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UPSIDED
Unique Pedagogies Stimulating Innovation,
Disruption, and Entrepreneurial Development



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Result of Activity 1, Work Package 2
Innovation Challenge Study and Specification
Study of existing systems at partner institutions
& Project's progress report

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Introduction

Work Package 2 of UPSIDED aims to analyze and define innovative pedagogical challenges that foster creativity, problem-solving, and interdisciplinary collaboration in higher education. By studying different types of hackathons and innovation challenges across Europe, the goal is to identify key success factors and develop a scalable, adaptable model for future educational initiatives.

As described in the application file, Activity 1 consists of the analysis of the existing innovation challenges at partner institutions of the consortium. All partners had to contribute to sharing their institutional practices and data regarding innovation challenges. The aim of the data collection and data analysis is to offer a deep dive into their structure, objective and outcomes.

Furthermore, the identification of best practices, as well as evaluation methods contributed to shape first recommendations to create a foundation for designing a new pedagogical challenge.

Result Activity 1, Work Package 2: Study of existing systems at partner institutions

Data collection using the questionnaire

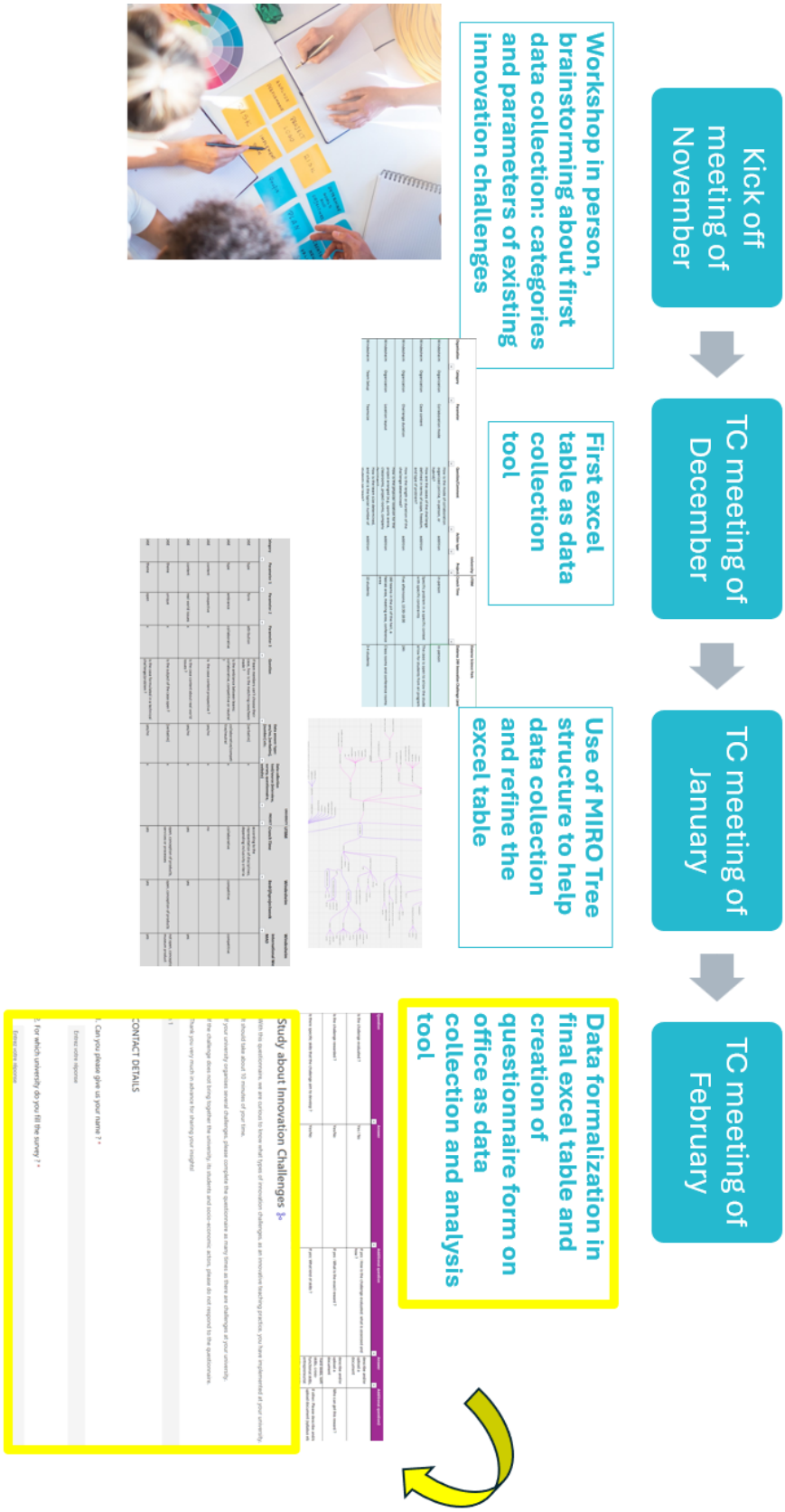
The starting point for this study of the innovation challenges faced by the universities in the UPSIDED consortium was to agree on the method – or, more precisely, the tool – that would be used to collect data from each institution regarding their innovation challenges.

