ifempower

IFEMPOWER HANDBOOK FOR MENTORSHIP

PROGRAM EMPOWERING FEMALE

ENTREPRENEURS

(INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 4)

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Document Control Sheet

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Table 1 – Document Control Sheet

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Table 2 – Versioning and Contribution History

Executive Summary

1. Executive Summary

Ifempower mentorship handbook contributes to an understanding of mentorship and particularly of the role of mentors. Before designing the mentorship program, the experts of Steinbeis Transfer Center have analysed good practices of mentoring in all partner countries of ifempower. A supporting document with details on relevant programs is elaborated separately as internal working document. On basis of those findings, the ifempower handbook for mentorship program is written.

Universities will use the handbook when implementing ifempower mentorship program for female students. It is a helpful tool for university teachers who are responsible for the new curricula, but also for the administration of universities – and particularly for the newly established Entrepreneurship Support Points. Latter have to assist students in finding mentors. The mentorship program is an integrated part of the international ifempower curriculum. The mentorship program contributes significantly to attract female students for the new study program.

The basic mentoring program aims to show students how successful female entrepreneurs master their daily business life. Getting the chance to be supported by a mentor is crucial reason, why students will choose the ifempower module. The handbook shows that the mentorship program could be combined with an internship or with project work. It is recommended to add such components to the mentorship program. The decision on extensions is under responsibility of the university where the international entrepreneurship module is implemented.

Responsible for finding a mentor, is the student. To ensure that students find suitable mentors, universities have to provide support. A database of available mentors must be created. Universities create incentives to the mentors when connecting them through networks. Entrepreneurs might find business partners in such networks. Being in contact with successful entrepreneurs strengthen reputation of universities – and allows universities to benefit more, e.g. as the entrepreneurs could become sponsors for events, provides topics for student theses or offers internships.

Students receive one ECTS for successful participation in the mentor program. For the definition of success, the respective guidelines of the participating university must be taken into account. The handbook on the mentoring programme is therefore not to be understood as a universal norm.

Introduction

2. Introduction

ifempower Handbook for Mentorship Program brings knowledge to Higher Educational Institutes (universities) that are project partner in ifempower, on how to implement the mentorship program. Afterwards it can be applied by any university wishing to focus on the empowerment of female entrepreneurs.

Mentorship handbook is made for

- university teachers who are responsible for the new curricula
- administration of Universities
- newly established Entrepreneurship Support Points (at Ifempower project partners; internal intellectual output 6)

The handbook is not to be seen as a guide for entrepreneurs on how to become and how to be mentors. Potential mentors have to be contacted by Universities and students. Handbook explains how to identify and convince entrepreneurs for becoming mentors (chapter 3).

Mentorship program is an integrated part of the international ifempower curriculum. It is to be understood as an organic part of the module. Those students who choose the module have to be mentored by entrepreneurs, mainly by female entrepreneurs. Participation in mentorship program has to be seen as mandatory for each participating student.

Universities and in particular the Female Entrepreneurship Support Points, set-up by ifempower, support students in finding mentors and in organising the relationship with them.

Getting the chance to be supported by a mentor is crucial reason, why students will choose the ifempower module.

By the end of the course/semester, students will have practical knowledge on how their mentors do their regular business and what kind of obstacles they have to generally overcome. Success stories and role models of mentors are highly encouraging students to start building up their professional entrepreneurial idea. The strong connection with other courses of the curriculum intensifies this positive impact on business development.

Best practices of ongoing mentorship programs in Europe were analysed and taken into account when designing the mentorship program. Those examples are summarized in supporting document "Best practice examples for building ifempower mentorship program". This internal work paper is available for **download.**

