



Grand Opening Hackathon I (Finland & Online)

Diversity **E**quity **I**nclusion

February 4-19, 2025
DEI4SME Hackathon I
(Finland & Online)





Vaasan yliopisto
UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

University of Vaasa Creating Energy

Vice Rector Tanja Risikko

4.2.2025

Vision:

The University of Vaasa is internationally recognised as a high-impact research university.



Brand promise:

Significant and meaningful



Research platforms:

- ▶ Digital Economy
 - ▶ InnoLab
- ▶ Vaasa Energy Business Innovation Centre
VEBIC



Vaasan yliopisto
UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

Sustainable Business, Energy, and Society

Strategic focus areas:

- ▶ Business Management
- ▶ Energy Transition & Technology
- ▶ Governance & Society

Values:

- ▶ Courage
- ▶ Community
- ▶ Responsibility

Mission:

The University of Vaasa creates and disseminates knowledge to advance sustainable business, energy and society through innovative and high-quality research and education that address global challenges.



Schools:

- ▶ Accounting & Finance
- ▶ Management
- ▶ Marketing & Communication
- ▶ Technology & Innovations



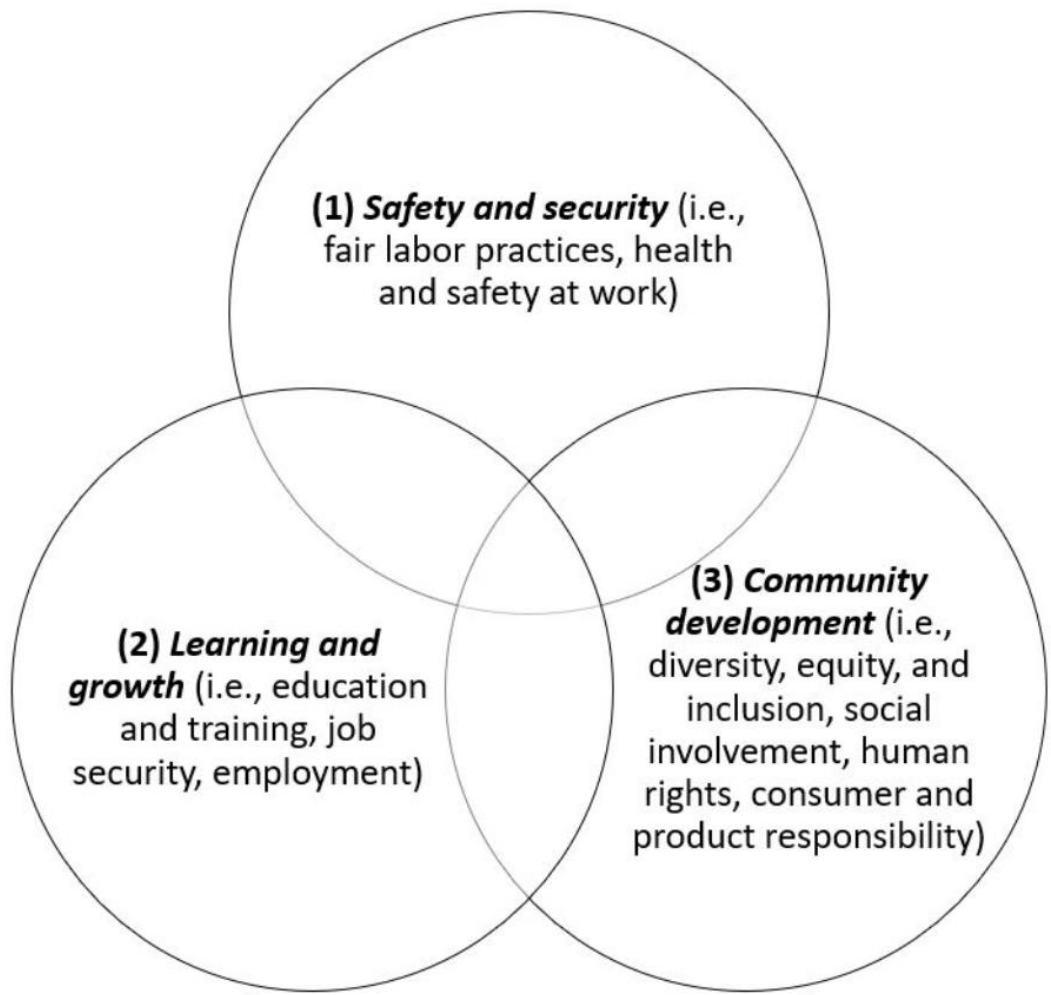
Why DEI4SME Project & this Hackathon were created?

