

Open Call Collection OC-2018-1

Proposal Reference OC-2018-1-22930

Title: European Cooperation: catch me 4 an open inclusive society

Acronym: CathME4inclusiveSOCIETY

Summary

The proposal CathME4inclusiveSOCIETY aims at presenting innovative solutions to the European priorities related to inclusion and training for people with disabilities below the 33% dependency ratio.

Having analysed the European background related to these societal challenges it is possible to verify some current actions of relevance and impact towards our target group. Although these actions include the priorities of social inclusion and training for disabled participants, it is important to realize that our action is very innovative in tackling the identified societal challenges. As an example, this COST Action will have several outcomes, such as the exchange of good practices and adapted guidelines for participants with disabilities, which will tackle social challenges like social and labour inclusion and digital literacy addressing the needs of either the participants as the society in general.

In addition, this COST action will allow for the target group the inclusion towards an open inclusive society through a participatory, personalized and flexible methodology adapted to the needs of the participants. It will have as its guiding principles: a) the capacity to develop and strengthen transactional networks b) the possibility of fostering the sharing and confrontation of ideas, c) the integration of an approach to practices and methods; d) the integration of this project in line with the Education and Training Goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Key Expertise needed for evaluation

Educational sciences

Education: training, pedagogy, didactics

Sociology

Work and professions

Media and communications

Media and communications, social aspects of information science and surveillance, socio-cultural communication

Social and economic geography

Socio-economic aspects of environmental sciences

Keywords

Social Sciences

educational Sciences

Innovation in an inclusive society



Multimedia and Communication

european networking in an inclusive society

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In addition, this COST action will allow for the target group the inclusion towards an open inclusive society through a participatory, personalized and flexible methodology adapted to the needs of the participants. It will have as its guiding principles: a) the capacity to develop and strengthen transactional networks b) the possibility of fostering the sharing and confrontation of ideas, c) the integration of an approach to practices and methods; d) the integration of this project in line with the Education and Training Goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Moreover, it will be presented unique, flexible, adapted and innovative solutions for both the target group and stakeholders integrating training programmes, workshops, boot camps and an innovative ecosystem "Starting up 4 Labour Inclusion" which is an adapted space for comprising both technological and societal challenges. As an example, these outcomes will serve as produced materials, which undergo the developed training models, frameworks, guidelines and total immersion experiences.

Therefore, at a horizontal level, this COST Action addresses the challenge of improving the spectrum of an open inclusive society towards people with disabilities, while focusing on new methodologies and innovative learning spaces in order to ease the inclusion of these citizens into the labour market and nowadays society.

Key Expertise needed for evaluation

Social Sciences and Humanities

Key words

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European Networking in an Inclusive Society



TECHNICAL ANNEX

1. S&T EXCELLENCE

1.1. CHALLENGE

1.1.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CHALLENGE (MAIN AIM)

CatchME4inclusiveSOCIETY COST Action proposal references the necessary networking activities, resources and materials in order to address the needs of participants with disabilities. In particular, those with difficulties entering the labour market, but that have enough cognitive abilities for employability, given the appropriate training / coaching. This COST Action aims at addressing three main priorities: one related to the Social Inclusion context and two others related to sectorial areas, such as strategies development for learners with disabilities and apprentices and promote business partnerships aimed at promoting work-based learning in all its forms.

In addition and towards the challenge of Social Inclusion, this COST Action intends to implement a comprehensive approach that deals with social inclusion and with other types of inclusion, specifically in the geographical, educational and economic contexts. However, the main aspect that CatchME4inclusiveSOCIETY intends to address is social awareness by working with people (with disabilities or an estimated incapacity up to 33%) to optimise functioning, activities and participation in several contexts of the labour market in order to minimise disabilities related to social exclusion. It is considered a priority since this project intends to integrate a methodology: applied at the level of trainers and trainees that integrates people with disabilities and/or with special educational needs in order to implement a methodology of evolution of learning. This methodology intends to integrate students in cooperative works with the participants in order to analyse their daily learning profile. In addition, this methodology integrates innovative pedagogical practices such as design for all, PBL (Problem Based Learning) methodologies and special strategies.

Regarding sectorial challenges, this Action will establish cooperation agreements with several institutions (HEIs; enterprises; NGOs; local regional, national and international entities) to support and enhance the training strategy of the project. This priority constitutes an important segment of the project since it will address the internationalization aspects of the training, in order to create the best outcomes for learners and apprentices (adapted, innovative and flexible environments ecosystem).

Furthermore, concerning the business partnerships aimed at promoting work-based learning in all its forms, this Action will address the PBL (Problem Based Learning) methodology with the integration of business partnerships by establishing an adapted educational environment (Starting UP 2 Labour inclusion space). It is also our purpose to promote networking ideas that will subsequently foster digital opportunities for the desired target group in collaboration with Higher Education Institutions (HEI), VET (Vocational education and training) providers and Enterprises. This kind of network is necessary to develop realistic and optimal ways to improve the quality of Education and, by doing so, to relieve this humanitarian plight, because these types of learning are the best way for people with disabilities to overcome their social dimension. The building of a European network that addresses these specific questions will enhance joint solutions and strategies to achieve the main goals mentioned, becoming a natural and privileged interlocutor to European policy makers in this area.

1.1.2. RELEVANCE AND TIMELINESS

The Consortium identified two major gaps (social & labour integration and ICT skills gaps for people with disabilities) which triggered this proposal leading to substantial benefits from a humanitarian, social, economic and learning perspective. The main outcomes of the public consultation for the Preparation of a new EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (EC, 2020) outlines that there are still areas and issues that need to be covered. These are mainly identified as discrimination perceptions, lack of adapted environments and equal opportunities in terms of education and job market and other aspects concerned to the standard social living. Additionally, according to the 2011 World Report on Disability: “more than one billion people, or around 15% of the world’s population, have some form of disability, with an over representation of them living in developing countries.” (WHO, 2011). Especially when analyzing the social sphere of society and understanding how many barriers and misconceptions are still raised towards people with disabilities. In addition, the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs (GC4DJ) in Europe identifies that training and matching digital jobs, certification, innovative learning and teaching, mobility and coding increase effectiveness of education and equity and produce positive impact in the economy as key priorities for European countries. The Science and Technology Advisory Council (STAC) outlines that 49% of EU citizens identified “job creation” and 33% identified “education and skills” as the top priorities for science and technology innovation over the next 15 years. These documents help to justify the need of a larger labour market and social inclusion force in the digital literacy fields, which can be an opportunity for people with disabilities. Comparing the conclusions of the EU Disability Strategy, World Report on Disability and the Grand social and labour e-skills and digital literacy by providing a joint strategy for these citizens, where they can acquire parallel abilities in transversal and labour oriented areas, widening the possibilities of success in the job market. Since the addressed needs are common throughout Europe, in spite of their cluster specificities this crucial reality must be integrated in a comprehensive approach that entails vectors such as:

