

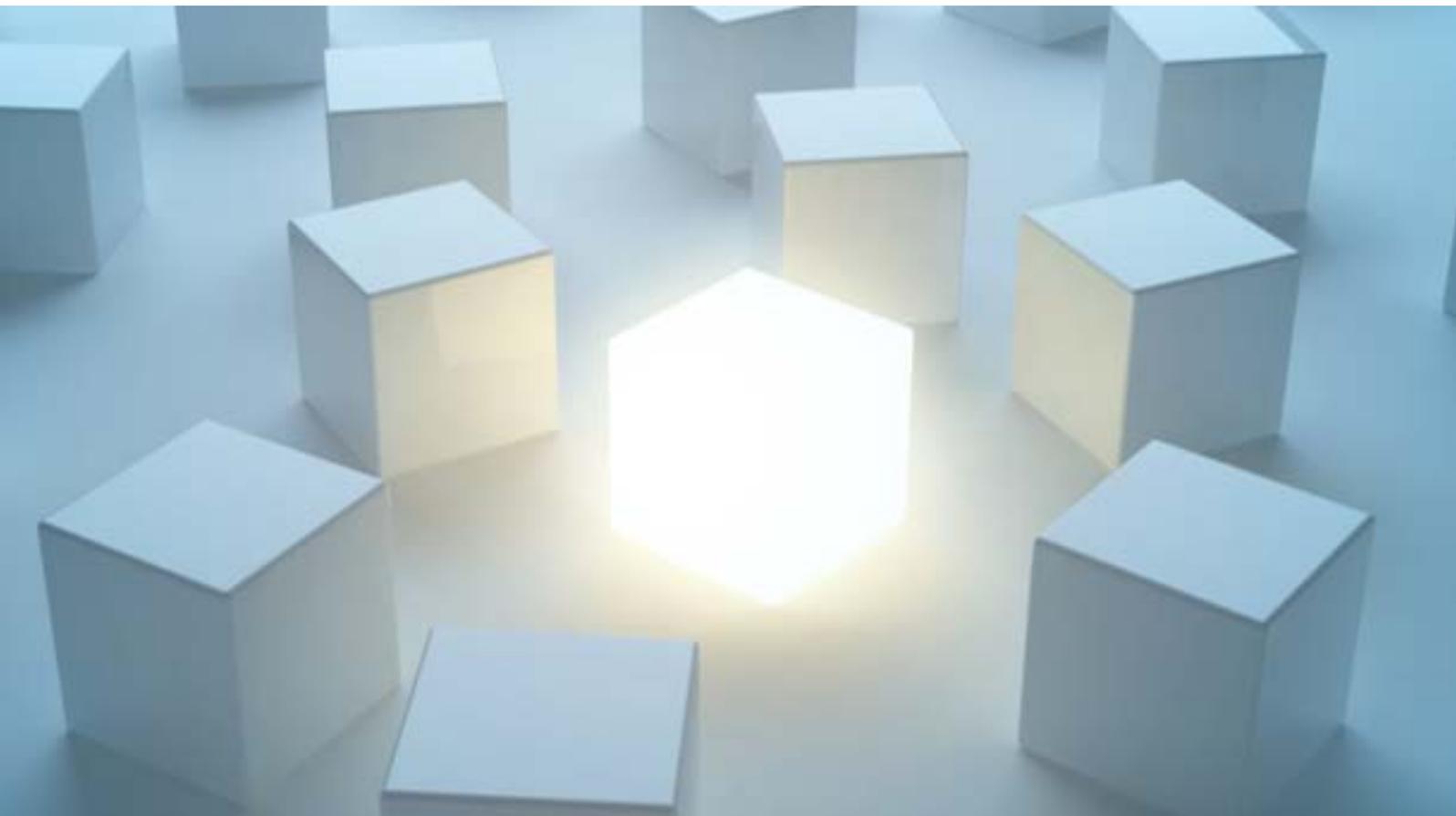


IMP<sup>3</sup>rove

European Innovation Management Academy

# IMP<sup>3</sup>rove “Mini MBA” on Innovation Management

An Integrated Training on-the-Job for Researchers and  
(Project) Managers  
2019



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## Executive summary

Companies of different sizes see the benefit – and the need - to develop their innovation management system. They understand that this is the pre-requisite for their future profitable growth and competitiveness. However, the knowledge in innovation management is not yet sufficiently developed within many organisations. On the other side, training offerings on innovation management often are too academic or too time-consuming. Therefore, IMP3rove Academy has developed a training programme which follows the process of developing a highly visionary idea into a successful innovation.