Aušrinė Šilenskytė, University of Vaasa, Finland



Diversity and its management is a part of social sustainability

Figure is based on work by Ajmal et al. (2018)



Regulatory case: DM is in CSRD & ESRS

Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)

European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS)

Applies to:

- Large firms
- Listed SMEs
- V-SMEs

Affects ALL SMEs, if they are in value or supply chain of large firms

ESRS 2 - General Disclosures

ESRS 2 - Minimum Disclosure Requirements (MDR)

E1 - Climate Change

E2 - Pollution

E3 - Water and Marine Resources

E4 - Biodiversity and Ecosystems

E5 - Resource Use and Circular Economy

S1 - Own Workforce

S2 - Workers in the Value Chain

S3 - Affected Communities

S4 - Consumers and End-users

G1 - Business Conduct

Social justice case: DM is a good thing to do!
It is a moral obligation, now re-enforced by policy

Going beyond political debates, empty corporate communication about DEI, and correlations of diversity-firm performance

01

DEI in firm's strategy making (keywords: strategizing, strategic business development, business model development, growth, expansion)

02

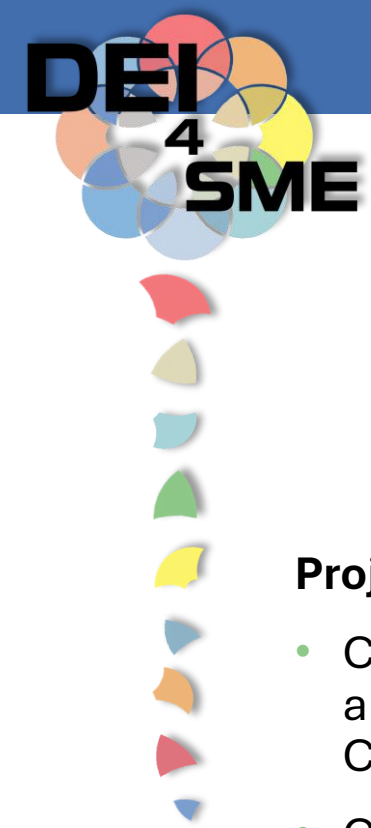
DEI in firm's strategy implementation (keywords: strategy communication, strategic practices at work, key performance indicators, managing operations)

03

DEI in firm's human resource management (keywords: recruitment, promotion, appraisals, teamwork, leadership, whistleblowing, integration, skill development, knowledge sharing)

04

DEI in firm's product or service development (keywords: accessibility of product or service, customer relationships, customer needs)

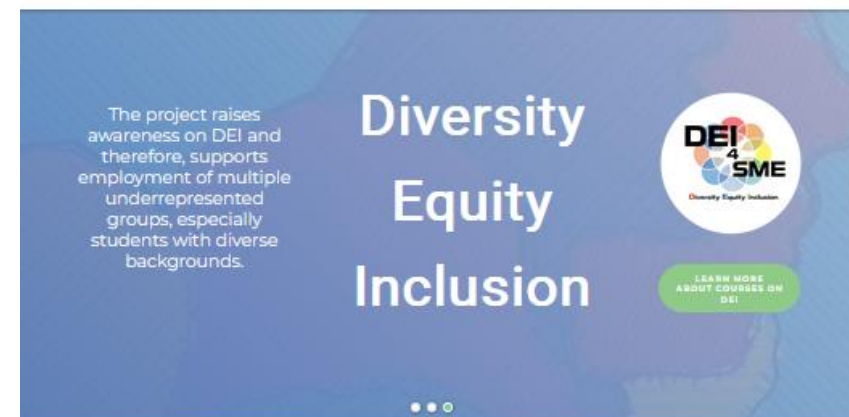


DEI4SME – Strengthening Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Education & SME Management

Project goals:

- Create an **open-access digital tool** for planning, implementing and monitoring Corporate Social Responsibility in line with CSRD
- Create **educational materials** on DEI management and on the use of the tool
- **Understand key challenges that SMEs face** while integrating and managing their DEI practices **and issues that under-represented groups in the EU face** when seeking employment and at work.