- identifying the needs of people with disabilities in terms of education, employment and training in social, digital and labour market competencies, delivering this information to European policy makers;
- developing a strategy to promote equity and inclusion by facilitating the access of people with disabilities - mostly those with disadvantaged backgrounds, or with socially disadvantaged backgrounds and cultural differences – to a European citizenship status;
- proposing new training models for people with disabilities (e.g. applying the physical tools made available in the Starting Up 4 Labour Market space for students to use (i) individually, (ii) in group, and (iii) in collaboration);
- implementing and test an innovative ecosystems where people with disabilities can develop their competencies – social skills; soft skills, technological, communicational, linguistic - in order to be able to integrate the labour market;
- disseminating results to stimulate long-lasting impact (in society, technology, policy and market), sustainability (through accreditation and certification of the training model) and further exploitation (using the European networks).

1.2. OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. RESEARCH COORDINATION OBJECTIVES

This COST Action “CatchME4inclusiveSOCIETY” goals are multidisciplinary and trans-sectorial within the project consortium, participants, stakeholders and other participants, and will contribute to the following research coordination objectives:

1. To share the achieved good practices in other countries. Build and disseminate them in the political, societal, technological and economic fields, thus contributing to the change of mentalities.
2. To design a flexible model and prepare applications according to gender and ethics issues. This must have multidisciplinary didactic and educational resources capable of reinforcing or developing soft skills and fostering equity in work contexts.
3. To train people with disabilities according to the priorities set out for VET (Vocational Education and Training) in order to respond to the needs of the working contexts of the digital society.

4. To improve the practices of collaborative work in the labour contexts in order to make them promote gender equality and equity.
5. To develop practices in the context of "real" work that meet the challenges of innovation and respect the basic principles of data protection, open source and security.
6. To evaluate the process of learning construction and its adaptation to the work environment considering the sustainability of the model tested within this project and its evolution to a Capacity-building project and the replication of this model in a national and international environment.

Considering short and long terms goals this COST action will have the following structure:

In a short-term, the training model will be designed for participants with disabilities with an estimated incapacity up to 33%. It will integrate a flexible and adaptable approach, reaching the upmost result, which is the methodology of "Design for All". It will also be a supportive programme since it follows the feature of being an inclusive education model in the context of VET education for intellectual disabilities. This makes it a reference and training model for other experiences, the main feature being social and work inclusion from the higher education environment

In a longer term, the deliverables proposed by this COST Action will contribute to the development of other strategies, policies and innovative actions meeting the needs of society, stakeholders, institutions, NGO's and enterprises. The overall objective of the Action is to extract social, educational, technological and economic sustainable benefits through the implementation of innovative deliverables and ecosystems conferring to its human resources social and digital competences that will positively influence results of target groups with disabilities. The participants will benefit from the Action, as they will have access to an adapted and flexible training model and skilled professionals in specific areas of need. With the ultimate objective of reducing social exclusion lack of skills, unemployment and cultural differences between people with disabilities and job market employees, as well as integrating these target groups into the labour market.

1.2.2. CAPACITY-BUILDING OBJECTIVES

The capacity-building objectives that complement this COST Action follow a set of methodologies that help to structure the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) way in order to understand which main milestones can be developed and achieved.

Therefore, it was defined the following methodologies for capacity-building purposes:

- a) The capacity of integrating a methodology, which is divided into several categories. The first has to do with the methodology applied at the level of trainers and trainees since the participants are people with disabilities or with special educational needs having the necessity implementing a methodology of evolution of learning.
- b) The integration of students of masters and bachelor degrees in cooperative works with the participants in order to analyse their daily learning profile. Then they will have to present a written weekly report.
- c) The alternative of this methodology of evolution of learning having the range of active participation of the trainees, which will be encouraged by the sharing of practical cases and experiences that enable the dialogue and the development of a reflective thought on the various educational actions concerning human differences.
- d) The inclusion of practical terms to the applied methodology consisting in a non-theoretical learning model for the implementation of competences acquired in the different training themes in a work environment, but controlled and regulated by the several players (participants, volunteers, work centres and the coordinators).
- e) The possibility of creating levels of coexistence in which the participants will be facing real situations of social and professional coexistence in order to learn to deal and resolve conflicts with the help (if necessary) of the rest of the participants.

f) The implementation of greater diversity models of training dividing it at different job profiles, always as close as possible to the competencies and characteristics of the participant, as well as to their own interests.

The other level of methodology applied to this project will undergo a methodological process of monitoring, through the construction and implementation of a marketing strategy to stimulate and disseminate the project itself, and the Labour market for digital literacy inclusion course to be developed.

In short, having in mind the various countries' realities and effective needs it is desired to plan a selection structure for these methodologies in order to have a major impact on its execution. The capacity-building objectives of this COST Action intend to engage into the joint definition of goals by the executing team in each sprint (a short period for task implementation) followed by its presentation and validation.