The UPSIDED project launch meeting in November at the Crunch Lab in Belfort provided an opportunity for all consortium members to work in teams to discuss the data collection method. To this end, the first step was to attempt to categorize this data. An initial spreadsheet served as the initial database, into which each institution could enter its data relating to its innovation challenges and categorize them accordingly.

The Excel table was refined and expanded, notably thanks to the tree structure available on the Miro digital tool. This tool enabled the creation of an overall visualization and a breakdown of the various aspects of the innovation challenges, making it easy to ensure that all elements relevant to the study of the challenges had been covered. The universities were then able to add elements and data that had not necessarily been considered relevant previously. This grouping and final 'tagging' of data led to a final consolidation of the data in a final Excel spreadsheet. This spreadsheet thus helped in the creation of a Microsoft Office questionnaire serving as a tool for data collection and analysis.

The questionnaire covers all the main aspects of the innovation challenges visualized using the MIRO tool: the type of challenge, the teaching approach, the cases or projects presented to the teams, the participants, and finally the organization. A screening question is used to exclude innovation challenges that do not involve the following three groups: higher education institutions, students, and socio-economic stakeholders (=project holders). To minimize the amount of open-ended text and thus facilitate data analysis and comparison, the questionnaire is primarily in the form of multiple-choice questions and tick boxes. Comprising 83 questions, it enables the 'respondent' to cover all information relating to their university's innovation challenge in around ten minutes. A separate questionnaire must be completed for each innovation challenge within the same institution. As part of Activity 2 of Work Package 2, this questionnaire is being and will be distributed to other European universities and beyond with the aim of broadening the scope of the study about innovation challenges.

Subtask 1, Activity 1: Find a data collection & analysis tool, below the process and steps:



Questionnaire and results analysis

Innovation Challenge	University	Status
Crunch Time	UTBM	done
Crunch Maker Camp	UTBM	done
Projet Industriel/Boot Camp	HELHA	done
Blended Intensive Program	HELHA	done
Health Interdisciplinary Day	HELHA	done
Young Enterprise Project	HELHA	done
Iathon	HELHA	done
International Week, minor MAD by Industrial Product Design	Windesheim	done
International Carousel week	Windesheim	done
Business Project Week	Windesheim	done
Imagine	Dalarna	done
Dalarna 24h innovation challenge	Dalarna	done
12		

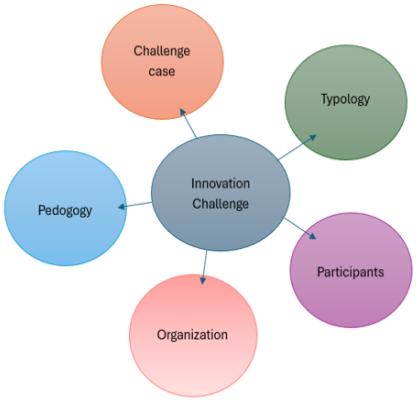
The data collected via the questionnaire relates to a total of 12 existing innovation challenges to be analyzed and compared within the partner universities of the UPSIDED project.

Below is an overview of the main findings from the questionnaire, grouped by category:

- Mostly 50/50 about teams working on same case or multiple cases : **40% unique case, 40% multiple cases**
- **Only 18% of challenges with competition between teams**
- Cases are a mix of **real world & prospective issues**
- **Include variety of sectors and innovation types**
- As much preparation (formal teambuilding and case preparation) as non-preparation before the challenge

- **80% in-person & 73% local challenges,** mostly unique events, not spread over time, that takes place once in the year
- Variations in the duration: it goes from 1 day to 2 months, majority of 1 week or 1 day
- Almost half of them take place at university campus, the other half rather in neutral places
- A majority of challenges are synchronized with other structures, either during the same or at different time

- In 60% of cases there are **follow-ups,** but rather with the pedagogical team
- **60% challenges evaluated** by pedagogical team
- **80% require deliverables** : varied, but mostly pitches, modells and reports
- 73% challenges rewarded: **39% with ECTS credits and 39% with prizes**
- **Skills** the challenges aim to develop: mostly *soft skills, multidisciplinary work, communication skills, team work, project management, problem-solving, creativity, innovation process & technical skills*
- Other main common objective of the challenge: to let the students step outside the comfort (and usual pedagogical comfort zone)
- Formats used in the challenge: **29% design thinking, 24% are hackathons, 35% no special format**
- Half of challenges part of compulsory course



