



Work package 4: Valorisation

Deliverable 4.1. Concept of valorisation of placements for knowledge transfer

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About this document

This document integrates WP04 (Valorisation) of the Unikey project and concerns the first activity, which is the establishment of a valorisation concept of placements. The goal of this task is to describe how students can be turned into agents of “knowledge transfer”. To this end, some requirements that students should have have been defined and some examples of technology transfer by all partners have also been identified.

Introduction

Knowledge transfer plays a vital role in the whole economic system, influencing innovation management in its very core. It is possible to find several definitions of knowledge transfer, most of them being presented by knowledge Transfer Centres.

The Knowledge Transfer Centre from the University of St Andrews (2011) defines it as “the systems and process by which research institutions interact with businesses, the public and other organisations to enable knowledge and expertise to be utilised leading to innovative, profitable and social improvements”.

Taking into consideration the importance of knowledge transfer, universities and research centres have been focusing their mission on this field, creating specialized units that seek and select knowledge and technologies that can be potentially commercially explored.

This knowledge and technology transfer does not only take place internally, at the home country. Efforts have also been made in order to bring these technologies to other countries through the establishment of partnerships and contacts with potential companies.

Considering the fact that most of the UNI-KEY partners develop mobility programmes, it seemed important to include the valorisation process as one of the activities undertaken by students when they are abroad. In order to help them doing that, a valorisation concept has been created and two modules in the Pilot Course (WP08) has been developed.

The design of Modules 4 and 7 reflect the valorisation concept, since through those modules students must:

- Identify what are the strengths of the home university and department/faculty, home region/town, home country;
- Explore whether the host organization or host region could benefit from the work going on at the home university or region
- Being able to communicate (personal, professional, business activities)

The Uni-Key approach aims to valorise placement periods for university-enterprise knowledge transfer, research and innovation. Uni-Key turns students into “transfer agents”. The role of a transfer agent implies the following:

- Encourage students to become ambassadors of their home university/region/country and also of their EU-programme, when they go abroad
- Encourage students to become ambassadors of their host organisation/region/country, when they return home
- Turn learning tasks into door openers, i.e. provide students with a reason to contact e.g. the regional Enterprise Europe network office, when they are abroad (or when applicable also back home)

Requirements and Procedures

In order to turn students into agents of knowledge transfer between universities and companies (UniKey Agents), the UniKey Partners will have to guarantee that those students have the following profile:

- a) Fluency in the official language of the host country;
- b) Good communication and negotiation skills;
- c) Preferably be a student from the same field of knowledge of the technology to be transferred.

The selection of students that will be turned into UniKey agents will be made taking into account the list of applications to mobility programs. Those students will have to show their interest in becoming a Unikey agent, and fill in a specific application form. They will then be interviewed by the project managers of the home university.

In case the student is selected, he/she will then become a UniKey agent and will be given training in the knowledge/technology to be transferred. The home University will have to guarantee that specific information about the knowledge/technologies is provided, such as:

- a) Main purpose;
- b) Main advantages compared to what already exists in the market;
- c) Valuation Possibilities;
- d) Costs.

Those students will also benefit from the training that is being prepared in the KLS 5. They will also have meetings, not only with the project managers that are responsible for the transfer of the knowledge/technology, but also with the main researcher who can provide specific information about it. Confidential information will be preserved.

The home university should present information about the technology/knowledge in an understandable way, i.e., information accessible to non-experts.

When the student goes abroad he/she will present the knowledge/technology to the company where he is staying at and/or to other companies from the same field activity, with the aim to license it.

Scenarios

In order to contribute to the “university-enterprise cooperation” the WP4 aims to turn students into “agents of mutual knowledge transfer between universities and enterprises”. To do so it is necessary to take into consideration different scenarios, since students can have their international experience in different entities (universities or enterprises).

The different scenarios are given below:

a) University – University

Students that are going to start an EU mobility program can come from a Home University into a Host University. Those students may have some knowledge about the technologies and knowledge of their home university, but they need to know what information they can/must share with the host university. They need to know the applications of the knowledge/technology they are going to valorise and they also need to understand and identify possible fields where the universities can work together.