1.3. PROGRESS BEYOND THE STATE-OF-THE-ART AND INNOVATION POTENTIAL

1.3.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE-OF-THE-ART

According to one of the most recent OECD reports (OECD, 9 Feb. 2018), international experts insist that, while indispensable, the reinforcement of funds and the increased value of practitioners and institutions are not yet contributing consistently to innovation and productivity growth within the priorities areas of social and labour inclusion as well as in the apprenticeship of digital skills. In addition to these indications, other programmes and reports, such as the Investment Plan for Europe: Juncker Plan (EC, 2018), the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET), and the Portugal InCode2030 national initiative, present a range of strategies in the field of vocational training and inclusion in the digital labour market. However, some of the priority areas and sectors are still scarce or lacking initiatives to include VET participants or others with intellectual disabilities in the labour market. In order to address these challenges and to train VET participants and target groups with intellectual disabilities up to 33% with basic, transversal, social and professional competencies, the CatchME4inclusiveSOCIETY COST Action proposal has been devised. Moreover, this project (in terms of impact, results and potential in the long term) presents solutions to the national and European priorities related to inclusion and training. Having analysed some of the proposals already in place or implemented by previous partnerships, identified by the Erasmus + special needs projects (EC, 2018), it is possible to verify some projects of relevance and impact as is the case of "All are", "Get-Set_go Travel App", "OLASA - Outdoor learning and sport activities for SEN students", "Dancing" for Inclusion" and many others. Although these projects include the priorities of social inclusion and training for disabled participants, it is important to realize that our CatchME4inclusiveSOCIETY" project is very innovative in its practices. Since, it presents a unique, flexible, adapted and innovative training that will provide participants with technical, personal and professional skills, thus helping them to integrate in an inclusive and competitive way in the labour markets.

1.3.2. PROGRESS BEYOND THE STATE-OF-THE-ART

CatchME4inclusiveSOCIETY COST action proposal intends to develop an innovative and adapted training model where work environments, networking and the development of entrepreneurship skills are totally designed for participants with disabilities with an estimated incapacity of up to 33%. It is innovative because it integrates a flexible and adaptable approach, reaching the upmost result, which is the methodology of "Design for All". It is also a supportive programme because one of the most important features is the fact that it is an inclusive education model in the context of VET education for disabilities. This makes it a reference and training model for other experiences, being the main feature social and work inclusion from the higher education environment. Thanks to this, learners will acquire the skills that they need to enter the labour market, while the involved staff (trainers, teachers and employers) train volunteers and key personnel with a view to supplying the knowledge and skills for the students in order to enhance their competitiveness. According to this model, schools or training centres will have the main responsibility of creating real life working environments. The mandatory share of learning in these working environments will vary, depending on the needs of this target group. Tasks in real work context and real-life project assignments are frequently used and often a mandatory part of

the curricula. Therefore, we will design open learning access, which includes a design for all strategy, and flexible contents and ICT supporting tools that integrates innovative contents for training purposes that encompasses cultural and digital competences. In addition, it will also be offered a Starting up for Labour Inclusion space to help students in their inclusion into the real life work environment. Thanks to complementary collaborations with enterprises, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), NGO's and associations, the intended target group can transfer their learning and developed competences into the labour market reality.

1.3.3. INNOVATION IN TACKLING THE CHALLENGE

The Innovation in tackling the challenges identified above consists in imagining new, realistic and attractive ways to reach the population with disabilities up to 33%, through the practices, methodologies, materials and devices they know better and the routines that they appreciate. This way we consider that reaching these people will be facilitated and that they will develop a more enthusiastic attitude towards working and society (in fact, a completely social and collaborative component can and will be brought into the debates fostered in this Action).

It will be taken into account several types of disabilities:

- Those who suffer from a deeper degree of disabilities (up to 33%) and require a more personalized accompaniment and adjusted to the needs of the student;
- Those who are social excluded and suffer from discrimination or other type of exclusion towards the society;
- Those who suffer from educational difficulties dropped out because of lack of resources, adapted pedagogical and methodological teaching practices or motivational purposes;
- Those who are geographically disadvantaged and cannot attend to schools, institutions or other type of entities to foster their skills and competencies;
- Those who did not have the "time" / "opportunity" to study and who need agile approaches to entry into the labour market versus a more formal learning that will take years and which will lead to demotivation of the student in the course (or even before beginning "the study").

To approach the specific population it is considered that current methods are not the most adequate and that new approaches have to be thought of and tried - this is the main goal and the Innovation that distinguishes this proposal is the creation of a practical model, which connects several methodologies based on integrating this target group into the labour market. In order for them to establish an educational and professional future this Action will present a unique training adapted to people with disabilities.

As for the remaining innovative good practices acquired, it will make a complementary bridge that allows to the COST Action the possibility to create a foundation of innovation, adaptability and flexibility to respond to a wider public with disabilities. In addition, concerning other complementary features, this project is integrated in a space called "Starting UP for labour market for digital literacy inclusion", responsible for providing an innovative environment with a secure and adapted space to the learning needs of young people with disabilities.

In terms of innovation, it is expected to achieve the following elements:

- a) An innovative, adapted and flexible training model designed especially people with disabilities (with an estimated incapacity up to 33%);
- b) The Starting UP 4 Labour Market digital literacy inclusion (a classroom designed to address 6 different competences);
- c) The creation of adapted learning and methodological guidelines for inclusion also related to the Action and disabilities and employability;
- d) Accomplishment of ethical events and boot camps - to understand better aspects like inclusion, safety, humans and personal data issues and gender equity.

1.4. ADDED VALUE OF NETWORKING

1.4.1. IN RELATION TO THE CHALLENGE

Considering the diversity and the specificities of the intended target audiences (people with disabilities) and its European clusters, the exchange of experiences between people from various geographical places in Europe, with different backgrounds, different points of view and diversified areas of study expertise will be a plus for the comprehensive solving of problems/challenges and finding effective and multidisciplinary responses.

In addition, it is envisioned the use of shared communication tools and the usage of collaborative platforms, in order to enrich the contents to be developed and introduced in the project.

The benefit of networking in relation to the challenge of this COST Action will develop several measures to become fully engaged, an online meeting will be arranged with all the partner institutions, establishing a set of important aspects like:

- (i) Taking every measure and making connections so that every team member knows the full project network (i.e. to present themselves to partners) and to promote interaction among them all;
- (ii) Discussing all the project details (aims, roles, activities, results and responsibilities);
- (iii) The definition and desired structure of the activities that will be developed during the project;
- (iv) Online meetings (webinar), in order to arrange all the necessary documentation for the implementation of the project;

Therefore, it is intended to promote an asynchronous (personalized email) and synchronous communication (Skype or other). In addition, we will meet each other every 6 months in different partner countries (including an Open day). The intended collaborative methodology will promote the integration, sharing and complementarity of knowledge of different stakeholders, institutions and research institutions. We will integrate and complement different skills and attitudes in order to enrich our way of thinking. It is also expected that some hands-on activities with groups of people with special needs will collectively develop.

