



INCREASE: USERS' AND EDUCATORS' GUIDE

INCREASE: INnovation Capacity building foR EnhAncing Sustainable growth and Employability



Increase



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1. Welcome to the INCREASE Project

Our partnership has prepared for you a set of solutions to support the development of innovation competencies among all employees that could benefit from the ability to support innovation in SMEs. In the scope of the INCREASE project, we primarily aim to provide the opportunity to understand and improve the potential to contribute to innovation among low skilled adults which current job posts are in the risk of automation. We especially focused on 3 key industries - agriculture, retail and tourism and hospitality. However, the solutions are developed with the needs of all adults struggling with automation risk that look to increase their innovation competencies to increase their employability and value as SME employees. The project looks to prepare the employees at risk of being made redundant due to automation of their job tasks in those industries to move to more future-oriented tasks related to providing ideas for innovation and contributing to implementing innovation in SMEs, rather than keeping to repetitive, easily automatable tasks. In this guide, you will learn how the products developed within the INCREASE project can be of use to you, whether you are an individual looking to develop important job market competencies, an adult educator looking to support employability or development of future-oriented skills, or you are an SME manager looking to improve the competitiveness of your company.





2. What the INCREASE Project has to offer?

Within the INCREASE project, you will find a set of solutions responding to the needs of different agents relevant to the effective participation of employees in innovation.

1. Tools for preparing SME managers to involve employees in innovation processes – [“The best practice guide for models of employee involvement in innovation processes”](#) and [“The trainer’s guide for engagement of Organizational Stakeholders in Innovation Oriented Intrapreneurship”](#).
2. Tools for preparing individual adults to contribute to innovation – [self-assessment methodology and tool](#), as well as the [e-training](#) for building innovation competencies of low skilled adults, with special focus on tourism and hospitality, retail and agriculture industries.
3. Additional materials for educators, managers and support organisations – [“Report regarding areas/aspects relevant for innovation capacity within SMEs”](#), [“Report: SME innovation capacity”](#), [“INCREASE Best Practice Guide for support to inclusive innovation in SMEs and providing innovation competencies development to low skilled adults in the risk of automation of their job posts”](#).

For easy access, transferability and adoption to the needs of adult learners all inputs have been collected within one integrated online platform providing access to all INCREASE [results/outputs](#).



3. What's in it for you?

Engaging in innovation is currently a key requirement for any organisation to stay competitive on dynamic markets. From a longer-period perspective, your company will survive on the market only if it evolves and engages in improvements and innovation. Especially in the case of SMEs with limited human resources, it requires engagement of all employees in looking for opportunities for relevant innovation, exchanging their observations, providing feedback, and supporting each other innovation initiatives across areas of operations or hierarchical levels. A modern company needs to mobilise all teams to think together about “how we can do things better”, “how we can anticipate what the market and customers may need in the future or take advantage of market changes in a way that we will offer attractive products or services to our customers and beat the competition to it”. Managers need to engage their teams in innovation, while employees need to learn what innovation is about, how to look for opportunities in innovation and what to do when they spot one or have innovative ideas. In the modern world, the employment stability of all staff, from line workers to top management, depends on the ability of the overall team to innovate and work together to do it faster and better than the competition, in order to be able to compete in the long term.

In this way, if you are:

