what went differently?

How to be a part of the conversation, how to find investors to pitch to, and events where you can **network**.

Understand your audience and understand the broader financing priorities in the green economy. Once you developed and tested your business idea, the next step is to find financial resources for its implementation. What can you do, and how to find your audience? The key word is networking and connecting with the right people and stakeholders. How will you know who the right people are, or who are the stakeholders you should approach? To get the answer to this question, you must conduct detailed **stakeholder research and analysis in your community**, on the local, regional, national, international levels, to map stakeholders relevant to the topic you are tackling:

- who are the potential investors?
- are there any funding programs available?
- what banks or other financial institutions are supporting start-ups?
- are there venture funds, businesses, accelerators, and similar?

If you want to find some funds for your business through **investors**, the advice is to seriously inform yourself/learn as much as possible about how the business system of the company that can be an investor in your business works.

The terms **Business Angels** and **Venture Capital** were imported from the USA to describe two basic ways of investment financing of companies - investments up to \$500,000 US as Angel investments and investments over \$500,000 US as Venture investments.

**Incubators** are business premises intended for new business ventures and their development. The aim of the incubator is to take someone with a good business model and help them develop from an idea to an initial product. Most incubators are related to some thematic area, for example, IT (tech-startups), improvement of health and environment, biotech, etc. In addition to the space for work, they also provide mentors who assist members, advising them on how to best develop their business model.

**Accelerators** are a continuation of incubators. They receive those who have already developed their business model, reached the first product (left the incubator), and helped them to "accelerate" their development. That "acceleration" is mostly done to advanced networking, i.e., creating connections and contacts with larger firms, companies and individuals who can improve your business to a higher level that you could not reach on your own at this stage of your business development.

You can also search for **business hubs and business support organizations** and contact them to join their networks and business communities.

# module 5. New and Improved Financing Opportunities

This module will help you navigate the steps of how to apply to EU funding, from scoping out available sources of financing, reading the applicant’s guide and developing a project based on a social/ economical problem you have identified in your area. This is a 5- step presentation on how to make an application for your start-up / business to obtain European funds.

By now, following the modules of the manual you should have a clear idea and a corresponding business plan. It is now time to translate all the work you have done so far into a successful application.

## STEP 1. CONCEPTION

The first step - Conception is about translating your project / business idea into a successful application. EU funding is an instrument intended to effect change in the world, but mostly in Europe. Each funding programme has a set of objectives and funding priorities, which you need to understand beforehand in order to align your project idea with the funding goals of the EU.

Even when backing individual businesses, EU financial instruments aim to develop the community at large, create jobs in the regions where they are scarce or work towards the larger goals of the Green New Deal, namely reducing emissions and encouraging the circular economy. From the get go, you have to understand how your project idea fits with the larger picture. In your application, you will have to show that it will have a positive impact on the community and the environment.

In order to play the game, you first need to understand the rules of the game, which are different for each funding programme.

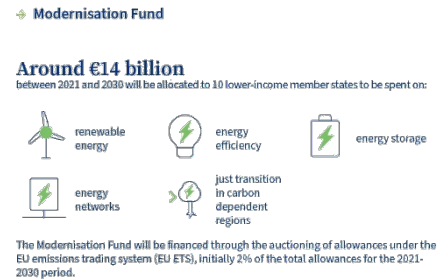
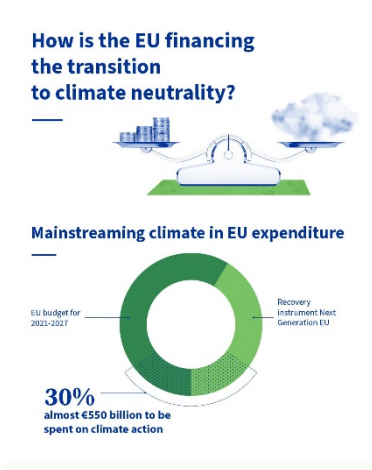
### HUNTING FOR OPPORTUNITIES

The EU devised complex funding programmes to tackle overarching societal problems across international borders. The ones designed to support the Green New Deal and the Just Transition are (also check the programmes presented in the Annex):

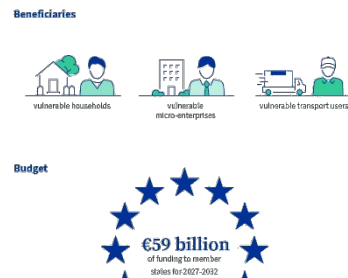
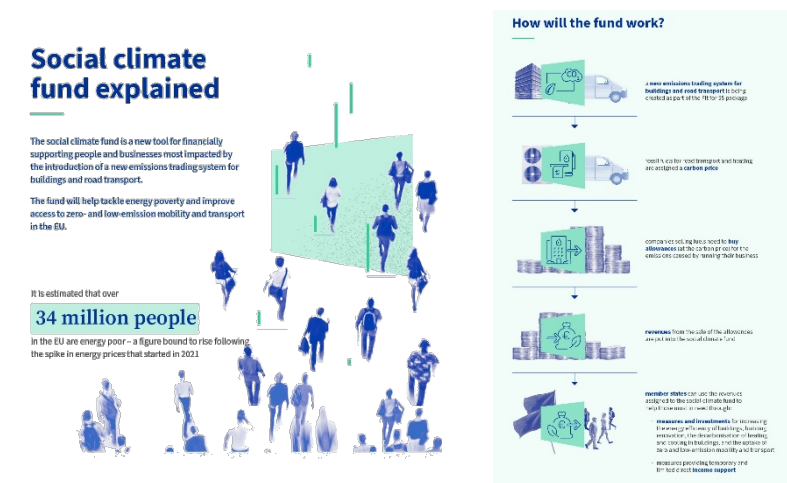
## STEPS IN OBTAINING EU FINANCING



- The Cohesion Policy Fund
- Next Generation EU
- The Just Transition Mechanism
- The European Social Fund +
- The EU programme for Employment and Social innovation (EaSI)
- The LIFE Programme
- Horizon Europe
- Erasmus+
- Invest EU



source: [How is the EU financing the transition to climate neutrality?](#) Infographic, European Commission, 2022



source: [Social climate fund explained Infographic](#), European Commission, 2022

These programmes are either managed by national authorities or by EU Agencies and are generally subdivided into multiple axes of intervention. Funding is usually disbursed through calls for projects and your job is to find one that is a good fit for your project idea. In the Annex, you will find a brief description of what each of these funds was designed to support, as well as a break-down of the funding axes that might be of interest to green entrepreneurs, complete with links to the websites you can use to research open calls for projects and fundings.

You can apply for funding in different ways, ranked by difficulty of access:

- **through calls for projects available at the EU level:** This usually requires you to partner up with other organizations from different countries to work on a common idea.
- **through calls for projects managed by national authorities.** In Romania, these are the Ministry of Investments and European Projects, the Ministry of Agriculture or National Development Agencies in your region.
- **EU funding is also disbursed as microloans** managed by financial partners like NGOs, investment funds or banks.

There are, as well **private sponsors, donors and financiers** in the business field that grant funds as awards to entrepreneurs' competitions, microloans through business incubators and accelerators, as well as bank various financial instruments.

The easiest to access are the **microloans** on account of EU guarantees which considerably simplify the lending process. However, the amounts offered are lower and they need to be reimbursed in small increments. In terms of **non-refundable funding**, national calls for projects are more readily accessible than EU managed ones (with the exception maybe of Erasmus projects for young entrepreneurs), but you need to monitor the websites with calls for action at all times for available opportunities. Some calls for action have rolling admissions (you can apply at any moment, provided that the funding allocated for that funding stream has not run out) and others have strict deadlines (you compete with other projects and if you score higher on the evaluation grid than competing projects, you get funded).

It can be challenging to find your way in the jungle of the myriad funding opportunities available to green entrepreneurs, but here are a few shortcuts.

