Management Training Workshop Curriculum on ESG Business Model Innovation – Mariënkroon Method

V1.0, 18.9.2026, MR, FJ, TH

Project
Erasmus+ co-funded project: Project 2024-1-AT01-KA210-VET-000257337 – ESG Business Model Innovation (BMI) - Enabling Business Leaders and Consultants to Facilitate Business Model Innovation in View of ESG Requirements by Means of Capacity Building/ESG-Align. Prior to the Erasmus+ project, team members developed elements and early versions of the method, presented in this curriculum, in the context of social enterprise and Economy of Communion business model development courses at the Vienna University of Economics and Business as well as the University of Applied Sciences BFI Vienna. More details on the Mariënkroon Method of Ideation are available in the ESG Business Model Innovation Handbook.

Team
Authors of this Document: Dr. Markus Ressl, Frank Jungmann, Dr. Tibor Hejj
Project Contributors: Jean-Marc Ziadé, Johannes Hirschmugl, Dr. Michal Lemański, Raymond Bronzwaer, Elodie Ressl, Claire Ressl, Lorentsa Panova, Martin Kopilović
Our motivation is to support businesses and organisations of all kinds with an affordable and highly efficient method of ESG Business Model Innovation towards becoming ESG Champion in their industry, inspiring others and adding superior value to the planet.

Name of "Mariënkroon Method"
The name of "Mariënkroon Method of Ideation" for ESG Business Model Innovation is derived from the place Mariënkroon in the Netherlands (Nieuwkuijk, region of Heusden), a former Cistercians Abbey, where the Method was presented in the framework of an international conference of academics and business leaders and where the first ESG business model management training workshop according to the Method took place, organised by Abdijhof Conference Center, partner of the Erasmus+ project.

License Conditions
License Specification: You are allowed to download this Curriculum, to share it with others and use it for non-commercial purposes, crediting the authors and referring to the name of method. You are allowed to change the content but not allowed to change the license type. Commercial use is forbidden. Licensing conditions, corresponding to Creative Commons License: CC BY-NC-SA.

Contact
info@ressolutions.at

Project Partners

ressolutions sustainable business development | Proactive Management Consulting | STARKMACHER IMPACT | ABDIJHOF MARIËNKROON

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or OeAD-GmbH. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction 3
2. Management Training Workshop Structure 4
3. USP / Critical Success Factors of the Method 8
4. Annex A: Innovation Strategy Tools 9
5. Annex B: Workshop Material 10
6. Annex C: Material Preparation Timeline 10
7. Annex D: Roles in the Workshop 10
8. Annex E: Sources supporting the Workshop Preparation 10
9. Annex F: Erasmus+ Project Partners 12

Co-funded by the European Union

1. Introduction

Objective: This guide provides practical instructions for planning and conducting an **ESG Business Model Innovation Ideation management training workshop** aimed at enabling participants to develop sustainable business models based on a proven approach, framework and method. It is based on the project team's expertise in the fields of ESG, strategy and group dynamics. A prototype was tested within the framework of the Erasmus+ project. It is a recommended standard and can be individually adapted according to the training situation. It is recommended to read also the corresponding chapters in the ESG Business Model Innovation Handbook before designing an innovation workshop.

Target Audience: The document is specifically designed for **consultants, managers, business leaders and experts** (top & middle management, experts; staff and leaders of SMEs[1], family businesses and all kinds of organisations) who want to conduct a **one-day innovation workshop** with up to 15 participants. In case of a two- or three-day training programme, timing and content needs to be adjusted accordingly.