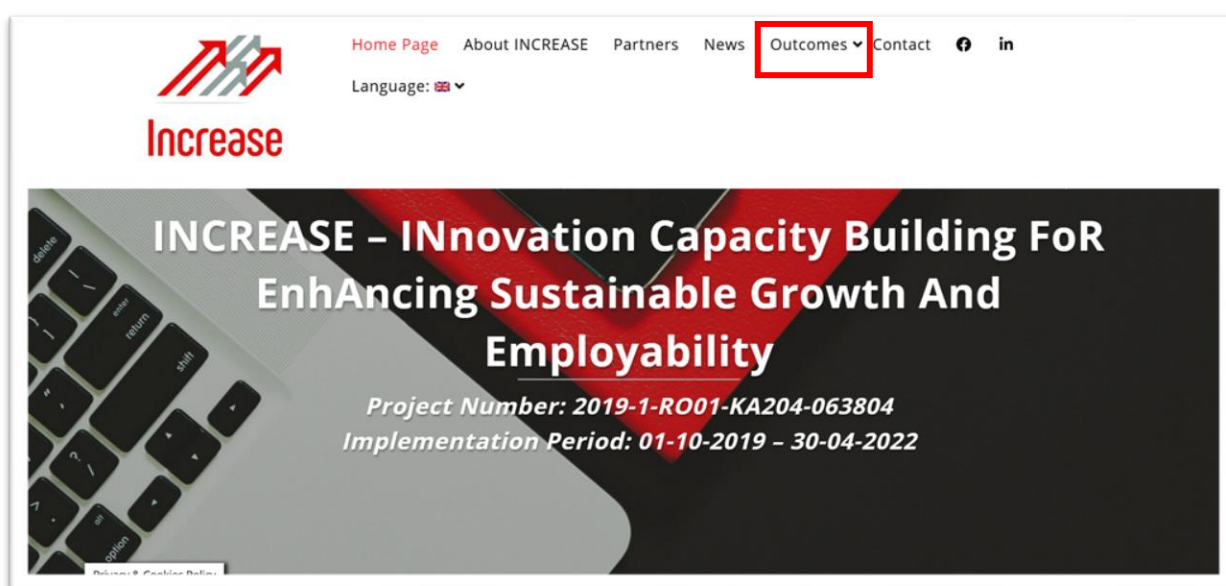
- **A non-R&D staff** from a low-R&D-intensive sector (such as tourism and hospitality, retail or agriculture or similar), the INCREASE platform will provide you with a unique opportunity to be a more valuable employee in the first place, allowing you to test your understanding of innovation and competencies relevant for your ability to contribute to innovation (the INCREASE self-assessment) and then offering you the opportunity for adjusting to your needs the development of knowledge and skills for innovation within INCREASE e-learning. That will help you be a more valuable employee and help you to contribute to ensuring your organisation's competitiveness. Moreover, it will help you INCREASE your job security and allow you to perform more interesting tasks in jobs to improve your working conditions.
- **SME manager** – the INCREASE project will enable you to learn about the benefits of engaging your employees in innovation and best practices from across European SMEs (Best Practice Guide). The INCREASE platform is equipped with ready to use self-training materials where your employees can learn what innovation is, how and why they should contribute to it



and will be able to develop and test their abilities to boost the innovativeness of your company competencies. Don't hesitate to share it with your team and test it on your own.

- **Adult educators, HR specialists or other freelancers interested in supporting employability and/or innovativeness** – the INCREASE project will provide you with ready to use scenarios and tools for encouraging SMEs managers to INCREASE their focus on innovation and engaging employees in defining and developing innovation. Moreover, it provides hands-on tools for adult learners – whether working or unemployed, to analyse and develop their innovation competencies being of high relevance for their employability and competitiveness of companies they work/will work for (self-assessment and e-training).

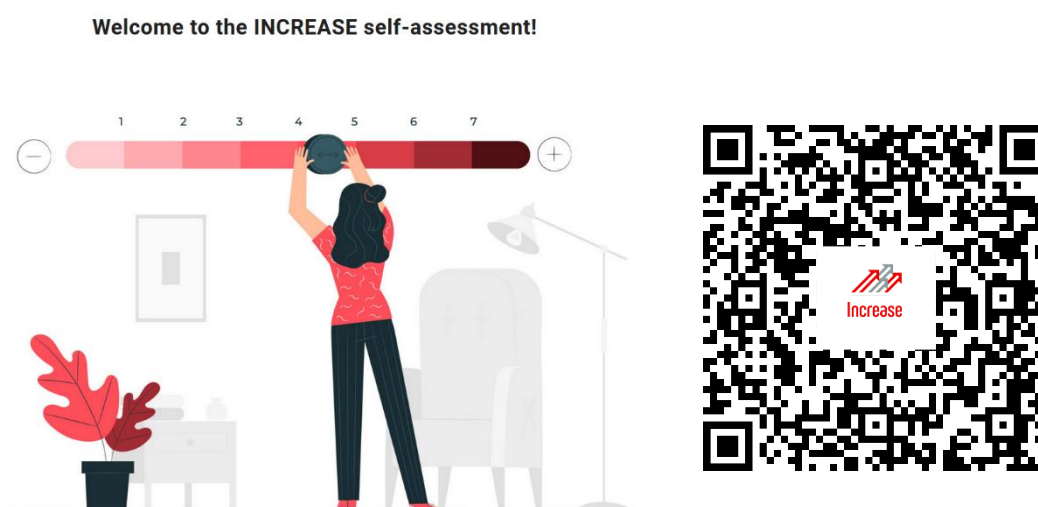
To cover the needs of different target groups relevant for SMEs innovation and especially for building competencies of adults to support innovation in SMEs, the INCREASE Platform integrates all the elements:



4. How do I use the INCREASE Program to reach its full benefits?

A. I'm an individual (employee or unemployed) interested in becoming more prepared to contribute to innovation in my current or future job or I just want to learn more about innovation:

1. Check your understanding of innovation and basic innovation competence with the [self-assessment tool](#).



Access it at - <https://increase.erasmus.site/self-assessment-methodology-and-tool/> directly, via the INCREASE website (outcomes > self-assessment methodology and tool) or via the QR code above.

