

Task 2.1 Analysis of status quo at partner institutions about Learning Professional

SUMMARY

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Our main objective in Work Package 2 of BoostEuroTeQ is to develop a concept for the training of "Learning Professionals" which addresses all economic actors. The report provides the status quo analysis which clarifies the current solutions at (selected) partner universities on behalf of Learning Professionals.

Who are Learning Professionals?

Although they are not always called Learning Professionals, they exist in the majority of our sample. They are the key actors that facilitate a smoother circulation of required knowledge and talents between universities, industry and other actors if needed. They build bridges between professions to bring theory and practise together. According to the analysis, Learning Professionals seemed to be important for almost all areas where there is a lack of communication among firms and researchers. Therefore, having Learning Professionals who are the bridge holders would fasten the knowledge spill over in the ecosystem regardless their main working environment.

Learning Professionals have a diverse skill set that includes communication, networking, and cooperation skills. They work at the intersection of executive education and internal continuing education programs, so they would design programs for internal customers (i.e. researchers and professors) and external ones (i.e. managers and engineers). They make sure that academia understands what skills the firms or the job market expect from their employees. They also better understand the knowledge available at the universities and know how to convince participants about the necessity of programmes and courses. They are aware of new technologies and the necessity of their integration in the ongoing activities and recent challenges. Institutions point to the importance of Learning Professionals, especially in the specific fields that constantly evolve such as energy, health-tech, biotech, food-tech, climate change and sustainability.

Learning Professionals at our universities work at the intersection of executive education and internal continuing education programs, so they design programs for our internal customers (i.e. researchers and professors) and external ones (i.e. managers and engineers). On the one hand, they answer to calls for proposals from firms where they define their needs and look for the evolution of the job markets to better understand the expectation of the industry. They work with academics to be sure that academia understands what skills the firms or the job market expect from their employees. They act like 'translators' who make sure that industry and academia understand each other and are aligned. Directors translate the needs and expectations of industry in proper set of skills, objectives, and courses. They find the proper academics and communicate with them to bring potential projects to life. On the other hand, in some institutions Learning Professionals act like mentors for their colleagues who are academics. In this role, they focus on developing training courses on how to present and teach.

How are we qualifying our Learning Professionals?

The majority of our institutions do not have any training programme or career track to become Learning Professionals within their institution at current. The fact that only two of the institutions mention their initiatives on creating training tracks, supports the aim of the Boost project. Upcoming deliverables will aim to develop an attractive career path for Learning Professionals and strengthen engineering education.

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Further documents

More information and further documents can be requested by contacting Sandra Dirnberger.

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