The mentorship programme is internationally useable. As national circumstances, e.g. specific legal or administrative aspects, certain standards of participating Universities or the business environment in general, have to be taken into account when implementing the mentorship program. National specifications for Austria, Hungary, Iceland, Germany, Spain, Portugal and Romania are discussed with project partners and presented in chapter 3.6.
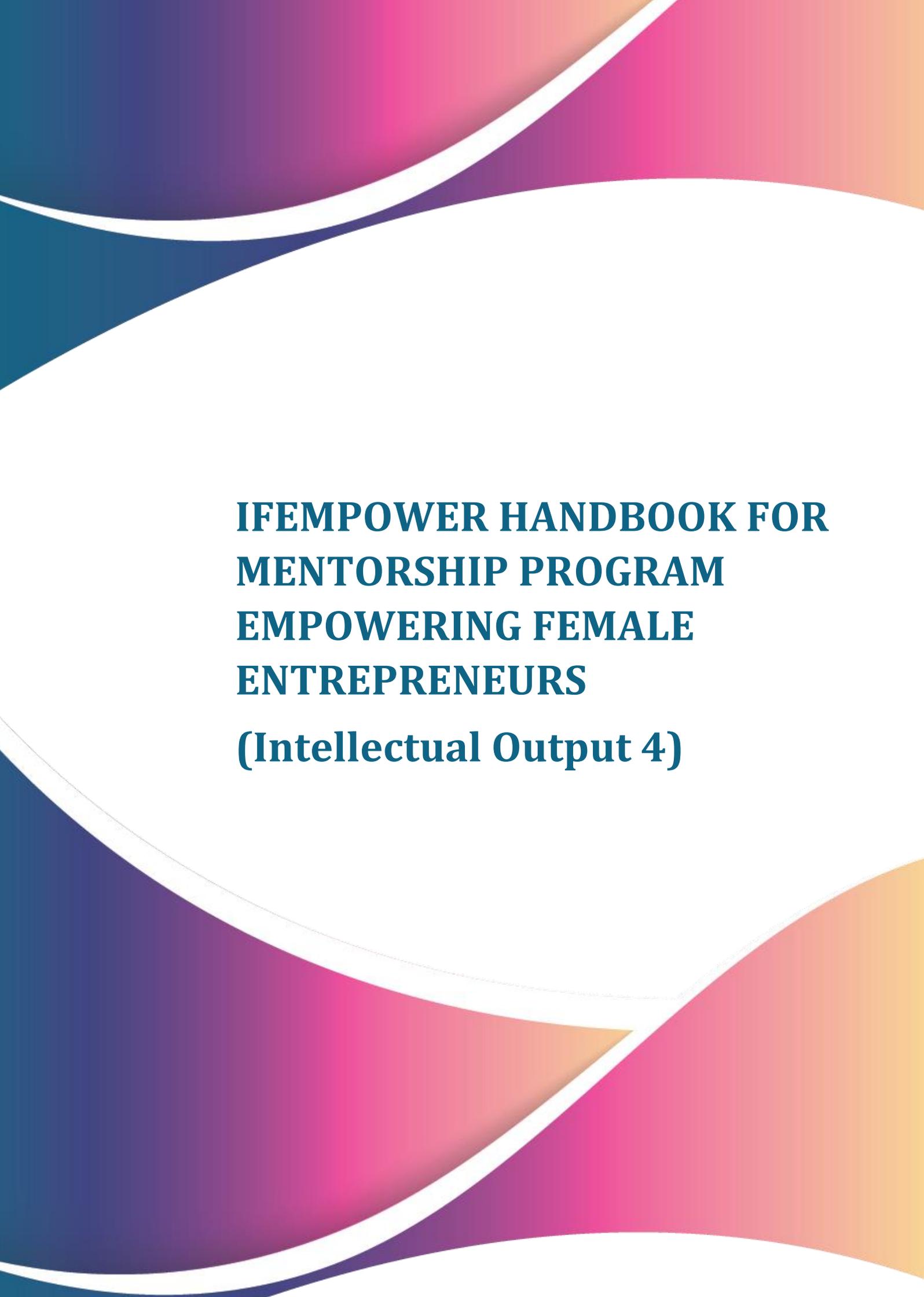
IFEMPOWER HANDBOOK FOR MENTORSHIP PROGRAM EMPOWERING FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS

(Intellectual Output 4)

3. Mentoring Program Empowering Female Entrepreneurs

3.1. Mentorship

3.1.1. Brief history of mentoring: origins and its development till now

A clear consensus about definition of mentoring has not been reached. The available definitions of mentoring are too numerous to count here but their multiplicity reflects the way in which political and social contexts determine meaning differentially as those contexts themselves change.