Activities & your engagement: surveys (2024), focus groups (Autumn 2025), hackathons (Feb 2025), testing tool (2025-2026), teaching cases in the book (2026), learning materials (2026), sharing best practices in DEI (ongoing).



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/dei4sme>

<https://dei4sme.eu/>



Project & Hackathon I contributes to SDG:



- **8.3** - Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services
- **8.5** - By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
- **8.6** - By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
- **8.8** - Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment

Project & Hackathon I contributes to SDG:



- **10.2** - By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.
- **10.3** - Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

Cases capture 3 levels of Diversity Management



Welcome!

This will be an amazing experience packed with innovation, creativity, and non-stop action!

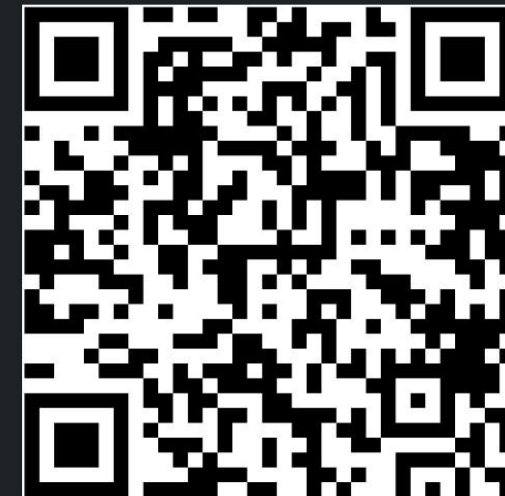


Time to get energized for the next 10 days!

- **Francis Oyeyiola**
- Talent/Career/Personal Development Coach, and Founder of Kpanlogo Yede, an association in Vaasa aimed at using elements of culture (music, dance and food) to help foster diversity and inclusion in Finland.



Francis Oyeyiola
Documentation Engineer/
Coordinator | Talent/Career ...



Amazing companies in the Hackathon!



DEI 4 SME

Diversity **E**quity **I**nclusion

Getting started with your challenge & competition in the hackathon I



Who has joined the hackathon?