The Training Course will have, in a first phase, 30 students with disabilities from and in different countries. These focus groups intend to have heterogeneous participants, representing a significant sample of the existing target audience of a country. To ensure the equal exercise of rights and fairness, in the selection process, interviews the students and companions will be planned. Members of the partnership and an external observer will constitute the jury; the external observer will guarantee that there is no discrimination and that they all have the same opportunity. Some of the selection criteria will include types of disabilities, psychological profiles, degree of commitment and motivation. The Action will benefit the target group in terms of higher qualification and employment for the population with special needs. In addition, we will validate the outcomes of the participants through Europass and/or ECTS certification, two very important elements to assure employability.

Finally, and due to the complexity of the target audience it is important to establish some important models. First, a key person and an Ethics Committee (leaders of all partners) responsible for assuring the ethical compliances and other issues that may cause harm, or unethical questions with these sensitive target groups.

1.4.2. IN RELATION TO EXISTING EFFORTS AT EUROPEAN AND/OR INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

The social, educational, geographical and economic inclusion for participants with disabilities is a European challenge that increases the countries' awareness. The sheer number of target groups with disabilities in Europe needs an integrated approach, which can only be successfully achieved if analysed and approached through European cooperation. Each country has different needs, and through cooperation at international level, the probability of achieving success and integrating this target group is higher.

Moreover, this COST Action (in terms to relation of existing efforts at European and / or international level) presents solutions to the national and European priorities related to inclusion and training. Having analysed some of the proposals already in place or implemented by previous partnerships, identified by the Erasmus + special needs projects (EC, 2018), it is possible to verify some projects, initiatives and actions of relevance and impact, specially focused on outdoor learning activities and recreational initiatives for inclusion, which aim people with several types of disabilities. Although these efforts include the priorities of social inclusion and training for disabled participants, it is important to realize that our COST Action is very innovative in its practices. Since, it presents a unique, flexible, adapted and innovative training that will provide participants with technical, personal and professional skills, thus helping them to integrate in an inclusive and competitive way in the labour market.

In addition, it is important to notice that results would not be possible only through cooperation at national, regional or local level as the proposal is a joint international program design to tackle people with disabilities needs. It is important to have this international partnership in order to stimulate our target group to integrate different European cultures and labour markets. We live in a networked and open society, where any citizen can work anywhere from anywhere, therefore it is vital for citizens to have skills in digital literacy.

Effective Measures/Benefits:

1. Increase social, educational, geographical, economic inclusion of people with disabilities;
2. Reduce the lack of skills and competencies differences between participants;
3. Use the "European e-Competence Framework" to develop ICT courses;
4. Development of pedagogical and methodological guidelines in order to define a template-guide of "how to introduce, implement and disseminate" this course according to each country's context and needs (social, educational, economic and geographical).
5. Implementation of three Boot camps for empowering communities and accelerate trainers and trainees at a local, regional, national and international level;

2. IMPACT

2.1. EXPECTED IMPACT

2.1.1. SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM SCIENTIFIC, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND/OR SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS

The pedagogical, scientific, societal, technological, political and economic impacts expected at the short and long-term scope shall result from the fulfilment three-project pillars:

- a) Innovative training program in Labour market for digital literacy inclusion
- b) The various Boot camps and actions that will promote training opportunities
- c) Equity and inclusion towards employment of the people with disabilities.

The integration of a target group with disabilities in society and in the labour market as valued members will have a noticeable impact at all levels. This COST Action will be thus collaborating in the solution of one of the major problems and challenges of social inclusion that Europe is facing.

This COST Action addresses the priorities identified in the Eurozone (e.g. European Parliament; European Commission) like the European Disability Strategy and the need for a more inclusive society. Therefore, this Action aims at making a positive difference in the area of the support of young citizens with disabilities.

All this will be interconnected knowledge and will be implemented in a personal and innovative learning environment (Starting up 4 Labour Market Digital Literacy Inclusion). Each participant with disabilities will have the possibility to choose where and how to learn (create, interact, present, exchange and develop). This will be an important and innovative support, turning learners more capable and entrepreneurs by accepting and integration in collaborative challenges. Above all, this COST Action aims to help people with disabilities to change their status. The action of this network will have a long-

lasting impact because the educational contents will remain available and the partners (mainly the non-profit organizations) will remain working on social inclusion of these citizens.

Pedagogical impact. The application and design of face-to-face, online and blended learning solutions for this target group - the expected impacts are: - accurate information of the inclusive aspects that should be taken into account; - proven models for blending formal and non-formal learning aspects; - ideas for using ICTs in efficient inclusive learning; - new creative commons generated by network.

Scientific Impact. The contribution of research towards the overall aims will be carried according to: - systematization and enhancement of knowledge; - literature review; - enhancement of competences already developed and creation of new ones; - increased awareness of the disabilities issues;

Societal impact. Through scientific exchanges and activities that we will initiate during the strategic collaboration - the expected impacts will be - knowledge and competence in the activation of effective non-formal learning solutions in inclusive contexts; - social inclusion of the at-risk youth in society and future employment market.

Policy Impact. Through the previous impacts, we intend to promote necessary reforms and enhance progress in teaching and learning at a variety of institutions: - Ministries of Education; - School regulators; - “Knowledge triangle” of the European Research Area: research, innovation and education.

Technological Impact. Through the integration and implementation of adapted and flexible digital platforms. As well, in the creation of personalised e-contents, videos and online features like the social media strategy.

Economic Impact. Through the introduction of local entities and NGOs enhancing their visibility towards the labour market. This way generating not only economic incomes as well other relevant aspects like competitive states among other institutions.

