# Activity 8. Ideation Stage (GrantXpert)

1. **Learning outcome(s): (list up to 3)** 
   * 1. Give a practical tool to young people and educators in developing fresh and innovative business ideas, based on their own group interests/passions/hobbies
     2. Cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset to teenagers, with the help of their educators
     3. Develop important entrepreneurial skills to young people that will help them in the future, including team work, strategic planning, analytical decision making and communication skills.
2. **Relation of activity with the STEM, gender inclusiveness and Entrepreneurship:** (text, not bullets, explaining the relation of the activity to 3 above)

Ideation stage exercise is closely related to the entrepreneurship topic, as it is the first thing you teach people when they follow an entrepreneurship-related course/module. It helps them in developing innovative and fresh ideas in short time. The ideation exercise can be more focused/specific, giving more emphasis on STEM.

1. **Indicate the area of focus:**

**☐ STEM**

**☐ Gender inclusiveness**

**☒ Entrepreneurship**

1. **Materials:** (including ppts, videos, hands-on material)

* 2 slides printed in one A4 paper and this is provided to each participant
* Pens and draft paper (A4)
* One flipchart paper provided to each team, with the 3rd slide already prepared for them
* Big flipchart paper for presentation purposes, after the idea is developed.

1. **Preparation:**The facilitator needs to have the material ready to be used by the participants (slides printed, pens, draft paper, flipchart paper). The flipchart is provided to the team once they have completed the individual part of the exercise. Also there should be stations for 4-5 people each, so that all participants can work in small teams.
2. **Duration:** 90 (minutes)
3. **Target group:**   Teachers of lower secondary education (students aged 12-15 years)

(student age)

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. **Description of the activity:**

Theme: Ideation (developing a business idea for the first time)

Working method: the facilitator explains the exercise and asks people to form in groups of 4-5 people. The participants choose on their own the members of their team, making sure there is a balance between boys and girls in each team. Also the facilitator can encourage people to take a role that is not within their comfort zone, e.g. a girl who is shy can present the results of the groups exercise. Thus the participants can take a role that they are not used to, without giving examples (e.g. we don’t tell them I don’t want any girls doing the minutes or the sketching). This can be done in practice as follows: write the roles in paper and mix them up and give these to people by chance (e.g. presenter, facilitator, the person keeping notes, the idea creator, etc.).

The objective of the exercise and the instructions are given within 10’ and then the team has 40’ to develop their unique business idea and then present it to the rest of the people within 2' (for each team). The class should not have more than 20 people, in order for 4-5 teams to be formed and each team to have time to present their idea to the public.

Once the presentations are over, all participants will reflect on the exercise, giving specific input on:

-How they worked as a group

-What kind of roles did each member assume (coordinator, evaluator, risk-averse person, idea creator, etc.). How do these roles assumed by each member relate to each participant unique capabilities, personalities, interests?

-Did they have any stereotypes/pre-conceived ideas on the role that boys and girls should take in such exercise? Did these stereotypes change after the exercise?

-Was there something they could do better next time

-Did it helped them in developing a new understanding about the ideation process?

-The participants should give feedback on whether they would use this method from now on.

Additional facilitation by the teacher: If the members of the team are struggling to agree or generate problems we can give them examples of problems that need solutions within the STEAM areas (this should be the last resort, allow students to first work on this identification of problems based on their own needs/frustrations on their own):

-Use of plastic bags in our everyday life

-Problem of water shortage in countries of the east-Mediterranean region

-Problems we are facing within our school

-Problems they face in their sports or dance or other out-of-school activities

-Pollution of the environment through car emissions

-Fatal car accidents

-Traffic in the streets through the use of many cars

-Leaves on railway lines, etc.

