

Learning Garage

Capacity Building in project and communication

27-28 July, Bologna (Italy)

Minutes

Day 1 - Thursday, 27 July

15:00 - 15:15 Opening by garage Rasmus Foundation and gE4Bologna

Fabrizio Bitetto, CEO of garagErasmus Foundation, and Stefano Campanari, CEO of Scambieuropei and gE4Bologna, welcomed all the participants and thanked everyone for attending the event, especially the new chapters.

15:15 - 16:00 Presentation of gE network: Foundation and gE4s

Fabrizio Bitetto presented the Foundation and its network, together with Valentina Presa and Carlo Bitetto. He said that as garagErasmus has received an operating grant, which will allow the organisation of more activities with the network, there will be more events like the current one. He presented garagErasmus projects funded by the European Commission and the National Agencies.

He also introduced the ESAA network, recognised by the European Commission since 2014. As part of ESAA, gE chapters can apply for ESAA funds.

gE4Cities were invited to contribute to the EU Year of Skills, Erasmus Days, the 2024 European Parliament elections and networking opportunities with universities, especially the Annual Meeting.

Fabrizio Bitetto presented gE alliances and working groups:

- ENHANCE, composed of EU technology universities
- EDEH, European Digital Education Hub (micro-credentials team)
- Erasmus+ Coalition

16:00 - 16:45 gE4s showcase

The poster session allowed the participating organisations to get to know each other. Each organisation had to create its own poster with general information about the organisation and current projects and activities.

17:00 - 18:00 gE strategy and membership

During the meeting, Carlo Bitetto and Luigi Briatore organised an interactive session to ask gE4Cities to describe their organisations and activities, but also what it means for them to be part of the gE network.

Carlo Bitetto described the beginnings of the garagErasmus network - a link between companies and the Erasmus generation - but as garagErasmus has changed in recent years, there's a need to change its mission and strategy. Participants are therefore invited to share their expectations and ideas about the future of the gE network.

Here are some interesting findings:

- More face-to-face meetings;
- New members bringing new ideas, knowledge, skills, good practice and experience;
- Focus on increasing opportunities for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, responding to people's needs and breaking down barriers;
- Addressing current social issues and providing solutions;
- Provide a platform for gE4Cities to share information, network and exchange innovative ideas and initiatives;
- Encourage initiatives by former Erasmus students working together on an international level;
- Consider new initiatives such as podcasts;
- Have global communication coordination and implement a communication strategy;
- Consolidate the network and increase cooperation to achieve the goals of the gE.

OFFICE IN MILAN
Via Ungaretti 4
20098 San Giuliano
Milanese (Italy)

OFFICE IN VICENZA
Strada Casale, 175
Elevator Innovation Hub
36100 Vicenza (Italy)

OFFICE IN BRUSSELS
Rue de la Loi 26
1000 Brussels
Belgium

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Day 2 - Friday, 28 July

09:00 - 09:30 Projects development and management

The session was chaired by Lia Chiara Micciché, co-founder of the garagErasmus Foundation and Lime-Up. It focused on how to improve project development and management.

The session was divided into two parts: one more formal on tools and tips for project management and the other interactive and informal to work on a project idea using the previously shared guidelines.

At the end of the activity, each group presented a project idea and its implementation and received feedback from the trainer.

11:30 - 13:00 Storytelling Lab: Projects communication and dissemination

Arianna Ioli, Director of Europa Business School, chaired the session and highlighted the importance of communication in both professional and everyday life, especially in the field of project management in the European Union.

The first part focused on how storytelling can help a project owner and the institution that might fund it to understand it. She also gave advice on how to create a communication plan and how to reach the widest possible audience, using examples from her own experience and guidelines from the EU Commission.

In the second part, more interactive activities were organised to practise their communication skills by playing the roles of a project owner and a storyteller, learning how to practise empathy and how to capture the main points of a story.

In the final part, they had to propose a communication plan, taking into account the feedback and expectations of the client, before writing the final story and considering their communication campaign.

15:40 - 16:00 Opportunities for funding

Valentina Presa presented various funding opportunities, in particular from the EU, ESAA and National Agencies.

Participants were invited to contact garagErasmus staff for assistance with the application process.

16:10 - 16:30 garagErasmus projects for 2023

The speaker of this session, Nunzia Di Francesco, presented gE projects in 2023, focusing on four themes: the EU Year of Skills, Erasmus Days, micro-credentials and inclusion.

She presented gE initiatives, activities, events and projects related to the themes and launched the gE4Women entrepreneurship platform, which focuses on female professionals and graduates in STEM and ICT.

Finally, she explained what garagErasmus is planning for 2024, such as cooperation with several ITS, micro-credentials for mobility, the Festival dell'Europa in Florence and the 2024 European Parliament elections.

16:30 - 16:45 Debriefing, next meetings and closing

Fabrizio Bitetto was pleased with the outcome of the event, as gE was able to collect ideas and proposals from gE4Cities. The need to develop cooperation and exchange new ideas to work together on the future of the gE network was shared by all participants. gE4Cities were invited to give feedback on the event and to attend the annual meeting in Paola (Malta) on 7-8 September.

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