#### Tips on becoming aware of funding opportunities

1. Ask an EU funding consultant. The first consultation is always free
2. Join a Facebook community
3. Monitor relevant websites that post about the latest calls for projects
4. Learn where you can find a programming document (a calendar for the funding lines which will open calls for projects)
5. Attend info days in person or online
6. Use the annex to this chapter to point you in the right direction for the funding programmes available in your country
7. REDI offers microfinancing for Roma entrepreneurs

## THE APPLICANT'S GUIDE

The **application process for EU funding** is transparent. Calls for projects are accompanied by a clear applicant's guide, where you will find information regarding eligibility criteria, the objectives of the programme, eligible activities and costs, how to fill out the funding application, the supporting documents you need to provide, as well as the evaluation criteria and the next steps to be followed once your project is approved.

Usually, applicant's guide comprises **General conditions** (valid for all the calls for projects open under a certain funding line) and **Specific conditions** (different for each call for projects). In order to be funded, you must meet both.

In the first phase, the applications will be checked for administrative compliance and eligibility criteria. **Administrative compliance** means submitting the proposal within the deadline, in due form, with all the required accompanying documents. Incomplete applications are eliminated from the review process, as are those that do not meet eligibility criteria. When considering whether a call for projects is right for you, the first thing is to determine whether you meet **the eligibility criteria**. If your projects meet the eligibility criteria, it will be undergone review, being scored according to the evaluation criteria. The projects with the highest scores in competitive application processes will be awarded funding. It is advised you self-score your project according to the evaluation grid to find out if you meet the minimum eligibility threshold.

## ELIGIBILITY

When you are going through calls for projects in order to find the right one for you, an important thing to consider is whether you are eligible to apply. Check the target group of the call for projects: SMEs, start-ups, NGOs or public bodies and authorities. Check, as well, whether there are supplementary eligibility criteria regarding annual turnover, number of employees, domain of activity, location of the enterprise, qualifications the entrepreneur must hold etc.

Note: Few calls for projects are fully funded. Some require applicants to cover a certain percentage of the costs engaged in the project with their own money or by taking out loans. Pay attention to the percent of co-financing!

Moreover, calls for projects also specify eligible activities and eligible costs. **Eligible activities** are what the funding body wishes to encourage with the programme, ex: the selective collection of waste, eco-friendly transportation, organic farming etc. In order to be a good fit, your project must develop one or several of the eligible activities in the call for projects.

**Eligible costs** are the expenses that you can receive non-refundable funding for in the implementation of the project. For instance, some projects allow for construction, the covering of wage costs or turnover costs, while others may not. If a cost is not eligible, the entrepreneur must cover those costs themselves. However, even if an activity is eligible for funding, the entrepreneur must still cover the percent of co-financing that they are responsible for that specific activity. When developing the budget, you have to separate eligible costs from ineligible expenses and calculate the fraction of the costs you are responsible for in the category of eligible costs.

You've done your research, maybe you've even taken advantage of a free counselling session to identify a call for projects your idea might be eligible for, now it's time to review the documentation for the calls for projects: the applicant's guide, the application form and the list of supporting documents.

### Eligibility criteria

- Nature of the applicant
- Number of partners
- Duration of the project
- Compliance with the Project's Objectives and General Rules
- Financial Conditions
- Eligible target groups



## EXERCISE

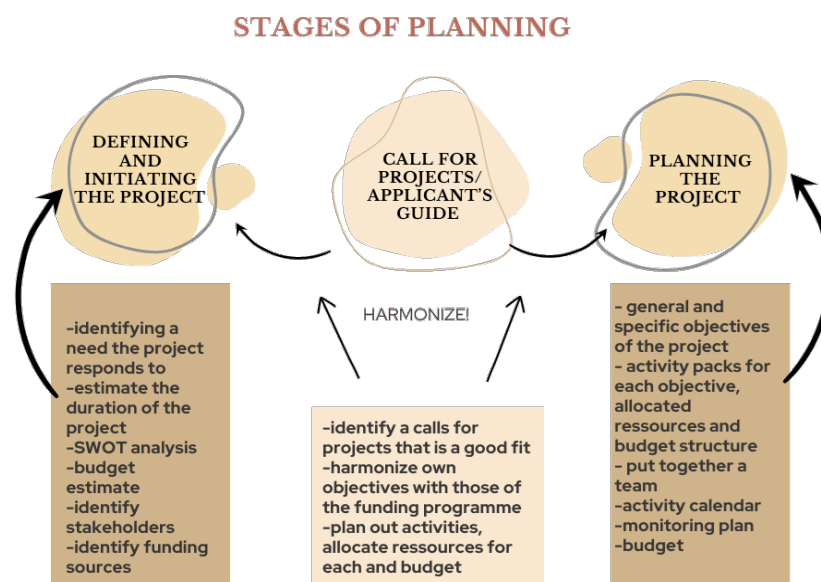
Identify an actual call for projects and answer the following questions based on a real applicant's guide.

1. Who is this call addressed to? (SMEs, NGOs, public authorities, NGOs in partnership with public services)
2. Do you need to apply in partnership with other organizations?
3. What are the eligibility criteria?
4. What is the application deadline?
5. What are the general and specific objectives of the programme?

6. How does my project fit with the objectives of the programme?
7. Will my project implement any of the eligible activities? Which ones?
8. What is the maximum value of the project and what is the percentage of co-financing?
9. What are the eligible costs?
10. How will the project be evaluated? Is there an evaluation grid? How many points would you score? Is there any way of tweaking your project to score higher in order to increase your chances of getting financed?

## STEP 2. PLANNING

Planning for a project has three stages: pre-planning, adjusting your initial plan to fit with the financier's objectives and the actual project planning and application stage. In order to find a call for projects likely to be a good match, you should already have a good idea or a business plan. Similarly, a project plan or a business plan need to address the following, under this name or something similar: problem identification, defining the target group, identifying the stakeholders, finding partners, developing the activities and the project / business calendar.



### PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

At this stage you have already identified the problem you want to address within the application BUT to earn funding, your project needs to showcase its usefulness for the community and its ability to contribute to solving larger societal problems. This is valid for both social projects and business ideas. Businesses thrive if they identify a real, valid, actual **pain point**, a lack or need that they can respond to.

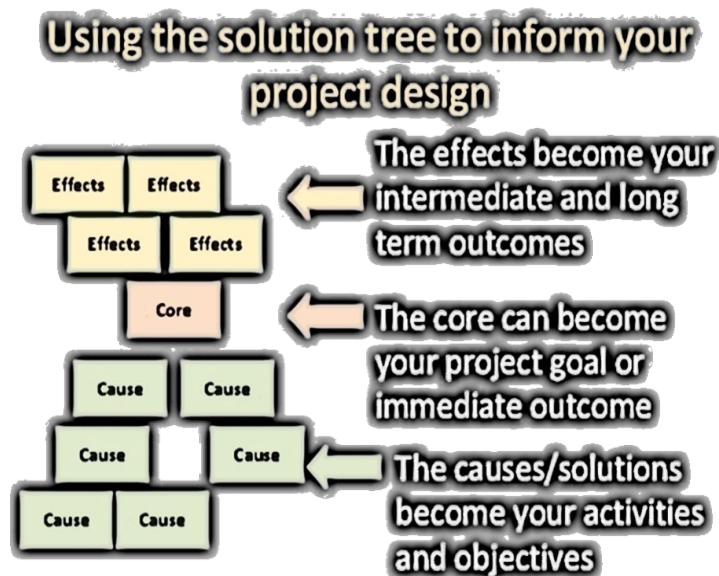
Examples of potential problems a green business can tackle:

- waste (used office supplies go to waste/ old clothes are not reworn/ broken electronics accumulate in landfills/ there is no selective collection of waste),

- lack of jobs (a polluting industry is closing down, leading to massive employment cuts),
- industrial agriculture and farming pollute the land,
- people in your region do not have access to healthy food etc.

Brainstorm other environmental issues your business/ project could respond to or do your research.