It is frequently cited as the original source for the concept of mentoring the Homer's Odyssey, an epic poem from Ancient Greece thought to date back at least 3.000 years.The Odyssey tells the story of the king Odysseus' lengthy return from the Trojan war. He entrusted guardianship of his son and his royal household to an old friend, Mentor, no doubt anticipating a swift return. Young nobles had long occupied Odysseus' palace, demanding that Penelope, his wife, to choose one of them in re-marriage, in the hope of usurping control of, his kingdom and denying Telemachus, his son, thebirthright. Eventually the goddess Athene interceded to ensure Odysseus' safe return. She appeared to Telemachus, by then aged 21, in a number of human and animal forms, including that of the ageing Mentor, to prepare him to be reunited with his father. After their reunion, father and son repelled the usurpers and order was restored[1].

It is a cutuma in all history stages that when the level of progress (to be understood as innovation) overcomes a certain society or space to refer to a system that is easily understood. The higher the change it is the older to the system to refer to is so. This could be seen as an application of the principle of parcimony.

Coming up with the informational revolution in which the cost of transmitting the information became negligible and resulting in a lot of information spread all around, thus resulted the need to revive trusted figures. In modern ages, reputation (trust-based) overcomes the information (gentle power).

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[1] Helen Colley, „Exploring the Myths of Mentor: A Rough Guide to the History of Mentoring from Marxist feminist perspective", Cardiff University, 2000, http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00001500

3.1.2. Definition of Mentoring

Defining mentoring is a very difficult task as it describes a form of learning which has been metaphorized and redefined along history according to the existent context.

In essence, mentorship is a relationship between individuals, resulting from a higher purpose – proficiency in a certain field or skill, referring to different stages of learning (professional or personal development), in which at least one of the parts involved needs guidance, information, networks or all at the same time. Mentor-mentee relationship allows space for private discussions in which at least one part is interested in benefiting from the growth of the other (recruitment, talent promotion, better networking with other business partners through mutual training, etc.). Mentor is a volunteer who has already achieved a certain level of success/proficiency and would like to share from his professional knowledge and personal wisdom to younger pretenders. Reasons to do this might vary but at least the following guiding principles should be applied:

• Mentee is not a copy of the mentor, nor a "drone" of the mentor;

• Mentor is a volunteer;

• Mentor and mentee act in improving each other`s quality of life (that is why private approach is an important component);

• Mentor and mentee understand the benefit of working one with each other, principle that guides the amount of time dedicated;

• Post-mentorship service is recommended but not mandatory.

General expectations resulting from mentor-mentee relationship could be summarized as it follows: **A mentor is a person** who acts as a guide and an adviser. He/she is a role model, one that the mentee can learn from, and one who is interested in passing on knowledge, experience, thoughts not to mention in-sights to others as inspiration for personal and vocational growth.

A mentor can offer:

• Information: mentors share their knowledge, experiences and wisdom;

• Contacts: mentors provide valuable opportunities by facilitating academic, career, and personal contacts;

• Challenges: mentors stimulate curiosity and build confidence by presenting new ideas, opportunities and challenges;

• Support: mentors encourage growth and achievement by providing an open and supportive environment;

• Goal Setting: mentors help the mentees discover talents and interests and define and attain their goals;

• Advice: Mentors guide the mentee in reaching academic, career and personal goals;

• Role models: by sharing stories of achievement with the mentee, mentors can become role models.

A **mentee is a person** who is less experiences and might have some specific professional and personal goals about which she wants to talk to a more experienced and successful person. A mentee takes up an active role as the one who seeks advice and guidance. A mentee must make clear how he/she want to benefit from the mentorship.

Thus, the mentoring is a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and the psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development; mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the mentee) . The mentee within the bigger organizations should be understood as the one having priority (according to certain invariables) into receiving counselling.

In a lot of studies there is very often encountered the comparison between mentor – mentee and parent – child, teacher – pupil or professor – student. University and dual education programs are the environment where counselling related to professional tasks is primarily to the private conversation into any mentorship initiative. Why is this so? Because of diverse forms that mentorship could take place before: family figures, friends, media figures, teachers or other type of exchange during networking. University is preparing the qualified workforce and can be said that it is the most important pre-stage (considering also PhDs cases) for studies – business environment touch.

In business, formal mentoring is part of talent management strategies which are used to groom key employees, newly hired graduates, high-potential employees and future leaders.

