

VERSION 1 –29.06.2024

ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PI-FORWARD-LOT2

Project number: 101132832

## Innovative VET Scalable Micro-Credential Solutions that Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate and Evaluate



Project number: 101132832

ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PI-FORWARD-LOT2

<https://www.stimuli2.no/project/five>

# D1.1 PROJECT MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

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Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



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**TABLE OF CONTENT:**

**ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT**..... 3

**WHY Five** ..... 5

**Contract responsibilities – Beneficiary and Partners**..... 6

    Contracting phase ..... 6

    Partner Agreements ..... 6

**Administrative and financial reporting**..... 7

    Eligibility period ..... 7

    Deadlines for reporting to the Commission ..... 7

    Partner financial reporting to the beneficiary ..... 8

    Financial reporting categories ..... 8

    Financial reporting templates..... 10

        How long should we keep financial records..... 10

        Upper limits..... 10

        Daily staff rates pr. category ..... 10

        Grant instalments to partners ..... 11

**Technical reporting** ..... 12

    Five work plan and deliverables ..... 12

    Technical reporting template ..... 13

**Project management structure**..... 14

    Management measures ..... 14

    Methods ..... 15

    Evaluation of progress ..... 16

**Project communication** ..... 17

**Project meetings** ..... 18

**Visits by the administrative agency** ..... 18

**Dissemination and Exploitations** ..... 19

**Evaluation**..... 20

**Intellectual property rights** ..... 21

**Logos** ..... 22

**Conclusions**..... 23

**APPENDIX 1 – Template for reports**..... 24

**APPENDIX 2 – Work Plan**..... 25

**Contact persons for this report** ..... 27



## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The Five project, partly funded by the A Partnership for Innovation - Forward Looking Project of the Erasmus Plus Program, runs from January 1st, 2024 to December 31, 2026. This document provides information on the internal management and administrative procedures of the Five project. The document addresses project partners. The document aims to provide information that will facilitate smooth project implementation through accurate and timely reporting, collaboration, and activity management.

The document presents information related to the contract phase of the project, the collaboration tools to be used by the Five consortium, communication channels, upper limits for each cost category, deadlines for the submission of periodic administrative and financial reporting both internally and towards the Executive Agency administrative authorities, deadlines for technical reporting based on implementation milestones. Furthermore, the document outlines the project management structure, decision-making procedures, and recommended communication channels between partners.

This document does not aim to replace the Erasmus Plus Project Management Handbook [2]. Rather, it aims to provide internal management procedures that are particular to the Five project itself aiming to facilitate timely and smooth project management. The document is in line with the Erasmus Plus Project Management Handbook. When in doubt, the Project Handbook should always serve as the main reference document.

## GLOSSARY

<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Individuals, groups, or organizations, whether targeted or not, that ultimately benefit, directly or indirectly, from the project.
<b>Dissemination</b>	The process of making the public aware of work done in the context of the project.
<b>Deliverable</b>	A tangible or intangible object produced as a result of the work done in the context of the project that is intended to be delivered to the internal or external stakeholders, evaluators, administrative authorities, etc.
<b>Work package (WP)</b>	Total of all the products, services, reports, methodologies of a project as a result of the teamwork.
<b>Evaluation</b>	The process undertaken to judge the worth, value, effectiveness of the outputs of the project for quality assurance purposes.
<b>Objectives</b>	The intended goals that the project is expected to achieve and which lie in its own sphere of influence.
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Agencies, institutions, groups or individuals that have a direct or indirect stake or commitment in the project design, implementation, benefits, or its evaluation.
<b>Work Plan</b>	A deliverable-oriented hierarchical decomposition of the work to be executed by the project group to accomplish the project objectives and create the required deliverables.

## WHY FIVE

### Background

Micro-credentials are the record of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a small volume of learning. Micro-credentials make it possible for individuals to acquire knowledge, skills and competences in a flexible and targeted way. They can be instrumental in upskilling and reskilling of learners, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, so that they can adapt to a fast-changing labour market.

Micro-credentials do not replace, however, traditional qualifications. They consist of three building blocks:

- A common definition for micro-credentials,
- Standard elements for consistent description of micro-credentials, and
- Principles for design, issuance and use of micro-credentials.

Five is a European pilot approach to a proposal for the application and the use of micro-credentials to provide tailor made VET, including applying new VET itineraries, into the labour market.

### Summary

FivE will identify, develop, test and pilot an innovative, cross sectorial VET scalable transnational platform applying Competence Units (CUs) leading to Micro-Credentials (MCs), emphasizing a systematic change of the modernization and digitalization of work-based learning practices and the green transition.

Students from production industries will apply a bottom-up approach for their VET career, testing out and studying independent CUs, one by one. When they find it interesting and succeed, they will keep on studying additional CUs leading to a MCs, afterwards combining them into full courses leading to a national qualification, or a recognized European Diploma according to the European Welding Federation.

A bottom-up approach will be applied to establish national Skills Foresight Forums. They will engage industry and VET providers to give direct input on developing, guiding and providing the protocol principles to consider when designing, standardizing and issuing CUs leading to high-quality MCs.