Develop a **problem tree** around the main environmental concern, which can then be flipped into a **solution tree**. Start with the core environmental concern and work your way down to the main issues and underlying causes. Then list the immediate effects the problem and its causes have. In the annex you can find an example of a problem tree on recycling in an area where waste management in disadvantaged communities is also a problem. The municipality leaves people to manage thrash on their own in communities that lack waste management infrastructure.



If you reverse the negative statements that form the problem tree into positive ones, you can design a **solution or objectives tree**.<sup>55</sup> For instance, ‘people are not motivated to recycle’ would become, motivate people to recycle’, an objective that your project can strive towards.

Depending on its size, duration and funding, a project may be able to deal with one or all the causes of a problem. But a solution tree can help you identify the branches that would be most impactful and design your project strategy around them.

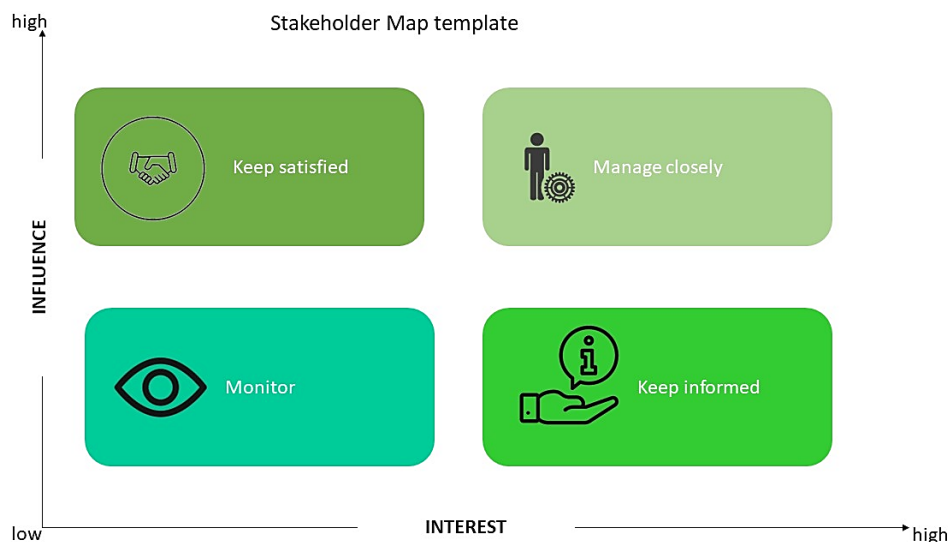


## EXERCISE

Starting from the problem tree, design a solution tree using the model below. Use post-its and reframe the problem and its causes into objectives. Analyzing the new tree, what branches do you think could be effectively tackled through your green project or green business idea?

[55] <https://slidetodoc.com/developing-problem-tree-solution-tree-what-is-a/>





THE  
GROUP

TARGET

Check in your application who is the target group of your project / business idea and confront it with the application guide. Verify the direct and indirect beneficiaries, the relevant stakeholders and the funders accordingly.

### THE STAKEHOLDERS

For instance, the stakeholders for a recycling initiative would be people, households, building administrators, the city, the waste collection company, environmental activists, companies that wish to recycle their office consumables, companies involved in processing recycled materials. In order to respond to the application guide properly do a **stakeholder analysis** first. Ideally, the planning process should include discussions with the stakeholders, in order to identify the strategy that best serves the interests of most parties.

Check below the actions for the main stakeholders' types according the Stakeholder Map by interest and influence: monitor, keep satisfied, keep informed, manage closely.

### FINDING PARTNERS

Some projects require you to apply in partnership with other organizations, sometimes from other countries if you are applying to EU funding managed at the EU level. You can also partner with public bodies that outsource certain social services to NGOs or businesses. In order to find a suitable partner, you could start with a search in databases of organizations who are also looking for partners, here: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/partner-search> or for Romania joining the partner list here: <https://oportunitati-ue.gov.ro>.

Once you've found suitable partners, you need to draft a partnership agreement, detailing who is in charge with what activities in the project (according to the expertise of the participating organizations), how funding will be split between partners and how each one will contribute towards co-financing.

## BREAK-DOWN OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

When planning for a project, you have to go through a series of steps: problem identification, developing a plan of actions / strategy, budgeting, implementation, evaluation, reporting. The main goal of the project / business, i.e., the best solution to the problem must align with the general goals of the Green Deal or the Just Transition and with the specific goals of the call for projects.

**Objectives:** must be SMART by the rule of KISS (keep it short and simple!).

A well-formulated objective should include the following:

- The result = the desired change to take place with respect to the root cause of the problem
- Performance indicators = to be precise, an objective should specify the measurement unit used to appraise its effectiveness (ie. Number of beneficiaries, percentage of participants to a program etc).
- Time frame = how long will it take to implement?
- Costs in work/ time/ money

**Activities:** the means by which an objective will be attained. When planning, each objective will lead to a pack of precise, time-bound activities needed to reach the result specified in the objective. In planning, it is important to understand how each activity plays on the other. Some can be run simultaneously, whereas some need to be completed first before others can take place.

In the application, you should include the following for each activity:

- Description of the activity
- How it will be implemented
- The resources involved (people= unqualified, qualified, specialist workers; materials; equipment; costs engaged)
- Costs and duration
- Deliverables (measurable outcomes and results of the activity, ex. number of recycle bins installed, a recycling guide to be distributed in households etc).



## EXERCISE

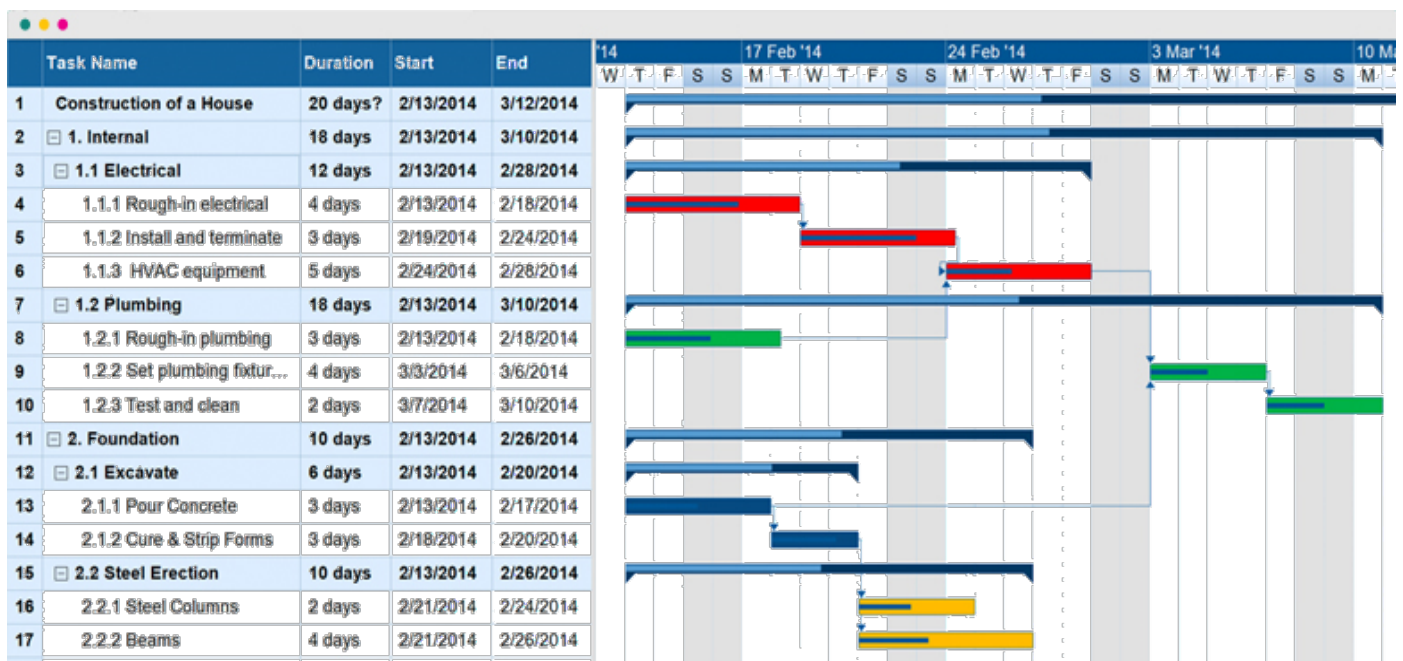
In most applications you will be asked to fill out a table, called the logical matrix of the project, which shows how each activity supports the specific objective it is subsumed under and the resources and time needed for each. Pick an objective linked with promoting the switch to renewable energy and think of three supporting activities, then fill out the table below.

