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HEInnovate Basic Workshop Guide

Resource for the User Journey Step 2: Engage & Step 3: Plan

European Commission | OECD

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Overview

This guide serves as a resource for the **HEInnovate User Journey Step 2: Engage and Step 3: Plan**. It provides practical guidance on how to design, organise and facilitate workshops that support collective reflection on HEInnovate self-assessment results and the development of concrete action plans.

The guide explains how to run workshops focused on discussing self-assessment outcomes, identifying priority areas and translating these priorities into structured actions using HEInnovate planning tools. It introduces different workshop formats aligned with the User Journey, including workshops dedicated to Step 2 and workshops focused on Step 3.

Designed for institutional leaders, staff, students, facilitators and other higher education stakeholders, the document supports inclusive participation and structured dialogue across groups. It outlines suggested materials, agendas and facilitation approaches, while also addressing practical aspects such as roles, preparation, logistics and follow-up.

Whether used to support initial engagement or to advance implementation, this guide helps institutions utilise HEInnovate workshops effectively to build a shared understanding, strengthen coordination, and support continuous development in innovation and entrepreneurship.

Introduction: Types of HEInnovate workshop formats

Once institutions have completed the HEInnovate self-assessment, workshops provide a structured way to bring people together to reflect on results and agree on next steps. They are a key element of Step 2: Engage in the HEInnovate User Journey and can also extend into Step 3: Plan, where institutions move from discussion to action.

This guide proposes **three workshop formats**, depending on the institution's progress, objectives and available time.

Step 2 workshop: Engage

Workshops focused on Step 2 support **collective reflection on self-assessment outcomes.** Participants from leadership,

staff, student, and stakeholder groups review the results together, discuss what they mean for the higher education institution, and identify priority dimensions for further development. By openly sharing results and perspectives, these workshops help establish a common language around innovation and entrepreneurship and ensure inclusive participation in shaping future directions. This collective reflection is essential for ensuring that the outcomes of Step 1 (reflect) are meaningfully interpreted and owned across the institution.

Step 3 workshop: Plan

Workshops focused on Step 3 build on the outcomes of Step 2 and support institutions in translating priorities into concrete actions. Using HEInnovate resources, such as the Action Cards, the Action Planning Board, and the Work Package Planning Board, participants define objectives, develop activities, assign responsibilities and agree on timelines. Repeating planning workshops over time helps maintain momentum, strengthens accountability, and supports structured progress toward institutional goals.

Combined Step 2 and Step 3 workshop

Since each workshop is planned for roughly half a day, the institution can choose to do both workshops on separate days or combine them into a full day of activities.

Workshop for Step 2: Engage

Workshop setup

Workshops focused on Step 2: Engage aim to support collective reflection on the HEInnovate self-assessment results and to **build a shared understanding of innovation and entrepreneurship within your higher education institution**. They provide a structured space for dialogue across leadership, staff, students and other stakeholders, and lay the foundation for informed decision-making in later planning stages.

A Step 2 workshop typically begins with a brief welcome and introduction that outlines the workshop objectives, agenda, and materials. This is followed by an **overview of HEInnovate**, including its origin, purpose, dimensions and how the tool is used, to ensure that all participants share a common reference point.

The core of the workshop centres on the **collective discussion of the HEInnovate self-assessment outcomes**. Visual outputs, such as the graphs generated on the HEInnovate website and a SWOT analysis, are used to explore strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement. Participants are encouraged to reflect on how different stakeholders in their institution responded to the self-assessment, to identify potential gaps in information and the needs of different groups. The group can discuss the implications of the results for their institution and identify priority areas for further development.

