



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

Closing Event Hackathon I

February 19, 2025

February 4-19, 2025

DEI4SME Hackathon I

at the University of Vaasa & Online





Welcome words by
Adam Smale
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Welcome words by
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DEI4SME Project leader & Program
manager, University of Vaasa, Finland

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**KEYNOTE
SPEAKERS
DEJ4SME
Hackathon 1**

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Keynote 1: Regulations and directives for the social sustainability and DEI in Europe: VSME

Elisa Bevilacqua,
Senior sustainability technical manager, EFRAG, Belgium



- With over 15 years of experience on corporate social responsibility, green finance, ESG risk, and sustainability reporting, Elisa's keynote will present the regulations and directives for the social sustainability and DEI in Europe, within the VSME frames.

DEI 4 SME – EFRAG: VSME

Regulations and directives for the social sustainability and DEI in Europe

Elisa Bevilacqua (EFRAG Senior Technical manager)

Brussels, 19 February



Disclaimer

The views expressed in this presentation are those of the presenter, except where indicated otherwise. EFRAG positions, as approved by the EFRAG SRB, are published as comment letters, discussion or position papers, or in any other form considered appropriate in the circumstances.

No	Item
1	Key Features and Objectives [Elisa Bevilacqua – Senior Technical Manager]
2	Methodological Approach Due Process [Elisa Bevilacqua – Senior Technical Manager]
3	Outcomes of Public Consultation [Elisa Bevilacqua – Senior Technical Manager]
4	Final VSME Structure – Overview [Elisa Bevilacqua – Senior Technical Manager]
5	Basic Module & Comprehensive Module - Deep Dive [Elisa Bevilacqua – Senior Technical Manager]
6	VSME Ecosystem [Elisa Bevilacqua – Senior Technical Manager]



1. Key Features, Objectives and

1.1 VSME – Key features and objectives

Objective: to credibly replace a substantial part of the questionnaires used by lenders, investors and corporate clients – supply chain dimension and to support SMEs in monitoring their sustainability performance.

➤ **Why a voluntary standard for SMEs?**

- i. [EC Q&A Delegated Acts ESRS in July 2023](#): “EFRAG is developing simpler, voluntary standards for use by non-listed SMEs [...] **to respond to requests for sustainability information in an efficient and proportionate manner**, and so facilitate their participation in the transition to a sustainable economy.”
- ii. [EC SME Relief Package of September 2023](#) Action 14 tasks EFRAG to develop a simple and standardised framework for SMEs to report on ESG issues, creating better opportunities to obtain green financing and thus facilitating the transition to a sustainable economy. In particular, Action 14 mentions that the “*Commission will ensure that SMEs have a simple and standardized framework to report on ESG issues ... ensuring the rapid delivery of voluntary standards for non-listed SMEs.*”
- iii. **Commitment of market participants** (larger corporates and banks) essential for the success of the standard

➤ **Not legally binding** – outside CSRD- but to fulfill market needs.

➤ **Proportionality** = simplified language + modularity + overall ESRS consistency

➤ Scope: Non-listed Micro and SMEs in EU

99.8% of total EU companies



2. Methodological Approach Due Process

2.2 EFRAG's Transparent & Inclusive Due Process for the VSME

General approach: have the VSME as a standalone document to provide a simple reporting guidance for SMEs that are outside the scope of CSRD.

CSRD Scope: The CSRD however provides certain indications for non-listed small and medium companies (Art 29b4, Recital 21, Recital 22). With reference to Recital 21, EFRAG considered whether the non-listed SME should also apply LSME ESRS, resulting in a single standard for SMEs. The EFRAG SR TEG and EFRAG SRB considered that the level of simplification and proportionality of a voluntary standard suited for use by micro and small undertakings would be irreconcilable with the minimum disclosures needed by investors.

Approach to the preparation:

- Ensure conceptual coherence with the ESRS Set 1 and ESRS LSME
- Proportionality and simplified language and starting from a white sheet of paper
- Focus on the users' needs = built based on existing questionnaires (12 questionnaires covering up to 26,000 SMEs, 700 banks and 450 corporates)
- SFDR PAI as sources of ESG datapoints needed beyond investors (lenders and corporates)

2.3 EFRAG's Transparent and Inclusive Due Process for the VSME

Methodological Due Process Used for the Creation of the Exposure Draft Published in January 2024

EFRAG SME Communities

- Group of experts participating in surveys and workshops with EFRAG Secretariat (closed meetings)



Outreach and workshops with SMEs associations and users of their information

- Questionnaire-based, to collect feedback on the content of the modules ahead of consultation



Benchmarking

- German Sustainability Code, Nordic Sustainability Reporting Standards and the CDP Climate, disclosure for SMEs
- Business Partners questionnaires
- Cluster 8 EFRAG PTF ESRS



EFRAG SR TEG

- Group of experts advising the EFRAG SR Board, multistakeholder composition, 4 meetings per month in 2024, public meetings. EC observer.



EFRAG SRB

- Group of stakeholders' representatives, multistakeholder composition, 2 meetings per month in 2024, public meetings. EC observer.



VSME Exposure Draft for public consultation (21/01/2024)

(Due process explanation continues on the next slide)

2.3 EFRAG's Transparent and Inclusive Due Process for the VSME

Methodological Due Process Used from the Public Consultation

Public Consultation Online
Survey

Public Consultation Field Tests

Public Consultation
Comment Letters

EFRAG SR TEG & EFRAG SRB – Post consultation discussion (after 21/05/2024)

- Discussion of public consultation results and technical + strategic orientations to be implemented arising from the public consultation's results. **Subsequent implementation** on the VSME based on decisions taken.

Banking Association Workshop (16/09/2024)

- Reviewal and confirmation of the changes made to the VSME after SR TEG and SRB discussion

SME Association Workshop (23/09/2024)

- Reviewal and confirmation of the changes made to the VSME after SR TEG and SRB discussion

EFRAG SR TEG approval (22/10/2024) + EFRAG SRB Approval (13/11/2024)

[VSME package](#) sent to the European Commission (17/12/24) (VSME, Basic for Conclusions, Feedback Statement, external CBA)

Due Process of CBA

Cost-Benefit Analysis -
Phase 1 – CBA conducted
on the basis of the ED

Cost-Benefit Analysis -
Phase 2 – CBA updated on
the basis of the changes
made to the VSME post-
public consultation



3. Outcomes of Public Consultation

3.1 Public Consultation: Key Results

Public Consultation Respondents

- **311 responses**
 - 126 preparers
 - 39 users
 - 146 other
- **164 responses to field test**
 - 135 preparers
 - 29 users
- **22 comment letters**
- Platforms involved as a proxy of preparers and users represented 23,000 SMEs across Europe and over 100,000 large undertakings worldwide.

- General support for the structure, language and modularity
- Online platforms needed (connected to incentives)
- Online tools needed (i.e. GHG calculators, interactive maps)
- Materiality too complex
- Narrative-PAT module complex for preparers, not user friendly for users
- Additional Guidance needed
- Additional financial datapoints requested by banks
- Additional requests at sector level are still possible / sector SME guidance needed
- The datapoints analysed the questionnaires (pre-consultation) were broadly confirmed in the public consultation (all users, banks, large undertakings, and investors).

3.2 Post-consultation Workshops: Banking and SME Association Workshops

BANKS

- Support new **Narrative-PAT** approach
- Support the guidance
- Support simplifications, including the replacement of the **materiality** principle with the “**if applicable**” principle.
- Clarified that certain **additional datapoints** requested during the public consultation are not essential

SMEs

- Support for architectural changes
- Support for reformulated narrative (tables)
- Support for simplification including the replacement of the **materiality** principle with the “**if applicable**” principle
- Need for an online tools
- Need for additional guidance

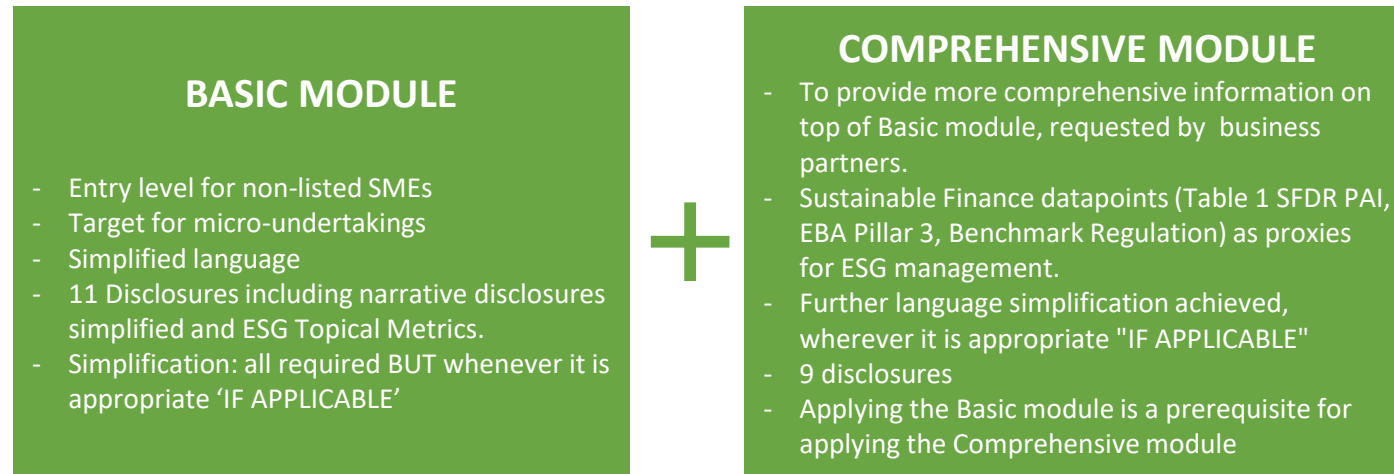
FREQUENTLY ASKED CONTENT OF GUIDANCE FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

1. *Templates of report and mockup disclosure*
2. *List of possible actions/policies for SMEs covering the ten topics. Examples of climate change transition plans, impacts on workers in the value chain, and affected communities for SMEs.*
3. *Guidance on pollutants*
4. *Sustainability matters per sector.*
5. *Linking VSME and ISO standards.*



4. Final VSME Structure - Overview

4.1 VSME: Structure and Modules



Overarching key changes to the VSME Standard following the public consultation:

- Request for an **online tool** and **VSME ecosystem**
- **Deletion** of the **Narrative-PAT module**
- **Removal** of **materiality** principle from the VSME

For future consideration: possible introduction of a link to the streamlined EU taxonomy tool for aligned and eligible activities that the Platform on Sustainable Finance is currently developing.