Specific objective	Results	Performance Indicators	Activities	Immediate outcomes	General resources needed	Human resources (Who?)

There are two ways of charting the duration and succession of tasks and activities in a project: the milestones chart and the Gantt chart. The Milestones Chart helps in visualizing the progress of the project by when certain tasks need to be completed (see an example in the Annex).

The Gantt chart or activity calendar is a tool that illustrates a project’s schedule, showing how each

activity depends on the other and sometimes who is in charge with a certain activity. Most applications will require you to provide a Gantt chart and the easiest way to do it is via a table. The columns represent time units spanning the entire duration of the project (days/ weeks or months) and the bars in the lines will represent how long an activity extends.

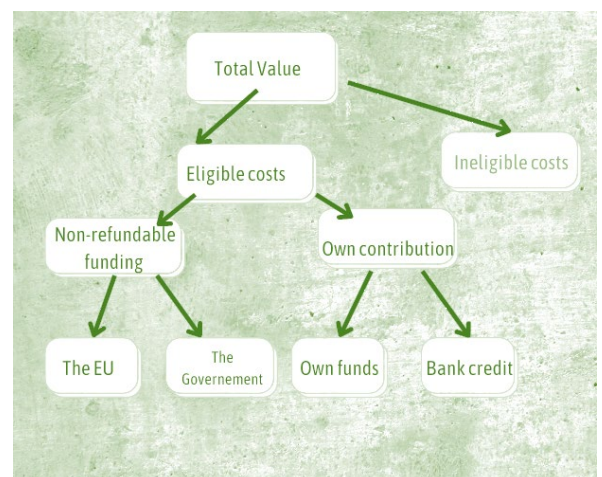


### BUDGETING

A realistic budget is critical in getting funded. For the best results, it is better to calculate the financial needs specific to each activity and task. Not all activities will require funding. The steps in coming up with a budget are:

- Identifying activities that require resources
- Estimating costs
- Calculating what resources are necessary for each activity (don't omit HR costs)
  - Adding up the numbers and creating a budget broken down according to the specific objectives of the project.

*Note:* Sometimes the call for projects will have conditionalities regarding the allotment of funds, ex. no more than 30% of the money can go towards construction etc. Pay special attention to these in calculating the budget!



When budgeting, it is important to distinguish between **eligible costs** (specified in the call for projects) and **ineligible costs**. Of the total value of the project, EU funding will only cover eligible costs, in the proportion of co-financing specified in the call. The good news is that social and green business calls can have 100% financing rates, depending on the specific funding lines.



## EXERCISE

You want to buy a tractor for an organic farm and the co-financing rate is 90%. Agricultural equipment is an eligible cost. The tractor costs 10.000 euros. How much do you have to cover? What if agricultural equipment are ineligible expenses?

### STEP 3. ORGANIZING

After the announcement of the success of the application and financing the project / business, a series of preparing activities need to happen: from signing a contract, to rewriting and reorganizing some activities, developing action plans, budget, detailed timeline. A series of meetings with all the relevant stakeholders aim to (re)align to the approved project / business - in many cases there are minor changes, but oftentimes the changes can be substantial money-wise, activity-wise etc.

During the organizing step a series of internal documents need to be produced to ensure the flow of the activity: from detailed calendars, to HR timesheets, but also relevant evaluation and monitoring strategies, as well as communication and dissemination, often times as relevant to the project as to the sponsors. The requirements and templates also vary from sponsor to sponsor.

### STEP 4. IMPLEMENTING

The actual implementation stage can come with both excitement and angst due to the dynamism of the project / business topic, of changes in the communities, or even potential legislative, and institutional changes. Oftentimes, the implementing stage might reveal needed changes to the initial plan. All these changes, but also the development of the activities, can be seen and included in a monitoring plan. Lots of sponsors ask for a mandatory monitoring activity. And for the benefit of the project / activity the monitoring should be part of the implementing step.

The most important issues to tackle during this step are:

- Resource management: material and technical, people, teamwork
- Time management
- Other activities during the project: publicize the project / business, think about the report
- Other activities after its completion: project report / annual reports for businesses
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation

Equally important for the success of a project / business are: internal communication and mitigation, conflict resolution, management risks, quality and quantity of human resources, adaptability to market changes, the financial crisis, climate changes and other external factors.

## STEP 5. EVALUATION

This last step usually comes with the ending of a step, activity, project, business, but some of these initiatives require continuous evaluation as well. There are different types of evaluation depending on its purpose and the project / business purpose.

Under the scrutiny of evaluation are:<sup>56</sup>

- the results
- objectives
- the management, including financial
- impact on the organization
- the process

Each of the subjects of evaluation requires a different model of evaluation: ex. ex-ante for some projects, impact evaluation (both on the communities as a result of project activities, as well as on the organization itself), activities evaluation (ex. training courses, intervention activities each with their own evaluation) etc.

For preparing and conducting an evaluation you must consider in advance: the time, planning of the evaluation (design, collecting info, interpreting info, assessment and conclusions, implementing results), communicating the evaluation results to the relevant stakeholders, produce change accordingly.

[56] CoE, Project Management T-Kit, 2000

# Good Practices

## NORTH MACEDONIA

Good Earth Cooperative is a 2015 regional Macedonian winner of the Balkan Green Ideas. It is a cooperative business owned by its members, friends and neighbors and offer nutritious foods and other products for the lowest feasible prices to promote healthful lifestyles, cooperation among food producers and consumers, and environmental quality. It features a produce department with organic, fair-trade, and seasonally local products. They have expanded to cooked food: daily soups and entrée bar. <https://goodearthfoodcoop.coop/>

Challenger is a Macedonian startup that developed a free mobile app with the aim to reduce CO2 emissions and bring positive change in the society by rewarding users for every green mile - spend on foot or by bike. It develops challenges and rewards winners with a direct award from local business partners. It can be found in the Google Store. <https://challenger.mk/>

Vega Solar is a German-Albanian renewable energy company focused on the photovoltaic sector with the aim to accelerate the process of integrating photovoltaic systems into the lives of Albanian families and businesses. The company offers a wide range of products, such as panels, batteries, inverters, and structural components. <https://vegasolar.al/?lang=en>

Hydrogrid is an Austrian energy company specialized in the optimal dispatch and commercialization of flexible, renewable power generators. It offers an automated IoT software for the optimal, real-time planning & dispatch of hydropower plants. HYDROGRID innovative machine learning algorithms and meteorological parameters allow them to create an intelligent inflow forecast for hydropower plants aligned to the SDG goals. <https://hydrogrid.eu/>

Enervalis is a Belgian platform that provides green energy solutions for electric vehicles, microgrids, and buildings. It was established in 2013 with the mission to play a key role in Energy Transition. From the start, Enervalis believed that IOT and Artificial Intelligence (AI) through self-learning algorithms, would be the answer to the mass adoption of “green” consumption in the energy marketplace. It can predict future demands and supply of energy by using weather forecasting, big data, AI, and input from users. The software observes available energy sources and distributes them to customers based on predictions. <https://enervalis.com/>

## ROMANIA

Nod Verde (Green Knot) brands itself as the first food hub in northern Transylvania. A food hub is a platform that collects, stores and distributes products that are locally grown to local consumers. Nod Verde purposes to connect urban consumers in the Cluj Metropolitan area to the rural fruit and vegetable growers and farmers. The 'knot' in their name stands for the interconnectedness of the world of modern consumers and that of the traditional village.