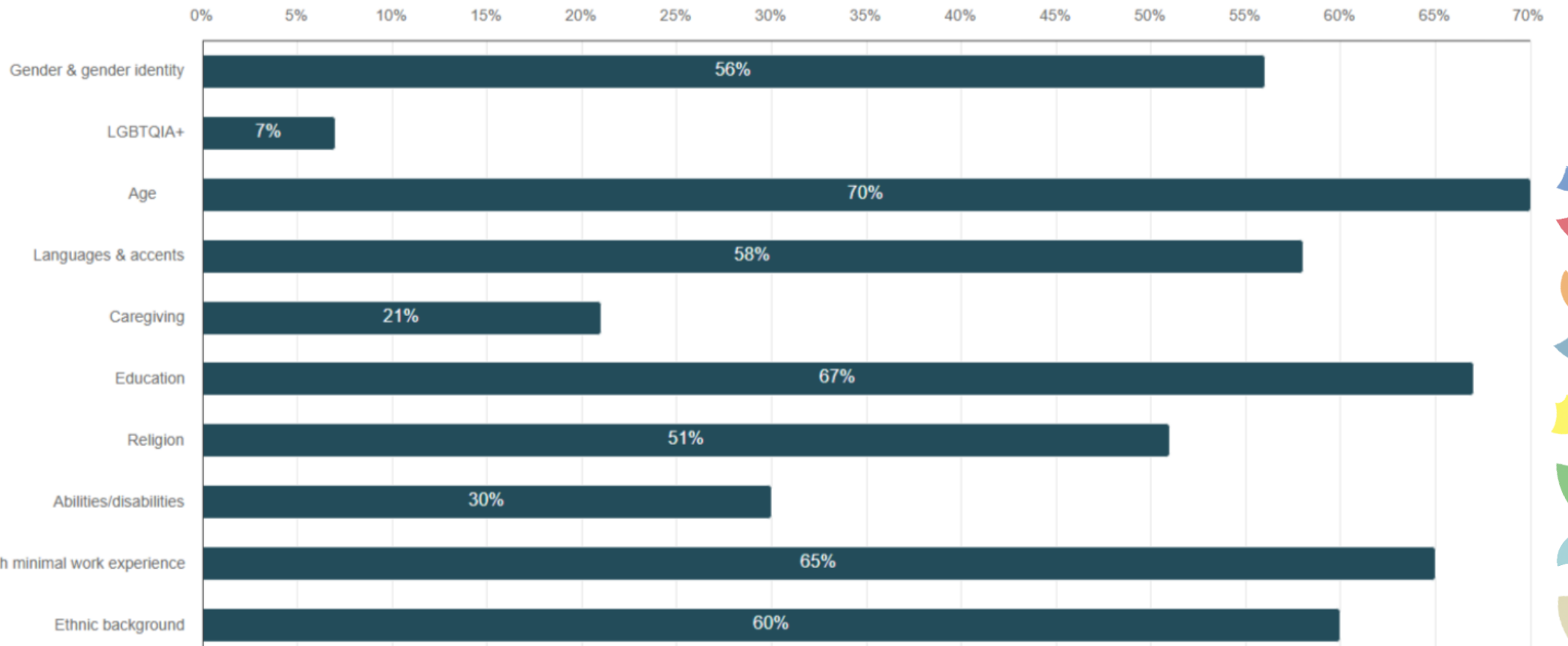
- University of Vaasa, Finland
- Vaasa University of Applied Sciences, Finland
- University of Louisville, USA
- Middle East Technical University, Turkey

38 Teams
182 Students

How diverse are our participants?

Which diversity dimension(s) do you recognize within your team? (Select all that apply to your team, please discuss together with all your team members before answering this question):

Number of respondents: 43, selected answers: 209



How will the hackathon work?

- Program
- Teams being matched
- Introductions of the case companies
- -> three key resources on the website <https://dei4sme.eu/dei4sme-hackathon-finland/>
- **Full case with the challenge** – will be sent personally to each team via email on Wednesday, 5th February, from contact@dei4sme.eu






Cases are matched with mentoring sessions & Company Q&A sessions

16:00-17:00	Online	<p>Presentation-Mentoring session European regulatory environment for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and social sustainability.</p> <p><i>Tauno Kekäle, Project Manager at Merinova Technology Center and Professor at the University of Vaasa, Finland. This session is open for all participants. <u>Recommended to all teams.</u></i></p>
17:00-18:00	Online	<p>Presentation-Mentoring session Global reporting session</p> <p><i>Dr. Kees Krul, postdoctoral researcher and founder of Sustainable Business. This session is open for all participants.</i></p>
15:00-16:00	Online	<p>Presentation-Mentoring session 🌐</p> <p>Employing people with disabilities in SMEs: overview of disabilities, Austria's legal framework for employing people with disabilities, creating inclusive workplace</p> <p>Johanna Lausegger, Autark, Austria</p> <p><i>This session is <u>necessary to attend for the teams solving T.I.P.S. and Hausmasters cases, recommended for teams solving Furvacon and AddSearch Case 2 (Product) cases. The session is open to all participants.</u></i></p>
16:00-17:00	Online	<p>Presentation Related to Amplon Case 🌐</p> <p>Presenting the details needed to solve the Amplon case.</p> <p>Kimmo Kallioniemi, CEO, Amplon.</p> <p><i>This session is open for all, <u>necessary to attend for teams solving Amplon case, recommended for teams solving AddSearch Case 2 (Product) case</u></i></p>

Mentors (1)