When the mobility program ends it is expected that the student collects all information and contacts, so that the home university guarantees the follow-up process and maintains the collaboration with the host university.

b) University – Enterprise

The most common scenario is the one where students develop the EU mobility program in a enterprise. Those students are going to face a total different environment, since companies have as main goal selling and having profit. Students need to know how to identify the company needs, in order to present the solutions (knowledge/technologies) from the home university. If those needs cannot be answered by the solutions from the home university, students should transmit that information to the university (clearly indicating the needs and expectations of the company) so that the university identifies the department/researcher that could develop a possible solution.

c) Enterprise - Enterprise

It is also possible that an EU mobility program accepts entrepreneurs, which are no longer students. Those entrepreneurs intend to create a company or already have a company with less than three years. In those cases entrepreneurs will also value the technology/knowledge of their company. However it is also expected that the entrepreneur presents technologies/knowledge from the home university that can answer the needs of the host enterprise or his/her own, thus promoting the development of his/her company.

a) Enterprise – University

In this case the entrepreneur conducts a EU mobility program in the University or research centre. The entrepreneur will have the opportunity to present to the university the needs of his/her company or a compilation of needs of the companies of his/her region. He/She can also acquire information about the services and skills within the host university in order to later present them to his company or to a business association in his/her field of activity.

In all these cases confidentiality must be guaranteed. An incentive scheme for students/entrepreneurs should also be considered, which can be, for instance, a share of the licensing value.

Transfer Agent success stories

Example 1

Stéphanie works for a Chamber of Commerce in Belgium, Brussels; her job is to do researches and studies on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Stéphanie is the tutor of a young smart intern: Sara, an Italian student, from the University of Padua – Italy.

Stéphanie is currently preparing a research project in the field of Human Rights within European SMEs. Thanks to her sound experience working with SMEs, Stéphanie has many contacts with entrepreneurs and business associations; she is missing a partner with strong expertise in Human Rights. Her intern, Sara, remembers that her home university is UNESCO chair in Human Rights democracy and peace. This would be a great partner for Stephanie's research project! Sara knows who is the reference person at the university, to be contacted; she manages to talk to him: he's really interested in the project and glad to take part to it.

2-months go by, during which the Chamber of Commerce in Belgium and the Italian University work together, to prepare the research project. The mediation of Sara is crucial, since it allows anticipating or overcoming problems of cultural or organisational differences. The project is a success and both partners will surely work together again (now that they know each other!).

Example 2

Caroline is SMEs consultant at the Belgian-Italian Chamber of Commerce in Brussels. She worked for 5 months with Gianmaria, a smart and proactive trainee from Italy. Together, they worked on how to develop business opportunities through public procurement.

Once the traineeship is over and Gianmaria goes back home, he realises that his uncle business could benefit from what he learned during his internship abroad. He talks with his uncle about it, who seems quite interested in the initiative. Gianmaria, thanks to what he learned at his stage, supports his uncle business in preparing the documents to take part to the public procurement. At some point he asks some support from Caroline, who is happy to review the dossier and to give some advice to Gianmaria once more.

After few months, Caroline and Gianmaria talk over Skype and he tells her that the offer went well and his uncle was awarded the public procurement; he will now subscribe to the Chamber of Commerce, in order to receive additional support. They are both truly happy about it: Gianmaria has the proof that he learned something very useful; Caroline is proud of his trainee and has gained a new client!

Example 3

The Belgian-Italian Chamber of Commerce hosts about 15 trainees every year. They are integrated in the staff and they follow a specific training plan. They are usually happy about their experience and the Chamber staff is satisfied as well. Many of them find a job in Brussels or in Italy in the private or public sector.

For the Chamber of Commerce, trainees are transfer agents because:

- They promote the Chamber at their university, among other students; thanks to this, the Chamber receives always very good CVs/candidates profiles
- They promote the Chamber with their friends and family, locally
- They promote the Chamber at their job place (when they start working) – i.e. they suggest the Chamber as partner or supplier of specific services

Example 4

Through student interns at the office of the World Food Programme (WFP) United Nations the programme office discovered the unique position of the small University of Applied Sciences Fulda in Germany.

This university offers study and research opportunities in nutrition and logistics - both areas are of strategic relevance of the World Food Programme. The contact to a professor was established, who is focussing her research on humanitarian logistics and a professor of nutrition who is specialised in Food Technology and Microbiology - as a consequence both the United Nations WFP and the University Fulda are drafting a cooperation agreement concerning joint education and research activities.