Collaboration between VET providers will be supported by a 'Shared Framework of Learning Outcomes' (SFLOs) underpinned by an industry led Common Competence Framework, to inform the collaborative development of learning resources, assessment processes and pedagogy. The SFLOs will ease the recognition of qualification equivalencies, assisted by ECVET and the European Skills Agenda. It is supporting learner mobility and shared delivery by VET specialists and industry experts, contributing to a unitized and modernized VET delivery system, where CUs and MCs will be designed, shared, and maintained nationally and transnationally within Europe.

New work-based learning pedagogies, digital learning resources and tools allows each country to create a 'blend' of work-based and alternative methods of VET delivery of CUs and MCs, to suit its own priorities, resources, national VET systems and stage of EQF development, ensuring complementarity with proximate ongoing initiatives.



**Target countries: Norway, Slovenia, Hungary and Belgium**

The Five mission is to help the production industries sector consisting of north European finfish production in the marine and freshwater phase including the husbandry operative and site manager levels, and mechanical industry site machine operatives and fabrication process technician's level to find ways of developing the workforces' knowledge, skills and qualifications more effectively and efficiently and also to develop VET schools in the target countries to take a leading role as a hub for helping the industry with education, entrepreneur and innovation issues. We would like to see the number of staff holding relevant and reliable national qualifications or EWF Diplomas to increase, thereby professionalizing the European workforce. The consortium believes that the provision of accessible, high quality, innovative work-based training and qualifications will be most influential in achieving this ambition. The overall goal is, in collaboration with these two industries, to identify skills gaps and entrepreneurship/innovation needs by developing, testing, applying and validating micro credential solutions based up on Competence Units

The main task of the Skills Foresight Forum will be to develop a cross sectoral MC applying CUs to describe the Common Competence Framework (CCF) for a) north European finfish production in the marine and freshwater phase and including the husbandry operative and site manager levels, assisted by the VET providers, and b) for mechanical industry site machine operatives and fabrication process technician's level. The group will also be instrumental in the establishment of a Communication Guideline to support dissemination throughout the project.

## CONTRACT RESPONSIBILITIES – BENEFICIARY AND PARTNERS

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### CONTRACTING PHASE

The beneficiary (Easy Learning Solutions) bears responsibility for timely and accurate financial reporting towards Executive Agency administrative authorities with related input from the co-beneficiaries. In addition, the beneficiary bears responsibility for timely technical reporting towards administrative authorities on the Five work plan. The beneficiary is further responsible along with the co-beneficiaries for the implementation of activities that closely follow the proposal work plan and the quality of outcomes.

A Grant Agreement has been signed between the beneficiary and the European Commission in November 2023 detailing responsibilities of each party towards the smooth implementation of the Five work plan. At the time of proposal preparation, the beneficiary signed with each co-beneficiary a Letter of Mandate in two copies, one for the beneficiary and one for the co-beneficiary, which gave the beneficiary the right to sign the Grant Agreement with the Commission on behalf of the co-beneficiaries. As a result, all co-beneficiaries have in effect sign the Grant Agreement.

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### PARTNER AGREEMENTS

During the first seven months of the project implementation period the beneficiary prepares Partner Agreements between the beneficiary and each co-beneficiary. Each Partner Agreement is to be signed in two copies, one for the beneficiary and one for the co-beneficiary, by the legal representative of each organization.

The agreements aim to facilitate smooth collaboration and include information such as:

- Foreseen total project budget, grant ceiling and co-financing.
- Foreseen co-beneficiary budget, grant ceiling and co-financing.
- Project eligibility period.
- Partner bank account information into which the grant instalments will be made by the beneficiary at predefined dates.
- Information on financial reporting, including periodic report dates.
- Beneficiary and co-beneficiary obligations and liabilities.
- A grant instalment plan from the beneficiary to the co-beneficiaries.
- Intellectual property rights.
- Work plan information.

The beneficiary and co-beneficiaries have each:

- A copy of the Grant Agreement, with signatures for the beneficiary and the commission.
- A copy of the Letter of Mandate with signatures.
- A copy of the Partner Agreement with signatures.



## ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

The European Commission in the Erasmus + Project Handbook sets precise rules for administrative and financial reporting. The project handbook must be the reference document whenever a partner is in doubt of reporting procedures. For the benefit of project partners, basic information is included in the following sections. However, please note that this report does not aim to replace the Project Handbook, but rather to constitute a quick reference guide providing some easy reporting guidelines for the consortium.

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### ELIGIBILITY PERIOD

The Five project eligibility period officially starts on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 based on the Grant Agreement signed between the beneficiary and the European Commission. The duration of the implementation period is 36 months. The implementation period ends on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026.

Only costs incurred during the project implementation period as it is defined above, are eligible under the Grant Agreement.

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### DEADLINES FOR REPORTING TO THE COMMISSION

According to the Grant Agreement, the beneficiary must submit:

- A progress report specifying the status by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025 covering the period 01/01/2024 – 30/06/2025.
- A final report by February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2027 covering the entire implementation period of the project, 01/01/2024 – 31/12/2026.