The training focusses on innovation capacity development for ambitious individuals who seek to prepare for, or improve at, a role as an Innovation Responsible within a company, or anyone who wants to gain a qualification in innovation management. The training develops skills required to successfully develop brilliant ideas into successful and sustainable innovation projects.

The uniqueness of this "Mini MBA" on innovation management lies in its combination of following the various steps of the innovation development process while at the same time integrating strategic, financial and cultural aspects which emerge as the innovation project evolves. This approach ensures high practical relevance for a specific innovation project while embedding a holistic approach to innovation management in the organisation.

This comprehensive training has a **proven track record of success**. It has been adopted by companies from different industries, of different sizes, from very different countries to train their researchers and develop their innovation management capabilities.

The IMP3rove "Mini MBA" builds on a holistic approach to innovation management and on the definition as provided in the **Oslo Manual** and the **CEN TS 16555**, where product, service, process as well as business model innovation are perceived as drivers for value and competitiveness of companies.

## Benefits of the IMP<sup>3</sup>rove “Mini MBA”

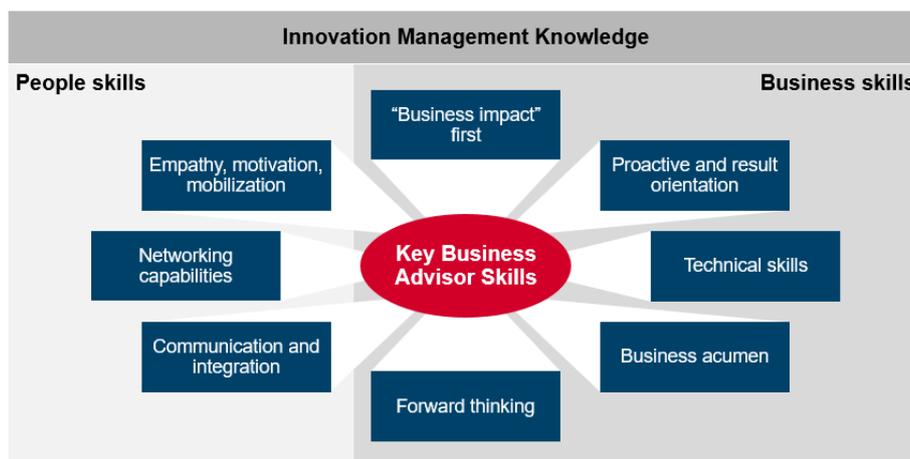
### For participants

The training brings real benefits for **participants** both in terms of business and personal development. The training ensures participants dispose of innovation management skills that include:

- Mobilising with vision and ambition
- Mastering innovation projects
- Shaping “brilliant ideas” into “exponential innovations”
- Effective innovation project, risk and stakeholder management
- Effectively engaging an organization in innovation
- Developing a compelling business case for innovation projects
- Reaching ambitious goals without institutional power
- Benchmarking the innovation management capabilities of an organisation, deriving and implementing high impact improvement measures aligned to the organisation’s ambition to grow and their ability to change
- Successfully managing ambitious innovation projects with clear targets and milestones (budget, time, quality, etc.) in an organisational environment
- Taking a strategic view on how innovation will effectively support the company’s profitable growth and developing an implementable roadmap
- Taking an entrepreneurial approach to decision-making and risk management

Indeed, beyond transferring knowledge on innovation management, our training **develops business and people skills** that are both required to successfully operate in the organisational environment, and to achieve an innovation project’s targets.