2. You will get the results of self-assessment that will help you understand how well you are prepared to support innovation and what are your strongest and weakest areas in your case.
3. The assessment will provide you with suggestions on which areas covered by the INCREASE training the strongest improvement is needed. When you move to the training, you can decide to focus on those specific areas or follow the full INCREASE e-learning program.

4. Start learning! Enter [the INCREASE platform](#) and follow the modules you decided to work on.

INCREASE Training

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



Module 1 - Innovation across organization

Part 1

Part 2



Module 2 - Where innovative ideas come from

Part 1

Part 2



Module 3 - Innovation mindset and what is in it for me?

Part 1

Part 2



Module 4 - How to communicate and lobby for ideas?

Part 1

Part 2



Module 5 - Innovation in business models (including crisis reactions)

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3



Module 6 - Digitalisation and automatization in SMEs

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

Part 4



Module 7 - Models for co-innovation

Part 1

Part 2

To access it you can use the link - <https://increase.erasmus.site/platform/> , access it from the [INCREASE website](#):



Increase

[Home Page](#) [About INCREASE](#) [Partners](#) [News](#) [Outcomes](#) [Contact](#) [Facebook](#) [LinkedIn](#)

Language:  ▼

Self-assessment methodology and tool

INCREASE Training 

INCREASE – INnovation Capacity Building FoR EnhAncing Sustainable Growth And Employability

Project Number: 2019-1-RO01-KA204-063804
Implementation Period: 01-10-2019 – 30-04-2022

or scan the QR code –



Pay attention that each module is composed of a few parts (e.g., Module 1 – Innovation across organisation with Part 1 and Part 2). Each part provides you with brief learning content to help you understand the topic and apply the skill/competence in your professional life. Additionally, it includes examples, interactive exercises, quizzes, and other tools to help you build your readiness to contribute to innovation, to apply what you learnt in practice.

5. After you finish a part, move to a new one or repeat the one that you finished (if you feel like you need more time/practise to feel comfortable with the topic covered). The INCREASE e-learning platform offers you free open access. You can use it in a way that works best for you!
6. If you struggle to understand some terms, check the provided [glossary](#),

INCREASE Training

 GLOSSARY OF TERMS





Module 1 - Innovation across organization

Part 1

Part 2



Module 2 - Where innovative ideas come from

Part 1

Part 2



Module 3 - Innovation mindset and what is in it for me?

Part 1

Part 2



Module 4 - How to communicate and lobby for ideas?

Part 1

Part 2

or look it up online.



7. At the end of each part, whenever you pass the included test (quiz), you will receive a certificate of completion. It will help you with the recognition of your micro-credentials in the area of innovation. If you didn't successfully complete the test (quiz), you can go through the part again to improve your competence and try again.
8. You can come back to the learning materials at any time. The INCREASE tools are openly available to all participants, so feel free to share the tools with anyone who could benefit from innovation learning.

B. I'm an entrepreneur or a SME manager in a non/ low-R&D intensive sector looking to improve the competitiveness of my company:

1. Find out about the benefits of engaging your employees in innovation by reading "[The best practice guide for models of employee involvement in innovation processes](#)".
2. Use by yourself "[The trainer's guide for engagement of Organizational Stakeholders in Innovation Oriented Intrapreneurship](#)" to better:
 - a. Understand the difference between entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship;
 - b. Understand the traits of an intrapreneur in order to identify and support them in your company;
 - c. Learn about ways in which companies foster intrapreneurship based on the project's research findings;
 - d. Reflect on your own practices regarding intrapreneurship.
3. Go through the [Self-assessment tool](#) (<https://increase.erasmus.site/self-assessment-methodology-and-tool/>) . Then, enter the [INCREASE platform](#) and follow the modules (<https://increase.erasmus.site/platform/>) to test the self-training materials by yourself, first. This step will enable you to support your employees in their development/ improvement process for the benefit of your company.
4. Encourage your employees to use the [self-training materials](#) mentioned in the step 3 and support them in the process. In this way, they can effectively learn what innovation is, how and why they should contribute to it. They will develop their innovation competences and will become better prepared to boost innovativeness of your company.