3.1.3. Mentorship program as integrated part of the international ifempower curriculum

ifempower has developed an international curriculum, strongly relying on mentorship and project-based learning. This comprehensive module reflects on known obstacles faced by female entrepreneurship and empowers students to successfully overcome them. This curriculum is one of the most important innovative characteristics of ifempower.

Students accomplishing the ifempower module will get professional mentorship from women entrepreneurs (one of the courses will consist of internship at an entrepreneur), opportunity to work with them, assist their work, and get familiar with the general way of leading an entrepreneurship. This can be understood as project-based transnational collaboration between enterprises and students/staff at higher education institutions to study real life cases. By the end of the semester, students will get not only a practical knowledge on how their mentors do their

regular business and what kind of obstacles they have to generally overcome, but they will get the opportunity to start to build up their professional entrepreneurial idea and network. Students' work with their mentors will be solely professional instead of administrative or secretarial. The mentorship programme will be internationally useable but also potentially be tailor-made to national circumstances.

A mentorship for female students as a component of a university program should take into account the following variables:

-   investigate the main roles they fulfil in doing business
-   the main hindrances they generally face in getting a leader position (external and internal factors)
-   what skills and potential legal changes would be needed to support their empowerment
-   characteristics of operation and situation of SMEs led by women
-   what strategies are followed to establish harmony between carrier and family life
-   identification of gaps on the market & market needs
-   what are the main hindrances in access to finance and lack of collaterals.[2]

All students in the ifempower Entrepreneurship module are required to participate in the mentoring program. Participation is mandatory. The study program is described in detail in the document "Ifempower Curriculum" (IO2). The documentation is available to the project partners. External interested parties can obtain information about the study programme on the project website (www.ifempower.eu).

In class	Entrepreneurship (25 hours)	Gender equality and women entrepreneurs (25 hours)	Start
	Sales and marketing (25 hours)		
	Business plan and risk management (25 hours)		
	Establishing and financing SMEs (25 hours)		
Project	Case study or business concept (25 hours)		
Internship	Mentorship programme (30 hours)		End

Figure 1 – ifempower Curricula Components

Mentorship with embedded project work versus internship

Students in ifempower entrepreneurship module are not asked to take the role of interns at the mentor's organization. They might assist and complete tasks led by the mentor (= project work). Thematic priorities of mentor-mentee relationship are on everyday-life situations, such as harmony between work and family life, role of females in enterprises, etc (= mentorship). To what extent a real project work can be added, has to be decided by the university. Instead of working on a case study, the student could work on a project what is designed and agreed with the mentor on basis of a real scenario for what the mentor needs a solution. A strong combination of mentorship and project work results in an advanced mentorship program (see also chapter 3.4) but is not to be understood as an internship.

Mentorship and the European Credit Transfer System

The complete module is designed to receive 6 ECTS. Students receive 1 ECTS for successful participation in the mentoring programme included into the 6 ECTS. It must be pointed out that without successful completion of the mentoring program, the entire module cannot be considered passed.

In order for the university to recognise the mentoring programme, it is necessary to define what is meant by successful participation. Basically, the individual standards of the respective university must be applied for the assessment. The university will name the success criteria and is responsible for deciding whether the individual mentorship program of a student is recognised. The handbook therefore only provides basic information on minimum requirements. From ifempower's point of view, the following characteristics of success must be taken into account: Mentees must submit a paper/report on the mentorship program to prove that targets were defined and achieved, meetings with mentor took place and that tasks, given by mentor, are fulfilled (see chapter 3.3.3).

As the program is part of the curriculum, each mentor must know and accept rules of the program in order to ensure a certain level of quality standard.

Brief introduction into program requirements to mentors should be offered by Universities. Attending the briefing should not become mandatory for mentors.

Duration of entrepreneurship module at Universities will be two semesters. Selection of mentors should take place before first semester ends. Mentorship takes place in second semester. The relation will not end since the mentors have to guarantee that they support their students and will be available for counselling at least online.

Entrepreneurship course is designed for 20 students at each participating HEI. As a principle, each student should have an individual mentor. In case that there are

less mentors available, e.g. as expected for Iceland, it is allowed that a group of students use same mentor (see chapter 3.5 on national specifications).

3.2. How to build up the mentoring network

3.2.1. Identifying suitable mentors

Mentors would not invest in students who have poor potential for becoming entrepreneurs. Selection/acceptance of the right students to participate at ifempower entrepreneurship module is crucial for attracting mentors.