The teacher can think of more examples that can relate to the national/local context or he/she can give examples of problems the school is facing.

|  |
| --- |
| **Notes for Trainers (background information):**  This is a great ice-breaking activity to be used at the start of an academic year or the first time the teacher enters the classroom, as it helps people to come closer together and feel at ease with each other, sharing personal data, working as team members and then merging their ideas and creating a unique business idea based on everyone’s input. The great thing about this exercise is that it gives people the chance to work on something that is relevant to them on a personal level and it is close to their hearts, something they care about. This is important to be emphasised by the trainer from the start, as many great business ideas have developed by a person that had an unmet need or identified an unresolved problem around him/her. Thus we are saying to people: if you want to develop a great business idea, start this process by first looking at the mirror and then examining the environment/community/people around you, to identify what they really want and need.  Also this exercise helps in explaining to students the unique skills and mindset developed once you start learning about entrepreneurship: after receiving this special training, you are now able to identify around you problems and think of solutions that other people do not see. A practical example that can be given to make people understand this concept is the following: you are driving your car late at night in a quiet neighborhood with very few cars still around in the streets. The red line is on and you are waiting for a long time until the green light is on, even if no one else is coming from the opposite side. Thus you may think: why don’t they have sensors in the traffic lights to recognise the traffic in each side and change the timing of each light based on the traffic activity? This is an important element of the entrepreneurial mindset, finding an unmet need, a frustration or a necessity for people and trying to satisfy  this need or resolve this frustration by developing a new product, service or process. You are not providing your student with a ready-made problem or solution, as this takes away from the idea of developing an entrepreneurial mindset of actually identifying a problem on your own. Thus it should be our last resort as trainers/facilitators to provide ready-made problems like the ones included in the PowerPoint slides, only in cases where the students are really struggling with this exercise.  The exercise also helps people to start thinking an important entrepreneurial concept, the product-market fit, meaning how the new product/service you are suggesting actually meets the needs of a specific market segment (specific target group), identifying in detail the unique characteristics of these target groups/possible users/clients and what their specific needs and wants are. A practical example that can be given to make people understand this concept is the following: Target groups of Apple vs target groups of Samsung. What are the different characteristics of each target group? A relevant presentation is the following to understand the differences between these target groups: <https://prezi.com/635kt-vpajlq/segmentation-strategies-used-by-apple-and-samsung/>  This exercise can be used as a tool for teachers of any subject, in cases when they identify a problem in their curriculum. They can use this exercise as a tool, not as an activity per se. Thus this is a great activity for teachers training and for students’ training and it can be used both as an activity and as a tool.  Once the ideas are presented by the teams, the facilitator/trainer does not judge the ideas. This is not the point of the exercise. The facilitator can start a valuable discussion on the features they liked the most but should not make the students feel criticised or disappointed.  The facilitator should ask the students to think of the most crazy ideas so as to not limit their creativity. Ask them to think of something that does not exist, as the less effective ideas may be the ones that are the most valuable ones. This can be easily done as the younger the students are, the more open-minded and creative they are.  If the students are struggling at first in understanding the exercise, give examples of such ideas, e.g. Loucas Louca saw the ipad at pilot stage and could not imagine that this would be so successful. Another example used in one of Louca’s classes when he was a university student was an assignment given to his team to design the toilet of the future. The boys visited the girls’ toilets and the opposite. Give them eye-opening things, e.g. tell them the example where the seat belt at first was only tested in men and once women started to really use it they saw that they did not take into account the differences between men and women’s bodies.  An eye-opening activity for the teachers as well (when they implement this activity during the STEMitUP pilot seminars), as some of them could be narrow-minded.  Each element that is completed by the individual at first could be connected with feelings. What makes you happy, what frustrates you. This is part of the value proposition canvas and is an essential training element in entrepreneurial courses.  Once each individual completes the four columns, then the facilitator presents the table with the 6 boxes, to avoid having them think about the link of their answers at individual basis, in advance. |

# 

# 9. Link to curriculum: Business, Political Economy, career orientation classes, ice-breaking activity for any subject.