2.2. MEASURES TO MAXIMISE IMPACT

2.2.1. PLAN FOR INVOLVING THE MOST RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

The proposed Action provides an opportunity to contribute to the development of innovative and good practices in the area of non-formal education and VET training opportunities as an element of a multi-disciplinary support structure. Further, insight and international co-operation will contribute to the exploitation of new educational environments (incorporating the adapted and innovative space “Starting UP for Labour market for digital literacy inclusion”) into other countries that work with these type of target groups. Thus, a range of social and emotional supports will be incorporated into learning and progression plans for vulnerable and at-risk groups of young people.

In concrete terms, the project will have the following impact on the participants and participating organizations:

1. It offers the opportunity to identify inclusive, adaptive and innovative learning materials through the implementation of the course, online platform and flexible contents in order to establish a "Community of Labour Inclusion Practices" where ideas and innovations can be shared among the people who are currently working with inclusive practices;
2. It provides access to collect and process information about the programmes already in use and to report about different inclusive online practices in the EU;
3. It gathers the information needed to identify innovative and inclusive methodologies for successfully training and integrating the target group in society, especially in the labour market. This opens a unique possibility to improve the learning (formal and/or non-formal) methodologies in various organizations both nationally and internationally;
4. It gives the possibility to design, test, implement and evaluate various thematic Boot camps with our focus groups and to test the materials in action. These Boot camps can be used as a part of the curriculum in the participant organizations after participating.

5. It offers an opportunity to give a more active role to the participants with disabilities both in terms of their learning and in terms of their presence in society (e.g. employment).

Other relevant stakeholders, such as special educators and partners, are offered the opportunity to be part of the network and to share experiences, ideas and innovations. This project will allow them to use the flexible, ICT contents produced, and the Handbooks as part of their developmental strategy in terms of learning solutions. They will gain open access to use all materials with their focus groups. With these tools, their opportunities to develop and improve practices designed for marginalized students, both nationally and internationally, will be enhanced. Finally, and most importantly, the target group of this project, the participants with disabilities will have a better opportunity to study in new and innovative learning environments, which are designed to help them overcome their educational challenges.

2.2.2. DISSEMINATION AND/OR EXPLOITATION PLAN

The Action is clearly aligned with the dissemination results. We included appropriate activities, tools and channels to ensure that results and benefits will be shared and spread effectively not only with all the participants but also to the stakeholders during and after the COST project execution period.

The Action results will be disseminate amongst our co-workers in our own Institutions providing best practices' workshops and through discussion meetings in order to share the reports' results. Our partners will be also responsible for conducting workshops and discussions sessions to spread the results in their countries. With this strategy, other institutions may apply the same contents and methodologies contributing to a more effective inclusion of students with disabilities, helping them to overcome their difficulties.

In addition to related dissemination activities, the project members believe that creating and implementing a social media strategy is very important in order to understand which other possible target groups can still be addressed and included into the Action. This social media strategy will be implemented in all of the available social networks (project website; Facebook; Instagram and YouTube) in order to analyse and monitor the metrics (gender, age, interests, countries, etc.) that can be used to enhance the visibility of the project.

There will be also the development of national and international reports, which will cover the most recent results of the project. These reports will be available through the project online platform. Furthermore, the Action dissemination plan will follow a monitoring methodology by developing a marketing strategy for the exploitation and dissemination of the course in Labour market for digital literacy inclusion.

Although, the COST project consortium has a plan for the dissemination of the Action results, it will also integrate the following actions:

- Dedicated discussion opportunities like sessions, workshops, seminars and conferences;
- Target written materials like articles, newsletters, press releases and brochures;
- Audio and Video Materials to cover our social media strategy through implementing video clips for YouTube, Facebook, etc.

In summary, these results will be disseminated locally and regionally through the stakeholders' entities such as youth and inclusion organisations. In terms of national dissemination, we will also disseminate through organizations working with this population that are part of our network as well as the policy makers.

2.3. POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATION VERSUS RISK LEVEL

2.3.1. POTENTIAL FOR SCIENTIFIC, TECHNOLOGICAL AND/OR SOCIOECONOMIC INNOVATION BREAKTHROUGHS

The scientific, societal, technological, political and economic impacts expected at the local, regional and national scope will consist in the fulfilment of the various courses and actions that will promote equity

and inclusion. The integration of people with disabilities in society and in the labour market will have a noticeable impact at all levels. The COST Action will thus be collaborating towards the solution of one of the major problems and challenges that Europe is facing. After the implementation of the various activities refinement / improvement, activities shall be also conducted towards presentations of the outcomes to our national and foreign Governments, and whenever needed, contributing to a shift/reform in policies regarding each country involved. More specifically, it will be established a direct connection with Ministries of Education and VET regulators in order to promote reform and enhance progress in VET /HEI populations. The COST Action addresses priorities identified in the Eurozone (e.g. Erasmus+, EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020, World Report on Disability, Digital Agenda for Europe and the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs report). The exchange of information and good practices will not be restricted to the immediate partners. Since the results will be used and implemented locally and regionally, and positive impacts are expected in local and regional economies both during the Action and after its completion, with of most of these people with disabilities employed. The action of this network will have a long- lasting impact by having the possibility to replicate the teaching-learning tools in other countries in Europe or outside Europe.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK PLAN

3.1.1. DESCRIPTION OF WORKING GROUPS

The CatchME4inclusiveSOCIETY COST Action has a duration of four years. For an optimal result a network organized within Working Packages (WP) will be developed. The theme of each working package will be custom made for the various approaches of the main theme, which is reaching the population with disabilities within diversified areas of labour market digital literacy inclusion. The main four Working Packages (WP) will implement all the activities and content, which were created with common purpose of ensuring that the target audience (population with disabilities) will have a major social experience in the scientific, cultural and innovative areas. All the appropriate initiatives will be developed to fulfil the objectives, and to generate an autonomous ecosystem and recognized area of study, collecting, organizing and disseminating the optimal conditions for already existing projects and for the development of new ones.