Figure 1. example of visualisation of HEInnovate results, to be used in workshop discussions
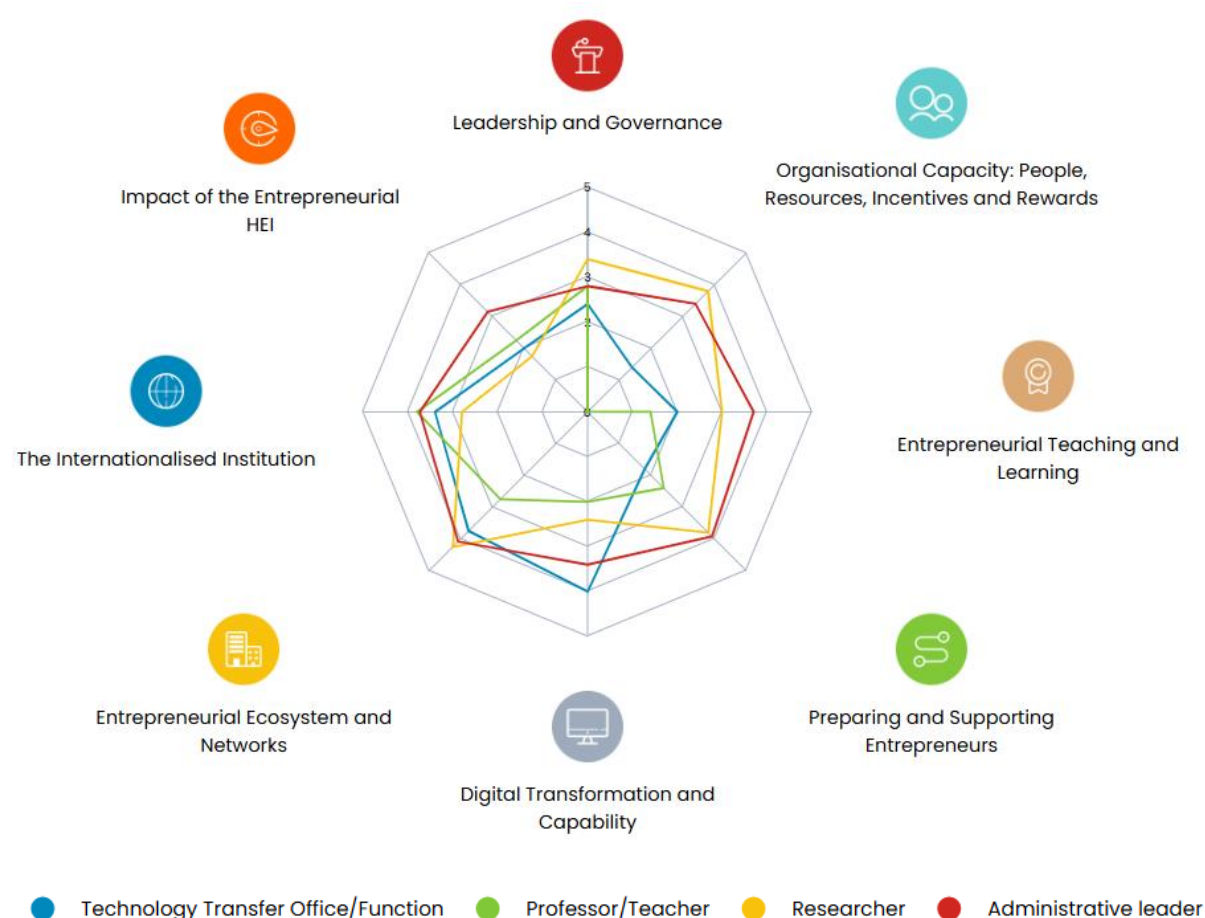
The workshop **concludes with a forward-looking discussion on the institution's future** direction, typically considering where the institution aims to be within the next years. This shared vision helps connect reflection with future action and prepares the ground for subsequent workshops focused on Step 3: Plan. See a sample workshop agenda in Table 1.

Step 2 workshops can be organised as stand-alone engagement activities or as the first part of a full-day activity, followed directly by the Step 3 planning workshop. In both cases, they play a critical role in ensuring that self-assessment results are collectively understood, owned and meaningfully used.

Table 1 Sample workshop agenda in step 2 of the user journey (half-day)

Suggested time	Content
10 minutes	**Welcome and introduction** Overview of workshop objectives, templates and materials.
10 minutes	**Introduction to HEInnovate** Overview of the framework, its purpose, dimensions and use

30 minutes	**Presentation of self-assessment results** Share the graphs and brief analysis of the results, and discuss initial reactions
15 minutes	*Break*
45 minutes	**Institution priorities and SWOT analysis** Discuss the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for your institution based on your HEInnovate results. Decide on key priorities and goals.
15 minutes	**Wrap-up and next steps** Summary of insights and link to subsequent HEInnovate steps

Suggested materials

- Presentation about HEInnovate
- Summary of HEInnovate self-assessment results (e.g. institutional profile, dimension scores)
- HEInnovate SWOT Analysis template or flipchart for collective analysis
- Flipcharts, post-its and markers
- Printed or digital agenda and guiding questions for discussion

Workshop for Step 3: Plan

Workshop setup

Workshops focused on **Step 3: Plan** support institutions in translating the outcomes of reflection and engagement into concrete, coordinated **actions**. They provide a structured environment for defining activities and agreeing on responsibilities, timelines and resource needs.

A Step 3 workshop typically begins with a brief introduction that outlines the session's objectives, agenda, and the planning tools to be used. Participants then organise themselves into **working groups based on the priority HEInnovate dimensions** identified in earlier discussions. Each group focuses on one dimension throughout the workshop.

The core of the workshop centres on **action planning**. Using HEInnovate resources, participants define clear objectives, explore and adapt ideas, and identify activities that respond to the institution's context and priorities. Activities are discussed and structured with a view to short-, medium- and long-term implementation.

Building on this, **participants cluster related activities into work packages**. For each work package, responsibilities are assigned, and indicative timeframes are agreed upon. This step helps ensure that proposed actions are realistic, coordinated and aligned with institutional capacities.

The workshop **concludes with group presentations and a collective reflection**. Participants review the proposed actions and work packages, identify synergies across dimensions and discuss alignment with broader institutional strategies. See a sample workshop agenda in Table 2.

