

GREEN SUMMER SCHOOL VIENNA



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WP6	Pilot actions
ACTIVITY 6.1	Capacity Building Pilots
DELIVERABLE 6.1.4	Green Summer Schools

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1. Aim of the Green Summer School

Under the leading motto “Grasping the Future”, the Green Summer School, hosted by Economica Institute for Economic Research, 25-28 Sep 2018 in Vienna, pursued similar aims as the two preceding events in Constance (Sep 2017) and Bratislava (Jun 2018): Educating, motivating, supporting and shaping the next generation of eco-innovators.

To achieve this aim, a diverse and interactive program, including visits at start-ups and hands-on demonstrations, lectures and workshops was set up. Economica, in a concerted effort together with the ECN (Entrepreneurship Center of BOKU University of Natural Resources, Vienna), an institution with day-to-day contact to students and with experience in recruiting and guiding young entrepreneurs, identified potential contributors (institutions, start-ups, lecturers etc.). Their individual tasks within the Green Summer School were elaborated and arranged strategically in the time schedule.

2. Overview and main results

The Green Summer School comprised a diverse and interactive program. To increase attractiveness and a tailor-made character, the event was optionally bookable as 2- or 4-day event. With talks, excursions (UNIDO), hands-on demonstrations (growing mushrooms on coffee waste) as well as workshops (business development, rhetorics) the event left a sustainable impression on participants, contributors and organizers alike. Altogether 30 international young participants broadened their eco-knowledge, developed entrepreneurial skills and interactively built on green business ideas.

One unanimous view and take-home messages conveyed by contributing start-ups, lecturers and workshop leaders was: “Gather your wits, strength and courage! Go and implement your Green idea!”

Economica Institute for Economic Research, the Austrian Ecolnn partner hosting the Green Summer School, communicated the need and pleasure of a resource-saving lifestyle by e.g. organizing/providing public transport, re-usable workshop materials and consistently meat-free meals. According to direct feedback and evaluation reports the event was a full success.

Participants requested to stay informed about similar events and activities, evidencing their sincere interest and potential as future innovators in the Danube region.

3. Call and recruitment of participants

The event was promoted among a relevant audience using diverse channels. At the national level, these include e.g. BOKU newsletter, respective link on Economica Institute’s website, print-outs displayed at Austrian Universities (BOKU, Vienna University of Economics and Business, Salzburg University). At the transnational level, project partners assisted promotion via Ecolnn microsite, Facebook, Twitter.

These promotion activities attracted >40 international applicants. As commonly encountered in registration fee-free events, several candidates cancelled attendance at short notice (see „lessons learned“). As a precaution, the organizing team had generated a waiting list (of applicants who had missed the registration deadline).

In the recruitment process, applicants were interviewed on their background and motivations. Priority was given to international applicants (all of whom had relevant background, motivation) to emphasize the event's international character.

4. Program and topics

The document used for promoting the event, including the program, is displayed below.

Ecoinnovation – Grasping the future

Ecolnn_ Green Summer School 25.09.-28.09. Vienna

Going „eco“ pays off in any respect, not only for environmental and human health, but -financially - also for innovative enterprises.

No matter if your ecoinnovative idea still has to be found or if it is in the developing phase already, or if your start-up seeks to gain momentum – the Green Summer School provides the necessary energy for your individual ambitions.

Four exciting days of interactive program with creative and inspiring minds are awaiting you. The event starts with making you familiar with the concept of Ecoinnovation, and with successful eco-innovators. What follows are a visit to a startup that turns waste into value, and a guided tour at UNIDO. Days 1-2 end with workshops on idea development, tools & business and voice & rhetorics. On days 3-4 you will get active yourself. The environment and input needed to make your ecoinnovative ideas flourish will be provided. With this support your project can mature to finally be presented to an expert jury.

The Green Summer School is meant for everybody interested in ecoinnovation – students, green enthusiasts and entrepreneurs. Participation (food included) is for free.

The Green Summer School is organized by the Entrepreneurship Center Network of BOKU and Economica Institute of Economic research. It takes place in the framework of the transnational EU-project *Ecolnn Danube – Ecoinnovatively connected Danube Region* whose overall aim is to boost ecoinnovation development by supporting cooperation between innovators, scientists and enterprises.