Busy city folk can shop for over 300 locally produced foods on the platform: <https://nodverde.ro/>, which are then delivered in an ecofriendly cardboard box. Small and medium farmers do not have the capacity to produce enough to sell in hypermarkets and find it difficult to access larger markets. The direct connection with consumers ensured by a food hub makes small and medium farms more sustainable.

Made in Pata Rât is a social economy enterprise funded by the Dutch organization Zody in the Roma community that lives on the outskirts of the municipal waste dump near Cluj-Napoca. A wave of racially motivated evictions, combined with the economical attraction of the garbage dump for waste pickers, has led to the development of a large Roma community in the unwholesome environment of the dump, compounding racial, social and ecological injustices. Made in Pata Rât started out as a carpentry and tailoring workshop offered to the teenagers in the community and became an outstanding example of creative upcycling. Teenagers turn reclaimed wood and waste from the dump into funky, artsy interior decor objects or into unique pieces of furniture. They also work on donation-based commissions, if customers approach them to give a new life to an old object or furniture item. Made in Pata Rât is a model of green business which combines vocational training with upcycling. On the one hand, it supports marginalized Roma youth to obtain sought-after qualifications and it capitalizes on the 'wealth' of resources offered by the garbage dump. You can admire their creative aesthetic here: <https://www.facebook.com/madeinpatarat/>

Recolamp is an enterprise specialized in collecting and recycling light bulbs and other light fixtures. Light bulbs should not be discarded with regular waste, because they contribute to mercury pollution of soil and underground waters. Recolamp contributes to the circular economy by striking up partnerships with suppliers of illumination systems, ensuring the recycling of illumination sources at the end of their life cycle. Since 2019, Recolamp extended its operations to recycle household appliances, mobile phones, ACs and others. Specialized recycling is an up-and-coming market filled with opportunities. For more information, consult their website: <https://recolamp.ro>

Made in Roșia Montană is a social economy enterprise that developed on the site of a former gold mining village. Massive street protests in several cities in Romania managed to put a stop to a gold mining development initiative in Roșia Montană that posed serious cyanide pollution risks. It started out as a way of providing alternative sustainable employment to the people in the small mining city via an e-commerce platform where people could purchase handknit items made from merino wool by the women living in the small mining village. The social enterprise took off, benefiting from the wave of public awareness generated by the anti-mining street protests and is now doing very well in international markets thanks to a Deutsche Welle article that covered it. <https://ro.madeinrosiamontana.com/?shpxid=35010cad-8ac5-4bb2-badf-84f6ba5e84ec>

## SERBIA

NewPen makes graphite pencils, and crayons from recycled newsprint. The company NewPen DOO was founded in 2018 in Smederevska Palanka, Serbia, with the aim of offering something new to the market pencils and crayons. Their products, graphite pencils and crayons made from recycled newsprint, aim to protect the environment in many ways. The use of recycled paper instead of wood, non-toxic materials, minimal energy consumption, and predominant manual work in production clearly indicates the company's orientation towards environmental protection.

All these environmentally friendly factors are accompanied by the excellent quality of the graphite found in the pens. NewPen, as the only company in Europe that produces such pencils and crayons, wants to increase people's awareness of the importance of preserving nature. They started production in 2019, and the biggest problem they encountered was the procurement of glue used in production. They were looking for a glue that was made according to health standards, which is not toxic for use or production, but also that the pencil has good quality and strength, but also soft enough to cut easily. They also had a problem finding a company that could supply such glue in sufficient quantities. When they packed all the necessary raw materials and adjusted and set up the machines to work with those raw materials, and that the work was according to all ecological standards, they realized that it would be a small volume of production, but they continued with their work and are satisfied with their business today.

<https://newpen.rs/about-us/>

Andramolje is an ecological and educational toy that supports children's free play - play without instructions and predefined outcomes. The four-member female team was united by the desire to provide children with a meaningful, healthy, and motivating environment. To get to the point where they are now, they crossed a path where they had to overcome numerous obstacles - obtaining safety certificates, optimizing production, and establishing a price that will be competitive in a market full of cheap plastic toys.

They knew they didn't want to make toys out of plastic because they were aware that 90 percent of toys in the world are made of plastic. They also knew that the average lifespan of a toy is about 6 months, after which they end up in landfills and only a small part is recycled. They strove for every raw material they use in their work to be ecological and/or not pollute the environment. They use plywood glued with ecological adhesives, created from wood cut from sustainable forests, ecological wax-based coating, and ecological write-and-erase paint for blackboards, 100 percent cotton wool with OEKO-TEX certification. They use recycled cardboard for packaging. The use of materials that have already been used, such as textiles or other waste, was unfortunately out of the question because they wanted the toys to be completely safe for children and not endanger their health in any way. This is one of the reasons why they chose natural materials, and in addition, natural materials enrich children's senses and connect them with nature.

Plans for the future are to obtain a CE certificate so that they can export toys to the European Union and one day establish their own production process in which they will employ people with disabilities. Because they believe in business ideas that are based on the principles of sustainable development and solidary entrepreneurship. <https://cirkularnaekonomija.org/za-detinjstvo-bez-plastike-igracke-andramolje-osvajaju-srbiju-sledeci-korak-eu/>



Herba Lab is a small family company founded in January 2020, out of a spontaneous desire to make a concrete product that can help people out with something they are otherwise engaged in scientific research. This is how marigold cream, their first product, was born out of research work and a hobby. The company is made up of three young people who are doctors of chemical sciences at the Faculty of Chemistry of the University of Kragujevac.

Their "HERBAL LABORATORY" makes cosmetic products made from the maximum percentage of ingredients of natural origin. By carefully selecting plant oils, macerates, plant extracts, essential oils, and other ingredients of natural origin, they created a series of products for face, body, and hair care. The products are handmade, in small batches, always fresh, without sulfates, parabens, silicones, artificial colors and fragrances, and synthetic preservatives. All raw materials are from renewable sources, they do not use raw materials that are oil derivatives and are used in cosmetic production.

The medicinal plants they use in the production were harvested on their own properties where their parents work and grow medicinal plants. The production facility is small and they use water from their own well, which they purify for their own needs, and they plan to produce their own electricity, but they need additional investments, which they expect to be able to achieve from the support funds. There is no waste in this production, and the resulting waste water is not a problem because all the ingredients are natural and biodegradable. The packaging they use is mainly made of natural biodegradable materials and they use Eco design, which means that the design of the packaging is adapted to reuse and can be used for other purposes.

<https://herbalab.rs/o-nama/>

## SPAIN

Gravity Wave is a five-person start-up from Alicante, Spain dedicated to cleaning the Mediterranean Sea from abandoned fishing nets and plastics, which amount to almost 50% of the residue at sea. It started after the founders came to realize the amount of plastic polluting the seas during a stay in Asia. In 2019, they decided to start a green project to generate change and fight against ocean pollution. Gravity Wave works with other companies by cleaning the ocean in their name. Today, it has collaborated with 80 different companies from Spain and abroad, such as Flying Tiger Copenhagen, Blue Banana or Red Bull. Following a zero-waste policy, the company creates furniture, signs and other products from sea plastics and fishing nets. This activity is possible thanks to their partnership with Enaleia, a network of Greek fishermen who pick up plastic from the sea; and CM Plastik, which collaborates in the fabrication of recycled materials. For more information: <https://www.thegravitywave.com>

eCoDeliver is a package delivery company that follows the same principle as ride-sharing initiatives. Instead of using delivery trucks to transport the merchandise, it provides the opportunity for car users to sign up in their app, indicate the origin and destination of any trip and use the free space in their car to pick up packages in their origin city and deliver them in the eCoDeliver warehouses in the destination city. Then, the packages are delivered around the city by the company's fleet of electric vehicles. By using this method, carbon emissions and other transport-related pollution are reduced, and app users obtain a payment that helps covering their travel costs. The company is currently in its late stage of development, after being presented in in the 2019 Demo Day hosted by CaixaBank for the winners of imaginePlanet Challenge to present their projects to potential investors. The founders of eCoDeliver are three Spanish university students between 20 or 23 years old with a vision to reduce emissions related to online shopping. For more information: <https://www.ecodeliver.es/particular#inicio>