Overall Workshop Agenda: This one-day workshop is structured into three main phases (excluding introduction), designed to guide participants through the process of ESG Business Model Innovation (see Chapter 2):

- **ESG Innovation Kick-Off and Training (Morning)**: Participants will be introduced into the fundamental concepts of ESG and various perspectives on business model innovation. This phase includes keynote speeches and an As-Is[2] Analysis through the presentation of real-world case studies. A deeply rooted As-Is Analysis in the pre-training phase of the business models of the cases and their current ESG features can increase the quality of the outcome.
- **ESG Business Model Innovation Process, in workshop method (Afternoon)**: This is an intensive, hands-on phase involving group work in dedicated "Innovation Rooms" (breakout sessions). Participants will use a set of practical management Tools to develop innovative To-Be desired ESG business model elements, validate them and formulate a draft proposal of strategic action plans. At this phase, a collaborative atmosphere of innovation is a key factor for success. Training teams with advanced competencies, skills and experience may include a transformation roadmap consulting proposal.
- **Presentation of ESG Innovation Results & Conclusion (Late Afternoon)**: After a moment of preparation, groups will present their developed concepts and action plans. The workshop concludes with a summary of key insights, lessons learned, and an outlook on the next steps for sustainable business model transformation.

Overall Learning Objectives: By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Understand the origins, core principles, and scope of the ESG approach while generating ideas for ESG Business Model Innovation
- Apply classic strategy development methods and Tools to create an ESG-embedded strategy
- Master the use of the Tools and methods based on real business model innovation process as a service to a real business or organisation in a practical, hands-on setting and an atmosphere of innovation and collaborative co-creation
- Effectively communicate the developed To-Be ESG business concepts and action plans
- Gain new insights by learning from each other's experiences, skills and competences
- Increase ESG-related values, mindset and intrinsic motivation to contribute to the global ESG transformation

Note: For optimal preparation and engagement, pre-reads for the case studies should be distributed to participants in advance.

[1] Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
[2] As-Is = current situation, To-Be = future desirable state of the organisation and its business model elements

2. Management Training Workshop Structure

Session Name	Timing	Content / Actions	Learning Objective	Method & Materials
ESG Innovation Kick-Off				
Introduction	10 Min.	Welcome, workshop objectives, overview of agenda. Moderator Tip: Start with a quick "one-word expectation" round including each participant.	Develop an understanding of the day's schedule and workshop goals.	Presentation, Interactive Warm-up, Plenum.
		Interactive warm-up: Expectations, introductions.	Establish initial connections between participants and the topic.	Flipchart / Whiteboard.
Keynote Speeches	60 Min.	Presentations on core aspects of ESG, business environment, and innovation. Example topics: Values-Based leadership, global responsible business, transformative business models (can be delivered online), Circular Economy principles, and strategic approaches to business model innovation.	Gain diverse perspectives on the workshop's core objective and its relevance within the current business landscape and the state of the planet.	Presentation, Q&A.
Break	20 Min.	Moderator Tip: Encourage participants to stretch or take a short walk to re-energise.		
Presentation of Cases, As-Is Business Models and ESG Features	90 Min.	Presentation of the cases to be developed with an ESG Business Model Innovation scenario proposal during the workshop.	Gain insights into concrete As-Is business models and their ESG features.	Presentation, Case Study Presentation.
		Discussion and questions regarding case examples. Expected Output: Initial understanding of challenges and opportunities of the presented cases.	Develop an understanding of the starting situations for the innovation projects.	Plenum, Q&A.
Lunch Break	60 Min.			