5. Use the additional materials like the [“Report regarding areas/aspects relevant for innovation capacity within SMEs”](#), [“Report: SME innovation capacity”](#), [“INCREASE Best Practice Guide for support to inclusive innovation in SMEs and providing innovation competencies development to low skilled adults in the risk of automation of their job posts”](#), in order to better grasp the importance and the methods of building your company’s innovation capacity for enhancing its growth and competitiveness on the dynamic market you are facing.
6. You can come back to the INCREASE results at any time. The INCREASE materials are openly available to all users, so feel free to share the materials with anyone who could benefit from innovation learning.

C. I’m an adult educator, HR specialist or other agents interested in supporting employability and/or innovativeness:

The INCREASE project offers you tools that:

- You can use in your work with:
 - o SMEs, business owners, managers to support development and innovation in local businesses,
 - o adults in need of requalification or for development of market-oriented skills;
- Help you improve your understanding of innovation processes in SMEs, how employees can be an integral part of/contributors to SMEs innovation, and how managers can facilitate employees’ engagement in innovation.

For support to SMEs, business owners, and managers

you can benefit from ready to use and implement workshop scenarios and tools. Start from [the Best Practices Guide for Models of Employee Involvement in Innovation Processes](#) to understand how effective engagement of employees supports innovation and competitiveness in Europe and what are the best practices in the area. Follow with the TRAINER’S GUIDE - [Methodology for Engagement of Organizational Stakeholders in Innovation Oriented Intrapreneurship](#). Use the TRAINER’S GUIDE and the Best Practice Guide to run workshops that will help managers understand the concept and benefits of innovation with the engagement of employees across their organisation. distribute [the best practice](#)



[guide](#) among your stakeholders, to build their awareness of innovation (and especially the inclusive innovation) practices and encourage their engagement in such strategy.

During activities with SMEs, business owners, and managers distribute information regarding the [INCREASE assessment tool](#) and [training](#) for employees, as an easy way to support them in building innovation competences within their teams. Feel free to use direct QR codes to provide easy access to the resources among your stakeholders:



The INCREASE self-assessment tool



The INCREASE training

Do not forget to test the assessment tool and the training on your own, to be able to support use of the tools among your stakeholders.

Based on international testing of the outcomes within the INCREASE project, the workshops and best practices can be easily applied across EU countries. However, adding local examples of SMEs engaged in inclusive innovation and local best practices would bring high added value to the local target group.

For support to adults in the need of requalification or for the development of market-oriented skills you can benefit from the [INCREASE self-assessment tool](#), which will allow you to test adult learners' readiness to contribute to innovation. More, the tool provides a list of competence areas that a person needs to be able to effectively contribute to innovation that will help you to guide individuals through the upskilling process in more customised way responsive to specific needs.



The [INCREASE e-training](#) allows you to offer adult learners opportunity to develop their competences to contribute to innovation, which cover skills related with 7 specific areas:

- Innovation across organization
- Where innovative ideas come from
- Innovation mindset and what is in it for me?
- How to communicate and lobby for ideas?
- Innovation in business models (including crisis reactions)
- Digitalization and automatization in SMEs
- Models for co-innovation

The training has a form of an interactive online program that can be easily recommended to be followed by individual learners or can be integrated into any upskilling/requalification program, guided by a trainer/educator. The contents can be used in their entirety or as individual areas offered by each module.

You can easily distribute links to the assessment and e-training among adults in the need of requalification or for the development of market-oriented skills. You can recommend them direct access via the [INCREASE website](#) (<https://increase.erasmus.site/>) >Outcomes>Self-assessment methodology and tool/INCREASE training. Provide them with direct links:

- Self-assessment - <https://increase.erasmus.site/self-assessment-methodology-and-tool/>
- Training - <https://increase.erasmus.site/platform/>

Or use the QR codes:





The INCREASE self-assessment tool



The INCREASE training

The training contents were designed to meet the diversified needs of adults in the risk of automation of their job posts. It provides learning opportunities adapted to learners at any level of education and is suitable for users with no prior knowledge of innovation. It focuses specifically on the needs of 3 industries – tourism and hospitality, agriculture and retail and has been developed based on research conducted in 6 European countries – Romania, Poland, Portugal, Finland, Austria, and Spain. As a result, while the contents can be used by any learner interested in the development of innovation competencies, for use with learners from other sectors and geographical regions, it is recommended to provide additional examples from innovation in other SMEs from the geographical area of learners and/or economic sectors they are related to. Effective adaptation to users' needs from different geographical areas of sectors should cover the exchange of examples and sector-related infographics and offer case studies related to learners' local/sectoral context.