Oscillum is a company from Alicante, founded in 2019. It has created a unique tag that, in contact with food, it gradually changes color to indicate the state of it: yellow when it is fresh and deep blue when it is spoiled and should not be eaten. This tag is functioning as long as it is in contact with the product, regardless whether it is still in its original packaging. It was created as a method to prevent both food waste and food poisoning. Regarding food waste, it is estimated that a third of global food production is thrown away, and a good amount is discarded in households based on its smell or look, even if it is still in good condition. All of this produces great waste and emissions. By using these tags, Oscillum contributes to reducing waste and emissions by allowing consumers and producers to monitor the quality and state of the food. For more information: <https://www.oscillum.com/>

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# Annexes

## MODULE 2 ANNEX: FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES

### European Funding Opportunities

Cohesion Policy Funds are meant to correct imbalances between countries and regions, investing in the EU's political priorities, especially the green and digital transition. It supports interventions on large infrastructure (a more connected Europe) and the environment (a greener Europe). It promotes the transition towards greener and more equitable forms of energy, investments in the green and circular economy, adapting to climate change.

EaSI (The EU programme for Employment and Social Innovation) is a sub-programme under the ESF, that guarantees microfinancing for social enterprises through partner organizations. Even though it doesn't provide non-refundable funds like other EU programmes, microfinancing aims to combat poverty and social exclusion by explicitly targeting vulnerable groups like youth in need of employment, women and Roma. Through its microcredit partner organizations, EaSI targets microenterprises and social enterprises. <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081>

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is an international mobility program for young entrepreneurs that can be mentored by experienced entrepreneurs successfully running a business in another country. The host gets to collaborate with foreign partners and learn about new markets. <https://www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu/page.php?cid=19>

Erasmus+, Key Action 2 fosters collaboration between institutions. Several of its objectives have to do with the Green Deal agenda: education that facilitates the transition to the job market, creating vocational courses that support the transition to green jobs, the continuous education of adults, skilling and reskilling.

ESF+ (The European Social Fund+) is an instrument designed to ensure fair job opportunities for all EU citizens investing in reskilling and upskilling workers to transition to better jobs. It also supports access to the job market for young people, less skilled workers and people from disadvantaged communities through life-long vocational education. The ESF+ supports entrepreneurship and social enterprises in disadvantaged communities in order to further the social inclusion. The ESF+ also supports the transition to a carbon neutral Europe by investing in the creation of future-proof, green jobs and education and vocational training in the fields of the environment, climate, energy and biochemistry

EGF (European Guarantee Fund) is a programme that offers easy to access loans through partner organizations like local banks or micro-financing institutions. It targets enterprises struggling because of the pandemic, that would have otherwise been strong enough to get a loan. Loans through this programme are guaranteed by the European Investment Bank, which makes the process easier to navigate for SME's in dire need of liquidity. <https://www.eib.org/en/products/egf/index.htm?q=&sortColumn=projectsSignedDate&sortDir=desc&pageNumber=0&itemPerPage=25&pageable=true&language=EN&defaultLanguage=EN&statuses=signed&orstatus=s=true&abstractProject=false&orabstractProject=true&orCountries=true&orBeneficiaries=true&orWebsite=true>

Invest EU supports the Green New Deal and Just Transition Policy Objectives combining multiple EU financial instruments, including the European Fund for Strategic Investments into one instrument designed to support EU policies. Within Invest EU, the European Investment Fund offers EFSI Equity Social Impact Investment Instruments. The EU provides capital to business incubators, business angels or investment funds and to financial intermediaries that support social enterprises. <https://ec.europa.eu/investeuportal/desktop/en/index.html>

IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession) is a fund of the European Union that provides non-reimbursable financial assistance to candidate countries and potential candidates for accession to the European Union. Based on the Decision of the European Commission on the transfer of authority for the management of EU pre-accession aid programs to the appropriate bodies in the Republic of Serbia that have met the necessary requirements, the competences for independent management of EU pre-accession aid programs have been transferred. <https://www.energetskiportal.rs/en/funding/>

The Just Transition Mechanism supports economic growth and the creation of new employment in all member states in regions flagged for being at risk from suffering the brunt of the socio-economic cost of the transition from non-sustainable sources of energy to greener alternatives. A map with the regions eligible to apply is available here: [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/funding/jtf/just-transition-platform/](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/funding/jtf/just-transition-platform/) It supports small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) that lead to professional reconversion and diversification in regions previously dependent on fossil fuels. It backs entrepreneurship, research in green technologies, digitalization and the circular economy, repair and recycling. It also supports the reskilling and professional reconversion of workers in order to reenter the job market, and supports the creation of start-ups and new firms and enterprises in fields related to the green and circular economy.

LIFE Programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action that it seeks to encourage social and technical innovation in the environmental and circular economy sectors. Thus, it mainly invites applicants to pilot and best practices projects scalable to real life market conditions through calls for Standard Action Projects (SAP). Its subprograms, The Circular Economy and Quality of Life, support the transition toward a sustainable circular, toxic-free, energy-efficient and climate-resilient economy by financing innovative projects in the fields of the environmental and the circular economy, which include recovery of resources from waste, water, air, noise, soil and chemical management. The Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation sub-programme, which supports innovative projects in the areas of farming, land use and management, renewable energies and energy efficiency. [https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life\\_en](https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en)

### Regional Funding Opportunities

EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development) supports the energy production from renewable sources, by providing loans to public suppliers for the reconstruction of existing and construction of new mini-hydroelectric plants and the production of energy from other renewable sources. The EBRD cooperates with domestic banks through which it realizes credit lines for the realization of projects in the field of energy efficiency in the Western Balkans.

<https://www.ebrd.com/home>

WBIF (Western Balkans Investment Framework) is a joint initiative of the European Commission and partner international financial institutions (EIB, EBRD, DB of CoE and KfW Bank), to support the socio-economic development and accession of the countries of the Western Balkans to Europe, through investment in the field of energy efficiency.

It includes its own private sector platform, the Western Balkans Enterprise Development and Innovation Program (WB EDIF), and works as an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) that directly provides additional funds to support projects in the areas of transport, energy, environment, competitiveness, innovation and capacity building. WBIF consists of the Joint Fund for Grant Funds and the Joint Fund for Lending, and their goal is to unite and coordinate different sources of financing, primarily loans with grant funds, for priority projects in the region. <https://www.wbif.eu/>

GGF (Green for Growth Fund), also known as The Green Development Fund of Southeast Europe, was established in 2009 as a specialized fund for the improvement of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources in Southeast Europe (including Turkey), as well as in the nearby neighboring region, and in the Middle East and North Africa. Launched by the European Investment Bank and KfW Development Bank, GGF is an innovative public-private partnership established to reduce energy consumption and CO2 emissions. The fund provides refinancing to local commercial banks, non-bank financial institutions such as microfinance institutions and leasing companies and other selected financial institutions providing loans to households, businesses, municipalities and the public sector for energy efficiency measures or renewable energy projects. GGF also offers direct financing to energy service companies, renewable energy companies or projects and energy efficiency services and suppliers that address energy savings and emissions targets. <https://www.ggf.lu/>

KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau), the German Development Bank (KfW) is one of the largest foreign banks that, in partnership with EU institutions and cooperation with national banks, provides favorable loans for financing agriculture, energy efficiency, renewable energy, environment and sustainability. <https://www.kfw-entwicklungsbank.de/International-financing/KfW-Entwicklungsbank/>