Co-funded by the European Union

Session Name	Timing	Content / Actions	Learning Objective	Method & Materials
ESG Business Model Innovation Process				
Introduction: ESG Innovation Process, Toolbox, Roles	30 Min.	Introduction to the ESG Business Model Innovation process and workshop methodology.	Get to know the Method, the innovation process, and available tools.	Presentation, Facilitation (Coaches).
		Presentation of the strategy Toolbox (see Annex A). Moderator Tip: Briefly explain the "why" behind each Tool and its relevance to ESG.	Develop an understanding of the structure and benefits of the workshop Method.	Discussion, Q&A.
		Clarification of roles and tasks in the breakout sessions (see Annex D).	Set clear expectations for group work.	
Break	10 Min.	Move to the different workshop rooms in case of breakout sessions.		
ESG Business Model Speed Innovation in Breakout Sessions and "Innovation Rooms"	90 Min.	Speed Innovation in Group Work: Application of Tools (= Innovation Rooms; see Annex A) for generating a big number of ESG BMI ideas. Moderator Tip: Use timer for each Tool. If a group gets stuck, suggest a "worst possible idea" brainstorming to break the ice. In every "Room": Participants write down ideas stick them on brown paper (and present them)	Develop the ability for rapid idea generation under time pressure.	Sticky notes, Pens, Idea board, Timer
Break	10 Min.			
Elaborate ESG BMI Presentation (Breakout Sessions)	75 Min.	Prioritise ideas: Reduce the longlist to Top 10 ideas (coloured dots). Moderator Tip: Guide groups to discuss "Who benefits? How to validate? What are the costs? How to quantify value?"	Identify and evaluate the most promising ideas.	Coloured dots. Option: Additional idea board.

Co-funded by the European Union

Session Name	Timing	Content / Actions	Learning Objective	Method & Materials
		Transfer the Top 10 ideas to the To-Be area of the 3D Business Model © paper canvas. Expected Output: A visualised To-Be business model incorporating the top ideas.	Visualise a future ESG-integrated business model.	A0 printed 3D Business Model[3] paper canvas
To-Be CSF, Vision, Mission		Draw a To-Be CSF picture and define / update briefly the ESG-aligned Vision and Mission for 2035 (or beyond…). Expected Output (optional): An updated draft of the CSF diagram and a concise updated vision and mission statement.	Update the CSFs and define a clear vision and mission for the company in the context of ESG.	Computer for presentation based on ESG BMI consulting template
Transformation Roadmap		Create an initial action plan / high-level Transformation Roadmap. Expected Output: A draft roadmap with key steps, responsibilities, and timelines.	Create an initial roll-out plan for implementation.	Computer for presentation based on ESG BMI consulting template
To-Be Business Model Strategy		Prepare the final presentation of the group results, transferring the Top 10 innovation ideas to the digital 3D Business Model. The To-Be Elements are added to the prepared As-Is picture with focus on the organisations ESG status.	Clearly and concisely communicate the developed concepts.	Computer for presentation based on ESG BMI consulting template
Break	15 Min.	Moderator Tip: Encourage a final check of presentation materials and a quick team huddle meeting.		

[3] 3D Business Model Approach was developed by Dr. Markus Ressl, based on his Dissertation on Economy of Communion at the Vienna University of Economics and Business (1999). He is sharing the tool, method and approach freely for the objective of this Erasmus+ project. The approach sees impact as well as interpersonal relationship elements like motivation, values, culture and growth as integral part of business models, crucial to manage the global sustainability challenge.

Co-funded by the European Union

Session Name	Timing	Content / Actions	Learning Objective	Method & Materials
Presentation of ESG Innovation Results & Conclusion				
Presentation of ESG Innovation Results (Plenum)	60 Min.	Each group presents their top results, the To-Be Business Model and optional also updated high level To-Be CSF, Vision and Mission Statements and Transformation Roadmap (approx. 10 - 15 min. per group, incl. Q&A). Moderator Tip: Encourage that each member of the innovation teams presents.	Clearly and concisely communicate the developed concepts.	Group Presentations with computer and beamer / screen
		Comments and discussion in the plenum.	Give and receive constructive feedback.	Plenum, Q&A.
Next Step ESG BMI Transformation Lessons Learned, Conclusions	15 Min.	Summary of key insights from the workshop.	Consolidate the core messages of the workshop.	Moderated discussion.
		Outlook on the next steps of the organisations' ESG BMI implementation.	Create motivation for implementation.	Feedback form (digital).
		Lessons Learned and feedback round.		
End of ESG BMI Training Workshop				
Dinner, Socialising				

This is the tested standard one-day ESG BMI ideation management training curriculum and workshop agenda, according to the Mariënkroon Method of Ideation for 9 hours of workshop time, e.g. from 9:00 – 18:00 including breaks and excluding dinner and socialising. Tight time management, a collaborative mindset as well as basic ESG and business model and industry knowledge are important features for successful workshop results and an excellent team experience.