5. Basic Module & Comprehensive Module - Deep Dive

5.1 VSME: List of Disclosure in the Basic Module

BASIC MODULE	CONTENT (Certain part of the text have been excluded to shorten the text)	Number of questionnaires in which it is asked	“If applicable”/ Always to be reported on/ May disclosure
B1 – Basis for Preparation	The undertaking shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which of the following options it has selected in the preparation of its sustainability report (...) - The disclosures that it has omitted due to classified or sensitive information, if any - Whether the sustainability report has been prepared on an individual basis (...) or consolidated basis (..) - The list of subsidiaries including their registered address covered in the consolidated sustainability report - The following information: 1) its legal form, 2) its NACE sector classification, 3) the size of its balance sheet, 4) turnover, 5) number of employees (headcount or FTEs), 6) the country of primary operations, and 7) geolocation of sites owned, leased or managed. 	-	Always to be reported on
	If the undertaking has obtained any sustainability-related certification or label: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it shall provide a brief description of those (including, where relevant, the issuers of the certification or label, date and rating score). 		If applicable

5.1 VSME: List of Disclosure in the Basic Module

BASIC MODULE	CONTENT (Certain part of the text have been excluded to shorten the text)	Number of questionnaires in which it is asked	“If applicable”/ Always to be reported on/ May disclosure																
B2 – Practices for transitioning towards a more sustainable economy	<p>If the undertaking has the following in place, it shall disclose the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practices - Policies - Future initiatives - Targets: to monitor the implementation of these policies <p>These datapoints can be reported on using the table in the guidance for Disclosure B2</p>	7	If applicable																
B3 – Energy and greenhouse gas emissions	<p>The undertaking shall disclose total energy consumption in MWh, with a breakdown as per the table below, if it can obtain the necessary information to provide such a breakdown:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>Renewable</th><th>Non-renewable</th><th>Total</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Electricity (as reflected in utility billings)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Fuels</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Renewable	Non-renewable	Total	Electricity (as reflected in utility billings)				Fuels				Total				12	<p>Always to be reported, breakdown If applicable</p>
	Renewable	Non-renewable	Total																
Electricity (as reflected in utility billings)																			
Fuels																			
Total																			
	<p>The undertaking shall disclose :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Scope 1 GHG emissions in tCO₂-eq (from owned or controlled sources); - the location-based Scope 2 emissions in tCO₂-eq (emissions from the generation of purchased energy). <p>The undertaking shall disclose :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Its GHG intensity, calculated by dividing ‘gross greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions’ disclosed under paragraph 30 (B3) by ‘turnover (in Euro)’ disclosed under paragraph 24(e)(iv) (B1) . 		Always to be reported on																

5.1 VSME: List of Disclosure in the Basic Module

BASIC MODULE	CONTENT (Certain part of the text have been excluded to shorten the text)	Number of questionnaires in which it is asked	“If applicable”/ Always to be reported on/ May disclosure
B4 – Pollution of air, water and soil	<p>The undertaking shall disclose, if already required by law or other national regulations to report to competent authorities its emissions of pollutants, or if it voluntarily reports on them according to an Environmental Management System,:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the pollutants it emits to air, water and soil in its own operations, with the respective amount for each pollutant. If this information is already publicly available, the undertaking may alternatively refer to the document where it is reported, for example, by providing the relevant URL link or embedding a hyperlink 	7	If applicable
B5 – Biodiversity	<p>The undertaking shall disclose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the number and area (in hectares) of sites that it owns, that it has leased or that it manages, that are located in or near biodiversity sensitive areas. 	4	If applicable
	<p>The undertaking may disclose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - metrics related to land use change such as total use of land; total sealed area; total nature-oriented area on site; and total nature-oriented area off site. 		‘May’ disclosure

5.1 VSME: List of Disclosure in the Basic Module

BASIC MODULE	CONTENT (Certain part of the text have been excluded to shorten the text)	Number of questionnaires in which it is asked	“If applicable”/ Always to be reported on/ May disclosure
B6 – Water	The undertaking shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - total water withdrawal - in addition, the undertaking shall separately present the amount of water withdrawn at sites located in areas of high water-stress. 	9	Always to be reported on
	If the undertaking has production processes in place which significantly consume water (...), it shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - its water consumption (...) 		If applicable
B7 – Resource use, circular economy and waste management	The undertaking shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether it applies <i>circular economy principles</i>, and if so, how it applies these principles 	9	If applicable
	The undertaking shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The total annual generation of waste broken down by type (non-hazardous and hazardous) - The total annual waste diverted to recycling or reuse 		Always to be reported on
	If the undertaking operates in a sector using significant material flows (e.g. manufacturing, constructions, packaging etc.) it shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the annual mass-flow of relevant materials used 		If applicable

5.1 VSME: List of Disclosure in the Basic Module

BASIC MODULE	CONTENT (Certain part of the text have been excluded to shorten the text)	Number of questionnaires in which it is asked	“If applicable”/ Always to be reported on/ May disclosure
B8 – Workforce – General characteristics	The undertaking shall disclose the total number of employees in full-time equivalents or provide a headcount of such employees broken down by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - type of employment contract (temporary and permanent); - gender; and 	8	Always to be reported on
	If the undertakings operates in more than one country, it shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the country of the employment contract 		If applicable
	If the undertaking employs 50 or more employees, it shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the employee turnover rate for the reporting period. 		If applicable – to be reported on when above the threshold
B9 – Workforce – Health and safety	The undertaking shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number and rate of recordable work-related accidents - the number of fatalities (...) 	3	Always to be reported on

5.1 VSME: List of Disclosure in the Basic Module

BASIC MODULE	CONTENT (Certain part of the text have been excluded to shorten the text)	Number of questionnaires in which it is asked	“If applicable”/ Always to be reported on/ May disclosure
B10 – Workforce – Remuneration, collective bargaining, and training	The undertaking shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whether the employees receive a pay that is equal or above minimum wage for the country it reports in (...) 	7	Always to be reported on
	If the undertaking's headcount is above 150 employees (before 7 June 2031), or 100 employees (after 7 June 2031), it shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the percentage gap in pay between its female and male employees. (...) 		If applicable – to be reported on when above the threshold
	The undertaking shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the percentage of employees covered by collective bargaining agreements - the average number of training hours per employee and by gender (...) 		Always to be reported on
B11 – Convictions and fines for corruption and bribery	In case of convictions and fines in the reporting period, the undertaking shall disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the number of convictions and the total amount of fines incurred for the violation of anti-corruption and anti-bribery laws. 	4	If applicable

5.2 VSME: List of Disclosure in the Comprehensive Module

COMPREHENSIVE MODULE	CONTENT (Certain part of the text have been excluded to shorten the text)	Number of questionnaires in which it is asked	"If applicable"/ Always to be reported on/ May disclosure
C1 – Strategy: Business Model and Sustainability – Related Initiatives	<p>The undertaking shall disclose, the key elements of its business model and strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a description of significant groups of products and/or services offered; - a description of significant market(s) the undertaking operates in (such as B2B, wholesale, retail, countries); - a description of main business relationships (such as key suppliers, customers distribution channels and consumers); and 	10	Always to be reported on
	<p>The undertaking shall disclose, the key elements of its business model and strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if the strategy has key elements that relate to or affect sustainability issues, a brief description of those key elements. 		If applicable
C2 – Description of practices, policies and future initiatives for transitioning towards a more sustainable economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the undertaking has put in place specific practices, policies or future initiatives for transitioning towards a more sustainable economy, which it has already reported under disclosure B2 in the Basic Module, it shall briefly describe them using the template found in paragraph 225. - The undertaking may indicate, if any, the most senior level of the undertaking accountable for implementing them. 	7	If applicable

5.2 VSME: List of Disclosure in the Comprehensive Module

COMPREHENSIVE MODULE	CONTENT (Certain part of the text have been excluded to shorten the text)	Number of questionnaires in which it is asked	"If applicable"/ Always to be reported on/ May disclosure
Consideration when reporting on GHG emissions under B3 (Basic Module)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Depending on the type of activities carried out by the undertaking, disclosing a quantification of its Scope 3 GHG emissions can be appropriate (see paragraph 10 of this [draft] Standard) to yield relevant information on the undertaking's value chain impacts on climate change. - <u>Guidance (paragraph 215):</u> SMEs operating with manufacturing, agrifood, real estate, construction and packaging processes are likely to have significant Scope 3 (...) 		
C3 – GHG reduction targets and climate transition	<p>If the undertaking has established GHG emission reduction targets, it shall disclose its targets in absolute values for Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions. (...) In particular, it shall provide: (..)</p> <p>If the undertaking that operates in high climate impact sectors has adopted a transition plan for climate change mitigation, it may provide information about it (...)</p> <p>In case the undertaking operates in high-climate impact sectors and does not have a transition plan (...), it shall indicate whether and, if so, when it will adopt such a transition plan.</p>	7	If applicable
C4 – Climate risks	<p>If the undertaking has identified climate-related hazards and climate-related transition events, creating gross climate-related risks for the undertaking, it shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - briefly describe such climate-related hazards and climate-related transition events; - disclose how it has assessed the exposure and sensitivity of its assets, activities and value chain (...) - disclose the time horizons of any climate-related hazards and transition events identified; and - disclose whether it has undertaken climate change adaptation actions for any climate-related hazards and transition events. 	9	If applicable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The undertaking may disclose the potential adverse effects of climate risks that may affect its financial performance or business operations in the short-, medium- or long-term, (...) 		May disclosure

5.2 VSME: List of Disclosure in the Comprehensive Module

COMPREHENSIVE MODULE	CONTENT (Certain part of the text have been excluded to shorten the text)	Number of questionnaires in which it is asked	"If applicable" / Always to be reported on/ May disclosure
C5 – Additional (general) workforce characteristics	<p>If the undertaking employs 50 or more employees, it may disclose the female-to-male ratio at management level for the reporting period.</p> <p>If the undertaking employs 50 or more employees, it may disclose the number of those self-employed without personnel who are working exclusively for the undertaking (...)</p>	Stems from public consultation	To be reported on when above the threshold
C6 – Additional own workforce metric - Human rights policies and processes	<p>The undertaking shall disclose an answer to the following questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the undertaking have a code of conduct or human rights policy for its own workforce? (YES/NO) 	6	Always to be reported on
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If yes, does this cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - child labour (YES/ NO); forced labour (YES/ NO); human trafficking (YES/NO); discrimination (YES/NO); accident prevention (YES/NO); or other? (YES/NO – if yes, specify). 		If applicable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the undertaking have a complaints-handling mechanism for its own workforce? (YES/ NO) 	5	Always to be reported on
C7 – Severe negative human rights incidents	<p>The undertaking shall disclose an answer to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the undertaking have confirmed incidents in its own workforce related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - child labour (YES/ NO); forced labour (YES/ NO); human trafficking (YES/ NO); discrimination (YES/ NO); or; other? (...) 	3	Always to be reported on
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If yes, the undertaking may describe the actions being taken to address the incidents described above. - Is the undertaking aware of any confirmed incidents involving workers in the value chain, affected communities, consumers and end-users? If yes, specify. 		If applicable

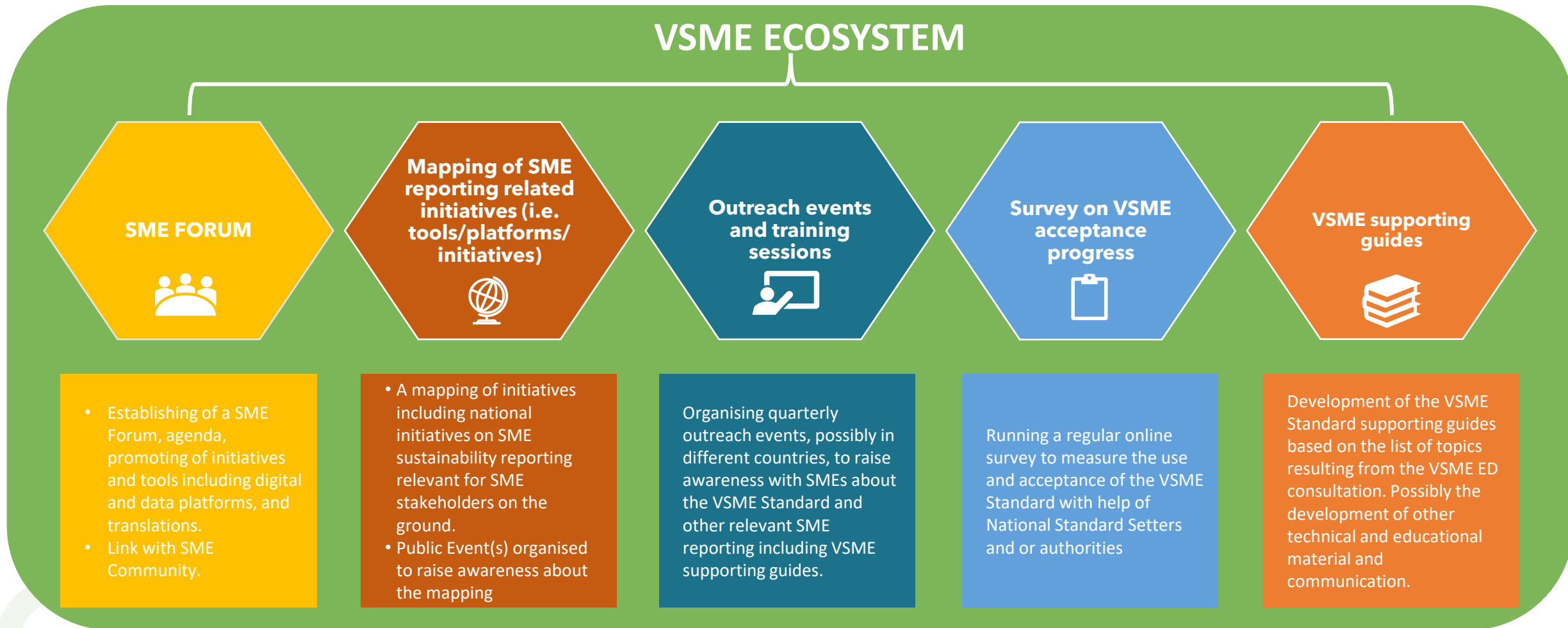
5.2 VSME: List of Disclosure in the Comprehensive Module