## National Funding Opportunities

### ROMANIA

In Romania, the ESF+ funds two programmes: the Operational Programme for Education and Employment and the Operational Programme for Social Inclusion and Social Dignity. The Operational Programme for Education and Employment programme offers courses, grants to start an enterprise or a combination of the two. But also free entrepreneurship courses or vocational training in a certain area, as well as opportunities for on-the-job training, mentorship and counseling. There are programmes that pair entrepreneurship training with competitions where you can win a grant to start your own business and benefit from free consulting before and after your idea takes off the ground. The programme will also support social enterprises that increase employment among youth from disadvantaged communities and digitalization of SME's. <https://oportunitati-ue.gov.ro/programul-operational-educatie-si-ocupare/>

The Operational Programme for Social Inclusion and Social Dignity supports community development and community led projects in poor and marginalised areas, with a focus on the valorification of their touristic potential. The 4th axis of the program is dedicated to social inclusion in disadvantaged communities, and explicitly flags Roma as potential beneficiaries. <https://oportunitati-ue.gov.ro/programul-operational-incluziune-si-demnitare-sociala/>

Regional Development Agencies are the intermediate institutions that manage the EU Funds at regional level. They have a monthly newsletter with the available financial programs and deadlines sorted by topics and entities: investment funding opportunities, support financing schemes, investment programs in local, green and renewable energies businesses. The national institution offers regular training courses on developing and managing businesses using EU funds. <https://www.roreg.eu/fonduri-europene/catalogul-finan%C8%9B%C4%83rilor-disponibile>The Norwegian and SEE Grants represents

the contribution of Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway to reduce social and economic disparities and strengthen the bilateral relationship with 15 countries from CEE. They have developed in Romania 12 financing programs among which those dedicated to energy, environment and business development tackle the green businesses. <https://www.eeagrants.ro/en>

## SERBIA

National Employment Service of the Republic of Serbia, in addition to a large number of projects financed from various sources, also implemented two direct grants that were financed with IPA funds for increasing employability, i.e. creating new opportunities for employment of the unemployed, especially for groups that are more difficult to employ on the labor market, and providing support to those groups on the labor market in various ways. <https://www.nsz.gov.rs/>

Fund For Innovation Activity of The Republic of Serbia is the only state organization specialized in providing support to innovative activity and managing financial resources to encourage innovation, which is mandated by law. Through several programs it encourages: early development programs, innovation co-financing program, science and business cooperation program, catapult program, innovation vouchers and several other programs. <http://www.inovacionifond.rs/cir/program>

Ministry of Environmental Protection allocates funds to support civil society projects in the field of environmental protection, financed by the European Union  
<https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/dokumenta/cirkularna-ekonomija/cirkularna-ekonomija>  
<https://www.ekologija.gov.rs/obavestjenja/finansijska-podrska-projektima>-organizacija-civilnog-drustva

European Union for the Green Agenda in Serbia contributes to all five areas covered by the Green Agenda from the Paris Agreement: decarbonization, energy efficiency and reduction of industrial emissions; circular economy for efficient use of resources and industrial symbiosis; reduction of environmental pollution with a focus on air quality; protection and investment in biodiversity and ecosystems; sustainable food systems and rural development. <https://www.euzatebe.rs/rs/projekti/eu-za-zelenu-agendu-u-srbiji>

The digital platform of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce for the circular economy (The CE Platform) is intended for direct communication between companies, as well as for presenting examples of good practices and new ideas, through which different clusters are formed and new business contacts made.

Local banks, with support of the international financial institutions such as EIB, World Bank or EBRD developed funds aimed at the green economy, circular economy, reducing the consequences of climate change and renewable energy sources, green agriculture and green tourism. <https://www.energetskiportal.rs/en/funding/>

## SPAIN

Cámara de comercio is a national economic institution with various programs to support entrepreneurship, including counselling, guidance and legal assistance to set up a new business. <https://www.camara.es/>

ENISA is a national platform for entrepreneurship and start-up financing, which is currently increasing its interest in innovative and green projects. <https://www.enisa.es/>

ICO, the Official Institute of Credit, which apart from offering funds and loans for new business, has specific bonuses for green and social enterprise which facilitate transition to a green economy. <https://www.ico.es/>

Fundación Biodiversidad is a foundation dedicated to green transition and biodiversity protection, which offer trainings and opportunities for green employment and entrepreneurship <https://www.fundacion-biodiversidad.es/es>

Ministry of Ecologic Transition offers subsidies for green transition and green projects, but only for associations and third sector entities.

Red Empreverde is a governmental network that collects information on many different funding opportunities and assistance programmes for green entrepreneurship, as well as trainings and resources to start a green business <https://www.redempreverde.es/pg/pages/view/34/Recursos>

### Other Funding Opportunities

GEF (Global Environmental Facility) was established ahead of the Earth Summit in Rio to address the most pressing environmental problems. The GEF is the largest multilateral trust fund focused on enabling developing countries to invest in nature and achieve implementation of major international environmental conventions, including biodiversity, climate change, chemicals and desertification. The GEF brings together 184 member governments, in addition to civil society, international organizations and partners in the private sector. Through its Small Grants Program, GEF has supported more than 26,000 civil society and community initiatives in 135 countries. <https://www.thegef.org/>

IFC (International Finance Corporation), as one of the members of the World Bank group, is the largest global institution that is oriented exclusively to the private sector of developing countries. It was founded in 1956, and is owned by 184 member countries that collectively determine its policy. The corporation's work enables growing companies and financial institutions to create jobs, improve corporate governance and environmental performance, and contribute to their communities. [https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/Topics\\_Ext\\_Content/IFC\\_External\\_Corporate\\_Site/Climate+Business](https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/Topics_Ext_Content/IFC_External_Corporate_Site/Climate+Business)

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) supports all the goals set in the Green Agenda for Serbia through various programs: <https://www.undp.org/sr/serbia/ciljevi-odr%C5%BEivog-razvoja#odgovorna-potrosnja-proizvodnja>

## MODULE 3 ANNEX: STORYTELLING, CONTENT MARKETING

### Target Audience questionnaire

1. Choose your age group
  - 18–24
  - 35–44
  - 55–64
  - 25–34
  - 45–54
  - 65+
2. Your level of education .....
3. Status
  - Single
  - Divorced
  - Widowed
  - Married
  - Separated
  - Other .....
4. Employment status
  - Employed
  - Not employed, not looking for work
  - Other.....
  - Not employed, looking for work
  - Retired
5. Are you aware of “Green products” or Eco-friendly products”?
  - Yes
  - No
  - A little
6. How you became aware of green products or Eco-friendly products?
  - Television
  - Magazines
  - Word of mouth
  - Class lectures
  - Other.....

To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?

Please check one mark from 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree

Strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      Strongly agree


              

7. Environmental protection is important to me when making product purchases
8. I believe that green products help to reduce pollution (water, air, etc.)
9. I believe that green products help to save nature and its resources
10. Given a choice, I will prefer a green product over a conventional product
11. My interaction with people influences me to buy green products
12. My acquaintances would approve of my decision to buy green products
13. It is entirely my decision to buy green products
14. I cannot pay more to buy green products
15. I require a lot of time to search for green products
16. I am confident about credibility of green product labels (ex: energy efficient rating such as 5-star energy efficient)
17. I plan to purchase green products
18. I will purchase green products in my next purchase
19. People who are important to me want me to buy green products
20. It is important for me to understand the ways of nature and act accordingly
21. I should maintain harmony with nature

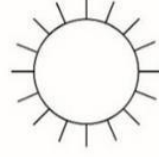
22. Being the master of the world, human beings are entitled to deploy any of the natural resources as they like
23. I avoid buying products that have excessive packaging
24. When there is a choice, I choose the product that causes the least pollution
25. I have switched products/brands for ecological reasons
26. I make every effort to buy paper products made from recycled paper
27. I use environmentally friendly soaps and detergent
28. I have convinced members of my family or friends not to buy some products which are harmful to the environment
29. Whenever possible, I buy products packaged in reusable containers
30. I try to buy products that can be recycled