While the program has been specifically designed for the adult education sector and the needs of low skilled adults at the risk of unemployment due to automation processes, the engaged in the testing of INCREASE project experts and users suggest that educators can benefit from the materials and tools also in the scope of academic education and VET.

5. Transferability Q&A

Do I need to ask for permission to use INCREASE products in my personal or professional use?

No, as long as you provide information about the source of the resources referring the INCREASE Project and Erasmus+ Program that financed the development of the INCREASE Program, you can use the INCREASE resources for non-commercial use, especially in the scope of education and training activities.

How can I use the INCREASE resources?

You can use the resources directly from our platform as a full program, as suggested in the section 4 of this guide. But you can also select specific section of the training to complement your training or other activities on a specific issue addressed within INCREASE platform. The INCREASE program has highly modular character and you can easily embed link to specific part in your materials. For example, if you are looking to run workshops regarding specifically innovation processes in SMEs you can use direct link to the selected part - <https://increase.erasmus.site/module-1-part-2/>. Considering the highly modular character you can easily adapt the training plan to your own needs and those of your trainees.

You can also choose to use the assessment tool independently from the INCREASE program to test innovation competence of your trainees, learners, employees or job seekers. You can direct them to the assessment via [link](#) or the QR code:



As an educator, SME manager or agent supporting SMEs you can use additional INCREASE resources to improve your knowledge in the area of SMEs innovation, develop needs-oriented workshops for SMEs or provide your stakeholders with relevant examples of inclusive innovation in SMEs (available at <https://increase.erasmus.site/outcomes/>). Please find more details about each resource in the section 4. of this document.

Why the training includes the specific 7 specific modules?

Based on conducted at the project initial stage (pre-application) needs analysis and expert method, 5 areas have been defined as critical for the needs and barriers to engagement into

co-innovation among adults in the risk of automation and for meeting the needs of non-technological SMEs innovation:

- i/ Innovation across organization,
- ii/ Where innovative ideas come from,
- iii/ Innovation mindset and what is in it for me?
- iv/ How to communicate and lobby for ideas,
- v/ Models for co-innovation.

However, more in-depth analysis, conducted within INCREASE research regarding areas/aspects relevant for innovation capacity within the target group (see Report [here](#)), shown that the needs for upskilling within the target group go beyond this scope. Therefore, based on the report and an internal discussion panel, the scope of the intervention has been furtherly enlarged finally covering the following areas:

- Module 1 - Innovation across organization,
- Module 2 - Where innovative ideas come from,
- Module 3 - Innovation mindset and what is in it for me?
- Module 4 - How to communicate and lobby for ideas?
- Module 5 - Innovation in business models (including crisis reactions),
- Module 6 - Digitalisation and automatization in SMEs,
- Module 7 - Models for co-innovation.

How do I use the self-assessment tool?

Just access [the tool at the INCREASE platform](#) (←click the link) and follow the instructions provided within the platform.

What is the self-assessment designed to test?

The main objective of the self-assessment tool is to understand the user initial comprehension of innovation, the level of innovation-oriented skills and readiness to contribute to it. The tool tests innovation competence of the user across 7 areas:

1. Innovation and innovation processes,
2. Ideation for innovation,
3. Innovation mindset,
4. Communicating innovation needs and ideas,
5. Business models and business models innovation,
6. Automation and digitalisation,
7. Co-innovation,



and underlines the weak and strong areas of the user to highlight the areas that need the strongest attention to achieve the user readiness for contributing to innovation. As a result, it provides recommendations for customisation of the training path, within the INCREASE platform to the individual needs of the user.

Can I use the INCREASE training platform for another target group?

While the platform has been designed specifically for the needs of SMEs and SMEs employees in the risk of automation, the training can be easily adapted to the needs of employees in other type of organisations – i.e., public sector, or students within middle and higher-level education. For the most effective transfer, the training should be enriched by specific examples more resonating with the specific target group and/or providing the context of specific SMEs environment helping users understand how similar challenges can look different in different types of organisations, for e.g., due to different size of the team, hierarchical issues, or organisational priorities.

