The iCAP Guidance Collection

Table of Contents

1. Introduction to the iCAP Guidance Collection 2

1.1 Our 12 learning points **3**

1.1.1 Linking effectively to school life and the curriculum 3

1.1.2 The working environment 3

1.1.3 Working cooperatively 3

1.1.4 Making use of time 4

1.1.5 Engaging with the community 4

1.1.6 How to choose your project 4

1.1.7 The use of objectives 4

1.1.8 Maintaining impact 4

1.1.9 Learning from the project 4

1.1.10 Seeing how your project fits 5

1.1.11 Managing your support 5

1.1.12 Adjusting to resources 5

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

1. Introduction to the iCAP Guidance Collection

The iCAP Guidance Collection addresses schoolteachers and students with an interest in innovation and entrepreneurship. It is developed through practical, real life examples and extensive research on practices and methodologies developed as state of the art teaching tools. Additionally, schoolteachers and all interested parties can be inspired, guided and oriented towards innovation capacity building. The Collection comprises two parts. The first part provides a short summary with key points of information on what partners have produced within the project. The second, extended part, offers methodologies, guidelines and testimonies to empower and motivate the reader.

Throughout the iCAP project, student teams from high schools in five countries have been involved in a practical experiment; this document is one outcome of this experience. These projects were geared towards creating change in their own communities and crucially, were developed under the students' own initiative rather than being directed by their teachers. By working in this way the students developed their own *innovation capacity* (hence 'iCAP').

This Guidance Collection is based on research that has been conducted by the knowledge partners and on material collected by the project practice partners. Videos and visual elements have been used in order to inspire the reader while informing on potential alternative educational techniques used worldwide. The guidance is available on the official project website (the Resource Centre) as well as in a summary form (PDF document) for the reader to download and print. The present document is an ally to secondary schools across Europe enhancing authentic inspiration to undertake experimentation with new innovation-fostering didactics. The practice partners' feedback and the testimonies depicted demonstrate crucial and desired impact on students and their teachers. The document is created on an extended version while it has been summarized into a short handout document. The complete collection represents Intellectual Output 2 of the iCAP project.

The consortium is composed of two knowledge partners:

1. University of Gloucestershire, from the U.K.
2. University of Thessaly, from Greece

five practice partners:

1. Institut de Vilafant, from Spain
2. Scoala Gimnaziala Gheorghe Titeica, from Romania
3. Platon M.E.P.E, from Greece
4. Furness Academy, from the U.K.
5. Solski Center Kranj, from Slovenia

and Working with Europe, from Spain as the evaluation and quality partner.

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

The iCAP project aims at fostering innovation interest and building innovation capacity among secondary school students through opening up new learning spaces for young learners. You may start by exploring a video co-created by the participating young teams, documenting their personal experience here.

1.1 Our 12 learning points

The twelve guidelines presented here are a distillation of the learning gained on this project. This was gathered in a five-day collaborative workshop involving almost seventy students. Don't miss the opportunity to have an informative insight through the project motivational video here .

1.1.1 Linking effectively to school life and the curriculum

One of the greatest challenges facing innovation projects in schools is how to overcome the constraints of the curriculum and the rigid structure of school timetables. Many of the project teams had to work in their own time (either at lunchtimes or after school) to adopt this student-led approach, another suggestion is to make innovation a specific lesson on the timetable. Either way, giving legitimate timetable space in school can help students feel confident that their voices will be heard so that they can air their ideas in public.

1.1.2 The working environment

Simply encouraging curiosity and creativity is not enough; the *context* of the project is also critical. By locating work outdoors and beyond the school gate, students have the opportunity to grapple with the unpredictability and complexity of the world. This greatly increases learning and motivation. In other words, it's not just what you do, it's the way that you do it – and where.

1.1.3 Working cooperatively

Working in collaboration with others appears to be a hugely motivating factor. This could be done face-to-face but also using digital platforms (particularly for keeping in touch with team members who work at different times or with similar projects in other countries). Team structure is important with many reporting on how different members play to their strengths rather than all trying to do the same thing.
"…some team building exercises that we did helped us become a better team and though we are definitely not perfect, we are doing really well. This project has also taught me better observation, evaluation and organization as well as it has given me more motivation for other things besides the project.

''I am happy to be in this project so I can learn how to cooperate with others and do as much as I can for the world.''

Student (Slovenia)

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

1.1.4 Making use of time

We all have the same number of hours in a day but having time restrictions can be a benefit for some. Having tight deadlines can put pressure on the team and this can stimulate action, which often means that things get done rather than being allowed to drift.

1.1.5 Engaging with the community

One of the key learning points for young people is the fact that *we are not alone*. External stakeholders, from individuals in the community to local action groups or authorities, all have important parts to play in making change happen. Linking with external groups can be a huge psychological step but it is also hugely rewarding.

1.1.6 How to choose your project

Some teachers feel they should choose a project for the students so that they can get to work more quickly; however, feedback from students suggest that the choice of project is an essential part of the process. This leads to interesting exercises in democracy that can involve agreeing criteria, then voting or consensus building and even conflict resolution.

1.1.7 The use of objectives

In the same way that tight deadlines can get things moving, setting clear objectives can also stimulate action. Beyond the usual demands that objectives are SMART (Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Realistic; Time-bound), they can also be set in such a way that they can be surpassed. We need to agree how to evaluate our own success so that we know how well we have done - this may or may not involve actual measurement. Exceeding the expectations of the student team or external groups provides an enduring 'feel good factor'.

1.1.8 Maintaining impact

Beyond immediate success lies the issue of sustaining the impact, or leaving a legacy after the project. Some teams talked of keeping in touch with external groups; perhaps most encouraging is the idea of students discussing projects with the younger years so that the learning is passed down and an enduring culture of making change happen pervades the school.

1.1.9 Learning from the project

As well as the generic lessons, such as teamwork or goal setting, each project introduces young people to a dimension of life that they might otherwise have missed. Examples include talking to elderly people from the community, discussions with technical experts such as architects and listening to people who work every day

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

to help others who are less fortunate. We should consider how we might capture or celebrate this leaning as it leads directly to students' personal development.

1.1.10 Seeing how your project fits

Moving away from formal class-based learning helps us recognise that nothing happens without a context. These projects introduce young people to worlds beyond their own yet demonstrate how these are connected. Examples include understanding how their same community used to look in the past or how other communities live today in different parts of the world. These 'other worlds' vary from a village in Kenya to local people who we might otherwise never meet.

1.1.11 Managing your support

For teachers, one of the hardest lessons is learning to let go; conversely, students report how important it is to learn to manage the different levels of support that teachers can offer. This can mean learning which teacher is going to help the most or learning how to avoid getting too much assistance! These projects are helping some students to learn that 'managing your manager' can be an important life skill.

1.1.12 Adjusting to resources

Time, money, workload are all cited as constraining factors; these are *always* constraining factors. The skill that many students (and teachers) are learning on these projects is how to adjust projects – and their own expectations – to match the available resources.

Eager to find out more?

Explore innovation through actual student testimonies and quotes here!

Don't miss the opportunity and explore our Resource Centre here and navigate through the extensive Guidance Collection document. The complete and practical Guidance Collection includes, among others:

- basic principles in open schooling
- working with the community guidance
- creating deep and sustainable innovation interest
- innovative methods and techniques in education
- modern teaching methods and techniques in education
- STEM information and insight
- skills assessment
- real life projects, activities and testimonies.

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein