

THE VALORISATION PLAN

GUIDELINES FOR PROJECT PROMOTERS

1. INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended for promoters of Leonardo da Vinci projects and aims to provide guidance for them in planning their valorisation activities and help them in drafting the valorisation plan forming part of their project. Further information on valorisation is also available on the Europa website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/leonardo2_en.html or directly from the European Commission (unite-B3@cec.eu.int) or the national agencies.

2. WHAT IS VALORISATION?

Originally a French term, the concept of valorisation is now widely accepted by the European vocational training community. "Valorisation" can be described as the process of **disseminating and exploiting** projects outcomes¹ with a view to optimising their value, enhancing their impact and integrating them into training systems and practices at local/national as well as European level.

3. VALORISATION: A NEW CHALLENGE FOR THE LEONARDO DA VINCI PROJECTS

The 2005–2006 call for proposals constitutes a major step as regards valorisation. For the first time in the history of the Leonardo programme, valorisation activities have become compulsory, hence, an important selection criterion for procedure B and C projects. The call for proposals requires inclusion of valorisation **from the project design stage** and close monitoring of its implementation **throughout the entire life cycle** of the project. The promoter will be required to perform specific valorisation activities in particular in order to:

- a. **ensure that the project results meet needs clearly identified at the outset so that they can be used in vocational training systems and practices (=exploitation of results)**
- b. **produce information focusing on the project's various activities (=dissemination of results).**

The valorisation activities must be spelled out in a single, coherent valorisation plan which must include a balanced description of activities for disseminating and exploiting the project results.² The valorisation activities must also be clearly identified in the project budget.

¹ Projects outcomes can be tangible like training products, course materials etc. as well as intangible like training methodologies, processes or experiences.

² "In order to be more relevant than ever, care has to be taken that the results of the new projects to be selected in 2005 and 2006 be properly disseminated and implemented during and after project's life. It is therefore requested that for a proposal to be accepted within all the priorities and actions proposed, a "valorisation" plan (i.e. plan for the dissemination and exploitation of innovative project results) be made explicit with appropriate and adequate resources. This plan should: identify the needs of interested sectors, domains and end users; define clearly the end users of the project's results; ensure that these end users will be consulted during the life of the project; explain how during and after the end of the project, the results will be disseminated and exploited; how they will reach these objectives both during and after the development of the project, and which outside players and bodies will be involved. On completion of their projects promoters should make the results of their projects available to the public by setting up a web site as a show case for their work" (text of the call for proposals 2005–2006, published in OJ C 103 on 29/04/2004).

4. DISSEMINATION: A KEY TO VALORISATION

All projects are required to arrange for dissemination from the onset of activities. Information on how a project is developing and dissemination of the results to target groups are the essential tools for project valorisation. Dissemination involves ongoing production of clear, targeted information on a project's achievements via appropriate means. In addition, Leonardo promoters have been required since 2002 to make their project results accessible to the public on a **website**, a showcase for their work.

Information on the project and the dissemination of its results provide a vital basis for implementation and exploitation of project results and their incorporation into vocational training systems and practices. From that perspective, dissemination is a strategic tool of valorisation but it needs to be supplemented by specific measures for exploiting, using and assuring the sustainability of the project results. This is achieved through constant interaction between the project partners and a sample of potential users of the project results right from the start of the project when the proposal is drawn up and throughout its entire lifecycle.

NB: the innovation compared to the past is the requirement not merely for a dissemination plan, but for a more comprehensive plan giving an overview of all the activities involved in dissemination/information and exploitation/utilisation of the results! The former dissemination plan is thus replaced by the new valorisation plan (dissemination + exploitation).

5. A GOOD VALORISATION PLAN: A QUALITY CRITERION!

All Leonardo projects must make provision for a clear, detailed valorisation plan (i.e. a plan for the dissemination and exploitation of the project's expected results) with **an explicit, accurate allocation in the budget** for carrying out the proposed activities (roughly between 10 and 20% of the total budget).