The Progress and Final Reports have a public and a confidential part. The public part aims to provide information on project objectives, implementation methodology, and outcomes easily understood by the general public; it may be published on the Executive Agency's related thematic portals. The confidential part is going to be read by the Executive Agency's administrative authorities. It includes financial information related to expenses incurred during the reporting period. The Progress and Final reports will be accompanied by copies of interim and final results. The results are expected to be completed within the corresponding reporting periods.

The beneficiary develops the Progress and Final reports with input from the co-beneficiaries. Based on the Partner Agreements, and to ensure timely reporting to the Executive Agency, each co-beneficiary must report the required financial information, accompanied by supporting documents, to the beneficiary one month before the deadline for the submission of the Progress and Final reports as this is stated above and in the Grant Agreement.

## PARTNER FINANCIAL REPORTING TO THE BENEFICIARY

As a good practice guideline, co-beneficiaries must report expenses to the beneficiary every 9 months, namely by:

- 30/09/2024
- 30/06/2025
- 30/03/2026
- 31/12/2026

Financial reporting includes the following; (1) a summary financial report based up on lump sum funding, and (2) possible supporting documentation for reported expenses.

## FINANCIAL REPORTING CATEGORIES

Costs are eligible only if they are directly related to the implementation of the workplan. Costs fall into predefined costs categories, as these are defined in the Project Handbook. The following cost categories are foreseen in the Five project:'

### Staff costs

These costs include costs for statutory staff (permanent or temporary) as well as temporary staff recruited through a specialized external Agency. This category does not include subcontracting costs. Maximum rates are defined for each staff category and for each country based on predefined limits set by the Agency. There are different levels of rates for each of the 4 staff categories. When reporting staff costs, partners should apply the country specific costs for each staff category (employee) in the organization. This amount includes social costs. The staff must get paid a salary for their work.

		<a href="#">Click here to go to the column Requested EU Grant Amount</a>														
A. DIRECT PERSONNEL COSTS	A1. Employees (or equivalent) person months	Leader (working days)	Teacher and researcher (working days)	Technical (working days)	Administrative (working days)	Other	A.2 Natural persons under direct contract					A.3 Seconded persons	A.4 SME Owners without salary	A.5 Volunteers	B. Subcontracting costs	C. Purchase costs
		Easy Learning Solutions	ELS	177 700	177 700	1 400	143 000	27 000	6 300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Quality Management Software	QMS	153 950	153 950	1 400	141 900	8 550	2 100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11 980
Matrai Welding Technique and Vocational Training	Matrai	74 825	74 825	650	66 750	6 825	600	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6 190
INOX Technology	INOX	92 000	92 000	650	80 250	10 500	600	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7 810
Institute za Varilstvo d.o.o	iv	134 300	134 300	850	114 100	18 150	1 200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8 840
Trondelag Fylkeskommune	TC	105 400	105 400	1 400	95 150	6 750	2 100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7 000
European Federation for Welding, Joining and Cutting	EFW	96 975	96 975	850	79 800	15 125	1 200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13 800
Slovenski drustvo za varilno tehniko	SDVT	68 850	68 850	850	64 050	2 750	1 200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7 410
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Consortium</b>	<b>904 000</b>	<b>904 000</b>	<b>8 050</b>	<b>785 000</b>	<b>95 650</b>	<b>15 300</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7 922</b>	<b>77 630</b>

Table 1. Estimated budget for the Five partners in the project proposal.

Purchase costs and other costs

	Requested EU Grant Amount	C. Purchase costs													D. Other cost categories	D.1 Financial support to third parties	TOTAL DIRECT COSTS INCLUDING SUBCONTRACTING (A+B+C+D)
		C.1 Travel and subsistence per travel or day	Travel	Accommodation	Subsistence	C.2 Equipment (please refer to the Depreciation Cost sheet)	C.3 Other goods, works and services	Consumables	Meetings, Seminars	Services for communication/promotion/dissemination	Website	Artistic Fees	Other				
Easy Learning Solutions	ELS	14 600	9 600	6 750	1 650	1 200	-	5 000	-	2 000	3 000	-	-	-	-	-	200 222
Quality Management Software	QMS	11 980	9 980	6 750	1 870	1 360	-	2 000	-	1 000	1 000	-	-	-	-	-	165 930
Matrai Welding Technique and Vocational Training	Matrai	6 190	4 690	2 750	1 160	780	-	1 500	-	1 000	500	-	-	-	-	-	81 015
INOK Technology	INOK	7 810	5 310	3 050	1 360	900	-	2 500	-	1 500	1 000	-	-	-	-	-	99 810
Institute za Varilstvo d.o.o	izV	8 840	6 340	3 600	1 660	1 080	-	2 500	-	1 500	1 000	-	-	-	-	-	143 140
Trondelag-Fylkeskommune	TC	7 000	6 000	4 100	1 100	800	-	1 000	-	-	1 000	-	-	-	-	-	112 400
European Federation for Welding/Joining and Cutting	EFW	13 800	11 800	8 000	2 200	1 600	-	2 000	-	2 000	-	-	-	-	-	-	110 775
Slovenski društvo za varilno tehniko	SDVT	7 410	5 410	3 150	1 360	900	-	2 000	-	1 000	1 000	-	-	-	-	-	76 260
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Consortium</b>	<b>77 630</b>	<b>59 130</b>	<b>38 150</b>	<b>12 360</b>	<b>8 620</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18 500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10 000</b>	<b>8 500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>989 552</b>

Table 2. Last part of the estimated budget for the Five partners in the project proposal.