COMPREHENSIVE MODULE	CONTENT (Certain part of the text have been excluded to shorten the text)	Number of questionnaires in which it is asked	“If applicable” / Always to be reported on/ May disclosure
C8 – Revenues from certain sectors and exclusion from EU reference benchmarks	<p>If the undertaking is active in one or more of the following sectors, it shall disclose its related revenues in the sector(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - controversial weapons (anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions, chemical weapons and biological weapons); - the cultivation and production of tobacco; - fossil fuel (coal, oil and gas) sectors (...) - chemicals production if the undertaking is a manufacturer of pesticides and other agrochemical products. 	5	If applicable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The undertaking shall disclose whether it is excluded from any EU reference benchmarks that are aligned with the Paris Agreement. 	-	Always to be reported on
C9 – Gender diversity ratio in the governance body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the undertaking has a governance body in place, the undertaking shall disclose the related gender diversity ratio. 	6	If applicable



6. VSME ecosystem

6.1 Future Work on the VSME: VSME Ecosystem



6.2 SME Forum

- Establishing and animating an SME Forum that would be composed of all relevant institutional stakeholders (users, preparers, platforms, rating agencies, national standard setters, etc.) to promote and ensure market acceptance of the VSME.
- SME Forum participants:
 - SME associations (preparers)
 - Banking associations (users)
 - Business associations/ Network/ Consortia (users)
 - Rating agencies (other)
 - Accountants (other)
 - Online platforms/ tools representing both preparers and users – individual organisations (other)
 - European and National organisations/ institutions (observers)
- The SME Forum may act in connection with the EFRAG VSME Community. The community will provide additional feedback to the Forum through surveys and other written media.

6.3 Support Guides

- The public consultation and field test of the VSME allowed to identify the following implementation needs:
 1. Templates of the VSME report and mockup disclosure;
 2. XBRL translation of the VSME template (to be embedded in online platforms)
 3. Examples of **practices, policies and future initiatives for transitioning towards a more sustainable economy** (Disclosure C2) to be used as a dropdown menu for a future VSME online template
 4. Examples of **GHG reduction targets and climate transition** (Disclosure C3)
 5. Examples of actions being taken to address **severe negative human rights incidents** (Disclosure C7)

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THANK YOU!

Keynote 2: Accreditations for sustainability in SME: When and how should SMEs do this?

**Tiina Partanen,
Head of Sustainability and PMO, Foamit Group, Finland**



- As an expert in sustainability who took company to the top sustainability rankings and a master in (sustainability) strategy execution, in the keynote speech Tiina will talk about obtaining the accreditations for sustainability in SME: when and how should SME do this?



Frameworks and standards for sustainability in SME: When and how should SMEs do this?

19.2.2025

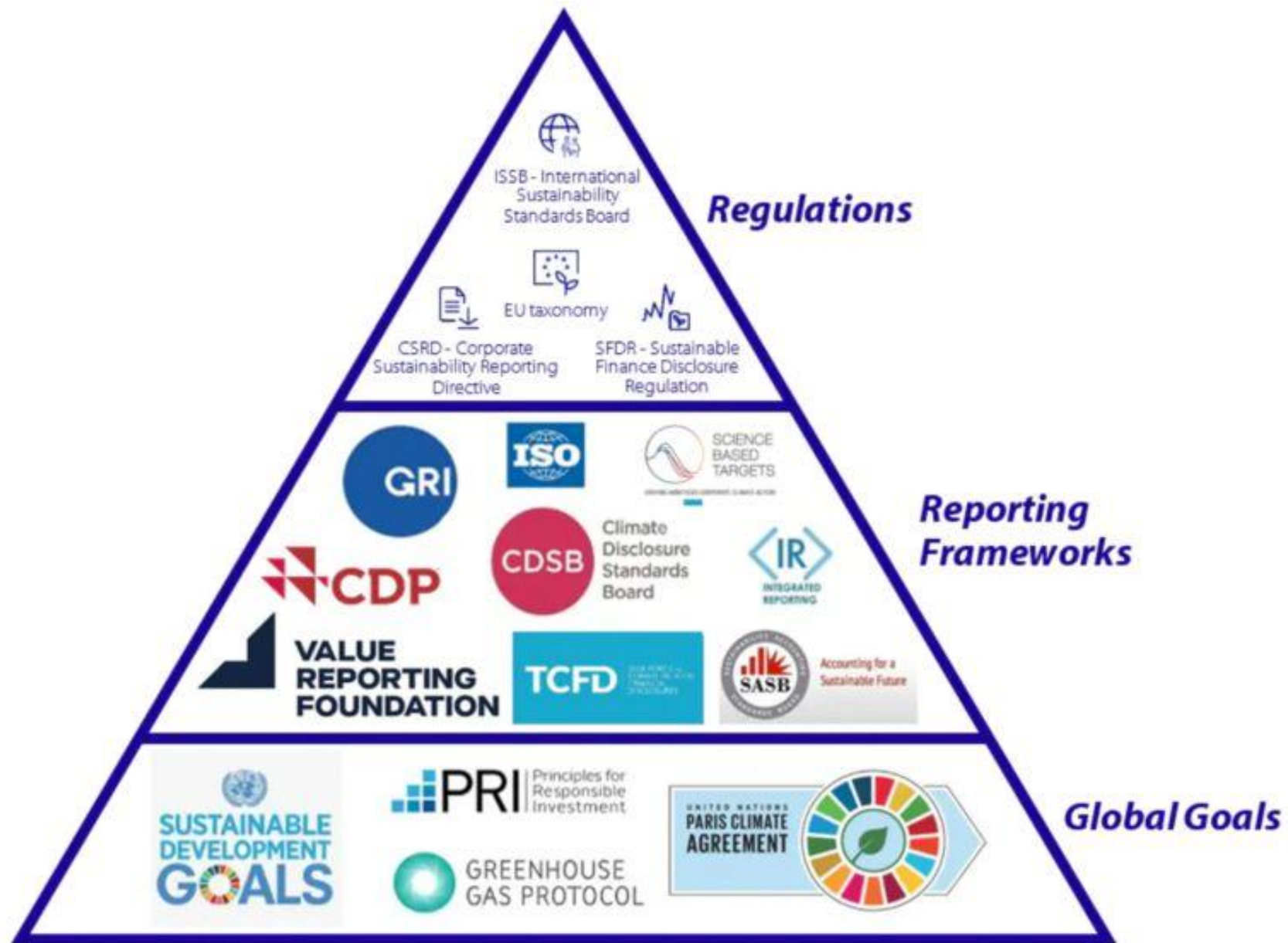
Tiina Partanen, Foamit Group



Over 600 sustainability frameworks / standards available



ecovadis



Terminology, 1/4

- **Frameworks:** Sustainability reporting frameworks are high-level guidelines or approaches that provide organizations with a structure to identify, assess, and report on sustainability issues relevant to their operations; allow them to benchmark their performance against industry peers and global best practices; and offer them a methodology to communicate their progress to stakeholders, including investors, regulators, customers, and employees. Well-known sustainability frameworks include the [Global Reporting Initiative](#) (“GRI”), [CDP](#) (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project), the [Sustainability Accounting Standards Board](#) (“SASB”)
- **Standards:** Standards are the more detailed and specific guidelines that build upon the principles set forth by frameworks and include the precise requirements, metrics, and indicators organizations should use to report on specific sustainability topics. In other words, while frameworks tell organizations how they should report on sustainability, standards are used to identify what needs to be reported. Standards enable comparability across organizations and sectors by providing a common language and set of metrics to measure and disclose sustainability performance. Standards vary depending on the framework and the industry sector. For example, the GRI offers a set of universal standards applicable to all organizations, as well as topic-specific standards that address industry-specific issues. The SASB, on the other hand, focuses on industry-specific standards designed to capture the financially material ESG issues for companies within a particular sector and has been recommended by leading money managers. Standards can, and often do, incorporate metrics that track organizational level contributions toward achievement of the SDGs.

Terminology, 2/4

- **Protocols:** Protocols are the specific tools, methodologies, or instructions that help organizations to measure, monitor, and report their sustainability performance in line with the chosen framework and standards. Protocols offer detailed guidance on how to collect, calculate, and disclose data consistently and accurately, and address various aspects of sustainability reporting (e.g., greenhouse gas (“GHG”) emissions accounting, water usage, waste management, energy usage, and plastic waste generated). One of the most well-known protocols, the [GHG Protocol](#), is used across different frameworks and standards (e.g., the CDP, GRI, and SASB) because it provides universally accepted measurement and reporting methodologies for GHG emissions. Other protocols may be more specific to a particular framework (e.g., GRI has its own protocols embedded within its standards and the CDP deploys CDP Questionnaires and protocols on water and forests) or industry.
- **Ratings and Rankings:** Ratings evaluate and score the sustainability performance of organizations based on specific criteria, and rankings compare and list organizations’ sustainability performance relative to peers or industry benchmarks. Ratings are generally based on analysis of the information that organizations provide in their publicly available reports, but some ratings bodies also make assessments based on interviews and other data collection methods. Ratings and rankings have been criticized for their complexity, poor data collection, and lack of consistency; however, CDP scores companies and other types of reporting organizations (e.g., cities, government agencies, NGOs, and supply chains) based on the environmental data they report and has been consistently recognized as being among the world’s most credible sustainability rating protocols. Other organizations collect and analyze data reported under the GRI feeds and use the output to provide research, ratings, and data to institutional investors.

Terminology, 3/4

- **Regulations:** Regulations are established by governmental or regulatory bodies (national, regional, provincial, and local) to establish and enforce mandatory sustainability reporting requirements (e.g., [SEC Climate-Disclosure Rule](#), [EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive](#) (“CSRD”), and the [EU Sustainable Finance Disclosures Regulation](#)), which often may be satisfied using the standards and protocols described above. For example, climate disclosures are required to varying degrees under both US and EU regulations and companies can fulfill their obligations by applying the IFRS S1 and IFRS S2 Protocols which are based in part on the recommendations of the TCFD and part of the [International Sustainability Standards Board](#) (“ISSB”) Standards. Regulators often look to frameworks for guidance when drafting their requirements (e.g., the CSRD was drafted to align with the broad range of reporting requirements in the CDP and the GRI’s comprehensive approach to reporting).

Terminology, 4/4

- **Sustainability Goals and Targets:** When organizations develop their sustainability strategies, reference can be made to global goals, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (“SDGs”), as a set of universal targets and objectives to guide their sustainability efforts. The [Science Based Targets Initiative](#) (“SBTi”) is not a protocol or standard in a traditional sense but is available to organizations that adhere to the GHG Protocol and are looking for technical assistance in setting science-based targets and implementing best practices in emissions reductions.
- **Principles and Management Systems:** Principles, such as the UN Global Compact and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, define foundational commitments and values that organizations can adopt and embed as their own to guide them along the path of implementing their sustainability strategies. Management systems, notably [ISO 26000 Guidance on Social Responsibility](#), can be used by organizations to integrate their sustainability strategies and goals into their internal operations and external value chains.

SME – What, when, how?