#### Key skills for Innovation Responsibles



**Figure 1:** Overview on people and business skill profile for Innovation Responsibles

**Business skills** are necessary to flourish in the management of industrial innovation. The Innovation Responsibles develop their skills in identifying opportunities for **business impact** from an innovation project for their company. This may come from technical features that create value or from the business model with which the new offering will be marketed to the customers most profitably. With further developed business skills, the Innovation Responsible is more likely to meet the expectations of the company management and their investors. They will focus on business opportunities and risks complementary to the technical features that an innovation project is based upon.

The Innovation Responsibles also learn how to develop **a project plan with clear and measurable targets and milestones** so they can manage a project on innovation based on these targets and milestones. This will help to maintain transparency throughout the development of a project and facilitate the communication with company management, the coordinator, other employees, and external partners.

Participants' **business acumen** is developed by enhancing their skills in innovation management and in developing compelling business cases. These build the basis for the company's managers and their investors/shareholders to take educated decisions related to the development of an innovation project and to mitigate the risk for the company. In addition, these business cases might create the basis for applying for funding. Highlighting potential alternatives in the business cases will demonstrate the Innovation Managers' skills in deploying their expertise in the technical areas for developing relevant options from an economic impact perspective. Thus, the Innovation Responsibles can develop and demonstrate their business acumen.

**The fore-sighting skills** are critical for the development of compelling business cases. Understanding the trends in the demand, in demographic changes, in public regulation and political changes will help participants to not only develop an innovation project based on technological feasibility but also in terms of responding to opportunities in new markets, new customer groups or new marketing and sales channels as well as in chances to collaborate with new partners that will accelerate the development or facilitate it due to co-funding possibilities.

**People skills** are the entry to gain acceptance in the organisation, mobilize and motivate colleagues to actively contribute and support the development of innovation, and to convince the organisation's management and investors. The **business skills** are essential to ensure that the innovation project achieves – and ideally exceeds the defined business targets. These skills are developed as an integral part of the training, addressed in separate individual modules as well as transferred via online peer-learning approaches.

**Engaging and mobilizing** colleagues highly depends on the researcher's or project manager's ability to understand co-workers' level of ambition, their own objectives, their past experience in interacting with internal and external partners and their workload independent from an innovation project. Innovation Responsibles need the tools and techniques to develop their skills in motivating and mobilizing their co-workers without having a clear supervisory role towards them. If the Innovation Responsibles **demonstrate the empathy** towards co-workers it will become much easier to **network** with them. Understanding and **communicating** "what is in it for the co-workers" and "what is against their interest" will also help to understand the company's (innovation) culture and to effectively integrate them in the innovation project.

These business and people skills for innovation in an organisational context are trained in a highly customized approach incorporating the Innovation Responsibles' different backgrounds, and the participating companies' specific situation (e.g. in terms of their industry sector, level of ambition of the management, risk appetite of the shareholders and investor, status of an innovation project, dynamics of the markets the innovation is intended to be introduced).

## For companies

The benefits for the **company** can be seen by the progress that is generated in the innovation projects' results and performance, and in the firm's focus on and capabilities in innovation management. For example, the benefits can be seen in the significant progress that a visionary idea can make in terms of technical feasibility, in terms of its potential for a truly radical innovation with a high potential for exponential growth or social impact, and in terms of its economic viability for the

company. The company's innovation pipeline will become more valuable and filled in a more systematic manner.

Besides these business performance-oriented criteria, the training has benefits for the company's organisational development. Companies and their involved employees learn new approaches to develop ideas with the potential for a radical innovation involving academic expertise. Moreover, the organisations gain knowledge and capabilities to systematically manage innovation and their innovation network in terms of both quality and size. This positively impacts the jobs offered by the companies as well as on the employability of their staff members.

## For academia, intermediaries and policy makers

Beyond researchers, innovation managers in companies, there is also great value for **academic institutions, intermediaries (development agencies or trade associations) and policy makers**. For the academic institutions, for instance, the IMP³rove "Mini MBA" will develop the skills of their early stage researchers in the area of innovation management and in industrial project management. Thus, the employability of these researchers inside and outside academia will be significantly enhanced.

