

**Project: Development and Introduction
of a Communication Competencies Model
for Enhancing and Maintaining a Business Mentor
Network (DICCMEM)
2019-1-LV01-KA203-060414**

SUMMARY

Rezekne Academy of Technologies (RTA) in cooperation with partners plan to implement an applied research project: Development and Introduction of a Communication competencies Model for Enhancing and Maintaining a Business Mentor Network. The expected results of the project focus on achieving the objectives of Priority 7 of the Smart Specialization Strategy (Latvia) or RIS3: identification of the existing resources of territories and their specialization, proposing prospective economic development opportunities and directions, int. al. leading and prospective business directions in the municipal territories. According to the NACE Rev. 2 classification of economic activities, it corresponds to Section J: Information and communication.

The aim of the project is to examine barriers to communication competencies between mentors and mentees and propose solutions how to enhance and maintain the business mentor network by means of communication technologies. The project is interdisciplinary because, according to the OECD classification, it directly relates to such fields of science as economics, entrepreneurship, communication as well as information technology. The project involves the following research studies: a technical and economic feasibility study and an industry research study.

Project activities: Technical and economic feasibility study on the communication competencies model for the business mentor network; Theoretical literature studies, an examination and

comparison of mentor work specifics in Latvia and abroad; Interviews with business mentor network participants (mentors and mentees); Interviews, questionnaire with experts; Mobility, experience exchange with foreign countries; Development of a smart communication competencies model for the business mentor network; Development of an effective communication and collaboration methodology for the business mentor network; A pilot group of mentors and mentees for assessing the effective communication methodology; Creating mentoring handbook; Publishing original scientific articles in journals or conference proceedings

included in Web of Science or SCOPUS (or other) databases Development of a joint monograph;
Development of network between partners.

In order that a mentor can act, communication is necessary, which is key to successful entrepreneurship. Regardless of whether communication is internal or external, horizontal or vertical, all the forms of communication in the entrepreneurial environment help to increase efficiency and improve organizational performance. The key purpose of communication is to ensure that a message is comprehended in a way it was initially intended in order to reach the audience. That is why communication could be both verbal and visual – it is a continuous process, during which interaction occurs among the communicator, the channel, the message and the communicates. An essential element in communication is the communicative effect or response, which indicates whether the message has reached the audience and whether the communication objective is going to be achieved.

The target group represents several fields: Research and academic environment: scientists, students, academic personnel in social sciences, as well employees engaged in research;

Entrepreneur environment: entrepreneurs from all countries, who wish to participate in business mentor network activities as mentors and mentees; enterprise stakeholders – employees, customers, business partners; entrepreneurs as users of the communication methodology for the business mentor network; Society: the society as a whole, as entrepreneurship in a region affects every resident through creating new jobs, improving the economic situation in the region, which increases the purchasing power of residents, amounts of taxes paid to the local and national governments.

Methodology and division of work will be symmetrical, where similar activities for development of intellectual output is going to be implemented in parallel in the participating countries. More in detail, the expected impact on the participant organizations is: more than 20 staff persons will be involved in the project; employing research staff; improving competence in communication field; enhancing international relationships; further collaboration in research.

Project will apply competence-based approach and assess their quality, impact and relevance. This can contribute to higher quality of education and training and support permeability between the different education and training pathways.

The expected results of the project would therefore be effective solutions to developing the business mentor network in all countries: performed study on a communication competencies model; designed a smart communication competencies model and a methodology; developed mentoring handbook; original scientific articles published in journals or conference proceedings.