- **What?**

- First step is electing the most suitable framework that aligns with the organization's:
 - strategic goals,
 - stakeholder expectations,
 - industry context.
- For guidance, organizations should identify the frameworks most used in their industries, the approaches that competitors are taking, and the needs of the most important audiences for the organization's reporting.

- **When?**

- Preferably before someone is asking.
- Strategic fit.

- **How?**

- Basic project management: define scope, schedule, budget and team.
- Use existing tools and processes as much as possible.
- Benchmark! Visit / talk to other SME's who already master the topic. Share experiences.
(Example Foamit – STARK)

SME – Why?

- **Competitive advantage: market access & business opportunities**
 - Building transparency and trust – differentiation from the competitors
 - All companies are sustainable, carbon neutral, green, environmentally friendly etc
 - Verified report is the only way to truly differentiate and build credibility. Build brand value and reputation.
- **Investor & Financial Benefits**
 - Banks and investors are increasingly prioritizing ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) factors.
 - SMEs that report sustainability data can access better financing options, lower borrowing costs, and attract impact investors.
- **Attractive employer image**
 - Companies with credible sustainability story with focus on health & wellbeing and DEI will get the best talents.
- **Sharpens your in-house processes: Cost Savings & Efficiency**
 - No need to invent the wheel again, just follow the well-thought management systems and standards.
 - Lower energy consumption, waste reduction, and operational efficiencies, saving money in the long run.
- **Risk Management**
 - Prepare for future regulatory changes and shifts in consumer expectations.
 - Climate change, resource scarcity, and social issues pose long-term risks to businesses.
 - Regulatory compliance.

Some practical tips

- Keep it simple!
- Implement tools and processes that reflects real life.
- Use the tools, processes, metrics that are already existing.
- Don't create "HSEQ/Sustainability" –layer on top of your normal management system.
- Avoid all unnecessary documents, reports.
- Don't do anything just for the auditor.
- Know the frameworks / standards and their requirements; keep the ambition level correct.

Main Sustainability achievements and future plans



2021

- First FG Sustainability report
- Materiality Assessment

2023

- EcoVadis Silver-level (UA)

2025

- In-house, online EPD's
- DMA (Double Materiality Assessment)
- CSRD, Sustainability report



2022

- Verified EPD, Environmental Product Declaration

2024

- Sustainability communication: webpages, SoMe, internal training.
- EcoVadis Gold-level (UA)

2026

- Verification of Sustainability report



Foamit Group



Foamit Group handles and recycles glass waste into raw material for industrial glass products. We also manufacture Foam glass aggregate for infrastructure and building construction business.

Subsidiaries
Uusioaines Oy (Finland)
Hasopor Ab (Sweden)
Glasopor AS (Norway)

Owners
Partnera Oyj
66 %
Tesi (Finnish Industry
Investment Ltd)
32 %

Turnover
 **43.7 M€**
(2023)

Employees
 **100**
(2023)

Head office
 **Vantaa,
Finland**



Thank you! tiina.partanen@uusioaines.com, +358 40 5607562

Thank you!



+ Q AddSearch



MERINOVA
TECHNOLOGY CENTRE



Foamit[®]

DIM-ECC

Amplon.io



CONSULTING4FUTURE e.U.
Coaching - Consulting - Training - Research

Hausmasters
..... Dienstleistungen aller Art

+ Q AddSearch

Thank you!

Helena Rebane, CEO

Haò Phan, Software Developer





Amplon.io 

Thank you!

Kimmo Kallioniemi,
CEO



CONSULTING4FUTURE e.U.
Coaching - Consulting - Training - Research

Thank you!

Barbara Sabitzer, CEO



DIM-ECC

Thank you!



Harri Kulmala, CEO

Lisbet Frey, Head of HR & Accountability

Markku Oivo, Distinguished Advisor





Thank you!

Kaj Sundén, CEO





Thank you!

Tiina Partanen,
Head of Sustainability & PMO

Jenny Peräsarka,
SuperCO HR, CEO

Hausmasters
ist ein Betrieb
der Chance B

Hausmasters

• • • • • Dienstleistungen aller Art

Thank you!

Michael Spielhofer, CEO

Corinne Jung,

Sandra Kleinhappel





Thank you!

Professor Tauno Kekäle

Project Manager



T. I. P. S.

Technical Innovation – Physical Solutions

Thank you!

Martin Eberhart, CEO

**Michael Fiammengo, Director
Organization & Business
Development**



Top Training

Thank you!

CEO



Keynote 3: Managing DEI-related challenges in smaller business: psychology perspective

Juha Simola,
Psychologist & long-term entrepreneur, Finland



- As an expert with over 20 years of various management and expert work within several industries, Juha's keynote speech will invite the audience to reflect on managing DEI-related challenges in smaller business from the perspective of psychology.



Success by
variation



An aerial, high-angle view of a city street, likely New York City, showing tall buildings, a yellow taxi, and a crosswalk. The image is dark and serves as a background for the text.

A Policeman

A Chaplain

A Psychologist

Muhammad Ali Stopping a Suicidal Man from Leaping to His Death, 1981



This is the dramatic moment Muhammad Ali saved a suicidal man who was threatening to jump out of a ninth-floor building in Los Angeles in 1981. Ali (right) is seen leaning out of a window pleading with the man.

This is the story of how the famous boxer Muhammad Ali convinced a suicidal young man to come down off the ledge.



CATEGORIES

- > AFRICA
- > ARAB WORLD
- > AUSTRALIA
- > BRITAIN
- > CANADA
- > CHINA
- > COLD WAR
- > CUBA
- > CULTURE AND PEOPLE
- > FINLAND
- > FRANCE
- > GERMAN EMPIRE
- > GERMANY
- > GULF WAR
- > HOLOCAUST
- > ISRAEL
- > ITALY



yliopisto
ITY OF VAASA



"Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee. The hands can't hit what the eyes can't see."

"If you even dream of beating me, you better wake up and apologize."

"I never said I was the smartest, I said I was the greatest."

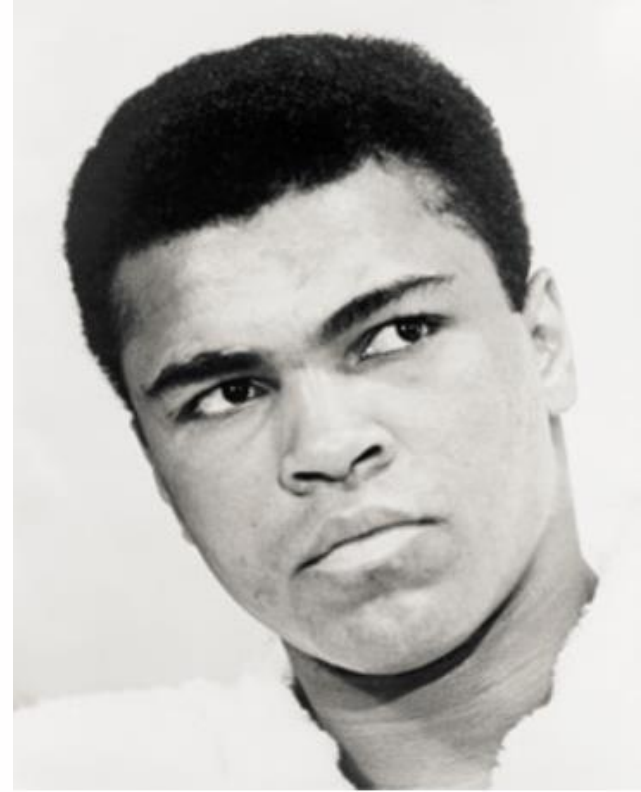
Dyslexia

Dyslexia

- Read/write slowly
- Feel sensations of mental overload/switching off
- Have difficulty organising thoughts on paper
- Find some tasks really easy but unexpectedly challenged by others

British Dyslexia Association

<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/advice/adults/am-i-dyslexic/signs-of-dyslexia/>



Muhammad Ali born Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr January 17, 1942 – June 3, 2016) was an American professional boxer and social activist. A global cultural icon, widely known by the epithet "the Greatest", he is frequently cited as the greatest heavyweight boxer of all time.

[Creative Commons CC](#)

AD(H)D

- Carelessness and lack of attention to detail
- Continually starting new tasks before finishing old ones
- Extreme impatience

National Health Service (NHS) England

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/symptoms/>



Emma Charlotte Duerre Watson (born 15 April 1990) is an English actress... Watson has been ranked among the world's highest-paid actresses by Forbes and Vanity Fair, and was named one of the 100 most influential people in the world by Time magazine in 2015

[Creative Commons CC](#)

Autism

- Getting very anxious about social situations
- Liking to plan things carefully before doing them
- Noticing small details, patterns, smells or sounds that others do not

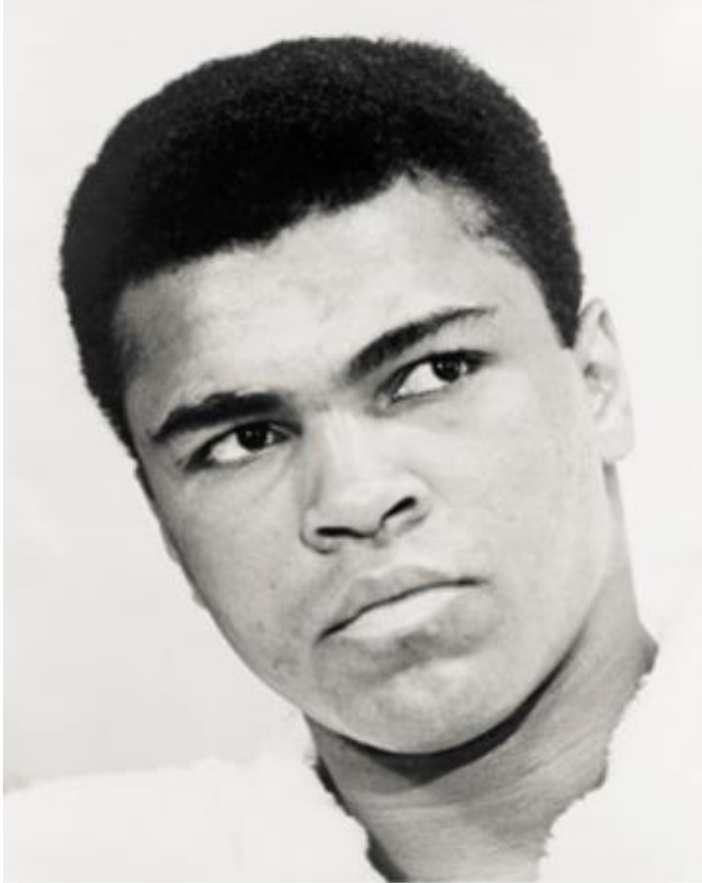
National Health Service (NHS) England

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/signs/adults/>



Greta Tintin Eleonora Ernman Thunberg (Swedish pronunciation: born 3 January 2003) is a Swedish environmental activist known for challenging world leaders to take immediate action to mitigate the effects of human-caused climate change.

By Kushal Das - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=158392120>



<https://www.adhdlifesimplified.com/blog/6-famous-women-thriving-with-adhd-after-diagnosis>

Launching DyslexicU: the world's first 'University of Dyslexic Thinking'



<https://www.virgin.com/branson-family/richard-branson-blog/launching-dyslexicu-the-worlds-first-university-of-dyslexic-thinking>

PRESS RELEASE 22.10.2024

Gofore starts publishing information on the company's mental health-related sickness absences





[Home](#) > [Resources](#) > [Articles](#) > [New Research Reveals Many Entrepreneurs Are Dyslexic](#)

New Research Reveals Many Entrepreneurs Are Dyslexic

Published: Jan 24, 2019

Modified: Mar 24, 2020

By AMA Staff

A staggering 35% of U.S. entrepreneurs suffer from dyslexia, compared to 20% in the UK, according to a new study by Julie Logan, Professor of Entrepreneurship at London's Cass Business School.