The goal of a valorisation plan is to explain how **during and after the end** of the project the results will be **disseminated and exploited** so as to make them "sustainable" (= once the project has come to an end, the results must continue to be deployed in different vocational training contexts). A valorisation plan must therefore necessarily set out in a balanced and accurate way the activities relating to dissemination and the activities relating to and facilitating exploitation of the results by the end and/or potential users and for the benefit of target groups clearly identified from the project design stage.

The valorisation plan is intended to be a flexible tool which can be adapted in the course of a project to ensure that it satisfies as fully as possible the latest needs of the partnership or the users.

NB: valorisation is a shared responsibility which falls to all the project partners; they must take an active part in bringing into effect the measures set out in the valorisation plan.

At the end of this handbook you will find a check list (not exhaustive) with a few practical questions you should ask yourself when preparing the valorisation plan and working out the steps to be taken to disseminate and exploit your project.

6. COMMERCIALISATION

Commercialisation of Leonardo products is an option and it is an instrument of making project's results disseminated, exploited and self-sustainable. Projects' promoters must just be aware of some basic rules.

- **Copy right issue:**

Project results are the industrial and intellectual property of the **contractor**, although the Commission retains the right to make free use of products for demonstration and dissemination purposes. An intellectual property agreement between promoter and partners is however recommended (and compulsory in case of commercialisation). **Since 2003** Commission has the right to hand over a copy of projects' results to third parties interested in testing or further development (excluded any commercial use of these results) provided the contractor has no opposition to that.

- **Marketing of products:**

In case he intends to market his product(s), the promoter needs to inform the Commission. A standard information letter is available on the Leonardo da Vinci web site (http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/leonardo2_en.html). In case of commercialisation, a marketing plan and an intellectual property agreement between partners have to be sent to the Commission.

Any income generated through commercialisation during project's life must be declared in the final report!

7. **THEMATIC MONITORING: A TOOL FOR VALORISING PROJECTS UNDER WAY**

In conjunction with the national agencies, the European Commission organises monitoring of projects selected and under way with the aim of stimulating interaction and exchanges between project promoters and partners working on the same theme (or in the same sector) and putting them in contact with potential users. In the event of selection, project tenderers must plan to take part in thematic monitoring (for example, to include the cost of taking part in a seminar each year with the project promoters working in the same area with a view to exchanging experiences on the substance of their project and on their valorisation activities).³ In addition, they must plan to participate once during the course of their project in a valorisation conference assembling project promoters and potential users. The expenditure incurred is eligible. These activities can be included in the valorisation plan.

NB: The project valorisation activities cannot be restricted to participation in the events arranged by the European Commission and the national agencies in the context of thematic monitoring! **The project partners are the prime movers and the only persons responsible for dissemination and exploitation!**

IN SHORT

Before drafting a valorisation plan, the promoters must have already come up with clear answers to three key questions:

- **what will be the final outcome of the project? (anticipation of result)**
- **what training needs does it meet? (ex-ante analysis of needs)**
- **who will be the user and/or end (and potential) beneficiary of the project's results? (sustainability of results).**

In addition, a valorisation plan must give details of:

- **the dissemination and exploitation activities (what?)**
- **the most adequate means (how?)**

³ The five current themes are: social and vocational integration; skills development in businesses, particularly SMEs; quality; transparency; e-learning. For more information on thematic monitoring: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/leonardo2_en.html.

- **the most appropriate and efficient timetable (when?)**
- **the resources available (human and financial).**

CHECK LIST

VALORISATION PLAN = DISSEMINATION + EXPLOITATION

(section E1 of the application forms)

DISSEMINATION

- Do the activities proposed in the valorisation plan form a continuous process throughout the project?

(The valorisation activities commence at the start of the project thanks to strategic planning; they continue throughout its implementation and do not come to an end when the project does.)

- Do all the project partners share responsibility for valorisation?

- Are the activities for disseminating the results detailed, clear and quantified?