The competencies of the students, their interests and involvement are issues what attracts mentors.

Basic rule is, that students, participating at ifempower entrepreneurship module, are responsible to find and choose their mentors. Students can look for mentors independent from their HEI or they use services, provided by their HEI.

The process to get in touch with mentors could be seen as similar to applying for a job, or for a trainee position and does not need to be explained here. However, due to the nature of the direct contact what is needed to the entrepreneur, students must give special attention to explain motivation and trustworthy in best way.

Universities, offering the ifempower entrepreneurship module, should support participating students in finding suitable mentors. Universities have to make available a database of potential mentors. Such non-exclusive database of entrepreneurs will help students to get access to mentors. To contact them and to convince them that they are the "right" students, is up to each student.

Simple way is, that HEI elaborate a list of possible mentors and keep it available for students that ask for support. In an advanced way, university and/or ifempower present available mentors online. German program "Spitzenfrauen" can be seen as a model of a simple **online database,** showing profiles of mentors (www.spitzenfrauen.de).

Recommended support actions by universities:
- promoting mentorship program on ifempower website, connecting it with social media, ifempower website, etc.
- launching a "Call for Mentors"
- contacting universities' business partners, e.g. sponsors, customers, cluster members, and externally hired lecturers – and entrepreneurs in connected business incubator centers, start-up-hubs, etc.

- organizing networking events and create awareness on possibility to become mentor directly to the target group
- establishing links to existing networks of entrepreneurs in the region where a university is located; also the alumni network
- Universities what are project partners in ifempower should use also the already established contacts to entrepreneurs who contributed to the project as interviewees

A perfect mentor is a successful female entrepreneur who is in same time experienced in thematic field of envisaged business.

However, a mentor from another business sector than the student is working in will be accepted.

In order to overcome the separation and segregation of potential female entrepreneurs, male entrepreneurs are also eligible.

For students facing with geographic obstacles, such as living on rural or less serviced areas and peripheral regions to start an own business is even more difficult while they have fewer opportunities and fewer knowledge to use. Rural areas have their own characteristics with regard to business opportunities, social and economic background, and with the knowing of those characteristics special enterprises can be developed. Supporting students in finding mentors should include actions to get in touch with entrepreneurs in rural areas.

It is agreed to point out in promotion actions, that the mentorship is open for disabled entrepreneurs. These women will be asked to be mentors, aiming at setting special example to the students, especially to disabled ones. Particularly during call announcements partner universities will give special attention to emphasize that special experiences of disabled entrepreneurs are a big value for students.

It is recommended, that Universities ask students to present their mentor options already when entrepreneurship module starts. However, each university has to decide, what to do in case that a student does not find a mentor. Participating in the mentorship program is mandatory and any delay in finding a mentor endangers the success of the entire module.

3.2.2. Creating an ifempower mentorship network

Whatever entrepreneurship/mentorship program an university might start, it is important to build a network and use it to get access to various entrepreneurs who will be the future mentors. In the expectation that each participating Universities will succeed in identifying mentors, their agreement for networking should be obtained. It is desirable that the mentors come into contact with each other. Their exchange of experiences on the progress and

problems of the mentees can strengthen the support service. In addition, contact with other entrepreneurs can be an incentive to participate in the programme. It is conceivable that contact with other mentors may lead to additional business opportunities.

The first step towards networking is the already planned kick-off event, which actually serves as an introduction to the mentors' special role in supporting the students. The presentation of the mentors on the websites of the HEI or of ifempower indirectly contributes to networking. The mentors can recognize which competence and business activity other mentors have and, if interested, address them specifically. The effect is reinforced by the fact that four countries are already represented by the universities participating in ifempower.

Certainly not from the outset, but in the medium term it is feasible to develop a certain structure. A mentor can act as the mentor's spokesperson and initiate and coordinate network activities. At first, this can only be understood as potential for the further development of the network, but the approach is to establish regional or sector-related structures. Mentors take on further functions. Examples of such networks are recorded and confirm that entrepreneurs are quite willing to engage further.