## FINANCIAL REPORTING TEMPLATES

Financial reporting must be submitted through the appropriate excel spread sheet, which is available in the member only area of the project web site and Teams area, and which provides a summary of all expenses for the reporting period. Details for each staff costs must be provided through the corresponding excel template. Please note that copies of the corresponding invoices for travels should not accompany the report.

One lump sum cost reporting template exists and it includes the staff costs, travel + accommodation + subsistence costs, and the other goods costs for the reporting staff costs. The templates are available at the member only area of the project web site and the Teams area.

Financial reporting takes place internally every 9 months. Consortium partners must forward to the coordinator all expenses related to the various deliverables every 9 month intervals. This process is installed for several reasons related to sound project management: to ensure that partners and the coordinator maintain an up-to-date file, to allow reasonable time for reviewing the costs charged to the project and make corrections if necessary, to avoid last minute reporting at the Progress and Finalreporting.

## HOW LONG SHOULD WE KEEP FINANCIAL RECORDS

Partners must keep financial records for a period of 5 years after project final report has been completed. These records must be available in the case of an audit.

## UPPER LIMITS

This section provides information on the upper limits accepted by the European Commission on staff costs. The information is based on the Project Handbook as well as the limits imposed for each partner by the European Commission in the contract signed between the beneficiary and the Commission, as specified in the Five final approved budget. For more information please refer to the Project Handbook.

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## DAILY STAFF RATES PR. CATEGORY

The average daily staff rates for each partner and each staff category are outlined in the budget lines. These rates were foreseen at the time of the preparation of the project proposal and must be respected when reporting staff expenses.

Please note that in the project proposal expenses are foreseen in the staff categories leader, teacher and researcher, technical and administrative.

Maximum staff rates for each staff category are imposed by the financial rules outlined in the Project Handbook. The maximum rates per country are defined in the Project Handbook and in the approved proposal budget.



## GRANT INSTALMENTS TO PARTNERS

The grant allocated to each partner has been determined at proposal preparation time based on the activities to be undertaken and is further stated in the Partner Agreement between the beneficiary and the partner.

Grant instalments are made to specific partner account, which is identified in the Partner Agreement. Any changes to this account must be reported to the coordinator. Both parties in the case of an account change must sign an amendment to the Partner Agreement.

Once both parties have signed the Partner Agreement, the beneficiary will make a forward instalment of 20% of the foreseen total grant to each partner. Following the recommendation of the Erasmus + programme administrative authorities, additional instalments will be made on regular basis upon receipt by the beneficiary of the financial reporting and upon completion of related tasks and upon timely submission of the periodic financial expense reports.

Specifically, 3 more instalments of approximately 20% of the total grant of each co-beneficiary will be at regular intervals to beneficiaries.

A final payment to the partners will be made after the approval of the Final Report by the Commission. The final payment will be no more than 20% of the total foreseen grant for each co-beneficiary.

## TECHNICAL REPORTING

This section provides guidelines on the technical reports and deliverables foreseen in the Five work plan, including titles, deadlines, and formatting requirements.

## FIVE WORK PLAN AND DELIVERABLES

This section provides a Gant chart of the Five work plan with Work Package (WP) and deliverables (D), the WP leader and deadlines for completion according to the Five proposal. For more details please refer to the Five proposal and project description.