For **intermediaries** such as trade associations, regional development agencies or cluster management, the IMP³rove "Mini MBA" offers the opportunity to put focus on profitable growth by innovation with a highly integrated training programme that leverages concrete innovation projects within companies to develop state-of-the-art innovation management skills in an industrial context. Similar benefits can be achieved for **policy makers**. The IMP³rove "Mini MBA" has been successfully implemented within a programme to develop the skills in innovation management of international young researchers working in a small or medium sized company to develop an ambitious innovation project while at the same time fostering the growth and internationalisation of those companies.

## Training approach

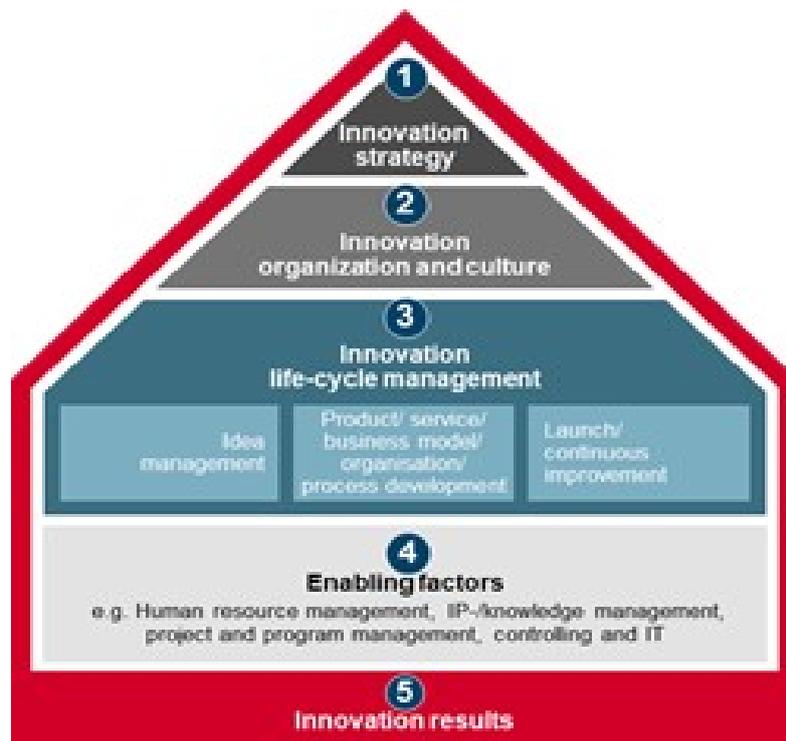
The IMP3rove "Mini MBA" programme, builds on and makes use of our comprehensive experience in large scale training programmes on innovation management for managers, business advisors, consultants, and those responsible for innovation within an organisation. Below we outline some of pillars of our training approach.

### "What is the problem to be solved"

During the exploration of an innovative idea's potential and the establishment of an innovation framework within the company, the Innovation Responsibles as well as the project coordinator and the company management must balance the research and development efforts with the commercial viability of the potential innovation. In addition, the investors', respectively shareholders', risk appetite has to be taken into consideration during the development of the "brilliant" idea. This balance is required along the entire innovation life-cycle from the definition of the idea to its development into a viable innovation, and finally its successful launch in the market. Examples of successful innovations illustrate that a clear focus on the – potential – market at any stage in the process is mandatory. Innovation within a company builds on a clear problem statement providing the answer to the question "what is the job that needs to be done". Ideally it aims at "exponential" growth opportunities or social impact. From our international experience in innovation management training and coaching we learned that the overriding question "what is the problem that is to be solved", is often not clearly defined and even if so, not well communicated - neither within the organisation nor to the innovation partners. Therefore, our programme ensures individuals are trained in this problem-solving innovation approach.

### Holistic approach to innovation management in line with CEN TS 16555 and ISO 5600X

This training is based on a holistic approach to innovation management addressing the innovation strategy, innovation organisation and culture, the innovation lifecycle, the innovation-enabling factors as well as the innovation results measured by growth in revenue, profit and number of employees. In such a holistic approach, the innovation strategy is driven by the organization and innovation culture into action. These actions are organized in the innovation process to generate the innovation results with the deployment and support of the innovation-enabling factors.