To attract mentors, Universities should present benefits and incentives. Generally, becoming mentor and connecting to the network resulting from the mentorship program helps participating entrepreneurs to

- improve marketing and HR strategies
- accessing such networks allows to identify and to meet active players from different local area who could become multipliers for forwarding corporate message.
- deepening or exploring psycho-pedagogical skills
  According to the curricula (content) of the program, mentoring could be considered one of the highest degrees of the personal success. Mentoring comes as a corollary of a certain stage of professional development and it is a great opportunity for personal development continuity. The mentor exercises his teaching abilities through professional tasks for the new entrepreneur.
- increases the reputation of the mentor and, of course, of the enterprise which is involved, particularly when mentoring program is part of university curricula
- understanding the new generation: future consumer trends and people management
- benefit from technology transfer quick process advantages
  a mentor could benefit from results of professional task forwarded to the mentee: either from a future start-up, either from seeding a certain idea

3.3. Mentor-Mentee Relationship

3.3.1. General Provisions

As a principle in ifempower mentorship program, mentors do not receive a fee for supporting a student. Universities may apply a different model due to strategic, political decision – particularly when it is about private universities.

Clear delimitation to mentorship programs what are established to support start-up enterprises: Beneficiaries of those programs are usually people, who are self-employed, registerred an enterprise or at least started to implement a business. Mentorship program for those target groups often require a financial contribution from mentees.

Mentoring is not the same as training, teaching or coaching, and a mentor does not need to be a qualified trainer.

The amount of time mentor and mentee agree to invest in the relationship varies greatly, based on the needs, expectations, and desires of both parties.

The university's requirements for recognition of the mentorship must be adhered as minimum conditions.

The greatest commitment of time is generally in the beginning of the relationship, when the focus is on getting to know each other and on agreeing targets.

The mentoring relationship is a voluntary commitment between the mentee and the mentor. By signing a target agreement, mentor and mentee define a binding framework for their mentoring relationship. This includes in particular the agreed dates, topics and tasks. In addition, the mentee agrees to prepare the meetings accordingly and to document them. The mentor undertakes to support the mentee and to respond to her wishes.

Both sides have the possibility to terminate the mentoring relationship. The university has to be informed immediately about such decision. To avoid that the entrepreneurship studies cannot be recognized, a new mentor must be found without undue delay.

All information and data exchanged within the mentoring relationship shall be treated with confidentiality and discretion. Mentee and mentor agree to maintain confidentiality beyond the duration of the mentoring relationship.

Ensuring the quality and further development of the mentoring programme is a major concern of ifempower. The experience and assessments of the participants are very important for this. Participating universities have to ask mentee and mentor to give feedback.

3.3.2. Steps of collaboration

After an entrepreneur has confirmed to be ready for mentoring a certain student, a few formal processes need to be carried out.

Before mentoring starts: generating a tandem and agreeing on goals

Mentor and mentee discuss and agree scope of mentoring, e.g. number and frequency of the meetings. It must also be clarified whether the mentorship programme is to be extended by project work. The specifications of the ifempower curriculum in this regard must be taken into account.

Mentoring can only succeed and contribute to the achievement of personal career goals if these goals are clearly defined in advance. In the target agreement, the rough framework for the mentoring relationship is set and basic cornerstones are agreed: How long time should the mentoring tandem go on (perhaps with a duration that goes beyond the actual duration of ifempower curriculum)? How and how often does the contact take place? What are the goals, expectations and tasks?

During mentoring: working with the mentor

Mentor prepares the meetings with the mentee and the specific professional tasks to be performed by the mentee. Mentee prepares the "homework" and follows the guidelines provided by the mentor.

Time and content of the mentoring are to be recorded in the mentoring protocol. Time is money and the mentors of ifempower work on a voluntary basis - this makes their commitment particularly valuable. Since mentorship is a component of ifempower curriculum, the mentoring protocol also serves as proof of attendance.

After mentoring: Measuring success and evaluating the mentorship

Further development is not possible without evaluation and feedback - this applies to the mentees and mentors as well as to possibly included project work. The evaluation sheet serves as a "grid" for mentees to measure their personal success - here mentees can define their goals in detail and assess their own improvement at a time interval. The feedback form gives the mentee the opportunity to assess the mentor's performance: What was particularly good, where is there still room for improvement?