Have joy in operating your **first ESG BMI workshop and management training** and adding value to your organisation, people and the planet!

Co-funded by the European Union

3. USP / Critical Success Factors of the Method

This makes the management training of ESG Business Model Innovation according to the Mariënkroon Method of ideation developed in our team and supported by the Erasmus+ project unique:

1. Integrated capacity building (training) combined with actual **ESG business model strategy generation** (workshop)
2. Focus on **intrinsic motivation** for making the **world a good place** to live through ESG Business Model Innovation is a key success factor for rich training and workshop results
3. Focus on **collaborative interpersonal relationships** during the innovation process increases creativity and group result
4. **Speed innovation** delivers quick results and decreases the barrier of entry for case organisations and workshop participants
5. **Universal application** of the ESG Business Model Innovation approach for all kinds of organisations, situations and contexts
6. The training format not only increases ESG knowledge but strengthens **ESG mindset**, **values and culture** that are often seen as a bottleneck for ESG Transformation and successful sustainability strategies. The format follows a Values-Based approach, placing collaborative values in the centre of interest and establishing them as key to successful ESG transformations.
7. Valuable **outside perspectives** on business model potential through mixed training groups including students (next generation), business leaders and expert.
8. Pleasant and **inspiring surroundings** such as, for instance, nature or spiritual places increase creativity and collaborative experience
9. High input-output **efficiency**: low time and financial investment from participants and case companies – high outputs in terms of training result and strategic contributions for organisation.
10. **ESG Marketing** and **CSR**[4] activity for case organisations, when supporting university courses and conferences on ESG Business Model Innovation with their time and information shared.

[4] Corporate Social Responsibility

4. Annex A: Innovation Strategy Tools

For further details see ESG Business Model Innovation Handbook. According to the workshop focus, tools can be customised, selected or added.

Tool	Objective
Tool 1: **As-Is 3D Business Model** © incl. CSF: Evaluate the As-Is Business Model Elements and ESG status to start the ESG BMI ideation process, based on the 3D Canvas and CSF diagram.	As-Is business model and ESG status **understood**.
Tool 2: **PESTEL(C)**: Identify BMI elements and organisational growth potential based on a comprehensive PESTEL(C) analysis indicating relevant factors, risks and opportunities.	ESG BMI ideas generated in view **context opportunities**.
Tool 3: **ESG BCG Matrix**: Identify ESG innovation ideas in the product portfolio presented in a scatter diagram, indicating relative market share, market growth rate (and ESG growth potential).	ESG BMI ideas generated in view of the **value proposition**.
Tool 4: **Circular Economy** (CE): Identify ideas for BMI based on the 9R CE principles based on a presentation of the organisation's As-Is CE situation as well as related risks and opportunities.	ESG BMI ideas generated from **CE perspective**.
Tool 5: **ESG SWOT**: Generate ESG BMI ideas based on a picture of the organisation's internal strengths / weaknesses, external opportunities / risks in view of ESG, including values and culture.	ESG BMI ideas generated based on ESG **SWOT** analysis.
Tool 6: **Value Chain**: Identify ESG impact opportunities along the entire value chain and its ecosystem based on a comprehensive presentation of the As-Is situation, challenges and potential.	ESG BMI ideas generated based on entire **value chain**.
Tool 7: **ESG Customer Portfolio**: Generate ESG BMI ideas based on the organisation's customer needs and segments shown in a Matrix including categories, contribution margin and ESG Maturity.	ESG BMI ideas generated based on **customer** segments.
Tool 8: **ESG Value Pricing**: Brainstorm ESG BMI ideas to align prices and revenue stream to the relevant cost structure of an ESG aligned value proposition based on an ESG Value Gap Analysis.	ESG BMI ideas generated based on **pricing** situation.
Tool 9: **ESG Champion Matrix**: Generate a longlist of ESG innovation ideas with a look to ESG champions in the relevant markets and beyond based on a comprehensive analysis of the situation.	ESG BMI ideas generated based on **ESG best practice**.
Tool 10: **To-Be 3D Business Model** © incl. CSF and other Tools if relevant: Summarise the ESG BMI brainstorming result and present the Top 5/10 innovation elements on the 3D BMI canvas.	Top ESG Innovation elements **presented** for implementation.