It also led to a closer interdisciplinary cooperation between the department of nutrition and the department of business at the University, which did not happen before as the University was not aware itself that the combination of education and research in nutrition (a traditional dept) and logistics (a young and strongly growing area of the business dept.) could turn into a "unique selling point" of the university.

The example illustrates how a student can turn into an agent of knowledge and technology transfer between universities and enterprises (here enterprise in a wide sense including non-profit and public organisations). However the example above is driven by coincidences - the Uni-Key project aims to increase the awareness at all involved parties - the student, the university and mobility coordinators and the enterprise (supervisors of students) of this potential role as we expect that often opportunities are missed because of a lack of awareness of those opportunities.

Example 5

A Warana business that is lighting up the world with new solar technologies has enlisted University of the Sunshine Coast students to expand its products into Europe.

Students from USC's Master of International Business are developing a global marketing plan for sustainable solar lighting technology company EXlites.

They will focus on two of EXlites niche products – solar bollard lights and solar lighting plants.

EXlites director Mike Arieni said the company had opened distribution channels in the United States and Middle East, with manufacturing soon to follow, and was now looking at ways to move into the European market.

“The European market is one we know very little about, so the student’s research and ideas will give us an insight into what opportunities exist for us over there,” he said.

“It is also huge cost-saving for me. When I look at the amount of hours I put into trying to understand the other overseas markets, I would estimate that it is saving me about six months of work.”

Lecturer in International Business Dr Leone Cameron said there were several European students working on the EXlites campaign who were able to draw on their own “local” knowledge.

“This is an opportunity for students to work with real businesses, analysing their business problems and act, under supervision, in the capacity of international marketing consultants,” she said.

“It allows students to use their own cross-cultural knowledge to benefit their business client with international marketing plans being prepared for France, Germany, Sweden, Netherlands, Ghana, Denmark as well as South East Asia.”

The students will present their findings to Mr Arieni and EXlites executives tomorrow (Thursday 24 November) at the University of the Sunshine Coast from 3pm.

Example 6

Students from the Universidade de Aveiro can already be considered as technology and knowledge transfer agents, since they will be transferring knowledge acquired during their undergraduation and/or graduation studies at the university . Our university also has several examples of students that have created their own business, thanks to the knowledge and skills they acquired at the university. In other cases, students have developed technologies that have been patented and licensed.

Mobile Challenge Game

In addition to the definition of the valorisation concept and pilot courses, partners have also drawn a challenge games that were inspired by www.scvngr.com and <http://badgestack.com/> (see annex 1 and 2). Those (optional)

challenges could be completed with a mobile device. The learners who complete the challenges earn reward points (E.G. 1 up to 3 points for a completed challenge depending on complexity) and learners could also create their own challenges. The winner(s) shall get an Award, in UNI-KEY it is a trip to Brussels to the final UNI-KEY event.

UNI-KEY partners identified some examples of potential Mobile Challenges, that are presented below:

- Document international student friendly facilities (e.g. restaurants) in your host region
- Identify and document typical sayings, symbols (and their meaning) of your host region, which you would not find at home
- Find and document a cooperation activity between your home and guest region/town
- Document your participation in a volunteer or social responsibility activity in your host region
- Search a good practice example of your host region of fighting against discrimination of minorities
- Find and document a gesture (nonverbal communication) used in your host culture, which is new to you (your culture)
- Identify new placement offers in your host region
- Identify the MEP of your host/home region and convince him/her to sign the petition „fraternité 2020“
- Post your own challenge and win a point for each student completing your challenge

Transfer (more complex) challenges (optional tasks)

- Find and document a cooperation activity between your home and guest region/town
- Document your participation in a volunteer or social responsibility activity in your host region
- Identify new placement offers in your host region
- Identify the MEP of your host/home region and convince him to sign the petition „fraternité 2020“
- Post your own challenge and win a point for each student completing your challenge

Implementation of the Mobile Challenge Game in Pilot Course 1

UNI-KEY partners created extra challenges that were included in the Pilot Course (one extra challenge for each module). Those extra challenges contribute to the valorisation concept as they provide door-opener tasks and train students to perform the role of a "transfer agent". A few examples are presented below.

Extra challenge of module: Welcome to the course!