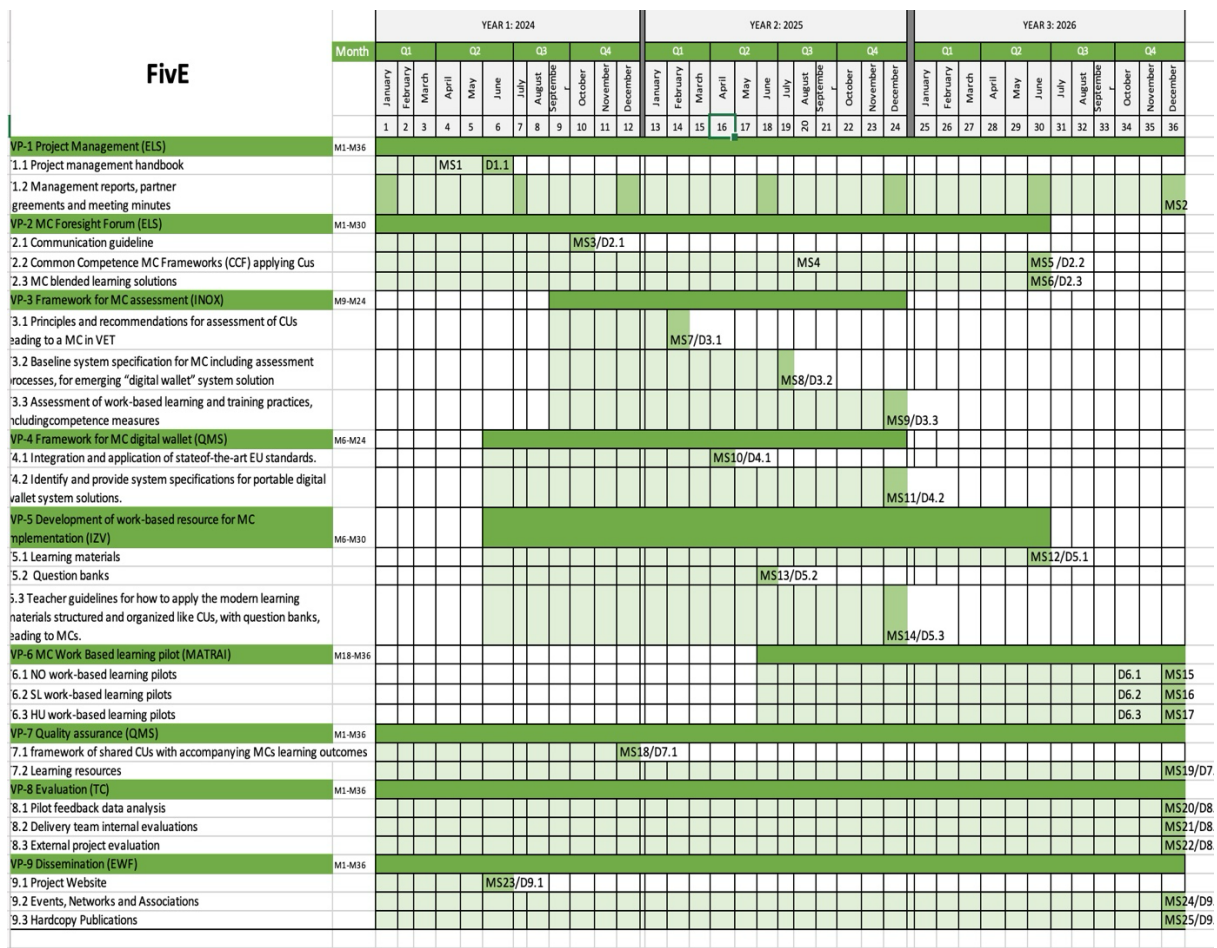


Figure 2. Five work plan Gant chart.

**Leaders of activity:**

- WP 1 Magrethe, Easy Learning Solutions
- WP 2. John, Easy Learning Solutions
- WP 3 Eszter, INOX
- WP 4 Erik, QM Software
- WP 5 Miro, IzV
- WP 6 Ference Jr., Matrai
- WP 7 Erik, QM Software
- WP 8 Dag, Trøndelag County Authority
- WP 9 Adeliade, EWF

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**TECHNICAL REPORTING TEMPLATE**

To ensure homogeneity in the authoring format of technical reports and written deliverables to be developed in the context of the Five work plan a TechnicalReport Preparation Template is available for the partners. The template gives formatting guidelines, such as fonts for headers and paragraphs, spacing, cover page design, headers and footers, references, etc. and can be found online in the membersonly areas. This report has been prepared following the formatting guidelines of the Technical Report Preparation Template.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The project is led by a Project Manager (PM), who is responsible for the overall smooth implementation of the work plan in terms of financial and administrative reporting, technical implementation, partner collaboration. The Coordinator and Project Manager is John, from Easy Learning Solutions, the beneficiary organization.

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## MANAGEMENT MEASURES

The project will apply the following measures to ensure that a project is implemented with high quality and completed on time:

- Project Planning will ensure project quality and timeliness by creating a detailed project plan that outlines all the tasks and milestones that need to be completed, along with timelines and resource requirements. The plan will be reviewed and approved by all stakeholders to ensure that it is feasible and realistic.
- Resource Allocation with adequate resources, including personnel, technology, and finances, will be allocated for the project. The resources must be available when needed to avoid delays in the project timeline.
- Risk Management is critical to ensuring that a project is completed on time and with high quality. The project manager will identify potential risks and develop contingency plans to address them if they occur.
- Quality Control will be applied as a measure that will secure project quality. This involves setting quality standards and monitoring project deliverables against those standards throughout the project's lifecycle.
- Clear communication between project stakeholders is critical to ensure that everyone is on the same page and understands what is expected of them. This will be achieved through regular status meetings, progress reports, and other forms of communication.
- Testing and validation will test project deliverables and validate their functionality to ensure that they meet the project requirements and are of high quality.
- Change Management are inevitable in any project, but they must be managed carefully to avoid delays and quality issues. A change management process should be in place to review, approve, and implement changes.

