



CREATIONALITY: DESIGN THINKING FOR INNOVATIVE EU PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Mastering Innovation Through Design Thinking

LEAD EXPERT

Giancarlo La Pietra

Giancarlo La Pietra is a seasoned trainer and project manager specializing in Design Thinking, EU project development, and innovation strategies. With extensive experience in mentoring startups, university research projects, and grant writing, he has helped numerous teams refine their ideas and secure funding. His expertise spans both public and private sectors, making him a key resource for professionals looking to enhance their innovation capabilities.

Online Course Agenda – 6 hours per day

Day 1: Foundations of Innovation & Project ideation

- **Icebreaker & Course Introduction**
 - Welcome participants and set expectations
 - Quick interactive exercise to foster engagement
- **Advanced Design Thinking Principles & Case Studies**
 - Overview of key design thinking principles
 - Case studies showcasing successful applications in EU projects
 - Common challenges and how to overcome them
- **Empathic Research & Stakeholder Engagement**
 - Methods for conducting user research
 - Techniques for stakeholder mapping and engagement
 - Analyzing user insights to drive project innovation
- **Practical Workshop: User Research & Empathy Mapping**
 - Hands-on activity: Conducting interviews and gathering insights
 - Creating empathy maps to understand user needs

Day 2: Ideation & Prototyping for EU Projects

- **Warm-Up Activity**
 - Quick creativity booster exercise
- **Creative Ideation Techniques & Concept Development**
 - Brainstorming techniques for innovative solutions
 - Structuring and refining ideas for project development
 - Example of successful ideation in EU-funded initiatives
- **Rapid Prototyping for Project Validation**
 - Introduction to low-fidelity and high-fidelity prototyping
 - Using prototyping to validate project assumptions
 - Hands-on session: Creating simple prototypes
- **Case Study Analysis & Group Exercise**
 - Reviewing real-world EU projects that leveraged prototyping
 - Group activity: Applying learnings to a given challenge

Day 3: Proposal Development & Innovation Culture

- **Energizer Activity**
 - Interactive exercise to set the tone for the day
- **Design Thinking for Proposal Writing & Storytelling**
 - How to integrate design thinking into EU proposals
 - Best practices for storytelling in funding applications
 - Examples of compelling proposals
- **Fostering a Culture of Innovation in Project Teams**
 - Strategies for embedding innovation in team culture
 - Leadership approaches for fostering creativity
 - Overcoming resistance to change
- **Final Exercise: Developing a Project Proposal & Feedback**
 - Hands-on session: Crafting a mini-project proposal
 - Peer review and expert feedback

OTHER COURSES

PM² PROJECT MANAGEMENT
METHODOLOGY FOR EUROPEAN FUNDED
PROJECTS

PROPOSAL WRITING FOR RESEARCH &
INNOVATION PROJECTS

MASTERING ERASMUS+ PROPOSAL
DEVELOPMENT: FROM PROJECT
CONCEPT TO WINNING PROPOSAL

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION & AUDITING
PREPARATION
FOR EU FUNDED PROJECTS

RISK MANAGEMENT FOR EC FUNDED
PROJECTS

IMPACT OF E.C. FUNDED RESEARCH

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In Class Course Agenda – 8 hours per day

Day 1: Foundations of Innovation & Project Ideation

- **Welcome, Icebreaker & Course Overview**
 - Introduction to the course structure and objectives
 - Engaging icebreaker exercise
- **Advanced Design Thinking & Innovation Strategies**
 - In-depth exploration of design thinking methodologies
 - Strategic applications for driving innovation in projects
 - Case study discussions on impactful innovation
- **Empathic Research & Stakeholder Engagement**
 - Tools and techniques for understanding user needs
 - Mapping stakeholders and their roles in project success
 - Using research insights to shape innovative solutions
- **Ideation Techniques & Concept Validation**
 - Structured brainstorming methods
 - Evaluating and refining innovative ideas
 - Ensuring feasibility and impact in EU projects
- **Group Exercise: Project Vision Development**
 - Collaborative development of a project vision statement
 - Presentation and peer feedback session

Day 2: Prototyping, Proposal Writing & Team Collaboration

- **Energizer Activity**
 - Icebreaker to set an engaging tone for the day
- **Rapid Prototyping & Testing for Project Validation**
 - Techniques for building prototypes quickly
 - Testing and iterating based on feedback
 - Case examples of successful project prototypes
- **Proposal Writing & Storytelling for EU Projects**
 - Structuring a winning EU funding proposal
 - Using narrative techniques to make proposals compelling
 - Reviewing successful EU-funded applications
- **Team Collaboration & Innovation Culture Development**
 - Best practices for fostering collaboration in teams
 - Building a sustainable culture of innovation
 - Overcoming barriers to effective teamwork
- **Final Exercise: Proposal Presentation & Feedback**
 - Group presentations of project proposals
 - Expert and peer feedback session

Please note - This agenda should be considered as a backbone, the exact content and flow may vary to better accommodate the needs of each training group individually.