A staggering 35% of U.S. entrepreneurs suffer from dyslexia, compared to 20% in the UK,

Suffer but also benefit to some extent

**Focus on the
Benefits**

AD(H)D

Carelessness and lack of attention to detail

Continually starting new tasks before finishing old ones

Extreme impatience

Ability to keep calm and work in high pressure surroundings

Seeing the larger picture

Efficient multitasking

Coming up with solutions that the current extremely impatient people need

**Success follows
variation**

Create a safe
place to work –
for everybody

**Be open,
curious and
emphatic**



Thank you!

Keynote 4: Best practices for DEI in SMEs, a global perspective for European SMEs

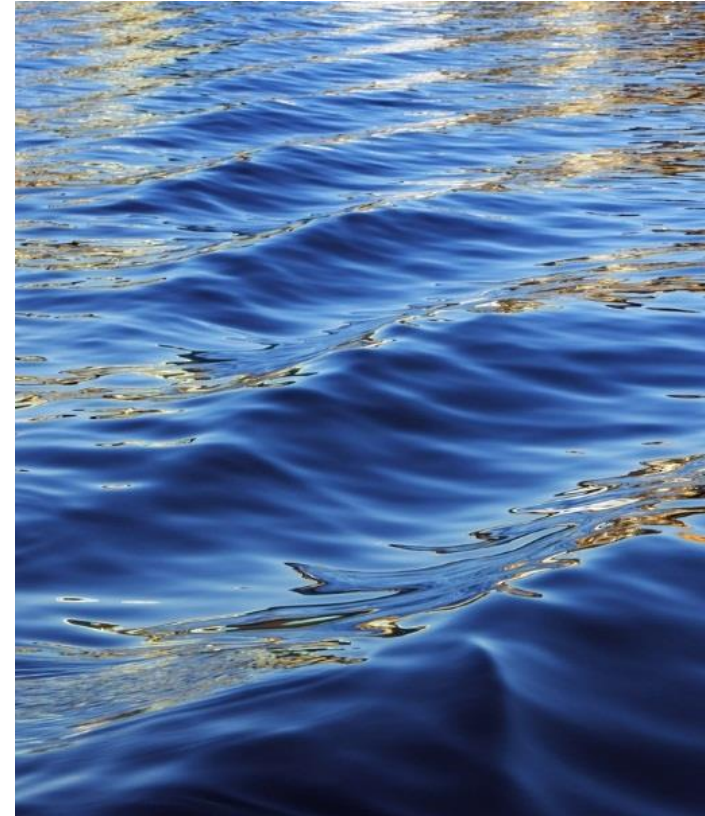
**Chenthuran Jayton,
Executive Director of Equity Labs, USA**



- As a DEI practitioner and educator with over 15 years of experience, who has pioneered DEI tools, curricula, and organizational strategies centred on equity and justice, Chenthu will share invaluable insights on the best practices for DEI in SMEs bringing global perspectives to the context of European SMEs.

Love as Organizational Practice

Chenthu Jayton
Executive Director
Equity Labs
University of Denver





Saying “I love you”



A loveless workplace

Classical vs. Sustainable Employment Model

Classical Model

- Individual Centered
- Profit/Productivity as a measure of success
- Personal/Professional Separation
- Extractive: Highest rents and lowest contractual costs
 - Personal Contracts
 - Resource Contracts
- Fiduciary Responsibility as Primary Responsibility

Sustainable Model

- Relational Centered
- Social/Environmental impacts as a measure of success
- Holistic view of employee
- Generative: Investment in growth and change
- Responsibility to remedy contemporary and historical injustice



"Love is the will to extend oneself for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's or spiritual growth"

- bell hooks

Love begins with a story...