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## METHODS

To ensure good quality, monitoring, planning, and control in the project, the following methods will be applied:

- Quality Planning will create a plan for how the project will achieve its quality goals, including identifying quality standards, defining quality metrics, and outlining the processes and procedures that will be used to ensure quality.
- Quality Assurance involves verifying that the project is adhering to the quality standards and metrics established in the quality plan. Quality assurance will involve conducting audits, reviews, and inspections of project deliverables to ensure they meet the quality standards.



- Quality Control involves monitoring the project deliverables during the project execution phase to ensure they meet the quality standards. Quality control can involve testing, inspections, and reviews to identify and correct any quality issues.
- Performance Monitoring involves measuring and tracking the project's performance against established metrics and milestones. This allows the project manager to identify potential problems early and take corrective action before they escalate.
- Earned Value Management will involve measuring the project's progress against its budget and schedule to determine whether it is on track to meet its goals. This method will help project managers identify potential cost and schedule overruns early and take corrective action.
- Change Control includes managing changes to the project scope, schedule, and budget. A change control process helps ensure that any changes are reviewed, approved, and implemented in a controlled manner to avoid negative impacts on the project.
- Risk Management will identify potential risks to the project and develop strategies to mitigate or avoid them. Risk management will help reduce the likelihood of project delays, cost overruns, or quality issues.
- Communication Management is critical to project success. A communication plan should be developed to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed of project progress, changes, and issues.

By employing these methods, the coordinating organization will ensure that their projects are of good quality, monitored effectively, and controlled to meet the goals and objectives.

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## EVALUATION OF PROGRESS

To monitor and verify the outreach and coverage of project activities and results, several evaluation methods and indicators will be used.

- Surveys will be used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on project activities and outcomes. Surveys will be conducted with project participants, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders to gather information on their experiences, opinions, and perceptions of the project.
- Focus Groups will be considered to use to gather qualitative data on project activities and outcomes. Focus groups involve bringing together a small group of project participants or beneficiaries to discuss specific project-related topics.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are quantitative indicators that will be selected to measure the progress and success of a project. KPIs can include metrics such as the number of project participants, the number of students attending, or the number of project deliverables completed.
- Process Indicators will be quantitative indicators that are selected to measure the efficiency of project activities. Process indicators can include metrics such as the time it takes to complete a task, or the number of resources used to complete a task.
- Impact Evaluation will be applied to determine the effectiveness of a project in achieving its goals and objectives. Impact evaluation can involve comparing project outcomes with a control group or measuring the change in outcomes over time.
- Cost-Benefit Analysis will be used to evaluate the economic value of a project and in particular the income generated by selling CUs instead of full courses. This involves comparing the costs of the project to the benefits it generates.



By using a combination of these methods and indicators, the project managers and WP leaders can monitor and evaluate the outreach and coverage of project activities and results. This will help ensuring that the project is achieving its goals and objectives and making a positive impact on the intended beneficiaries.

## PROJECT COMMUNICATION

All partners should be able to collaborate and communicate effectively for the project needs. The available tools for the collaborative interaction are:

- A mailing list that includes all individuals working towards the Five work plan.
- A Microsoft Teams area which can exchange ideas through a chat, share documents and work together on the same documents.
- Video and telephone conferences can be initiated with the involvement of all partners to facilitate face-to-face communication in-between consortium meetings. Telephone conferences do not require any special hardware or software on behalf of participation partners. Videoconferences require a PC or laptop with camera and microphone and the use of a videoconferencing application, such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom. The coordinator has access to and may host videoconferences in Zoom.
- A member only area on the project website is available for sharing documents and consortium-restricted information among partners:  
<https://www.stimuli2.no/delivery-workpack/wp-1-project-management-els-m1-36>
- All partners will actively and timely inform the project management team on changes of their coordinates, contact person or changes in other information needed for executing the project. Project Management team makes this information available for all partners.



## **PROJECT MEETINGS**

Consortium-wide meetings are foreseen in the Five proposal on a bi-annual basis. In a postCovid situation consortium partners will organize the meetings in a rotating order, but in the meantime the meetings will be organized by the coordinator in Microsoft Teams. Partners will decide the location and dates of the project meetings.

Each meeting will have an agenda to be prepared by the beneficiary and circulated in advance allowing input by partners and adjustments. The meeting discussions will be detailed in meeting minutes, to be prepared upon completion of the meeting by the beneficiary.

Intermediate meetings may be scheduled among smaller groups of partners focusing on specific sub-tasks if this is deemed necessary.

Given that a number of consortium partners are schools facing additional scheduling restrictions due to ongoing classes, the consortium will schedule meetings on dates that meet particular requirements of all partners. If necessary, the participation of specific partners via video-conferencing or other means will be considered.

## **VISITS BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY**

The Agency may conduct visits to the beneficiary, or may participate in project meetings as an observer in order to become acquainted with project progress and results. Furthermore, the beneficiary may be requested to visit the Agency up to two times a year in kick-off or cluster meetings.

## DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATIONS

A dissemination strategy aims to ensure that information on project goals, activities, and outputs reach effectively and widely the target sector. The Five dissemination aims to reach instructors in primary and possibly secondary education, policy makers, the ICT services in education community, experts in pedagogy, higher education students majoring in pedagogics, the educational software industry, the lifelong learning community, and the general public. All of the above groups stand to gain from the proposed inquiry-based and problem solving learning methodologies that aim to foster critical, analytical, and structural thinking skills. The groups also stand to gain from the proposed deployment of ICT technology towards the development of on-line simulators and demonstrators to be used as educational tools in wider blended learning activities.

Realizing the importance of dissemination, Five plans a wide range of activities for reaching the target sector:

- Presentations at conferences and workshops
- Scientific publications
- Publications to on-line databases
- Informational leaflet and poster concerning objectives and progress done
- A periodic project newsletter promoting goals and activities
- Presentations to instructors and thematic groups
- Presentations to policy makers and educational community
- Publications through the media such as newspapers, etc
- Publications to web sites with high traffic by the targeted users
- References to the project at partner portals

Furthermore, Five aims to adapt and deploy project results to additional user groups and target sectors, which stand to benefit from technology-enhanced education and from suggested pedagogical and methodological approaches. The proposed methodologies have wide applicability in terms of thematic areas, age groups, and learning settings. As such, Five aims to develop a comprehensive evaluation strategy for the adoption of results in wider sectors post project completion. In this context, the Five long-term target groups include:

- Professional networks for lifelong skill and competency management including national teacher associations
- Industrial companies active in production-, processing and supply to aquaculture industry
- VET schools providing qualifications and skills towards staff in the aquaculture industry
- Policy makers, including school, professionals, and higher education administrations in represented countries
- External stakeholders, including the Qualifications Authorities and VET regulatory bodies will be engaged, to request their assistance with the analysis of VET supply.
- The higher education community, by adoption methodologies to students with varied disciplines, ranging from engineering to humanities
- Professionals, aiming to use analytical skill development as a career advancement tool for groups such as engineers and advanced vocational learners
- Teachers trainers for all of the above groups, ultimately aiming to improve the teaching skills of instructors and to facilitate better integration of ICT in lifelong learning

## EVALUATION

Evaluation aims to ensure that project outputs meet the needs of the targeted user groups and that they meet certain quality criteria. Due to the importance of evaluation, a separate work package is allocated to this task (Work Package 8).

Early on in the project implementation period the consortium will establish evaluation goals based on:

- internal evaluation will be achieved through regular progress monitoring by consortium partners. Implementation milestones such as stakeholder analysis completion, learning design completion, alpha versions of software tools and services, and validation session planning will be reviewed during the consortium meetings and will be used as a means for progress monitoring
- External validation will be pursued through the engagement of companies, learner and teacher user groups. Validation is planned through the engagement of groups representative of Five stakeholders in several countries, including dissemination events:

Evaluation activities will include on-going internal evaluation by project partners as well as external evaluation through the involvement of user groups (including both teachers and learners) as well as engagement of external experts, which are foreseen.

Internal evaluation involves a well round and highly accepted approach that addresses all components of a project, including the work plan, foreseen deliverables, and implementation team.

External evaluation examines quantitative approaches, which aim to produce feedback based on numbers and statistics and typically employ questionnaires, as well as qualitative approaches, which aim to produce impact on how well the goals were met and typically employ interviews and observation practices. The exact evaluation method will be decided by the consortium based on evaluation goals and the input of teachers, who are close to the instructional process and the needs of the target sector, namely primary education. The methodological approach will be carefully considered taking into account the context in which evaluation will be carried out as well as the needs of the participant community.

Evaluation results will be detailed in the Five Evaluation Reports, which is planned for the end of the project implementation period.



## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Copyrights will be respected as follows:

In the case that partners bring into the project material previously developed for use in the scope of the project, for example as templates of good practice, copyright must be strictly safeguarded. Permission for reproduction and scale of reproduction of related material must be agreed upon beforehand.

Regarding material to be developed in the scope of the project, this material will be available to project partners for use within the objectives of the project proposal. The material may be freely quoted with appropriate references in the context of dissemination, exploitation, and project promotion activities. Translation of products that are foreseen in English to national languages may take place after the consortium members that contributed to their development as long as the intended use is not for profit grant permission. This includes reports, services, informational material, manuals, and more.

Where partners intent to adapt or reuse products or parts of them for purposes not outlined in the project proposal permission must be granted by the individual copyright holders, namely the partners that contributed to the design and implementation of the specific outcomes.

## LOGOS

The project logos and the Erasmus+ program logo should appear in documents related to the Five implementation. The logos are presented below. Electronic copies of the logos are available on the project website and the project Microsoft Teams area.



Figure 4: Five Project Logos.



### DISCLAIMER:

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## CONCLUSIONS

This document provided information on Five project management structure, activities and processes. The document aims at offering the necessary information to partners with the objective of smooth collaboration and smooth, timely, and quality implementation of the workplan and foreseen deliverables.