– sessions directly related to cases



Prof. **Tauno Kekäle**,
Project Manager at
Merinova Technology
Center



Dr. **Kees Krul**,
postdoctoral
researcher at
Rotterdam School of
Management (Erasmus
University), and
founder of
SustainabilityReports.c
om



**Johanna
Lausegger**,
Autark, Austria



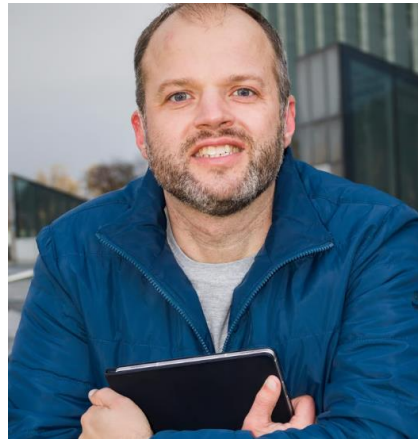
Markku Oivo,
Distinguished
Advisor at
Dimecc Oy

Mentors (2)

– sessions directly related to cases



Murtada Al-Emara, Business Development Manager at TD SYNEX



Donatas Počešiūnas, architect, wav3x.com



Dr. Audrey Jayton, UX Researcher at DaVita Kidney Care and DEI Advocate



Zixin He, University of Vaasa, Finland



Mentors (3)

– sessions to deepen your expertise



Pavla Skorpilova,
*innovation-focused
product and
project manager,
Coach for Thinking
out of the Box*



Mag. Susanne Prisching,
Gleichbehandlungsanwältin bei
der
Gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft,
Leiterin Regionalbüro Steiermark
und Kärnten, GAW, Austria



**Megha Goswami &
Kristaps Kovalonoks,**
coupleofexpats.com,
Communication experts

Actively attending the sessions that are linked to your case will help you succeed, but also....

- **Do your own research** of the company, industry, competitors, alternatives
- **Talk to people** who are from the groups related to the case
- Be creative and innovative – we have listed many existing solutions in the case, including what company is already doing. Please **DO NOT** repeat them. These are listed to you so that you go beyond and **think OUT OF THE BOX.**
- **Be very specific with your solutions**, make sure they fit company, its particularities, and legal framework of the EU

Personal coaching to think out of the box



- I'm an innovation-focused product and project manager passionate about helping startups, entrepreneurs, and businesses turn ideas into digital products. With a hands-on approach, I guide teams through every stage—from ideation and research to MVP development, testing, and launch.
- My background spans international sales, startup acceleration, and cross-industry projects in tech, education, and health-tech. Leveraging design thinking, business strategy, and human-centered design, I help teams build impactful digital solutions.
- Mentoring at the Bio Farma X MIT Hacking Medicine hackathon reinforced my love for problem-solving and guiding teams in high-energy, creative environments. I'm especially excited about innovation in sustainability, education, and NGOs, where action-driven ideas can create real impact.

18 personal coaching sessions with experienced coach Pavla Skorpilova

- When you need help to proceed with team's thinking and solution building – this is a session for you!
- **Only one session** for the team.
- Use Calendly to schedule your **mentoring session with Pavla Skorpilova**. Once you've booked a session with this link <https://calendly.com/hackathon-finland/mentoring-session-with-pavla-skorpilova-1>, you will receive a **confirmation email** containing the Zoom link. Please note that this email will come from **“Syed Amin (via Calendly)”**. If you don't see the confirmation email in your inbox, please check your spam or junk folder.
- **Come to the session prepared with your questions and thoughts how to frame your case challenge**. Pavla will be familiar with all challenges in the hackathon, but she will not provide you any answers, just coach you to think about the problems that you have and how to reframe your case challenge.

Time availability for online consultations:

Wed 5.2. 17:00 - 18:30 CET

Fri 7.2 9.30 - 12:00, 13:00-16:00 CET

Tue 11.2. 17:00 - 18:00 CET

Wed 12.2. 17:00 - 18:00 CET



When & How to submit your solution?