Co-funded by the European Union

5. Annex B: Workshop Material

- **Flipchart** (optional)
- **Sticky notes** (various colours) and **pens** (e.g. permanent marker 2 – 7 mm)
- **Idea board** (e.g. brown paper) prepared with headers & categories
- **Coloured** dots
- **Printed versions** of the 3D Business Model paper canvas as A0 poster (option: pre-filled with As-Is situation of the organisation)
- **Timer** (digital or analogue, possibly app)
- **Beamer** or screen
- **Computer**
- **Slide deck** for presentation (with strategy tool template and prepared As-Is situation of the cases)
- **Digital tools set-up** for hybrid or online workshops, consider using digital collaboration platforms (e.g., Miro, Mural) for idea boards and sticky notes.

6. Annex C: Material Preparation Timeline

- **2 weeks prior to workshop:** Distribute pre-reads for case studies to participants.
- **3 days prior to workshop:** Prepare the print of the 3D Business Model Canvas and ensure that the slide deck as well as the workshop material is ready.
- **Morning of workshop:** Prepare the workshop rooms (especially tables, idea boards, 3D Canvas), set up the beamer / laptop and ensure that workshop material is ready to use well before the workshop starts.

7. Annex D: Roles in the Workshop

- **Workshop leader:** Time management, group dynamics, stimulate discussion, ensure goal achievement. It is recommended that possible breakout innovation sessions are led by experienced co-leaders.
- **Business owner, management board member:** Presents the business case, provides context information. Option: online interview / presence.
- **Participants and co-creation teams:** ESG BMI idea generation with the help of the strategy tools based on the As-Is situation, the organisation's challenges and opportunities as well as clustering, ranking and presentation of results. Inhomogeneous teams are important.
- **Workshop assistant (optional):** Supports with time management, quality assurance, presentations and the documentation of the process including picture taking.

Co-funded by the European Union

8. Annex E: Sources supporting the Workshop Preparation

- ESG Business Model Innovation Handbook
- Sustainability reports of the case organisations
- ESG-related strategy papers of the case organisations
- Academic papers incl. bachelor and master theses on ESG status and potential of case organisations
- Case studies on the case organisations
- Best practice cases
- ESG related documents and regulations by the European Union
- Taxonomy documents for ESG and sustainability reporting
- United Nations documents related to SDGs and sustainability
- Documents on the planet's state of sustainability including "business-as-usual"-scenarios

Co-funded by
the European Union

9. Annex F: Erasmus+ Project Partners

Ressolutions GmbH, Austria, E10034765, www.ressolutions.at (Leading Partner)
Starkmacher Impact GmbH Germany, E10251715, www.starkmacherimpact.co
Proactive Management Consulting Korlatolt Felelossegu Tarsasag, Hungary, E10364098, www.p-m-c.eu
Stichting Mariapoli Mariënkroon, Netherlands, E10360972, www.marienkroon.nl, www.abdijhof.com

From left to right: Johannes Hirschmugl, Frank Jungmann, Dr. Tibor Hejj, Dr. Markus Ressl, Claire Ressl, Jean-Marc Ziadé;
ESG Business Model Innovation pilot workshop and management training.
Vienna, January 2025.

Contact: info@ressolutions.at

Proactive Management Consulting

STARKMACHER IMPACT

Co-funded by the European Union

ressolutions sustainable business development

ABDIJHOF MARIËNKROON

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or OeAD-GmbH. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.