**Figure 2:** A.T. Kearney “House of Innovation”

The training and coaching of the Innovation Responsibles stresses very much the **value** that is created by such a holistic approach to innovation and innovation management for the enterprise, for the enterprise’s customers, employees and other key stakeholders as well as for the society. At the same time, the envisaged training scheme will not neglect the **operational focus on the project level**, which the Innovation Responsibles are concentrating on. The value based on this combined perspective might finally result from growth in revenue, in profit, in technology leadership, increase in market share, and/ or increased sustainability (economic, ecologic and social) and social impact.

To conclude, the training and coaching for the participants of the IMP3rove “Mini MBA” addresses the various **steps in the innovation life-cycle management** with a strong focus on the innovation process as defined in CEN TS 16555-1, ISO 5600x, and in the definition of innovation in the Oslo Manual.

## Training contents and structure

The IMP<sup>3</sup>rove “Mini MBA” comprises seminars, webinars/e-learning, networking online events, and individual on-demand support. The content of all these training elements are aligned to the steps that will be required for a successful and ambitious innovation project.

### Seminars

The seminar programme consists in general of **4 seminars**, each encompassing **3 consecutive training days**. However, they can be scheduled also as a highly concentrated programme or offered as 12 single day seminar programme. All seminars are designed as **action-learning experience** for the participants. This means that the seminars do not only encompass lecture-based learning, but rather highly interactive break-out sessions. During these sessions the theoretical knowledge is applied. Moreover, all interactive sessions relate to the concrete situation in the company and of the Innovation Responsible there. Any previous experiences and lessons learned are encouraged to be discussed in the plenary while at the same time protecting confidential information. This **peer-learning** increases the practical experience of all participants. A strong focus is put on the business impact of defined measures. The figure below draws out the main focus topic for each day of the 4 seminars we offer. We remain flexible and tailor the training to the specific needs of the company and participants.

	Seminar 1	Seminar 2	Seminar 3	Seminar 4
Day 1	Innovation management	Innovation strategy and performance	Open innovation	Innovation marketing
Day 2	Industrial innovation project management	Innovation life-cycle management	Design thinking	European and national funding schemes
Day 3	Engaging the organisation in innovation	Intellectual property rights	Business model innovation	Success stories and continuous improvement

**Figure 3:** Overview of the focus topics for each day of the 4 seminars

#### Seminar 1: Providing an overview on innovation management

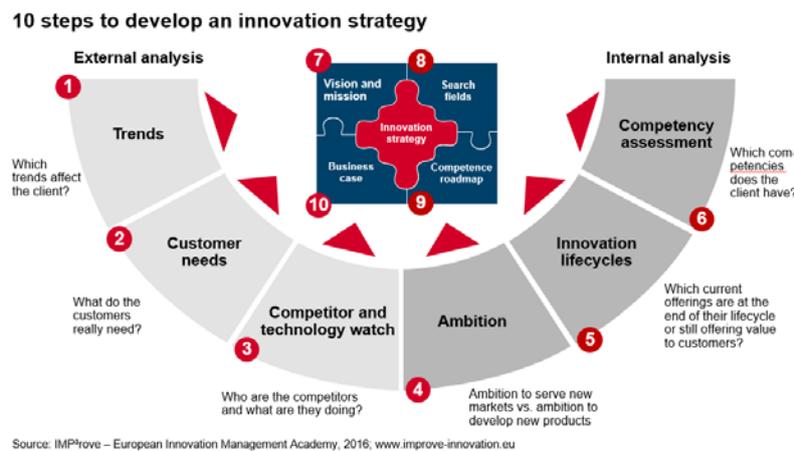
Seminar 1 starts with an **overview on innovation management** (as defined e.g. in CEN TS 16555-1 or ISO 5600x) in an organisational context combined with an introduction to the IMP<sup>3</sup>rove Innovation Management Assessment. Thus, the participants will gain insights into the company’s current innovation management performance based on international benchmarks. These insights will be complemented with an understanding of the differences between industrial innovation projects and academic research projects. Especially when young researchers start their career in a company they need to understand the different drivers and success factors. Being often rather new in the organisations, these researchers will need to also understand how to integrate into and engage the organisation in innovation.

