SESSION TITLE

Ideation Session

ACTIVITY IN A SENTENCE:

This is a series of up to three co-creation sessions designed to collaboratively select a challenge, topic or initial project idea for an Open Schooling project.

DISCIPLINES INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES:

Design Thinking, Citizenship

RECOMMENDED AGES:

14+

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (CONTEXT SETTING):

Classroom, informal learning setting, university

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Learners will:

- Select a challenge topic related to an area of the sustainable development goals
- Decide on a specific challenge to be addressed (who/what/why/where?)
- Develop initial ideas and solutions (sketches for later development)

Active citizenship within the local community will be encouraged, and learners will see the importance of working with different stakeholders, including multiple experts from different disciplines, when working to solve challenges. This feeds directly into the goal of open schooling.

RECOMMENDED EXPERTISE:

There is no specific expertise needed for this session. Participation in design thinking, collaborative work may be of some help.

SDG LINKS:

- **Goal 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

TIME IT TAKES TO COMPLETE:

Approximately 2 hours 30 minutes

MATERIALS / RESOURCES NEEDED:

- *Presentation slides*
- Google Jamboard templates or printable templates
- Pencils/markers and 1 sheet of A4 paper per learner
- Some A1 or A2 paper and sticky notes (if not using the Google Jamboard option)

CONTENT FOR LEARNERS:

- Presentation – *Activity Handbook: Ideation Sessions*

Note: *Copy the presentation into your own folder before editing.*

Activity

Introduction:

The Ideation Sessions are made up of these three elements:

- **Asking questions to drive the process forward**

  (e.g., Who are the people most affected by this issue in the local area?)

- **Ideating & reaching consensus through design thinking tools**

  (e.g., posting sticky notes of ideas to a graph of positive impact vs feasibility)

- **Ensuring that decisions are leading to useful next steps**

  (e.g., a consensus of Chelsea fans being a problem to be dealt with is a co-creation dead-end, but a theme of soccer/sport/competition can be carried forward)

Most importantly – the learners are the decision makers. Although there will necessarily be some synthesising of ideas with others (you, the open science hub, external societal actors), it should be possible to trace back the leaves (project outputs) to the branch (final concept or challenge) to the trunk (mix of ideas that turns into the final concept) to the roots (learner ideas and input that are the main part of the mix).

Finally, it is important to note that learners are not expected to reach a fully formed project idea by the end of these sessions. The rough sketches of ideas they come up with towards the end of these sessions will feed into the OSHub Accelerator Session and subsequent research phase. More information on these sessions can be found in the *Open Science Hub Ireland Interactive Handbook*.

Part 1: Co-creation Introduction

1.1 A manifesto for co-creation

Co-creation is the act of creating together. It's an approach to design that attempts to actively involve all participants in the process to ensure the result meets their needs and is usable.

Ask learners what they think is important in order to create a good, happy space for collaboration. Learners should write these up using post-it notes, an online whiteboard or on a poster space in the classroom under the title "OUR MANIFESTO FOR COLLABORATION" see Figure 5.2 (a).

Figure 5.1 (a): Example of 'Our Manifesto for Collaboration' Board. Credit: TCD.

1.2 Choosing a goal (Sustainable Development Goals)

To start the challenge decision making process, we have grouped the SDGs into three broad areas: Climate Action, Reduced Inequality and Sustainability. These groupings can be found in the complimentary presentation (Slide 10). The following three questions begin the ideation journey. Responses can be noted physically with sticky notes or digitally on the provided Google Jamboard.

- If you had to choose only one of those broad areas (climate action / reduced inequalities / sustainability) to tackle, which would it be?
- Is there an issue in your local area linked to what you chose?
- Who is worst affected by this issue?

Now take time to open discussion around what learners have contributed including questioning any choices that you feel may not have been made in all seriousness or need more clarification.

Part 2: Decision-making

Learners will now rank these topics generated in Part 1 in terms of positive impact on the community (is there high or low benefit to the community by tackling this problem?) and relevance (is this an urgent or timely issue?). See Figure 5.2(b) for an example of such a graph. As the facilitator, feel free to edit this sorting graph with different axis labels if they are more relevant.

Ask learners to individually copy the map on paper and use it to choose their top preferred topics from the previous step. This ensures that the learners don't follow a herd mentality. Once they've marked their own choices on their own paper, they can fill in a Jamboard or large sheet of paper with their choices so that everyone's opinions are visualised together.

If there is more than one dissimilar topic in the top right section of the graph (high impact and high relevance) open up a brief discussion so that learners can speak about why they chose a particular topic. Finish with a vote to decide the top challenge area to take forward to the next stages.

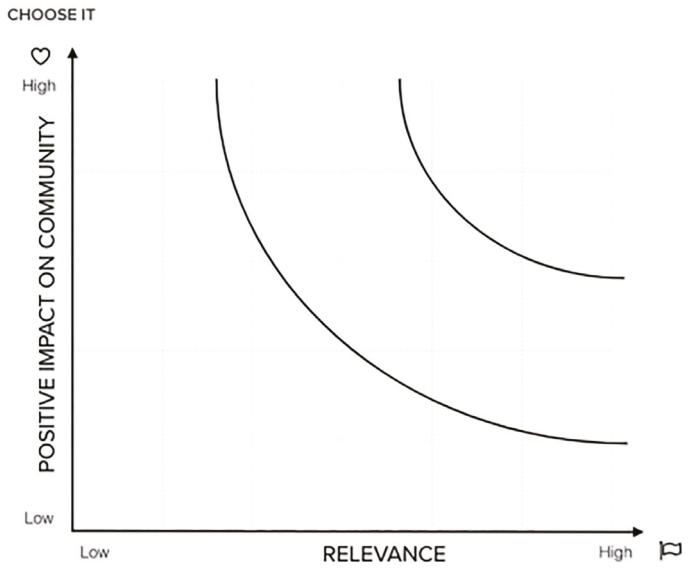

Figure 5.1 (b): Example of sorting graph outlined in Part 2. Axes of the graph can be edited for relevance. Credit: TCD