(Example: number of persons benefiting from the dissemination activities, budget percentage earmarked for dissemination, any dissemination activities directed at other information multipliers, means for dissemination in the long term such as scientific articles, conference proceedings, Internet sites, commercialisation, and in the short term, the media, seminars, conferences, exhibitions, and so on.)

- Are the dissemination activities and means adapted to and suitable for the project goals and beneficiaries?

- Does the project provide for setting up an Internet site accessible to the public presenting the project's achievements? Is it planned to update the site after the project has been completed? How will access to the results be assured after completion of the project?

- Is there continuous interaction between project partners and end/potential users of the results?

(The project's direct beneficiaries are also the parties towards whom the dissemination activities are targeted, but provision is also made for information and awareness-raising among potential users, political decision-makers and/or key players in the project's field of activity, including the social partners.)

- Is the dissemination to be organised at different levels? (i.e. local, national, European and sectoral level via efficient relays for promotion purposes, such as transnational networks)

EXPLOITATION

Are the exploitation activities detailed, clear and quantified?

Are the end users involved in the different stages of the project and are they consulted regularly in the course of the project?

(Their advice and requirements are essential with a view to producing an immediately useable output. The users may be involved at different stages, for example, already when reviewing requirements, when testing the prototype, and in the assessment of interim and final results. This involvement is important to adaptation of the results and possibly to reshaping certain project activities.)

Are the needs of potential users taken into account in the course of the project? Are they kept informed and involved in the activities?

Has provision been made for passing on the project results to decision-makers and vocational training professionals?

(The ultimate goal is to have the product incorporated into systems and practices, for example by having it recognised/certified; involvement at policy-making level is therefore essential to the results' sustainability.)

Does the project include a product test stage before finalisation with the end beneficiaries/users?

(The results of the test should be taken into account in adapting and finalising the product.)

Is it planned to update the results after completion of the project?

On the whole, are the valorisation (dissemination + exploitation) activities clearly identified and quantified in the project budget? Are the valorisation activities in line with the proposed budget?

(About between 10 and 20% of the budget should be earmarked for valorisation to ensure an effective result.)

Has provision been made for an agreement between the partners on intellectual property rights?

(Such an agreement is not compulsory, but could prove useful. At all events, it must not prevent any future use of the product by third parties, while abiding by the right to commercialise the product.)

Could the expected products be easily transferred to and exploited in other sectors/target groups/social and cultural environments?

(Product easy to use from the technical point of view, product including maintenance and follow-up after completion of the project, product bringing new approaches to training; product aimed at target group not currently covered; product designed in such a way that its content and/or its technology can be easily adapted; product solving European-scale problems; product available in several languages.)

Has provision been made for participation in thematic monitoring activities?

NB: to ensure that valorisation is incorporated efficiently into a project from the design stage, it must be taken into account in all stages, particularly when needs are analysed and the partnership members selected.

NEEDS ANALYSIS (section C1 of the application forms)

Does the project include a satisfactory ex-ante analysis of the training needs it is intended to meet?

(Consultation of future beneficiaries and future users of the project results is fundamental in this stage.)

Does the project incorporate an accurate analysis of the state of play in the project theme?

(This is important so as to show its added value and avoid any redundancy; SWOT⁴ analysis may be useful in this stage.)

PARTNERSHIP (section D of the application forms)

Does the project provide for a stable partnership? Is the partnership based on existing cooperation?

(that is, is it part of medium and long-term cooperation between the partners)

Does the partnership include several players and provide in particular for links (directly or via reliable relays) with the most representative decision-makers and professionals in the field of vocational training, including the social partners?

⁴ SWOT = strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (planning activities in the light of identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks connected with the project, the partners and the external conditions).

- Does the partnership include at least one body representing organisations expected to incorporate the project results in vocational training systems and practices at national, regional and/or sectoral level (i.e. result users)?
- Can the project partners demonstrate their ability and readiness to ensure that the results will be followed up after completion of the project? (i.e. updating, use, continuous dissemination, transfer, etc.)
- Do the partners have professional experience in dissemination/publishing/communications?
(despite the fact that the partners share responsibility for dissemination).