#### Seminar 2: Aligning the organisation for innovation

Building on this baseline on innovation management, in the second seminar we cover the **challenges to align the organisation for innovation** by setting the right strategic focus and actively

managing the life-cycle process of an innovation. From a strategic point of view, it is very important to also identify intellectual property issues and rights at a very early stage. Already during the shaping of the idea and preparation for the development, significant value can be secured if **IP issues** are addressed properly.

A well-structured approach guides the Innovation Responsibles through the key steps to **develop a clear innovation strategy** for the company. As our IMP³rove benchmarking database shows, SMEs in particular tend to lack a clear innovation strategy. Therefore, we present to the participants the 10 steps that will lead to an effective innovation strategy for the company. These 10 steps are presented in the visual below.



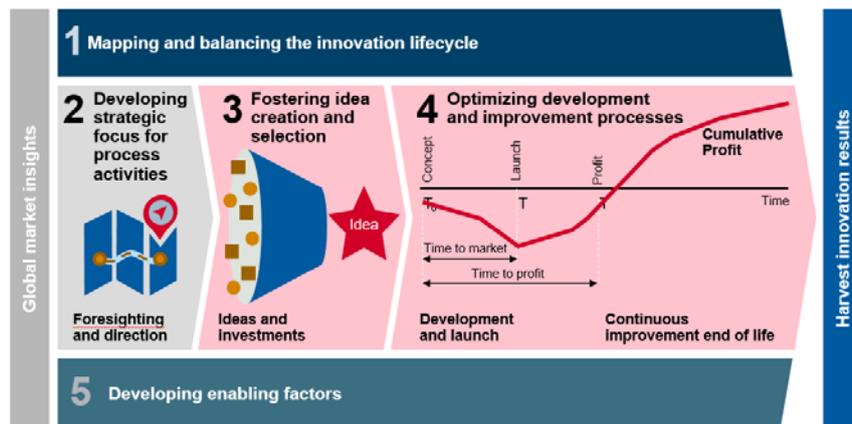
**Figure 4:** The 10 steps to develop an innovation strategy

Especially if the organisation has completed the Innovation Management Assessment at this point in time and has identified significant improvement potentials related to either the definition of the strategy or its implementation, changes might be triggered by the defined improvement measures that need to be adequately communicated internally. Hence, as a result of this seminar, the Innovation Responsibles learn about **effective approaches to ensure strategic alignment** with the innovation.

Moving on from the strategic level, participants experience the active management of the **innovation life cycle** during day 2. They learn about the key levers, and how they can be effectively used to implement a highly effective and efficient process from idea management to development, launch, continuous improvement until the point when the former innovation will be phased out. The **link to the innovation strategy** is established that ideally provides the criteria for selecting the ideas, developing them, and measuring the impact from launch and continuous improvement.

We then introduce approaches how to develop, and jointly agree with the coordinator, the milestones and key performance indicators during the development of the innovation. This provides all parties involved with a solid basis for project management and with high transparency on the actual development of the innovation. We introduce the participants to **risk management** strategies that allow them to communicate effectively concerning emerging risks and how to develop recommendations upon which the firm's management can make well-educated decisions.

### Innovation life cycle management framework



Source: A.T. Kearney, "Masters of Innovation", 2015; www.atkearney.com

**Figure 9:** Innovation life cycle management

An important part of the innovation life cycle management is the development and protection of **intellectual property**, which is captured on day 3. The participants are introduced to the various options of intellectual property development and protection. They also learn how to enhance the value during the innovation life cycle by effective intellectual property management at a rather early stage. Issues on intellectual property lead to the challenge of **external collaboration** in innovation projects. This topic is covered in the third seminar.

In sum, after day 2, the Innovation Responsible has gained experience in developing an innovation strategy and in **actively managing the innovation life-cycle** for their innovation project - from the very beginning to the end, when the innovation is phased out. This life cycle management will also build on insights gained from best practice examples in **managing intellectual property** for increased value of the company.

### Seminar 3: Leveraging proven approaches for an industrial innovation project

With this set of tools and knowledge, the Innovation Responsible is introduced in Seminar 3 to complementary tools which leading innovators apply. They include **open innovation approaches**, especially how to collaborate with external partners during the development of the visionary idea and how to **open up markets in collaboration** between small and large companies. Design-thinking tools and business model innovation will contribute to the value of the targeted innovation to be developed with the support of the Innovation Responsible. These approaches are introduced in a hands-on approach suitable for the specific company context.