## Persona Canvas worksheet

# PERSONA CANVAS

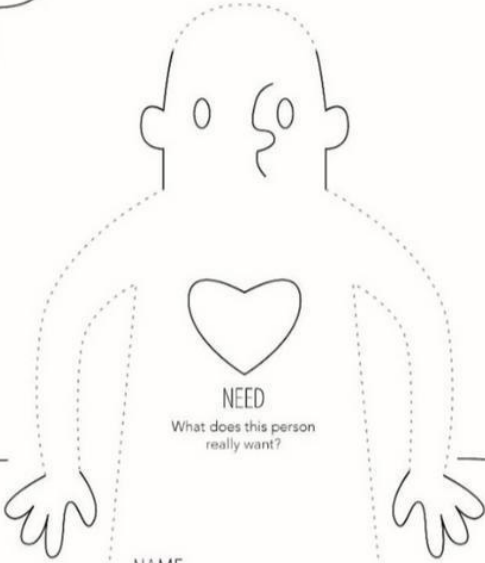


**NEGATIVE TRENDS**  
Negative trends from the environment



**POSITIVE TRENDS**  
Positive trends from the environment

**HEADACHES**  
Professional and work related issues



**NEED**  
What does this person really want?

**OPPORTUNITIES**  
Professional and work related positive outcomes

**FEARS**  
Personal issues

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ROLE \_\_\_\_\_

**HOPES**  
Personal goals and hopes

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## Social media Canvas worksheet

### Social Media Canvas

Project name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Version: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Goal</b> Write what success looks like for you. </p>	<p><b>Content Topics</b> Jot down a few key categories you can post around. </p>	<p><b>Team</b> Pick who will coordinate. </p>
<p><b>Channels</b> Select which channels you want to leverage. </p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p><input type="checkbox"/> </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> </p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p><input type="checkbox"/> </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> </p> </div> </div>	<p><b>Content Format</b> Identify what post formats your users prefer. </p>	<p><b>Budget</b> Outline your spending. </p>
<p><b>Rhythm</b> Plan when you will post on social media. </p>	<p><b>Content Tone</b> Choose a tone to create the feeling users want. </p>	

Social Media Canvas | © Orange Cube Group | orangecubegroup.com



## Storytelling Canvas worksheet

# STORYTELLING CANVAS

<b>SUBJECT</b> What is the story about?	<b>GOAL</b> What do you want to achieve with this copy?	<b>AUDIENCE</b> What is your story's audience? What are their needs?		
<b>BEFORE</b> What does your audience think, feel, know, want, before they have experienced your story?	<b>1. SET THE SCENE</b> What do you need to introduce? What should be set up or explained?	<b>2. MAKE YOUR POINT</b> The audience's A-to-Z moment.	<b>3. CONCLUSION</b> The end of your story. What is the conclusion? What is your call to action?	<b>AFTER</b> What does your audience think, feel, know, want, after they have experienced your story?

DESIGNED BY: CHRIS LAKE (@lakey) Co-founder @empiricalproof

## Content Strategy Canvas worksheet

# The Content Strategy Canvas

DESIGNED FOR:

DESIGNED BY:

DATE:

VERSION:

<b>Audience</b> - Personas - User stories - Customer journey mapping - Location	<b>Audit</b> - Legacy content - Gap analysis - Competitor benchmarking - SEO - Technology	<b>Production</b> - Team - Style guide - Metadata - Publishing checklist	<b>Formats</b> - Pages - Posts - Videos - Webinars - Slideshows - Events	<b>Distribution</b> - Key channels - Paid vs organic - Social media - PR
<b>Brand</b> - Tone of voice - Brand guidelines - Core tenets	<b>Workflow</b> - Tools - Calendar - Revisions and updates - Keyword research	<b>Stakeholders</b> - Interviews - Sign off - Legal and compliance - Budget	<b>Goals</b> - Macro - Micro - Metrics - Reporting	


DESIGNED BY: CHRIS LAKE (@lakey) Co-founder @empiricalproof

EmpiricalProof  
Mission control for digital teams

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## Vision Canvas worksheet

### 5 BOLD STEPS VISION® CANVAS



**THEME**

**THEME**

**THEME**

**THEME**

**THEME**

**VISION STATEMENT**  
What is the future state of your business? How are you going to help your customer?

**SUPPORTS**  
What are the supports that strengthen you while reaching your vision?

**BOLD STEPS**  
The big steps towards your vision

5. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

**CHALLENGES**  
What are the challenges that hinder you while reaching your vision?

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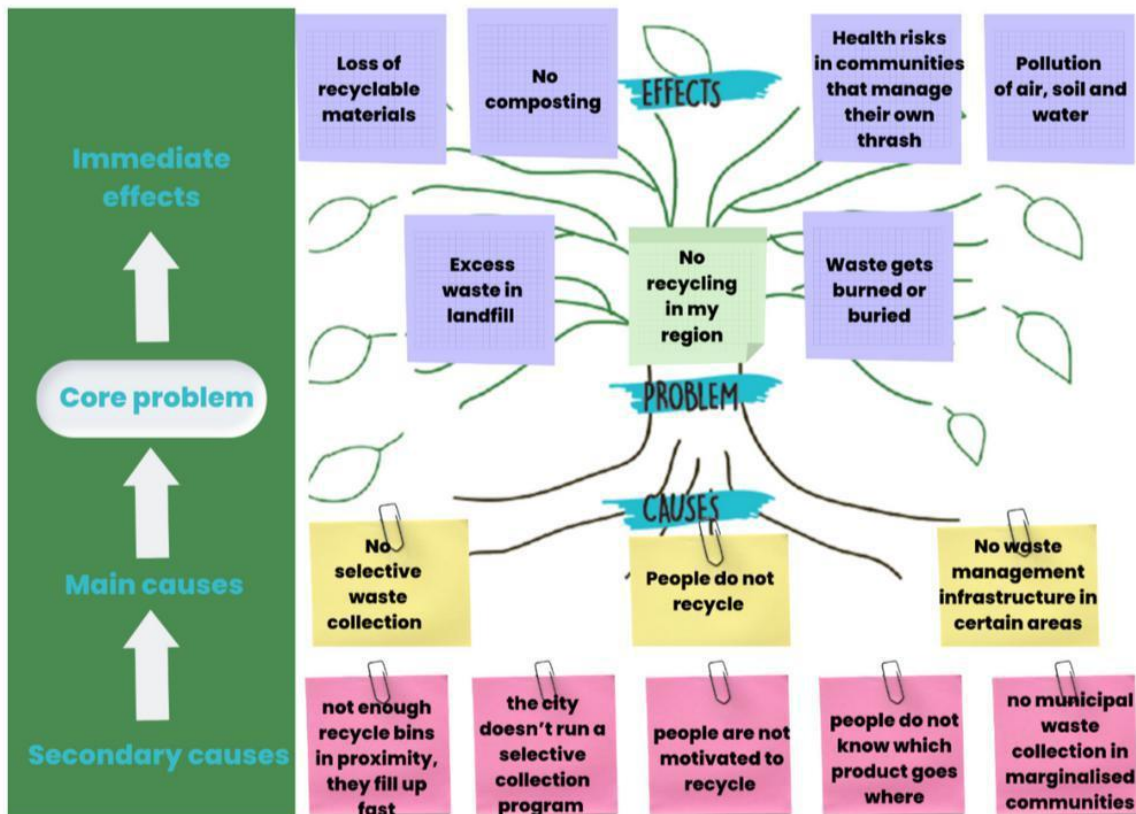
THE GROVE  
CONSULTANTS INTERNATIONAL

The 5 bold steps vision canvas was originally designed by David Sibson

## MODULE 5 ANNEX: NEW AND IMPROVED FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES

### Problem tree

problem tree around the issue of recycling in an area where waste management in disadvantaged communities is also a problem. The municipality leaves people to manage trash on their own in communities that lack waste management infrastructure.



### Milestones Chart