To university, mentee must submitt a report on the mentorship program to prove that

- targets were defined and achieved
- meetings with mentor took place
- tasks, given by mentor, are fulfilled

3.3.3. Supporting documents to organize mentor-mentee relationship

Form templates are attached to the manual. The purpose of these templates is to show the most important contents of such documents. It can be assumed that participating universities have their own templates available and can easily adapt them to the requirements of the mentoring programme.

Form templates (examples):
- mentor profile (Annex 1)
- mentee profile (Annex 2)
- mentor–mentee agreement (Annex 3)
- mentor-log (Annex 4)
- self-assessment (Annex 5)
- feedback (Annex 6).

Participating universities expressed additionally the wish, to receive an implementation guide. This supporting document is attached to the handbook (Annex 7).

3.4. Advanced Mentorship - a tool of university-industry collaboration

The scheme of ifempower mentorship programme significantly promotes synergies between business and education, whose objective is one of the basic requirements of the Europe2020 strategy, the EU's agenda for growth and jobs for the current decade. It provides the basics of dual courses for universities within and beyond the partnership in entrepreneurial teaching and learning.

Dual Education at university level

The mentorship programme in combination with internship could be seen as resembling to the scheme of dual education. Even though certain commonalities can be seen in the combination of theory and practice in ifempower curriculum, dual university education is a much more intensive teaching program. An example for dual education at university level is Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University (Germany; approx. 34,000 enrolled students). All degree programmes of that university are dual, are both nationally and internationally accredited, count as intensive study programmes and are worth 210 ECTS credits.

"The key feature of cooperative (work-integrated) education is the unique combination of theory and practice. The university's curriculum combines higher education and on-the-job training at numerous partner companies, aiming to provide both academic skills and work-related expertise.

In that regard, the academic content conveyed in classroom is complemented with workplace experience, so that real-life situations immediately test the effectiveness of classroom theory and vice versa." (Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University; www.dhbw.de)

However, as ifempower mentorship program strongly connects students and entrepreneurs, various opportunities to develop this connection towards dual education are given. In order to efficiently combine the mentoring program with an internship, it makes sense for the mentee to carry out project work for the mentor. Universities can develop more intensive cooperation with companies from this type of project work. Another success story of dual education at HEI level is developed by German Steinbeis University. This private university applies the model of Project Competence Studies®, currently with more than 8,000 enrolled students (www.steinbeis-hochschule.de). On the way to receive a Bachelor or Master degree, every student implements a project work in collaboration with a business partner. Duration of the project is same as the duration of the studies. Ifempower entrepreneurship module with its mentorship program has potential to be developed into dual education, similar to Steinbeis' Project Competence Studies.
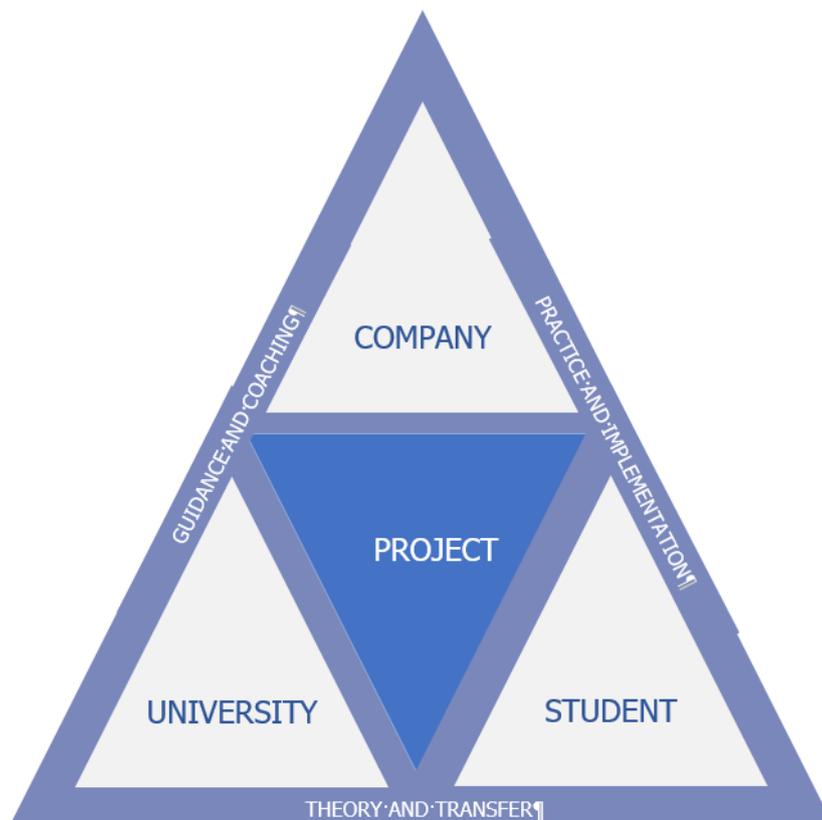