During the training, participants learn the **three phases of open innovation** that include prepare, partner and pioneer.<sup>1</sup> During the preparation phase, common objectives must be defined that are aligned in terms of a clear problem statement (what problem will the innovation solve) and commonly agreed timelines and clear interfaces between the organisations are defined. During the partnering phase, participants gain insights into approaches to agree on the details regarding the project's benefits, risks, roles and responsibilities. During the pioneering phase, the company explores the technical and economic opportunities of an innovation project with the partner and will deliver the results in close cooperation. In **case examples**, participants will learn where the pitfalls in open innovation are and how to master them. The participants are also asked to share best practice

<sup>1</sup> World Economic Forum Report „Collaborative Innovation“, p 11

examples of successful **collaboration and networking with external partners** and how to translate them into their current project or company setting.

During day 2, participants are introduced to the **concept of design thinking**. The open innovation and the design-thinking approach is complemented by the **business model innovation** workshop on day 3. Here the participants learn how to enhance the value of their innovation not just by leveraging leading-edge technologies but also by clearly defining and reviewing the unique value proposition of the innovation, identifying the right distribution channels, addressing the most suitable customer segments and defining the cost-revenue model.

#### **Seminar 4: Looking beyond boundaries**

In the final seminar, we look into the company's value chains, introduce European and national funding schemes and shed light on success stories and best practices in innovation management. The following graphic provides an overview on the specific contents of Seminar 4.

With the final seminar, we highlight the **learning curve** that some of the participants have already taken since the beginning of this training and coaching programme. The nature of this is of course adapted depending on the length and nature the training itself took for these participants. We showcase the development that some of the participants and companies have made, and what the key success factors were to achieve this. Thus, we create momentum and support further the community-building among the participants so that they continue **sharing their ideas and good practices in innovation management**.

### Webinars and e-learning

Complementing the training programme, **webinars** are offered to strengthen the knowledge transfer from the seminars. The webinars cover both new topics not covered in the seminars that are suitable to be addressed in a 2-hour webinar and **specific details of topics** that have been covered in the seminars but could not be elaborated there for time reasons. Our experience shows that the more related the topics are to the day-to-day work of the participants, the higher the level of attendance will be.

For some webinars, we collect **input from the participating Innovation Responsibles** in advance to ensure high focus on the target groups' specific requirements. This is also an opportunity to mobilise and engage the participants, and to develop the community. For each webinar, there will be follow-up actions which might also link to the discussion in the **participants' LinkedIn group** that might be established.

As a result, participants of these webinars gain **complementary insights on key issues related to innovation management**. They also learn from their colleagues' experience in other companies. The planned topics are scheduled in line with the topics covered in the seminars. Thus, we ensure consistency, additional knowledge gain, networking and community-building.

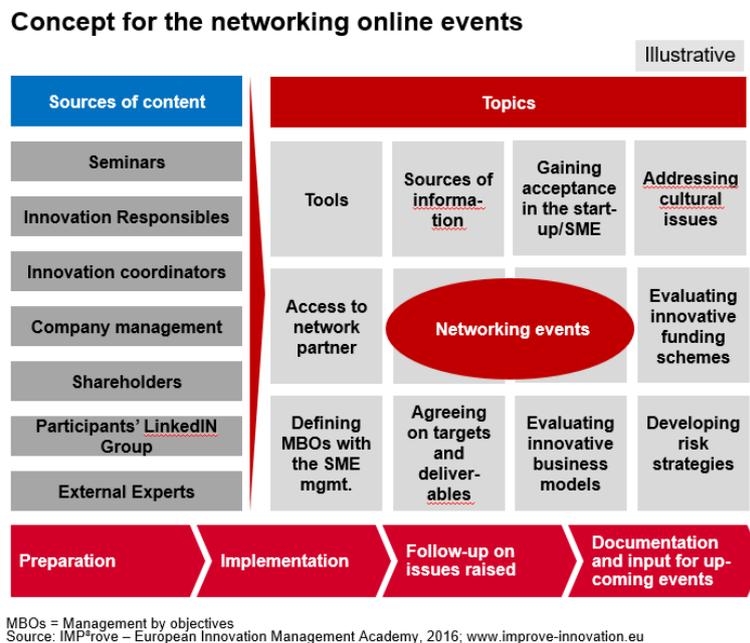
Based on our experience, **interaction during the webinars** increases the attractiveness for the participants. Therefore, we might identify suitable candidates from the Innovation Responsibles to take over a short sequence highlighting an effective solution in the context of managing an innovation project or a challenge where the other participants are asked to share their suggestions how to master the challenge.