The activities of this COST Action are designed along four areas of impact between all the players involved, and are described as follows:

WP 1. Total Immersion Experiences in Good Practices of Labour Market

A1. Pedagogical, Methodological and Practical Structure for Good Practices Resources (people with disabilities interaction with society and mutual imaging);

Results: 1 Handbook (A1 + A2 + A3) in the openAIRE platform; 6 case studies about different practices in the European Community of people with disabilities being published at the Zenodo platform; Duration: 1-47 months

A2.Guidelines models of Learning and Methodological Inclusion Profiles (Special Needs and Design for All);

Results: 2 Guidelines on Special Needs and Design for All; 1 Evaluation Methodology; 1 Selection Methodology; 1 Survey on needs, expectations and interests; Duration: 6-15 Months

A3. Theoretical models for the assessment and evaluation of people with disabilities (problems, questions and possible solutions);

Results: 1 Paper; Duration: 16-34 months

WP2. Flexible contents and ICT supporting frameworks

A4. Creation of flexible contents for a better use of digital educational tools for a social and labour inclusion approach in close cooperation between stakeholders and academia.

Results: 9 case studies with Audio and Video Materials; 1 Guideline for preparation; Duration: 1-15 months

A5. Innovative ICT supporting frameworks and evaluation tools;

Results: 1 ICT framework; 1 Evaluation tool for an adapted and flexible platform assessment; Duration: 6-18 months

A6. Address standard guidelines for evaluating the usability and accessibility of open learning access for ALL.

Results: 19 adapted syllabus and content for the training model (F2F and eLearning); 1 handbook with methodology report based on WP1 + A3 + A4 + A5 + A6; 10 Workflow mechanisms of the training model based games, storytelling and digital puzzles; Duration: 19-36 months

WP3. Content and Material experimentations to support boot camps (Pedagogical and learning solutions) for a life-cycle integration of people with disabilities in employability

A7. Assessment of soft, emotional and labour skills recognition/validation through basic concepts, workshops and challenges breakthrough to connect the population with special needs to employability;

Results: workshop on soft skills, emotional skills and labour activities; modules of basic concepts on digital skills, literacies and inclusion; templates for CV development; online tools for curricular and social inclusion; Duration: 1 to 46 months

A8. Re-using, composing and distributing of learning materials and new tools in an innovative environment (Starting up 4 Labour Market Digital Literacy Inclusion).

Results: Training model rebuilt; 1 Innovative and adapted physical environment to the population with special needs; Duration: 6 to 44 months

A9. Experimental Observatory for categorized people with disabilities according to a diversity of learning profiles and tools in line with the employability scenarios, and with the specificities of the target group;

Results: Do's and Don't's based on the proposed model in focus group; Comparative papers within the Action countries by establishing groups of work; Monitoring systems and certifications of educational processes; Duration: 25 to 40 months

WP4. Focus on dissemination, policies, impact, exploitation and sustainability

A10. Dissemination process (internal and external, and fostering impact: short and long term) External dissemination ;

Results: 1 Open day; 1 training model; 3 Training courses; 8 Scientific-Technical meeting; 1 Platform integrated with the webpage (Open Access and Social Media); 3 Conferences with Workshops; 3 Reports (2 in progress – 1 to 18 months; 2 – 19 to 32 months; 3 – Final). Duration: 1 to 48 months.

Internal Dissemination Results:

- Management Committee_MC (planning and coordination of the Action, supervision of ongoing work, dissemination activities, external contacts, coordination of the 4 Working groups and the Short-term Scientific Missions (STSM); integration of the Early-Stage Researchers);
- Steering Group_SG (responsible for scientific guidance, discussion of relevant issues, monitoring of the scientific work of the 4 WG);
- Coordinator for the Early-Stage Researchers_ESRs (Training Schools organization);
- Website and Mailing List Coordinator (setting up and creating interoperability of the Action Web page so all the innovative tools are available in the field of the Action);
- Policy Impact on the EU Scientific Strategies_PC (design of the methodologies for the effective integration of NEET in a digital environment);
- Dissemination and Prospective Board_DPB (Responsible for the dissemination process during and after the life cycle of the Action. This DPD will also be in charge of presenting to a prospective board the sustainability of the Action);
- Employability Industrial Advisory Board (EIAD) (Responsible for the integration of the population with disabilities in the employability dimension).

A11. Strategy for integration and dissemination of Policies. Results: 8 scientific technical presentations; 2 Reports; Duration: 1 to 48 months

A12. Exploitation and Sustainability regarding the diversity and multicultural workplace.

Exploitation: The partners demonstrate how they and other stakeholders will use the outcomes. It provides ways to measure exploitation during and after the Action lifetime.

Sustainability: The Action includes appropriate measures and resources to ensure that the partnership, results and benefits will be sustainable beyond its lifetime. Duration: 24 months to beyond COST Action lifetime.

3.1.2. GANTT DIAGRAM



3.1.3. PERT CHART (OPTIONAL)

3.1.4. RISK AND CONTINGENCY PLANS

The consortium have been chosen for their strong skills in the areas included in the project, for their experience in working with other people and enterprises, curriculum, and for the partnerships that the members have in a local, regional, national and international scale.

Therefore, all team members are used to working in a global and multicultural environment, and within multiple country consortiums, with all the issues that those projects bring – several language domains, customers from different countries, and with different cultures. So, any emerging conflict will be solved among partners with the mediation of the project's leader. Additionally, some group dynamics may be established during face-to-face meetings in order to strengthen the group cohesion and collaboration.

On the other hand, potential situations of risk and conflict will also be addressed through the work methodology proposed for the project. For example, the project team will be forming a dynamic way and according to each Intellectual Output, and where the members from all the project team can be part of and directly contribute.

However, with more or less critical importance, it is already possible to identify a few potential risks to the project and to identify lines of action to minimize their impact during the execution of the project. By doing an analysis of the risk associated to this project, we can describe 8 potential risks and respective corrective actions:

- Risk (1): Not understanding which tasks to execute and their expected results:

Corrective action 1: Similar to Line of action 1, and where each partner's general planning and update status will be made available and shared throughout all the project team members;

- Risk (2): Safety and general issues at the phases of implementation of the course:

Corrective action (2): According to the safety and general issues at the phases of implementation of the course will be established an Ethics Committee in order to address ethic issues (gender, exclusion and discrimination issues);

Risk (3) - Tight Time-Plan for the execution of activities

Corrective Action (3) - Strict measures of control and monitoring, adopting P-D-C-A methodology (Planning, Development, Control and Action)

Risk (4) - Leadership and global coordination in international COST Action

Corrective Action (4) - Systematic meetings and management of resources, activities and tasks over the time-plan of the Action. Adoption of 2/3 majority rule on decision-making.