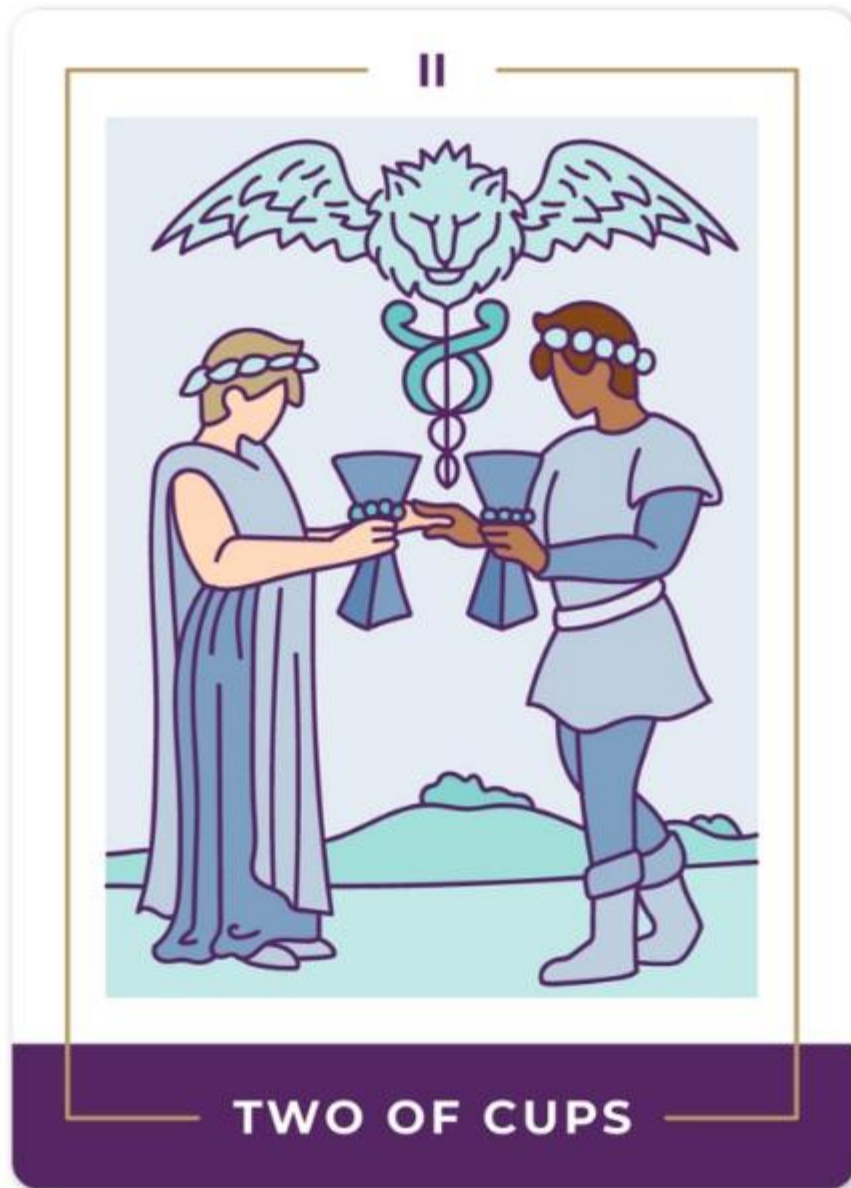
Curiosity



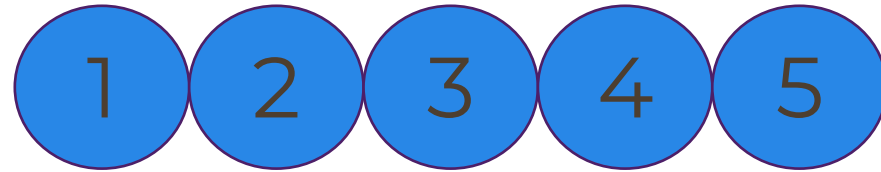
Storytelling

Empathic Reception

Responsible Action

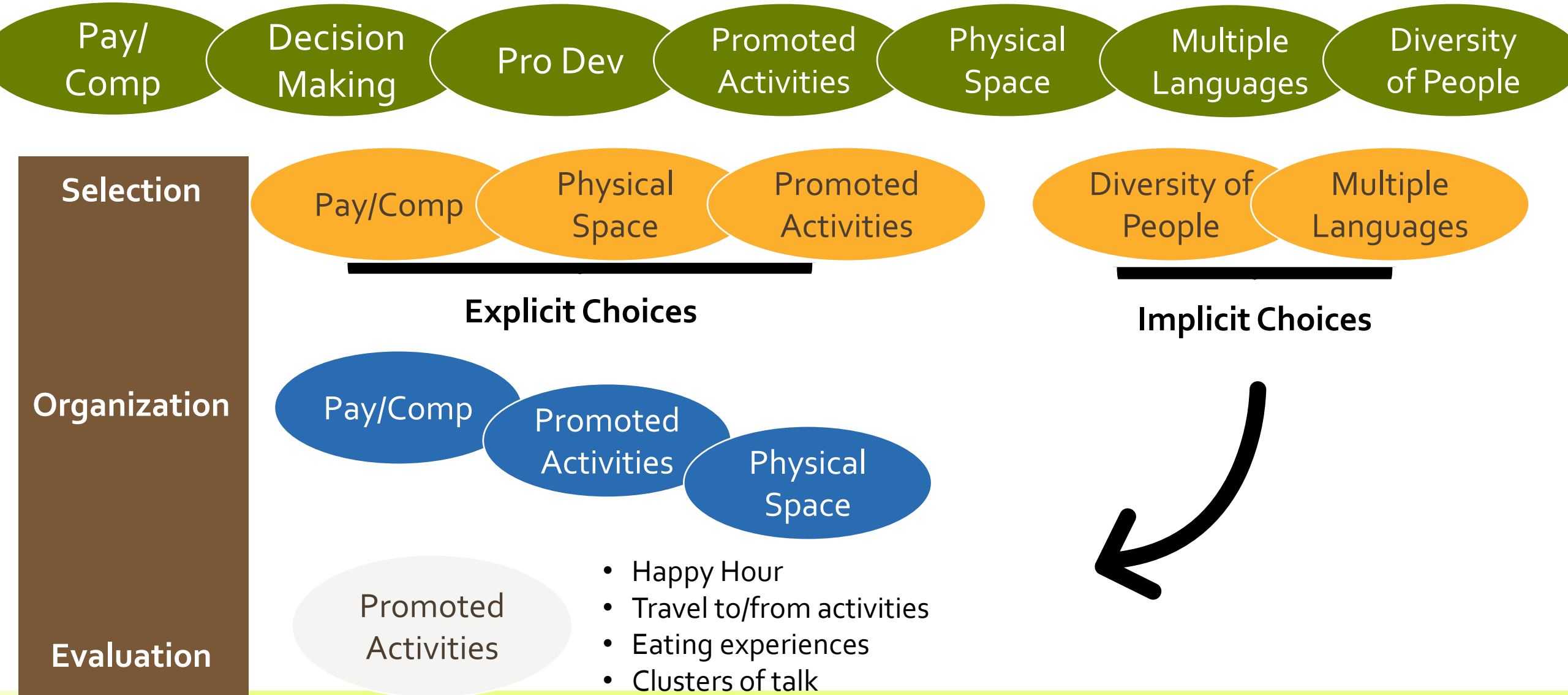


Symbols

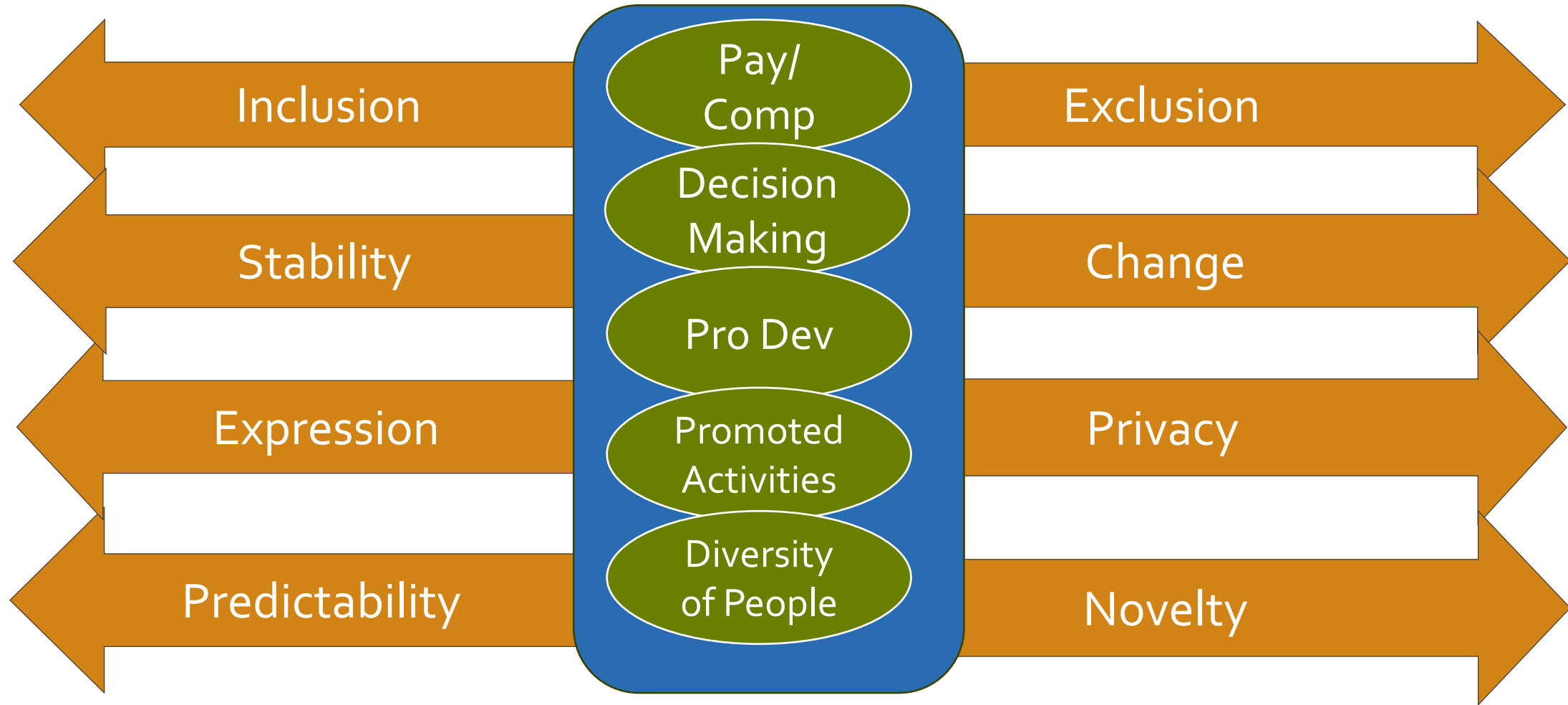


Loving
Workplace

Designing A Loving Workplace



The Courage to Love and the Tensions that go with it...





Love as a Heuristic

Heuristics: Decision-Making shortcuts

"Is this an extension of ourselves to nurture the personal, professional, and spiritual well-being of our people?"

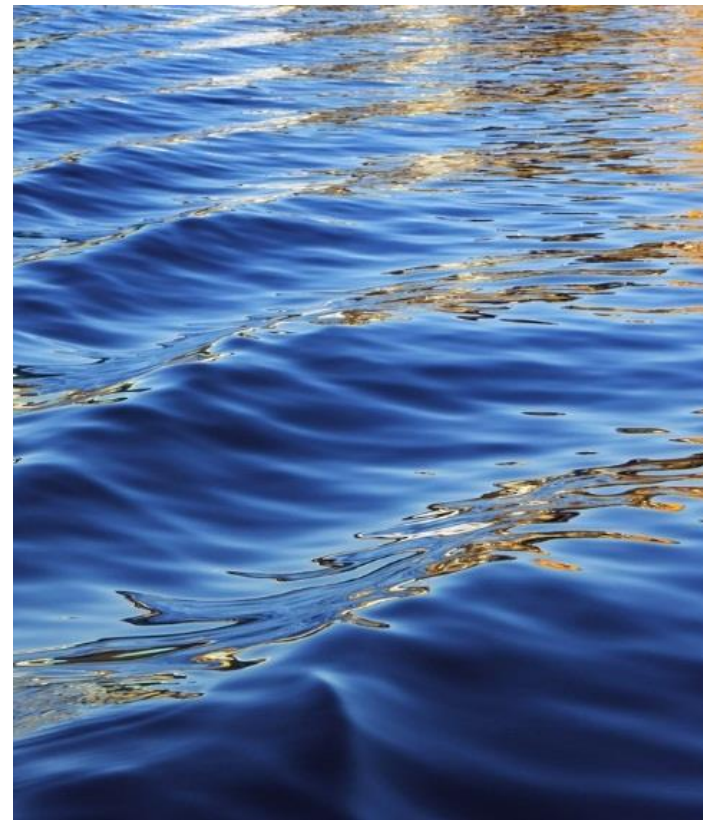
"If not, can we do better?"

Love as a Practice works...



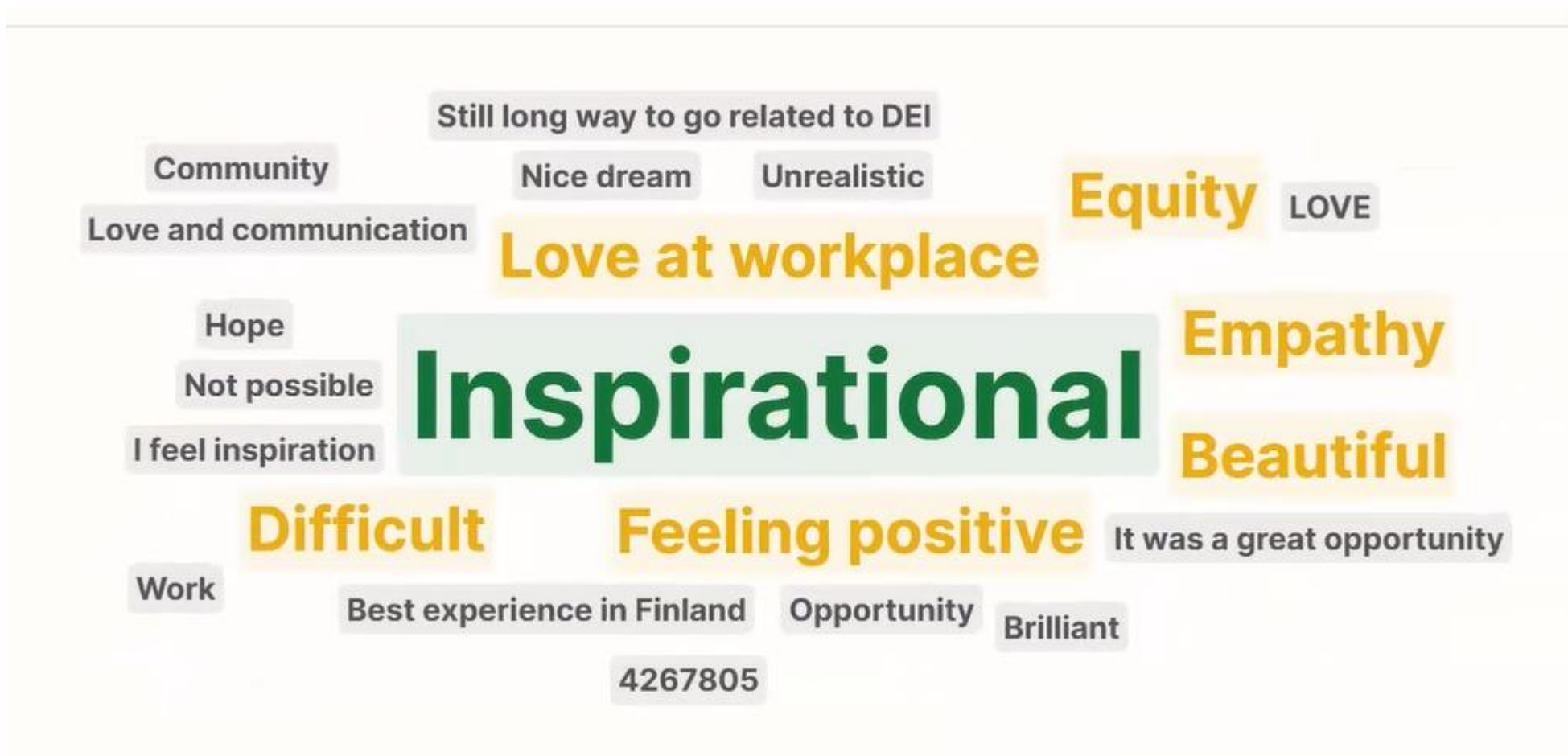


I love you...



Word Cloud in an Interactive app:

after the hackathon, what are your feelings and impressions about the DEI in business, especially smaller businesses in Europe? Please share keywords that describe your thoughts and feelings





Big thanks to our
amazing mentors!!!

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

Your guidance, insights, support were
a real treasure to all of us!



Mentors (1)

– sessions directly related to cases



Prof. Tauno Kekäle,
Project Manager at Merinova Technology Center, Professor, University of Vaasa, Finland



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



Johanna Lausegger,
Autark, Austria



Tina Malle,
Key Accounting Manager at NEBA Betriebservice, Austria



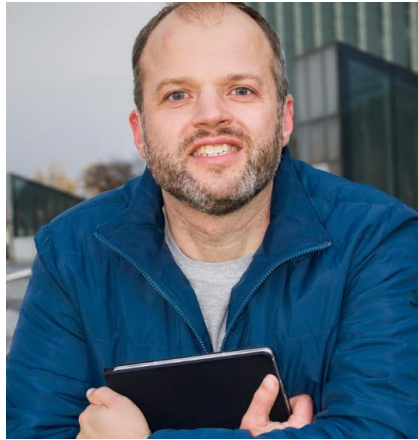
Markku Oivo,
Distinguished Advisor at Dimecc Oy

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



Franziska Mehlhorn, HR Business Partner at saas.group, Norway

Mentors (3)

– sessions to deepen your expertise



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



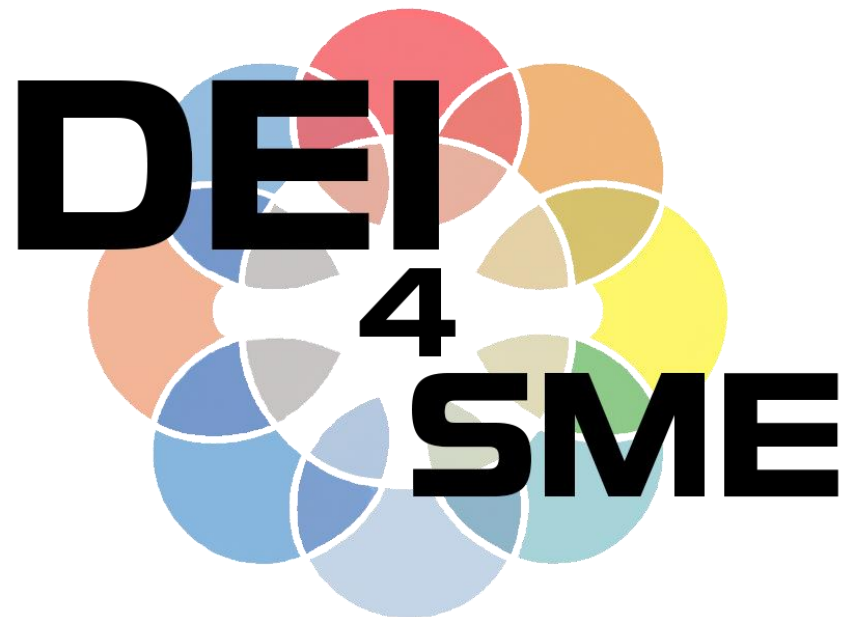
Mag. Susanne Prisching,
Equal treatment lawyer at
the Equal Treatment
Advocacy
(Gleichbehandlungsanwal
tschaft), Head of regional
office in Styria and
Carinthia, Austria



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



Francis Oyeyiola
Talent/Career/Personal
Development coach and
Founder of Kpanlogo
Yede, Finland



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

**Big thanks to the
incredible
evaluation
committee!!!**

Your have been a dream team whose hard
work brought justice and allowed us walk-
the-talk the DEI!





Dr. Anne Mari Zwerg
Associate Professor of
Management at the
University of Louisville,
Director of the Accelerated
MBA and the Professional
MBA and the Assistant
Director of the Forcht
Center for
Entrepreneurship, USA



Dr. Petr Procházka
Associate Lecturer,
Faculty of International
Relations, Prague
University of Economics
and Business, Czech
Republic



Chenthuran Jayton
Executive Director of Equity
Labs, USA



**Dr. Cyntia Vilasboas
Calixto Casnici**

Lecturer in International
Business at the
University of Leeds,
Leeds, United Kingdom
Vice Chair, Resources,
AIB T&E SIG



**Dr. Lenka
Theodoulides**

Assistant Professor,
Faculty of
Economics, Matej
Bel University,
Slovakia



**Dr. Narentheren
Kaliappen,**

Associate Professor
School of International
Studies, University
Utara Malaysia (UUM),
Malaysia
Vice Chair for DEI, AIB
T&E SIG



**MacDonald Oguike
Director,**

Corporate Training
and Workforce
Development,
University of
Calgary Continuing
Education, Canada



**Anna
Andersone**

CEO,
StartSchool &
Riga TechGirls,
Latvia





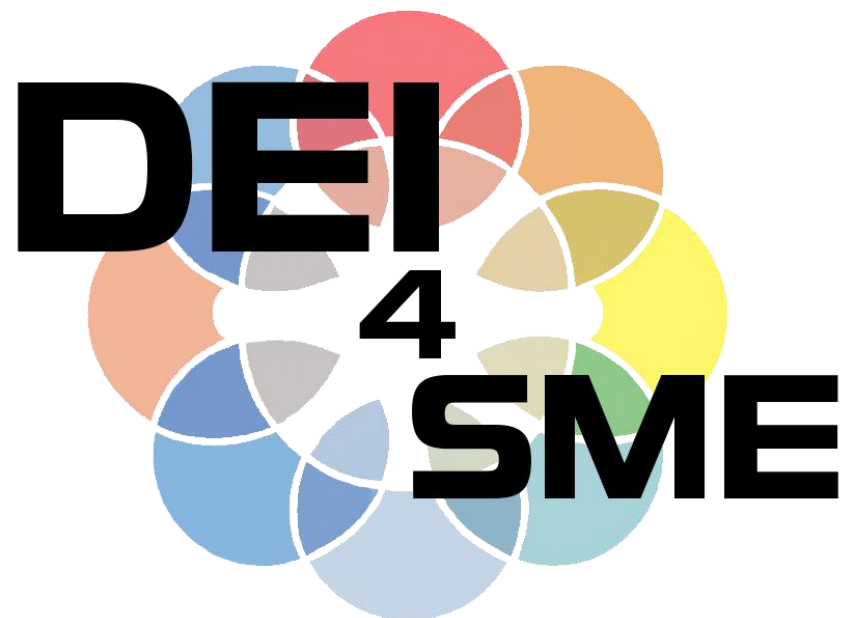
Meet the evaluation committee



**Thanks a million to organizations
who joined poster exhibition!**

**ETNO (Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations Etno)
Mira International Culture Society
Bloom Ry**





Time for prizes!

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

Awarding the prizes of the DEI4SME Hackathon I





Treasure hunt winner

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

Who collected all the 15 treasures hidden among the sessions?



Prize for the Treasure Hunt Winner



Who found the treasure first:

Anuruddika

(winner on the prize)

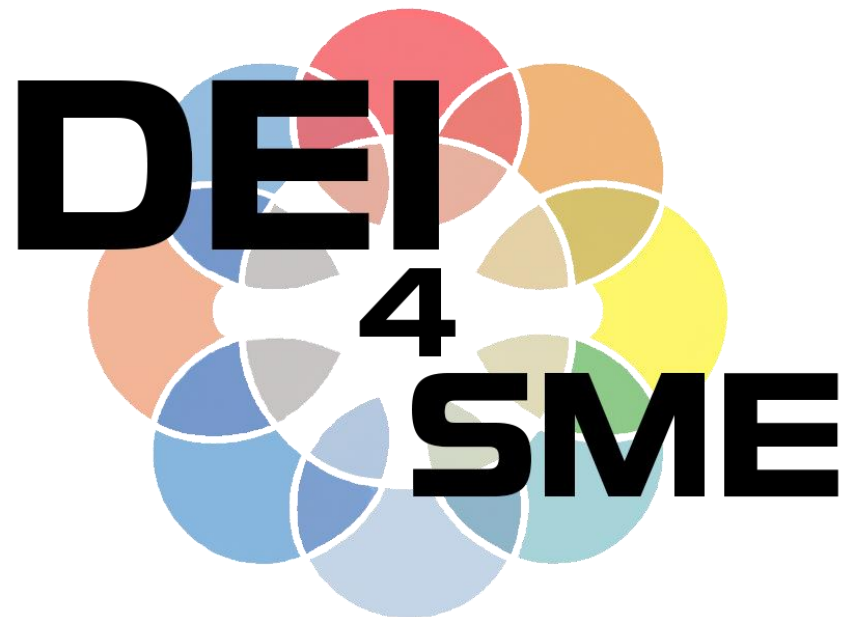
Certificates also awarded to:

- Hirushi
- Lochan
- Aditi
- Rajib
- Pramit
- Sabina

A complete riddle: Answer Key

"In a place where voices blend yet differ in tone,
A bridge is built, though not of stone.
It thrives in hands that reach, not divide,
Where growth and strength walk side by side.
Some may stumble, their path unclear,
Yet a guiding light stands ever near.
No one alone, no role too small—
For together, we rise, or divided, we fall."

Author: ChatGPT




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


Team Quest
prize by
Foamit®


Foamit Group's special prize for
balancing hard work with team's well-being activities



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



Diverse Minds



10 companies, 11 cases in the Hackathon I

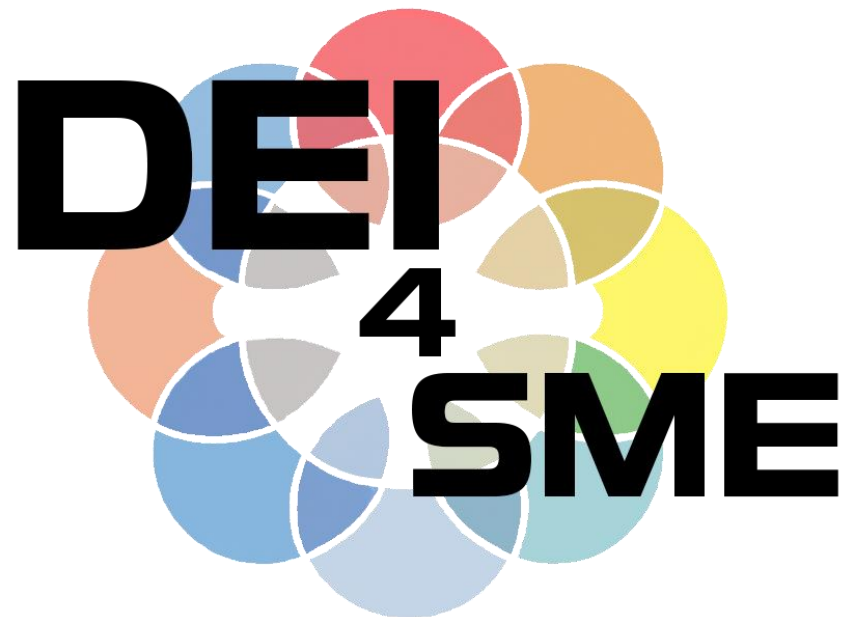


+ Q AddSearch



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Coaching - Consulting - Training - Research





Special Recognition by Company

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

Solutions that were highlighted by the SMEs



DIMECC: Alpha Squad and Lakuthon

“Both of these solutions present ideas that are innovative, yet practical. These ideas could be implemented to our day-to-day work, and they have the potential to genuinely improve the current situation.”

Amplon: Dynamic Visionaries and Team 6

“Dynamic Visionaries prioritizes Color Combinations Known for Colorblind Accessibility which is actionable. Team 6 had also good ideas and further explanations would have helped a lot”

Foamit Group and Superco HR: Spirit

“Feasible +++! No extra cost and resource needed. Simple but all perspectives considered.”

Hausmasters: Diversity dynamics 1

“Best solutions from the submissions for the case even if the presentation could have been more creative”

Finvacon: Diverse Minds

“Wow! I simply loved this solution. The team was presenting the solution with tools and "language" that addresses at least directly to me. The solution is clear, understandable and realistic. The solutions suggested are partly already in use or to be considered, but this only confirmed that we have thought about correct things. No company starts development of DEI issues from scratch, and you had understood this very well. Very creative and informative pictures.”

AddSearch – Case 1: Pentacoder Team

“ I think it was great to see a suggestion regarding a DEI platform. In real life, it would be probably a consideration for an existing HR tool, but I think it had interesting suggestions for components, which could be implemented for different services we already use.”

AddSearch – Case 2: Hack Attack

- “ - Had clearly made some good background research to understand the personas and referring to challenges mentioned in the Q&A session.
 - Combining existing technology with using AddSearch.
- Thought about how to measure the success of accessibility, which I think is a great point, as we don't do that at the moment.”




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

Special prizes
by
+ Q AddSearch

You got noticed for your unique communication and ideas! 😊



+ Q AddSearch

A session with a **saas.group** 
Head of Talent Acquisition
Ferenc Csonka

meant to provide support and feedback on the CV and LinkedIn
suggesting how to make them perfect and stand out in front of a
recruiter, awarded for unique ideas to:

Trang Pham



+ Q AddSearch

A workshop with **saas.group** 
Senior Recruiting Partner
Joanna Sitarz

meant to give practical tips on how to prepare for an interview,
awarded for brilliant communication throughout the hackathon to:

Team Nova23



Nhi Nguyen
Energy Technology Junior - specialized in Energy Processes and Project Management- experienced in Media- Sales- Customer Services- with Creativity and Individuality

All activity
Posts Comments Videos Images Reactions

Nhi Nguyen · You
Energy Technology Junior - specialized in Energy Processes and...
Meet our team NOVA 23 in DEI4SME. We are happy to take part in the project we will try our best to mitigate the challenges. ...more

Cha Mari · 1st
Strategic Problem Solver | Energy Engineering Student | Chess Player | Crafting Innovative Solutions

We are thrilled to kick off our journey in the #DEI4SME Hackathon, where we tackle real-world challenges in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) for SMEs. Our diverse team, bringing together expertise in media, business, engineering, and research, is committed to developing innovative and sustainable solutions that drive workplace inclusivity.

Our Challenge
In collaboration with Finvacon, we are exploring strategies to measure DEI impact, scale inclusion, and enhance business success internationally. As a leader in sustainable management, Finvacon sets an inspiring example, and we are excited to support their mission in fostering diverse and inclusive workplaces.