The Green Summer School can be booked as 2-days (Thu&Wed or Thu&Fr) or as 4-days-program.
Registration (Deadline 15 June 2018) via email to tto@boku.ac.at

Time	Di, 25.09.	Mi, 26.09.	Do, 27.09.	Fr, 28.09.
9:00-12:00	Kick-Off, contents and context of the Green Summer School 9:00 Keynote (<i>Ali Mahlodj</i>); talk "Think eco when you innovate!" (<i>A. Pitzschke</i>)	Workshop and Excursion <i>Hut & Stiel</i> (ecoinnovative startup), incl. lunch	HEUREKA– Think Tank: professional workshop on idea development	Rhetorics Training/ Workshop, (voice, persuasive power) with <i>Christina Scattolin</i>
12:00-13:00	lunch		lunch	lunch
13:00-16:00	Guided Tour at UNIDO incl. presentations on environment & innovation	Motivation Session with startups sharing insider experience on the way to success; interactive problem solving	Tools & Business Workshop (game-like, interactive) (<i>Michael Ambros</i>)	Question & Answer Session
				Pitching-Session (experts/startups) jury

5. Legal and financial issues

In accordance with personal data protection regulations participants were asked to give (written) consent to names, photos, email-addresses etc. being displayed in event-related documents. Contributors were asked for written agreement on fees. To keep event costs within budget constraints the program encompassed presenters charging no, low or a moderate fee (max. 600 € for half-day). Economica saved some external expertise costs by covering part of the program with qualified own personnel (A. Pitzschke, lecture / workshop on eco-innovation).

6. Interaction with participants

There was intensive interaction between organizers, performers and participants, facilitated by interactive workshops, coffee/lunch breaks etc.

7. The transnational aspect

Participants from abroad as well as Ecolnn project partners acting as jury members or collecting inspiration for own future events, respectively, came from the following countries:

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia.

Noteworthy, a participant from Serbia (fruit-producing company searching for ecologically/economically favorable solution for arising waste of pressed fruits) resumed his interaction with A. Pitzschke (Economica); that had been initiated during the Green Summer School in Bratislava. Among others, the final day/ pitching session comprised a tasting of apple “waste” products – material delivered and freshly processed by the Serbian participant and Economica, respectively. Plans for a collaborative Serbian-Austrian project are being explored.

8. Framework conditions: Consistently green

In line with the overall concept of Ecolnn the organizers aimed to keep the event’s ecological footprint to a minimum. This meant: no plastic bottles; any transfer between program stations was accomplished by public transport, participants received re-usable dishes and equipment, eco-friendly workshop materials as well as consistently meet-free meals.

9. Participants’ evaluation

Economica distributed evaluation forms among participants, taking a revised document (originally developed by the German partner BWCON for the Constance Summer School) as a template. We received 16 completed evaluation forms, distributed as hand-outs and/or via email. Return rate was 100% for hand-outs. See Annex II.

10. Lessons learned

- An optionally 2- or 4-day program has both benefits and drawbacks. On the one hand, participants who can only spare 2 days do get an intensive attractive program. On the other hand, for participants attending the entire 4-day-event it is distracting to see attendees change in between.
- Participants with a sincere interest in environmental protection contribute significantly to the success of Green events. At the same time, they are the greatest beneficiaries.
- A diverse program (in terms of type, e.g. workshop, lecture, excursion; and in terms of contents, e.g.

ecology, marketing) ensures that participants stay motivated during the entire event. From the evaluation forms (where attendees mention almost any program item as their individual favorite) one can conclude that the program as a whole was indeed appropriate.

- Having some parts of the program happening at different locations evades the impression of “being at school” and thus contributes to program attractiveness.
- Providing consistently “green” framework conditions and engaging naturally eco-oriented staff are effective and convincing tools for environmental awareness-raising among participants.
- Start-ups are happy to make entries to Ecolnn Danube’s Virtual Lab portal if contacted directly, i.e. in the context of their Green Summer School contribution. Motivation outside such a direct contact is far more difficult.
- Return rate for evaluation forms is highest if participants are asked to fill in the documents on-site (rather than electronically).

11. Communication and sustainable benefit

As a “digest” of the Green Summer School, Economica created a drop box where all presentations, informations, contacts and photographs are accessible to the participants. See https://www.dropbox.com/sh/19crhmisgpvtr7q/AAD1keCoh_lIelxuOjdvoWZta?dl=0

We keep participants informed on similar events and activities. They explicitly wished to stay (inter-)connected, and exchanged contacts accordingly. The Green Summer School thus helped from an environment for sustainable networking activities; a key determinant for future eco-innovative collaborative projects.

A brief summary was also communicated via the Ecolnn microsite:

<http://www.interreg-danube.eu/news-and-events/project-news/2824>

Annex I: Selection of pictures