It should be noted that the reference document in case of doubt must always be the Project Handbook and the Partner Agreement signed between the beneficiary and each partner. This document does not aim to replace the Project Handbook and Partner Agreement, but simply to highlight parts of the most commonly sought information as well as to set certain communication and reporting guidelines facilitating smooth consortium cooperation.

## APPENDIX 1 – TEMPLATE FOR REPORTS

An example of templates for project reports. The templates are stored in the Microsoft Teams area.

VERSION 1 –29.06.2024

ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PI-FORWARD-LOT2

Project number: 101132832

### “Innovative VET Scalable Micro-Credential Solutions that Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate and Evaluate”



Project number: 101132832

ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PI-FORWARD-LOT2

<https://www.stimuli2.no/project/five>

## D1.1 PROJECT REPORT

AUTHORS: ~~MAGRETHE~~ MAGRETHE LUND/ EASY LEARNING SOLUTIONS

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



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## APPENDIX 2 – Work Plan

The establishment of a cross sectoral Micro Credentials (MCs) Skills Foresight Forum (SFF) will provide the stable foundations required and a mechanism for industry involvement, influence and leadership, to inform ‘down-stream’ collaborative VET developments. It will also notify VET providers and their partners of current and anticipated industry problems and indicate companies receptive to developing solutions, thereby helping the selection and prioritization of local business innovation support activities.

Activities are presented sequentially:

1. **Establish the SFF (WP2):** Project partners will form the core membership, including a representative from each company, SME representatives and VET providers, to ensure a strong linkage between the SFF remit and innovative usage of MC VET development. They will be joined and supported by a technology supply companies’ representatives.

- The VET providers will work with industry representatives to devise the new MC work-based learning pedagogy and develop their respective roles within the work-based learning pilots described below. This is including the use of e-learning, blended learning, practical skills development, learner centered support system solutions and the application of ‘e-portfolio’ within a formal VET MC adapted assessment process delivered by VET providers and company team leaders in partnership.

2. **Common Competence Framework (CCF) for MC, with supporting standards for assessment solutions and work-based learning pedagogy for VET (WP3):** The cross sectoral CCF targets two production sectors. It will be developed for a) the husbandry operative and site manager levels for cold water finfish farming, and b) for mechanical industry site machine operatives and fabrication process technician’s level. The process will be led by industry and supported by VET partners experienced in the development of definitions (knowledge, skills and competences) for each occupational level, and the proposed new MC protocols for new assessment standards and inclusion of work-based learning pedagogy.

- These will be included into an existing VET system, where a full course is divided into a number of Competence Units (CUs) – each leading to a MC. A CU is the smallest educational unit available, containing a specific MC subject module that is leveled and aggregated for operatives and technician’s levels. This will ease the recognition of MC qualification equivalencies, assisted by ECVET and the European Skills Agenda.

3. **Framework for new, shared MC digital certificate (e.g. an emerging “digital wallet”) solutions (FSDC) (WP4):** Following agreement on the MC protocols to be adopted for both - the course level and at the CUs levels - describing the general content, general and specific learning outcomes, and general competences; the FSDC will be developed with reference to the CCF for a) fin fish husbandry operative and site managers, and b) for mechanical industry site machine operatives and fabrication process technicians, including EQF levelled to differentiate VET from higher VET. The VET providers will map their existing National Qualifications or the European Welder Federation wide qualification system, including the Learning Outcomes and curriculum, to the FSDC, to establish the gaps.

- This will lead to establishing a European approach for portability of MC for lifelong learning and employability, by establishing a definition and a standard format for describing micro-credentials, that is applying open standards, authentication services and best use of digitalization, together with new principles for designing and issuing micro-credentials, reflecting the Council Recommendations. Each completed CU will provide European valid

Digital Credentials for Learning (Europass) enabling portability between countries, employers, VET and training and employment systems.

- The project will provide MC for the green transition by designing, developing and delivering new CUs that addresses the necessary skills for the green transition based on use and input from employers, industry and social partners. Since the CUs provide joint design, delivery and updating across regions and national borders, the subsequent MC will do the same.

4. **Resource development for VET (WP5):** A set of e-learning quality and technical standards will be established to ensure compatibility with each partners Managed Learning Environment (MLE). Available and compatible 'e-learning' content from within the partnership will be sourced and mapped to the FSDC.

- New learning and assessment resources, as well as teacher guidelines, will be developed to address gaps. The resources will support a 'VET provider and employer partnership-based delivery model' to improve National Qualifications or EWF diplomas completion by work-based learners.

5. **Pilot work-based learning VET delivery applying CUs leading to MC (WP6).** The revised partnership work-based learning delivery system including the resources, pedagogy and CUs leading to MCs, will be piloted with learners and feedback gathered in 3 partner countries.

6. The senior network will be recruited at a regional basis from experienced personnel that have extensive experience from production and manufacturing processes, and that have just retired or are about to retire. They will support delivery of CUs with their MC, by providing follow-up and 1-1 support during the first starting period in a new job. This will test and validate how MCs for a more inclusive labor market better supporting employability and inclusion.

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Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
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