3.2. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

The CatchME4inclusiveSOCIETY COST Action will have a duration of four years. The procedures and management structures that will be implemented during the Action's lifetime are going to be open in an intuitive and accessible framework with open access to organisations, institutions and enterprises who directly collaborate, or are interested in collaborating with the research and impact fields of the pinpointed network. The Action will have a Management Committee (MC) responsible for the main coordination and organization. It will also be monitored by an Action Chair (AC), a Vice- Chair (VC), and 4 Coordinators and 4 Co-coordinators for the Working Packages (WP), which are responsible for the development of activities and content, and will be elected within the group of MC members at the 1st meeting (Kick-off) of the Action. The Action Chair (AC), Vice-Chair (VC), together with the Coordinators and Co-coordinators of the Working Packages (WP) will form the Steering Group (SG). For further persons in charge of key positions in the Action, there will be the 1st MC Meeting to name the Early Stage Researchers Coordinator, a STSM Coordinator and also the Website, Intranet and Electronic Mailing List Coordinator. At the first MC Meeting the Action Chair will decide on what policies to take in and the organisation of the network activities. The other committees and Working Groups will communicate through dedicated online resources, which will be a mailing list for each group and an intranet, responsible for the smooth management and an effective and punctual share of information. In addition to the MC and WP meetings, which will take place at an earlier stage, the action participants will also collaborate through remote conference calls (e.g. Skype or Google Hangouts). A bigger effort will be made to enrol and organise co-located MC and WP joint meetings.

The management structures and procedures will respect the differences, rhythms and references of each partner, in an approach that privileges the identification and problem solving, through a work plan that foresees a closer involvement, which will extend the project capabilities. In order to implement the methodology mentioned above, the project team decided to create within the agreement of all members, the following management structures:

Elaboration of a project plan - This will begin with the explanation of the ACTION aims to all the partners. Next, the inclusion of the baseline management plan in order to understand the variances that may occur. Then, there is the definition of roles and responsibilities of each member, with the integration of a kick-off meeting. In addition, the development of a scope statement will take place, where it is described the project outcomes and other key milestones. Finally, there will be the demonstration of task allocations and scheduled activities, the implementation of the Gantt chart and the analysis of both quality and risks of the project. These are the core elements that the project team considers important for the development of the project plan

Set up steering committee - The development of a Steering Committee (Advisory Committee) will have a positive impact towards the implementation and project management of this project. Several experts, specialists or stakeholders that will provide the best guidance possible in the key aspects pinpointed in this project will compose this committee. All the project team members will consider this guidance.

Set up online project management space - The project team will also have a specific platform for the project team to communicate (intranet). It can establish tasks, check the status of the intellectual outputs and see how many resources are still available for the implementation of other activities, as well to allocate members in other roles, making possible to monitor the project management status.

Online coordination meetings - It is intended by the partnership, in order to implement all these processes, to engage in one Skype coordination meeting every three months. In order to establish these assemblies, it is important that the Coordinator of each team is present, as well as the responsible members of the national working groups.

3.3. NETWORK AS A WHOLE

As for the network as a whole, the responsibilities, tasks and organisation elements of the Action are described and structured as follows:

Management Committee - The Management Committee (MC) will be responsible for the general planning and main coordination of the Action. More specifically, the subjects that are in accordance with the work programme, budget, and impact and dissemination plan will be discussed, oriented and agreed on by the MC. The MC will also be responsible for the supervision of ongoing work, dissemination and implementation activities, contacting external interested parties and other stakeholders to support the Action, setting up the work schedule and the programmatic structure, and finally, the logistics for events and participating institutions. Furthermore, the Management Committee will coordinate and plan its own meetings, the meetings of each Working Group, the Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSM), and other events taking place during the course of the Action. The MC will also monitor and structure specific activities and content of the Working Packages (WP), STSM, Workshops, Training Schools, MOOC's and other courses related to the Action, thus maintaining under control the budget of the Action and the decision making for unplanned extra costs. The MC will also work together with the other Coordinators, especially Early- Stage Researchers, to facilitate the participation and communication of these players in the Action. The possibilities of support are guaranteed thanks to the budget allocated to STSM and the other meetings.

Steering Group - The Steering Group will be responsible for the various actions, with a higher focus on scientific implementation, as well as discussion of relevant issues to be brought to the attention of the MC. The Steering Group will organize the communication between all the Working Groups to promote a better harmonisation of the research topics used in the different WG, designing, overseeing and implementing the necessary technical programmes of workshops and training schools related to the Action. The SG will also be responsible for the proper monitoring of the overall scientific work, ensuring the fulfilment of the deliverables of every WG.

In accordance with the WG, the SG will structure the necessary conferences, their schedule and also the methodologies of the Training Schools.

Coordinator for Early-Stage Researchers - The Coordinator for Early-Stage Researchers (ESRs) will be responsible for promoting broad participation of researchers in the Action.

The main goal of the coordinator is to gather a good number of involved ERS, either in the planning stage of the Action, as for the research working groups. If necessary, there is the possibility to enlarge the number of ERSs through invitation of the Coordinator. The responsible person will identify the profiles of the ERS, and what activities are suitable within the Action. These researchers will also be encouraged to participate actively in the STSM's, WP Meetings and Training Schools of the Action.

Website, Intranet and Mailing List Coordinator - The Website, Intranet and Mailing List Coordinator will be in charge of the development and management of the digital platforms listed for the Action. In this case, setting up the optimal communication solutions for the integrated members of the Action. The Website will be organized in a way that all the members can post content and share news, for example in the form of announcements, publications, videos or other multimedia-based mode. The mailing list will enable the discussion between members and coordinators, being structured in two sections, a forum and a general information exchange, providing meeting announcements, Durations and locations of the Action.

The Intranet will work as an internal network for all the involved members and coordinators, in order to establish the structure of the Action, tasks, goals, achievements and future programmes. This system will only be available to registered members, such as the players directly involved in the Action. The main responsibility of this particular coordinator is to monitor Action members' creation of contents and to approve them before they are made public.