Complementary to these webinars, online material is made available for the Innovation Responsibles to achieve a comprehensive blend of **e-learning opportunities**. The content of the e-learning material includes short case examples, easy to adopt tools for effective management of innovation in an organisational environment and templates that increase the participants' efficiency in project

management. This helps to deepen the knowledge and to provide further input on key topics that emerge during the project.

## Networking online events

These 2-hour online events are a **combination of expert and peer support**, of **best practice examples presented as video, as short case studies** of what could go wrong and how to prevent these risks, as chats to exchange challenges and lessons learned within the participant group. The topics might be proposed by participants of the training programme directly. We also identify topics that might arise from the seminars, webinars, or from the LinkedIn group. These sessions are moderated by us and animated either by one of the Innovation Responsibles, or an external expert in technology/innovation management in a business environment, or in IPR, public funding or a procurement expert from a larger enterprise explaining the selection criteria for innovative suppliers. A rolling plan is developed for these online events, highlighting the planned topics and experts.



**Figure 13:** Concept of networking online events

The planned topic for the online events is communicated in advance to maintain a high level of participation. There might be also follow-up activities from the participants and/or the experts engaged in the online events.

## Individual on-demand support

Based on our long-term experience in individual on-demand support for the training participants, we communicate this service right from the beginning. Thus, participants can **schedule a conference call or webinar** with our experts as the issues arise. The topics are defined by the Innovation Responsibles. They are asked to provide a brief background on the issue, the challenges they are facing, the measures they have already taken and propose some time slots for the conference call. We then will identify the most suitable expert and schedule the call. The topics covered remain **confidential**. We do, though, collect short feedback and categorise the issues discussed whether they were related to business management issues, intercultural issues or related to the project development itself. This information is captured on a standard template filled out at the end of the support service.

Selected examples

On-demand support	Type of question		Country of the startup/SME		Type of company
Case 6	Innovation management		Spain		SME
Case 7	Organizational issues		Spain		Large firm
Case 8	Innovation management		Finland		Startup
Case 9	Commercialization		Italy		Startup
Case 10	Organizational issues		Denmark		Large firm
Case 11	Commercialization		Spain		SME
Case 12	Organizational issues		Ireland		SME

**Figure 14:** Examples of topics for the on-demand support

The **on-demand support** covers questions about the access to expertise and networks, about innovation management approaches and how to best implement them in the company, about how to **build trust in the organization**, or about how to use some of the approaches provided in the e-learning modules. If feasible, we are also able to arrange for a physical meeting (e.g. before or after one of the seminars). The topics covered in these support sessions highly depend on the participants' specific issues.

There might also be several instances where on-demand support is envisaged also for the respective innovation coordinators. For the discussion on the results from the IMP<sup>3</sup>rove Assessment for instance, we offer individual sessions that ensure confidentiality of the benchmarking results.

## About IMP³rove – European Innovation Management Academy

The IMP³rove - European Innovation Management Academy, non-profit ([www.improve-innovation.eu](http://www.improve-innovation.eu)) offers innovation management support services to enterprises, consultants and intermediaries. It also provides financial actors, policy makers and academia with consulting support and technical assistance related to innovation and innovation management. The services include innovation management benchmarking for enterprises, training and certification in innovation management, research on innovation management issues and promotion of best practices in innovation management. With its global network, the IMP³rove Academy has set the standard for innovation management assessment. The IMP³rove- European Innovation Management Academy emerged from the European Commission's flagship programme "IMP³rove". It was supported by the European Commission's Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme and receives continued support from Horizon2020.

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