The deadline to return your video is **Thursday 13th at midnight UTC+2** (Finland, Helsinki time zone). To convert the time in your own time zone, you may use this conversion tool, or any other tool convenient to you. Link: <https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>.

Please make sure to respect the following technical guidelines when submitting your solution.

Format: ensure the files are not password protected, or restricted to view, the evaluation committee must be able to access your solution easily.

Language: every file returned within the solutions must be written in English language.

Property: mention your team name and the team members name on the first page (you can also mention it on the footer).

When submitting the solution, you must use **Wesendit:** <https://www.wesendit.com>. **We will not accept solutions sent by email to our organizing team, or to our hackathon's contact email address.**

Evaluation

1 (low) - 5 (Excellent) for each criteria

- **Innovation:** Creativity and originality of the proposed solution.
- **Impact:** Effectiveness in addressing DEI challenges and fostering meaningful change.
- **Feasibility:** Realistic implementation within the SME environment.
- **Regulatory Fit:** Alignment with the EU legal frameworks related to DEI.
- **Presentation:** Clarity, quality, and persuasiveness of the solution's delivery.
- **Team Collaboration:** Evidence of diverse contributions and effective teamwork.
- **Integration of Materials and Insights:** Consideration of diverse perspectives, comparative studies, insights from the presentations, Q&A and mentoring sessions, and relevant research.

Judges



[Anna Andersone](#) (CEO, StartSchool & Riga TechGirls, Latvia): A visionary leader and several startup co-founder empowering women in tech and bridging the gender gap in Latvia's tech ecosystem.

Dr. [Anne Marie Zwerg](#) (Associate Prof., Univ. of Louisville, USA): A global educator, having taught in Colombia, China, Germany, and Mexico, and serves as a diversity advocate in Louisville's business community and diversity advocate, with expertise in Organizational Behavior and International Business.

[Chenthuran Jayton](#) (Exec. Director, Equity Labs, USA): A DEI practitioner and educator with over 15 years of experience, has pioneered DEI tools, curricula, and organizational strategies centred on equity and justice.

Dr. [Cynthia Vilasboas Calixto Casnici](#) (Lecturer, Univ. of Leeds, UK): Specializing in active learning, integrates AI into her teaching and research, focusing on innovation in international business education.

Dr. [Lena Theodoulides](#) (Asst. Prof., Matej Bel Univ., Slovakia): An expert in leadership and social innovation, combines academic rigor with practical experience in consulting and education.

[MacDonald](#) Oguike (Director, Univ. of Calgary, Canada): With over 20 years of international HR experience, specializes in digital transformation, diversity, and equity strategies for organizational development.

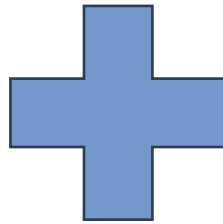
Dr. [Narentheren Kaliappen](#) (Assoc. Prof., Univ. Utara Malaysia): A leader in international business and curriculum innovation, has earned global recognition for his research in DEI and performance excellence.

Dr. [Petr Procházka](#) (Lecturer, Prague Univ. of Economics, Czech Republic): An ESG Specialist, focuses on sustainability, ESG reporting, and governance within global value chains.

Chair: Dr. [Ausrine Silenskyte](#) (Program Manager, Univ. of Vaasa, Finland): A leader in international management and sustainability, has spearheaded the DEI4SME initiative and numerous projects on education innovation and social sustainability.



Prizes: III Place – Best Solution

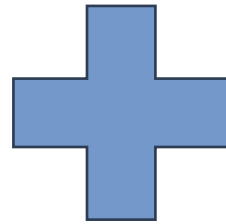


Finvacon's special:

- Quality T-Shirt from Craft
- With Your personal name for each team member & Finvacon logo

- **3 months subscription for each team member**
 - Access to LinkedIn Learning
 - LinkedIn Premium

Prizes: III Place – Best Solution



Finvacon's special:

- Quality Jacket from Craft
- With Your personal name for each team member & Finvacon logo

- **5 months subscription for each team member**

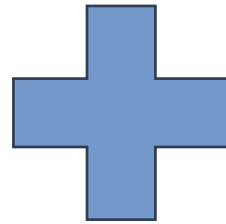
- Access to LinkedIn Learning
- LinkedIn Premium

Prizes: III Place – Best Solution



Finvacon's special:

- Personal 1-hour meeting-coaching session with the CEO **Kaj Sunden** for each team member
- In Vaasa or online



- **7 months subscription for each team member**
 - Access to LinkedIn Learning
 - LinkedIn Premium

Extra activities for FUN!