#DiversityEquityInclusion #Hackathon #Innovation #TeamNova23 #Fin

Interaction

Have a look of our video

Storyboard

Please Scan to review our posts :)

Together, we are not just building a system

We are fostering a culture of equity, empowerment, and sustainable success



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

Winners of the DEI4SME Hackathon I (Finland & Online)

Top 3 teams from 36 submitted solutions



Evaluation 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

Informed at the time of sig up for the hackathon, see:

<https://dei4sme.eu/dei4sme-hackathon-terms-and-conditions/>

Rubrics based on these criteria

Criteria	1 – Poor	2 – Below Average	3 – Satisfactory	4 – Good	5 – Excellent
Innovation (Creativity and originality)	Solution lacks originality; relies on well-known approaches without modification.	Shows some effort in creativity but mostly builds on existing solutions without adding new insights.	Proposes a solution with moderate originality; some new elements but still closely related to known strategies.	Demonstrates strong creativity with new ideas that extend beyond common approaches.	Highly original and innovative; explores new, untested, and industry-relevant solutions that push boundaries.
Impact (Effectiveness in addressing DEI challenges)	Limited or no potential impact on DEI issues; does not address key challenges mentioned in the case.	Addresses DEI concerns but with minimal impact or lack of depth. Very little address key challenges mentioned in the case.	Solution is moderately impactful, addressing DEI challenges with reasonable effectiveness. Moderately address challenges mentioned in the case.	Demonstrates strong potential for meaningful change within the SME environment. Address challenges mentioned in the case.	Highly impactful, with clear, measurable benefits that significantly enhance DEI within the firm and industry. Rigorously address challenges mentioned in the case and provide detailed discussion on issues raised by the case company.
Feasibility (Realistic implementation within SMEs)	Unfeasible for SMEs due to resource constraints, lack of scalability, or unrealistic assumptions.	Implementation is possible but has major gaps that make it unlikely to succeed.	Some feasibility concerns, but the solution could work in an SME context with modifications.	Realistic and practical for SMEs, considering available resources and constraints.	Highly feasible, offering clear, actionable, and tailored steps suitable for the firm that is an SME, its industry, and scope.
Regulatory Fit (Alignment with EU DEI legal frameworks)	No consideration of relevant regulations; potential legal compliance issues.	Limited understanding of EU DEI regulations; possible misalignment.	General alignment with EU legal frameworks but lacks specificity. Legal issues are mostly implicit.	Well-aligned with EU legal requirements and considers regulatory implications. Legal matters are discussed.	Strong and precise integration of EU DEI regulations, ensuring full compliance and strategic legal alignment. Legal matters addressed and explained.
Presentation (Clarity, quality, persuasiveness)	Unclear, disorganized, and lacks persuasiveness. Lack of arguments and explanations beyond the issues suggested.	Some structure but lacks clarity or engagement. Very few arguments and explanations beyond the issues suggested.	Moderately clear and structured, with room for improvement in persuasiveness. Some arguments and explanations beyond the issues suggested.	Well-structured, engaging, and effectively delivers key messages. Most of the suggestions are well explained and reasoned.	Exceptionally clear, compelling, and professional; highly persuasive and impactful. Strong argumentation beyond the issues suggested.
Team Collaboration (Diverse contributions and teamwork)	Little evidence of collaboration or diverse perspectives.	Minor evidence of collaboration or diverse perspectives.	Moderate evidence of collaboration or diverse perspectives but limited integration of perspectives.	Strong evidence of integration of different views.	Outstanding integration of diverse perspectives and views.
Integration of Materials and Insights (Use of diverse perspectives, research, mentoring, and Q&A insights)	No integration of relevant materials or external insights. Minor references to the case	Some reference to materials but lacks depth or relevance. Some references to the case	Moderate integration of research, mentor presentations, and discussions, but lacks a holistic approach. Moderate references to the company and the case.	Strong use of materials, incorporating multiple insights and comparative perspectives. Clear references to the company and the case.	Comprehensive integration of diverse perspectives, research, and discussions, creating a well-informed, innovative, and actionable solution. Strong references to the company and the case.

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.

Round 1

1. All of us ranked teams individually, off-line.
 2. Shared our evaluations with other members in the smaller team
 3. Compared evaluations and selected 2-4 strongest teams to go to the finals
- > 12 teams entered the finals

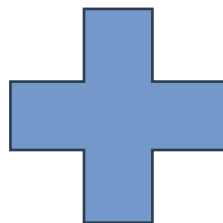
Round 2

and Ausrine with each pair

Naren & Lenka	MacDonald & Anna Andersone	Chenthu & Cyntia	Anne & Petr
NOVA23 (Finvacon)	Team Himalaya (Finvacon)	Diverse Minds (Finvacon)	Everest 2 (Finvacon)
Team 6 (Amplon)	Dynamic Visionaries (Amplon)	Fusion Force (Amplon)	Team Cashflow (Dimecc)
Alpha Squad (Dimecc)	SBD + Int 1 (Dimecc)	Lakuthon (Dimecc)	Group2 (Foamit)
Dollar dynamos (Foamit)	Spirit (Foamit)	G^2MBC BRIDGE BUILDERS (Foamit)	Team FJNCB (Merinova)
Pentacoders (AddSearch 1)	Group #7 (AddSearch 1)	Group 8 (Merinova)	The Innovators (AddSearch 1)
Hack Attack (AddSearch 2)	Pixel Pioneer (AddSearch 2)	Byte Force (AddSearch 2)	UniVaasaWarriors (AddSearch 2)
Unity Spectrum (TIPS)	Bullish Rhinos (Consulting4Future)	Everest 1 (Consulting4Future)	DEIverse Minds (Consulting4Future)
DiversityfortheWin (Top Training)	Unity (Top Training)	Annapurna (TIPS)	Path Finders (Top Training)
Business Titans (Hausmasters)	DEI-licious (Hausmasters)	Diversity Dynamics 1 (Hausmasters)	Diversity Squad (Hausmasters)

1. The set of 12 teams were evaluated again **against all the criteria by ALL evaluation committee members**, comparing the submissions in the finals, each member identified several potential winners
2. **The company representatives** also ranked the solutions submitted and their ranking was integrated and compared to the opinion of the evaluation committee
3. **Support provided to the teams** was also considered.
4. Based on all of this, we produced a list of potential winning teams
5. Through assessing all the above and discussing we finalized the winners of 1-3 places

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

SBD+INT 1

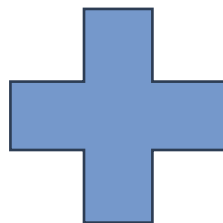
THE DIMECC PRODUCTIVITY GAME GOAL

Make teamwork, efficiency, and innovation fun & engaging

- 3 Simple Gamified Elements:
 - 🎯 Task Points System
 - 💛 Collaboration Bonus
 - 💡 Innovation Challenges



Prizes: II Place – Best Solution



Finvacon's special:

- Quality Jacket from Craft

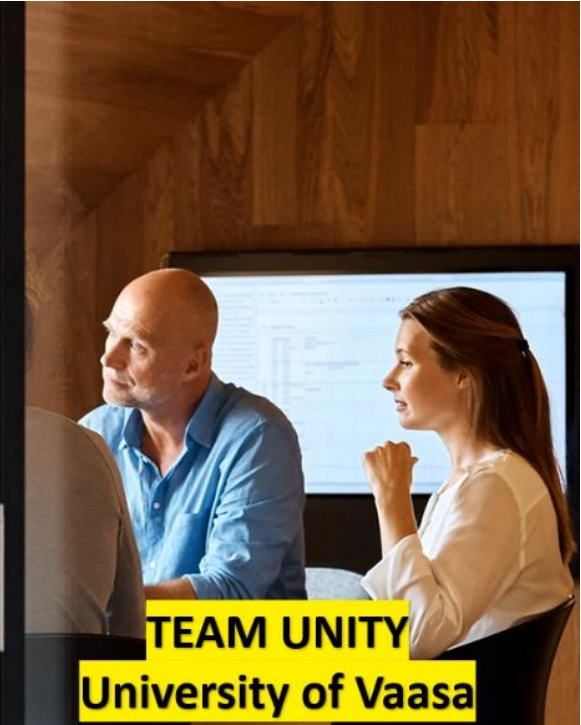
- **5 months subscription for each team member**

- Access to LinkedIn Learning
- LinkedIn Premium

Prizes: II Place – Best Solution



Case Study by Top Training
February 2025

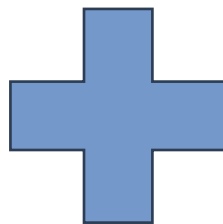


Prizes: 1 Place – Best Solution



Finvacon's special:

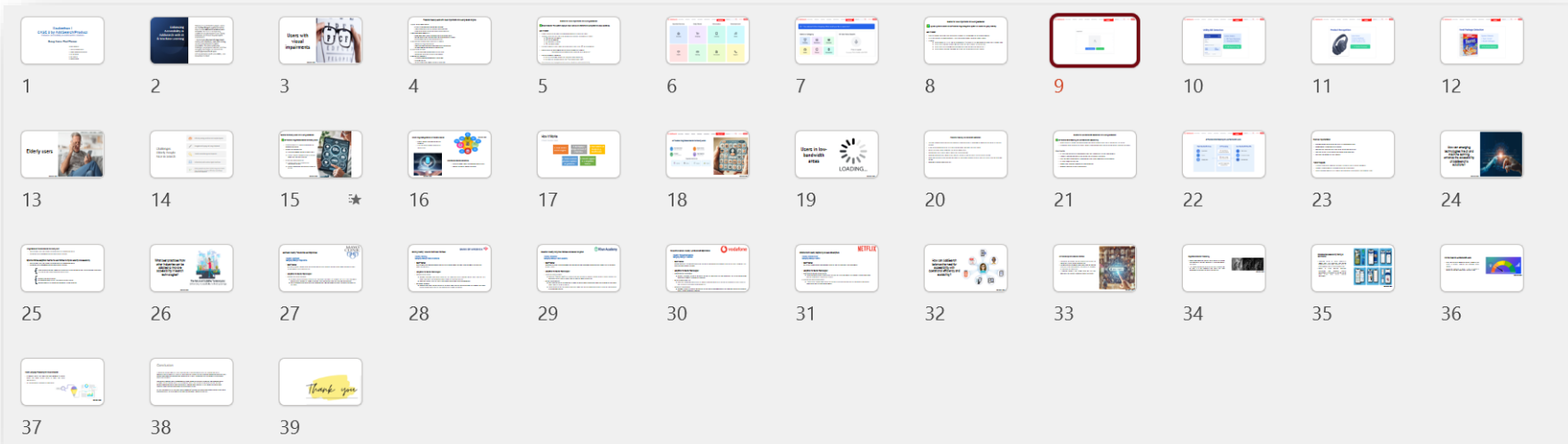
- Personal 1-hour meeting-coaching session with the CEO **Kaj Sunden** for each team member
- In Vaasa or online



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

Prizes: 1 Place – Best Solution

Pixel Pioneers



**Million of thanks to the
hackathon organizing team!!!!**

**They did not count the hours –
they made the hours count**



Big THANK YOU for your active participation!!!!



Your feedback is most welcome!



Next steps of the DEI4SME project?

Hackathon II (Lithuania & Online)

Focus group discussions about the framework to manage DEI in
European SMEs

Teaching cases: Book & Online resource repository

Digital tool to manage DEI in SMEs

Welcome to subscribe to the DEI4SME news & updates – join us again!

**Newsletter
subscription**



**Follow on
LinkedIn**



**Register to test
the Digital tool**

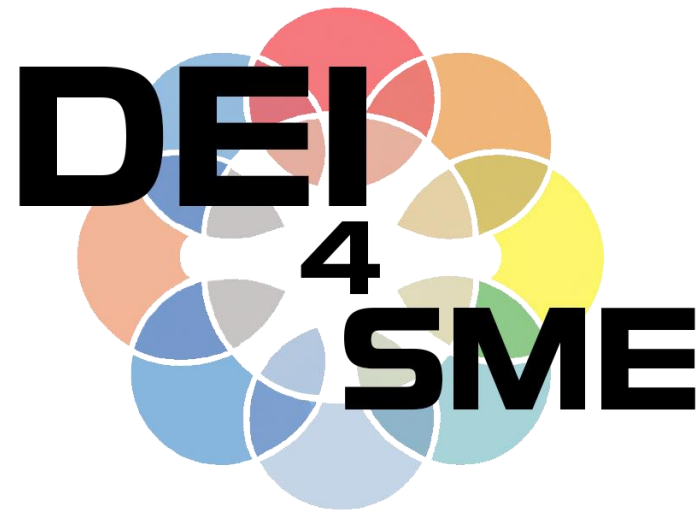


Welcome to join a group photo!

If you would like to be in a photo welcome to the front of the auditorium

If you are online: welcome to open your camera





Diversity Equity Inclusion

THANK YOU!

contact@dei4sme.eu



Vaasan yliopisto
UNIVERSITY OF VAASA



kaunas
university of
technology



IHK-Projektgesellschaft mbH
GUTENBERGSTRASSE



European Network for Transfer and Exploitation of EU Project Results



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