Ask a friend or colleague to assess your career development abilities based on the test form you know already from the warm up task. If you got the results you can compare them with your self-assessment and we would like to ask you to send us a little report. Have you noticed differences, how does the original result change when you calculate the average of your self-assessment and the assessment of your colleague (see online platform)

Extra challenge game Module 1: Ready to go? Planning an internship abroad

Now get ready for the extra challenge of this module:

Identify an official holiday, which is specific to your host country (i.e. does not exist in your home country) and find out about what people celebrate or commemorate and what they usually do on this day. Report about your findings in the Module1-challenge-forum. Furthermore find a newspaper article, containing further information on this public holiday of a newspaper in your host country and attach a digital copy (in pdf, html, doc or rtf format) to your forum message.

Extra challenge game Module 2: Plan 2 Succeed! Self-organisation during internship, including financial issues

Are you ready for an extra challenge on the financial management side of your stay abroad?

This challenge is more complex than the challenges before – that means if you have what it takes to complete this challenge you get **2 points** and you have time until the end of the year (**31.12.12**) to complete the challenge:

a) Perform a research about discount opportunities in your host region, which do not exist in your home country or are specific to your host region and which help foreign trainees/interns to save costs (e.g. there might be a special service to rent or buy used bikes, which would save transport costs).

Use, try out one discount yourself and report about it in the 2-challenge-forum so that other international students can benefit from it in the future (i.e. include logistic details about how and where to get the discount). Furthermore include an evidence – e.g. a digital copy of the coupon, discount card or receipt, which demonstrates that you actually got the discount.

b) Perform a research on the income side, which means how you can get extra (additionally to a potential Erasmus or Leonardo grant and additionally to your potential salary from your host organisation) income or raise funds during your stay abroad. It must be realistic to get those extra funds on the side of a full-time internship. It does not mean that you have to get money sometimes there are non-monetary opportunities in the local community to exchange services, e.g. you help somebody, who is learning your language and he or she will wash your clothes in return.

Report about how to get it and details about the organisation providing the income opportunity in the 2-challenge-forum. Provide evidence by submitting a copy of the advertisement, web-page (screenshot) or any other way to confirm the offer.

You get all or nothing – i.e. either you complete the full challenge and get 2 points or you get 0 points, when the challenge is only partially completed (or not done).

Tip: Get in contact with local colleagues or neighbours to find out about those discount/income opportunities – in case of doubt use the challenge as “an excuse” to approach local people

Extra challenge game Module 3: Have you heard? Confidentiality and ethical challenging situations

Our extra challenge this time has something to do with ethics just like in the module! I hope you are all ready for it- as usual we are really looking forward to your contributions!

Search for and describe an institution in your host environment that displays social entrepreneurship (see the online platform) attributes or has a very known ethical conduct. Try to identify good practices of promoting social entrepreneurship (e.g. activities that encourage the creation of new business / social enterprises, activities fighting against discrimination of minorities or activities that boost gender equality, etc).

If you are already doing your internship start looking in your host institution and then search for others, if you don't find any noticeable example in your host organisation.

Report your findings and **highlight/name 2 (business or work) ethics** you liked (think of what Ilona said in her video) and include evidence (newspaper articles, online articles, website of the institution, testimonies of those involved, etc) in the 'Have you heard extra challenges forum' below.

This challenge will last till the end of the **module 4 (November 21st 2012)** and **2 points** will be awarded for it.

Extra challenge game Module 4: I have an idea ... ! Identification of university-enterprise cooperation opportunities at host organisation

Now after doing the great work with your presentations (task 2), why don't you actually use them in the real world? Do you have an idea of where you could present the ideas in your slideshow in practice in your host region (e.g. at your host organisation)?

For example you could check the website of the Enterprise Europe Network and identify an EEN partner in your host region:<http://portal.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/> and you could identify some cooperation opportunities in the technology market database.

Or you could find an occasion at your host organisation to do such a presentation.

After doing that, please report about the occasion and the outcome or feedback you received in the extra challenge-4 forum and earn two points. You have time until the end of the course, i.e. January 31st 2013 to complete this challenge.

Background Research

In order to develop the challenge games, the UniKEY partners have made some benchmarking and research. Two examples were analyzed in detail, and they are presented in annex.

Annex 1 – SCVNGR

Annex 2 – Badgestack