As with Step 2 workshops, Step 3 workshops are usually organised as half-day sessions but can be adapted depending on the number of priority dimensions and the depth of planning required. They can be delivered as stand-alone workshops or as part of a combined programme following a Step 2 engagement workshop.

TABLE 2 SAMPLE WORKSHOP AGENDA IN STEP 3 OF THE USER JOURNEY (HALF-DAY)

Suggested time	Content
10 minutes	**Welcome and introduction** Overview of workshop objectives, templates and materials
5 minutes	**Dimension grouping** Participants choose their dimension and form groups
1 hour	**Step 1: Action Planning Board** Groups define the main objective per dimension, review Action Cards, and brainstorm activities, categorising them by timeframe
30 minutes	**Group presentations & feedback** Each group presents its objective and activities; other groups provide feedback
15 minutes	*Break*
45 minutes	**Step 2: Work Package Planning Board** Groups cluster activities into work packages, assign leaders and set timeframes
30 minutes	**Final presentations & Collective reflection** Each group presents work packages; discussion on synergies and institutional alignment
15 minutes	**Closing & next steps** Summarise outputs and discuss follow-up actions

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Suggested materials

- HEInnovate Action Planning Board templates (printed in A1 format or digital)
- HEInnovate Work Package Planning Board templates (printed in A1 format or digital)
- HEInnovate Action Cards
- Summary of priority dimensions from Step 2 discussions
- Post-its, markers and flipcharts

Guidance for all workshop formats

Preparations and prerequisites

Before organising a HEInnovate Step 2: Engage workshop, ensure that participants have:

- Completed the group HEInnovate self-assessment (**Step 1: Reflect**).

Furthermore, make sure that for Step 3: Plan workshop, participants have:

- Analysed and discussed the self-assessment results (**Step 2: Engage**).

- Identified priority dimensions to focus on.

Preparation includes identifying the HEInnovate champion(s), who are responsible for coordinating HEInnovate-related activities in your institution, including workshop organisation, communication and follow-up. The workshop focus should be clearly defined, specifying whether it addresses reflection (Step 2), action planning (Step 3), or a combination of both.

Clear objectives and expected outcomes should be agreed in advance. Participants should be identified and invited with sufficient information on purpose, agenda, logistics and any preparatory tasks.

Participants, roles and facilitation

Participants should be divided into working groups based on the HEInnovate dimensions they wish to address (Step 3 workshop). Each group focuses on one dimension throughout the workshop. It is not necessary to cover all eight dimensions; only the priority dimensions identified for your institution's goals.

Each group should receive the Action Cards relevant to their dimension. These are used to stimulate discussion, generate ideas and adapt actions to the institution's specific context and resources.

The following roles support effective delivery (see Table 4). In smaller workshops, roles may be combined; however, overall coordination should always remain with the HEInnovate champion.

Table 4 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
HEInnovate champion	Lead organiser; liaises with leadership; manages logistics; coordinates communication; provides materials; ensures alignment with institutional goals.
Facilitator	Designs the agenda; leads sessions; guides discussions; ensures objectives are met.
Rapporteur	Takes notes; captures key decisions and action points; supports follow-up.
Technical support	Manages audio/visual setup, online platform, recordings, or breakout rooms.
(Optional) Guest speaker / Expert	Provides institutional examples or external insights. Can be a member of the HEInnovate Expert Group[1].

Logistics, format and delivery

The workshop format should be defined early, including whether it will be held in person, online or in a hybrid format. This includes booking venues or setting up digital platforms, checking room layouts and ensuring stable internet access.

Materials should be prepared in advance and may include:

- HEInnovate Action Planning Board templates (A1 or digital)
- HEInnovate Work Package Planning Board templates (A1 or digital)
- HEInnovate Action Cards
- Flipcharts, post-its, markers and supporting documents
- Printed agendas or a shared digital workspace
- Online collaboration tools where relevant (e.g. whiteboards or polling tools).

Outputs and follow-up

By the end of the workshop(s), participants should have:

- Defined objectives for each selected HEInnovate dimension
- Identified and prioritised activities by timeframe (short, medium and long term)

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[1] Contact us at info@heinnovate.eu if you would like to have an HEInnovate Expert at your workshop (EU countries only).

- Structured activities into work packages with assigned responsibilities
- Validated commitments and assessed feasibility

These outputs form the basis for updating the institution's HEInnovate Action Plan and for subsequent follow-up and monitoring activities.

After the workshop

After the workshop, all notes, comments and action points should be compiled and structured in a clear and accessible format. A **concise summary** should be circulated to participants and relevant stakeholders, including agreed actions, responsible persons, timelines, identified resource needs and, where appropriate, visual documentation such as photos or screenshots of workshop outputs.

The institution's **HEInnovate Action Plan** should be regularly updated to reflect the institution's progress and changing priorities. This ensures continuity between discussion, planning and implementation, and supports alignment with broader institutional priorities.

To maintain momentum and accountability, follow-up activities should be scheduled. These may include follow-up meetings, a monitoring schedule and internal reporting on progress. Workshop outcomes should be shared with institutional leadership and, where relevant, integrated into strategic planning and decision-making processes.