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COST Mission and Policies

The global environment in which the EU operates is constantly evolving, both at local and global scale and with multiple implications (ex: the last years of economic recession in Europe have resulted in an increasing number of people with disabilities with the lack skills, proper training models and focused strategies for an optimal learning strategies. In addition, this target group need to acquire basic and transversal competencies to be integrated into the labour market. 15% of the world's population are facing some form of disability according to the latest World Report on Disability increasing the challenges of the effects of current and future unemployment and wage penalties due to discrimination towards these target groups). In addition and analysing Europe data, specifically, the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe communication, it was possible to understand the frailties of this population. Furthermore it says that: "one in six people in the European Union (EU) has a disability that ranges from mild to severe making around 80 million who are often prevented from taking part fully in society and the economy because of environmental and attitudinal barriers. For people with disabilities the rate of poverty is 70% higher than the average partly due to limited access to employment" (EC, 2010). Given this multiple, changeable and fragile context, it is urgent to study Europe's cultural and social disability, and to understand its origins in order to be able to act positively, aiming at two fundamental areas:

(1) on the one side, helping at reversing inequalities since the integration of people with disabilities means creating more inclusive societies;

(2) economic recovery and inclusive and sustainable long-term growth with focus on co-creation for growth and inclusion (if mechanisms for integrating people with disabilities s in the labour market are developed, this will mean less expenses and further economic growth, in line with the principle of inclusiveness).

CatchME4inclusiveSOCIETY is a proposal that totally fits (1) Europe's policies towards our changing world, aiming at promoting more inclusive, innovative and reflective societies, and (2) in line with the principles and rules. Furthermore, this proposal intends to influence future policies in its area of study and action.

In fact, the proposed action is consistent with the principles and rules of COST, both in its balanced composition and in its aims. It will bring together people *from* various "pockets of excellence" operating in diverse locations in Europe, allowing thus for an extensive geographical coverage, very important since we know that people with disabilities have different profiles across the *multiple* European countries (10 Inclusiveness Target countries; 1 Cost International Partner and 3 Business Enterprises).

Also, it will give an opportunity for researchers from some COST member countries, that sometimes have less access to knowledge infrastructures, funding and resource distribution, to get more intensively involved in COST activities, also *encouraging* their internationalization.

Gender balance (45,0% Males and 55,0% Females) has equally been considered, as well as the advantages of connecting senior researchers with early career investigators, thus counterbalancing long term experience with innovation in an international community (5 Early Career investigators in a total of 28 proposers) sharing equal aims and enthusiasm.

The involvement of the business sector (3) is also a plus since it will provide a fundamental point of view concerning the issues that will be debated. This sector will pay an important active role guiding the population with disabilities first steps in their social integration.

The international cooperation planned for this COST Action, counting on both academics and people from the business, research, NGO and industry areas, with gender and age diversity will constitute a fertile ground that will encourage and enable new ideas and proposals to grow, enhancing excellence.

Besides regular reports, the team also intends to produce a final document, with an assessment of the Action, the undertaken actions, as well as its achievements and conclusions. This document will aim at providing suggestions concerning European intergovernmental policies on the issues considered, encouraging their implementation in order to contribute to innovation, inclusiveness and excellence across Europe.

Network of Proposers - Features

COST Inclusiveness target countries

60.00 %

Number of Proposers

20

Geographic Distribution of Proposers

Country	ITC/ non ITC/ other	Number of institutions from that country	Number of researchers from that country	Percentage of the proposing network
Croatia	ITC	1	1	5 %
Cyprus	ITC	1	1	5 %
Estonia	ITC	1	1	5 %
Germany	non ITC	1	1	5 %
Greece	non ITC	1	1	5 %
Italy	non ITC	1	1	5 %
Lithuania	ITC	1	1	5 %
Mexico	other	1	1	5 %
Netherlands	non ITC	1	1	5 %
Poland	ITC	2	2	10 %
Portugal	ITC	7	9	45 %

Gender Distribution of Proposers

45.0% Males

55.0% Females

Average Number of years elapsed since PhD graduation of Proposers with a doctoral degree

18.3

Number of Early Career Investigators

5

Core Expertise of Proposers: Distribution by Sub-Field of Science

25.0% Media and communications

15.0% Educational sciences

10.0% Economics and business

10.0% Electrical engineering, electronic engineering, Information engineering

10.0% Languages and literature

30% Other

Institutional distribution of Network of Proposers

85.0% Higher Education & Associated Organisations

15.0% Business enterprise

Higher Education & Associated Organisations:17

- Number by Field of Science of Department/Faculty of Affiliation

- Computer and Information Sciences:3
- Languages and literature:2
- Educational sciences:2
- Interdisciplinary:4
- Other humanities:1
- Electrical engineering, electronic engineering, Information engineering:1
- Economics and business:1
- Philosophy, Ethics and Religion:1
- Media and communications:1
- Biological sciences:1
- Number by Type
 - Education Oriented:9
 - Research Oriented:8
- Number by Ownership
 - Fully or mostly public:14
 - Fully or mostly private:3

Business enterprise:3

- Number by Market sector of unit of affiliation
 - Information And Communication:3
- Number by Type
 - Private enterprises:3
- Number by Ownership and International Status
 - Independent Enterprise:3
- Number by Size
 - SME (EU Definition provided underneath after selection):3

COST Country Institutions(10) : Croatia , Cyprus , Estonia , Germany , Greece , Italy , Lithuania , Netherlands , Poland , Portugal

Near-Neighbour Country Institutions(0)

COST International Partners(1) : Mexico

European Commission and EU Agencies(0)

European RTD Organisations(0)

International Organisations(0)

Network of Proposers - Details

Main Proposer's Details

Title:	Prof	Gender:	F
First Name:	Maria	Year of birth:	15/01/1965
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Sub-field of Science of Department:	Computer and Information Sciences	Core Area of Expertise:	Media and communications (Media and communications, social aspects of information science and surveillance, socio-cultural communication)

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Years from PhD: 16



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Years from PhD: 7

Mexico

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Gender: M

Years from PhD: 0

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Years from PhD: 27

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Years from PhD: 21

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Core Expertise: Psychology: Educational and Clinical

Gender: F

Years from PhD: 33

Portugal

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