Figure 2 – Project Competence Studies

The further cooperation with mentors in this sense increases on the one hand the interest of entrepreneurs to participate in the programme. In addition, the mentees gain an even deeper

insight into the entrepreneurial work. Since it can be assumed that in most cases the project work will be successfully completed, the university strengthens its position as a knowledge generator.

Technology and Knowledge Transfer

The project-related cooperation of a student with the mentor can be extended by the university to include a component, namely the participation of a professor whose expertise contributes to the success of the project. Economic problems of enterprises very often generate new research activities at universities. Contributing to problem solutions in business sector, increases experiences and competences of professors.

**The effective technology transfer in enterprises that is oriented
on the economy is one of the main elements of national
economic development (www.steinbeis.de)**

A circle closes: universities that cooperate with business can motivate students to engage in entrepreneurship as students could be involved in project work even before they get enrolled in extra module ifempower entrepreneurship.

Impact of ifempower mentorship program on participating universities:

- Strengthens partnerships strategy of the university;
- Higher the rate of professionals to volunteer in mentoring;
- Introduce students to different assessment steps that they will have either to work with (as business owners) either to perform in case they will work for big corporations;
- Increases the quality of the mentorship program and its attractiveness;
- Increases the reputation of the mentorship program;
- Guarantees a better mentor–mentee matchmaking;
- Offer professionals alternatives to current services that they buy in order to profile their employees and contribute to technology transfer.

3.5. National Circumstances and Specific Solutions

The handbook on ifempower mentorship programme is internationally useable. However, national circumstances have to be taken into account when implementing the program. Regarding such specific requirements, the mentorship program is kept flexible in order to allow tailor-made solutions.

Need of a national specification is reported by project partner from Iceland. In ideal case, each student has one mentor. The number of entrepreneurs, particularly the number of female entrepreneurs in Iceland is much smaller than in other participating countries. It cannot be ensured, that every student find a mentor in Iceland. To ensure that every student can participate in the mentorship program, one mentor should be responsible for more students – and first the mentor must be ready to take over this bigger responsibility, secondly the mentor must be able to do so.

Participating universities from Austria, Hungary and Romania did not express a need to adapt the mentorship program to national circumstances.

Conclusion & Recommendations

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The mentoring program is practice oriented. It has to be taken into account that the subject areas of the universities and thus the knowledge and interest base of the students are very different. The universities have retained a high degree of creative freedom.

According to the planning of ifempower, the mentorship program will be tested and adapted as necessary according experience gained in pilot phase. Current version of the manual may be less precise in some respects than the final version.

In any case, the participating universities should strive to establish a close relationship with as many potential mentors as possible at an early stage.

Public relations activities of ifempower are a suitable tool to promote the mentoring program and to get in touch with entrepreneurs.

Universities wishing to offer the ifempower study module must decide whether the relationship between mentor and mentee is to be managed as a simple mentoring program. Or whether the mentoring program should be combined with an internship, possibly also with concrete project work. The advanced mentorship program should be envisaged in order to use synergies and to ensure that university, mentor and mentee benefit from a win-win-win situation in best way. Feasibility of such extended program depends to a large extent on available support capacities at the universities. Those should be created, but can be stimulated by ifempower only and not be demanded.

Annexes

5. Annexes

Supporting documents (chapter 3.3.3).

5.1. Annex I – Template 1 "Mentor Profile"

5.2. Annex II – Template 2 "Mentee Profile

5.3. Annex III – Template 3 "Mentor-Mentee Agreement"

5.4. Annex IV – Template 4 "Mentor-log.

5.5. Annex V – Template 5 "Self-Assessment"

5.6. Annex VI - Template 6 "Feedback"

5.7 Annex VII – Supporting document "Implementation Plan"