Act or Attend & Win!





Diversity **E**quity **I**nclusion

Treasure Hunt Attend & Win!

Game for every individual in the hackathon !
(optional, but really fun!)

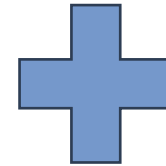
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DEI4SME Hackathon I
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How It Works

- There are **15 pieces of a riddle-poem that are split among the sessions** of the hackathon I. Not every session has a piece, but most of the session will have a piece of the poem.
- Participants must attend as many sessions as possible to collect different pieces and put them all together in one poem.
- The phrasing is intentionally fragmented so that without multiple clues, it's difficult to guess the full riddle.
- Once you gather all 15 pieces, you shall rearrange them correctly to form the full riddle. Numbers will help you place the pieces in the correct order.
- First **individual** to submit the correctly assembled riddle wins a special prize. Students, mentors, company reps, evaluation committee – all can participate in this game!
- **This is an individual activity, so the most active person will be awarded**

Prize for the Treasure Hunt Winner



Piece No. 2:

"voices blend yet differ"



Diversity **E**quity **I**nclusion

The Team Quest: Work & Well-Being Challenge Act & Win!

Game for every team in the hackathon!
(optional, but really fun!)

February 4-19, 2025
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Your team will inspire others to work hard in a sustainable way!

The Team Quest is a challenge designed for hackathon teams to showcase how they balance **hard work and well-being** throughout the 10-day event.

We know you will work very hard on complex challenges that companies provided, and we would like to encourage you to have sustainable team dynamics, ensuring that productivity and well-being go hand in hand.

The most balanced and engaged team will be rewarded at the end of the event.





How It Works


If your team would like to participate in the Team Quest, please do the following:

1. **Work Hard:** Stay committed to solving the hackathon challenge and demonstrate strong teamwork.
2. **Prioritize Well-Being:** Integrate activities that enhance team and individual well-being (e.g., active breaks, mindfulness exercises, creative team moments, social bonding activities, or any other innovative ideas that you will come up).
3. **Share & Engage:** Document your activities and post about them on **LinkedIn, Facebook, or Instagram** using the hashtag **#DEI4SME** and tagging the **DEI4SME** project's official pages. Posts should include:
 1. A short description of what the team is doing to balance productivity and well-being.
 2. A photo or video showing the activity.
 3. A reflection on how balancing work and well-being has impacted your productivity and collaboration in the DEI4SME Hackathon I.
4. **Submit Final Entry:** At the end of the event, your team should gather screenshots of the posts and add links to all the posts you made and submit them **in one file via one email** to **contact@dei4sme.eu** for the final evaluation. **Please add all your names and the name of the team to the file submitted.**

Evaluation Criteria & Reward

 **Consistency** – Regular posts showcasing both work and well-being activities.

 **Creativity** – Unique and engaging ways to integrate well-being into teamwork.

 **Impact** – Demonstrated improvement in productivity and collaboration through well-being efforts.

 **Engagement** – Interaction with the hackathon community through shared experiences.

Prize:
a special treat
from Foamit
Group &
Certificate for
mastering
sustainable work
dynamics



Immediate next step

- Find which case you will solve – in the website
- Check which sessions (in the website) are linked with your case and schedule your calendar to attend
- Start reading about your case company
- Review their poster online – it captures key idea of the case
- Receive full case Wednesday (Feb 5) morning and start solving with your team
- Be active and have fun joining Treasure Hunt and Team Quest

All sessions will be in the same zoom
link you used today

except two – will be separate zoom:

Pavla Skorpilova

Zixin He



Diversity Equity Inclusion

THANK YOU!

contact@dei4sme.eu



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