2.1 Understanding stakeholders

Now that one topic has been decided use the provided Google Jamboard Venn diagram titled 'THINK OF EVERYONE' (see Slide 23) to ask for learners to fill in who they think is affected by the issue and who can affect the issue (e.g. who has influence to make a difference – positive or negative). These may be individuals, communities, organisations, government departments etc. As a facilitator you may want to provide some suggestions to get the ball rolling. When thinking of those affected, think of particular demographics (gender, age, ethnicity etc).

2.2 Idea generation

In the presentation slides use the 'scribbly mess' slide (slide 25) to illustrate that making a prototype is not a straight A to B line. There is a lot of discussion and debating, and new information could change the course of the project later. To this point we only know what challenge we want to tackle, but now we will discuss ways of actually tackling the challenge.

Explain to learners that these next activities could get a bit wild and wonderful. Welcome exploration and creative ideas at this stage.

2.3 Rapid Ideation

Another way we can do this is through a pick and mix of ISSUE + USER + FORMAT.

- Select some of the issues that have already been discussed either in inspiration sessions or the topics voted on previously
- Ask learners to think of various types of users (ability, gender, age)
- Ask learners to provide various formats of art, design, or technology (poster, AR, app etc)
- After randomly grouping an issue with a user and a format, ask learners to take ten minutes to come up with a concept that uses their given combination – a concept in the format provided aimed at the user provided that deals with the issue provided (e.g., water pollution + old-aged pensioners + virtual reality).

Make sure there is enough time to do another round of rapid ideation with a combination given to all groups of: the chosen challenge + a user identified as being affected by the challenge + a format.

This time choose formats from: survey, poster, advertisement, coding, community initiative, prototype, monitoring device, website, artwork, robotics, video. These ideas will be carried forward to the last ideation session for discussion and refinement.

Part 3: Choosing a project

3.1 Idea ranking

Sort ideas by using the grids (impact v creativity and impact v feasibility) provided. Learners should individually copy the graph before adding it to a communal version. This time only the lowest priority ideas (bottom left) should be discarded, if the class is unanimous in agreement. The top ideas (top right) can be banked and brought forward.

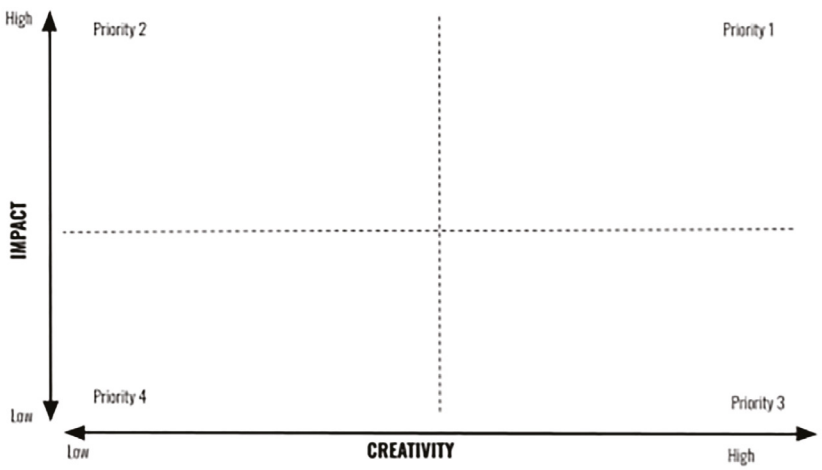

Figure 5.1 (c): Impact vs Creativity grid. Credit: TCD.

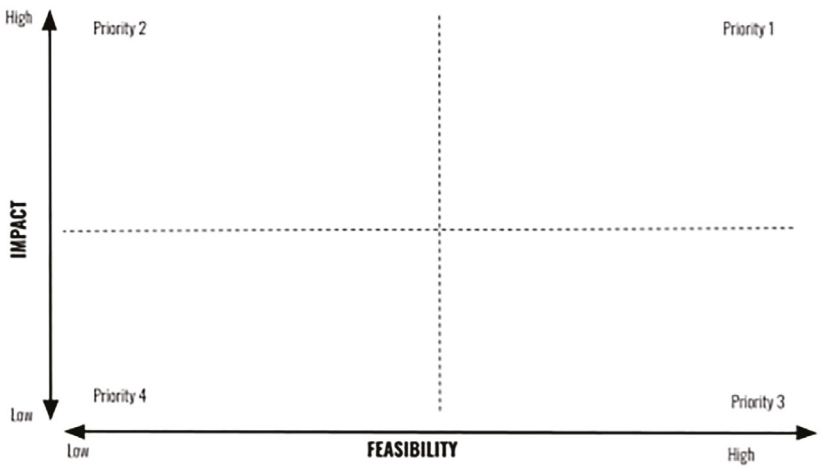

Figure 5.1 (d): Impact vs Feasibility grid. Credit: TCD.

3.2 Problem definition

Using the provided problem definition canvas, go through each of the panels as a group. Talk and walk through each panel, filling in as much information as is possible at this time. Depending on the complexity and existing knowledge of the chosen challenge, this process may take a short time or longer. This will be a living document which can be added to as more research is carried out. Part of the session could be used for learners to do some web research on laptops to gather information for the problem definition canvas.

Credits: This activity was developed by Trinity College Dublin, OSHub Ireland.