- **91% universities organise more than 2 innovation challenges**
- Side-activities very varied: majority of relaxing times 20% workshops/conferences or international activities
- **67% feedback collection** used to improve future challenge editions
- Yet no impact indicators set
- Mostly self-funded challenges with no full time dedicated team for the organization
- Dedicated app or platform for half of the challenges

- 82% team defined by pedagogical team, 73% of teams don't choose their cases
- Main criteria to make up teams: multidisciplinary and randomly dispatched, minority of mix of years of study, international teams
- **56% teams of 3-5 students**
- Variations in nb of teams 8-100
- Project holders: **28% companies, 25% public institutions, 19% associations**
- **100% team support, mostly by coaches 34%** , guiding in the method, progress & process
- Drivers to motivate project holders: obtaining new ideas 29%, networking partnership aspect 32 % and commercial/ talent aspect 19%
- 1-67 project holders involved

Based on these questionnaire results, the following main similarities and differences between the challenges organized by UPSIDED members can be observed:

On typology:

These are primarily in-person events, with virtual or hybrid formats remaining the exception. Still, UTBM is the only university not yet to have tried a hybrid or virtual format, unlike the other partners.

These are mainly local events, apart from Windesheim University's innovation challenges, which are directly international in nature.

These are one-off events taking place once a year, mainly integrated into the curriculum,

- HELHa differs here in that its challenges are spread out over time
- The one-week (or five-day) format is the duration adopted by the majority
- All universities were able to synchronise their challenges with another institution and organise activities alongside their challenge, except for Dalarna University

On teams and teaching methods:

Most teams consist solely of students, except for the UTBM Crunch Maker Camp. They are all multidisciplinary, although no other criteria are considered for most consortium members.

There are just as many challenges focusing on a single topic with a single project leader as there are challenges with multiple project leaders and corresponding topics.

All types of innovation are covered and addressed by the challenges, as are all sectors, although depending on the university and faculty involved, the scope of the fields of activity will not be the same.

- There are as many challenges involving advance preparation as there are challenges without preparation
- There is a support mechanism provided by internal staff, mainly teaching staff acting as 'coaches', for each of the challenges studied
- There is no competitive element between the teams, except at Windesheim - Most challenges are assessed and rewarded with either ECTS credits or specific prizes, except for Windesheim University, which offers a combination of both.
- All universities, except for UTBM, employ a 'jury' system, which is responsible for awarding prizes to the various teams at the end of the challenge. It is most

often composed of both members of the academic staff and professionals from the business world.

All challenges aim to develop multidisciplinary skills, problem-solving, creativity, team spirit, soft skills and entrepreneurial skills, whilst taking students out of their comfort zone.

The method and procedure used to achieve this objective is primarily that of design thinking.

Other key points:

- Depending on the university and the challenge, the diversity of project leaders will vary. In any case, it is always the universities that approach them, rather than an initiative by socio-economic stakeholders (=project holders).
- After the event, each university collects feedback and measures participant satisfaction, which serves as a basis for future editions.
- Most universities fund their challenges using their own resources. Some charge project leaders for their participation, and few of them rely on external funding, such as financial support from the European Commission.

Fact & identity sheets on the various innovation challenges:

Building on the survey and an exchange of best practices during the Crunch Time 2026 innovation challenge organized by UTBM during the week of 16 March 2026, here are the fact sheets compiled of the various innovation challenges among the members of the UPSIDED consortium:

utbm
université de technologie Belfort-Montbéliard

CRUNCH TIME

Format/innovation method: design-sprint, in-person

Location: local concert hall

Duration: 5 afternoons

Nb of participants: 1300

Profile of teams: mix of all engineering programs and mix of study years + diversity criteria

Project holder(s): 67 companies, associations, healthcare facilities, public institutions, social economy

Skills to develop: soft, cross-functional, entrepreneurial skills

Evaluation/reward: 1 ECTS upon assessment of team report, feedback report, skills portfolio, final pitch- by pedagogical team and project holder

CRUNCH MAKER CAMP

Format/innovation method: hackathon, in-person

Location: Crunch Lab, third place

Duration: 48 hours

Nb of participants: ap. 70

Profile of teams: university students, project holders, any willing individual

Project holder(s): 16 companies, associations, healthcare facilities, public institutions, social economy

Skills to develop: soft, cross-functional and entrepreneurial skills

Evaluation/reward mode: Open Badge Maker

INDUSTRIAL PROJECT

Format/innovation method: in-person multi-session challenge

Location: place of project holder, factory

Duration: 5 days spread over 5 weeks

Nb of participants: ap. 20

Profile of teams: informatics, industrial design

Project holder(s): Technocampus

Skills to develop: soft, entrepreneurial and technical skills

Evaluation/reward: 6 ECTS upon assessment of report, pitch, source code by teachers

BIP

Format/innovation method: hybrid

Location: university campus

Duration: 5 days

Nb of participants:days 35

Profile of teams: electronics, biotechnology, chemistry, biochemistry, engineering

Project holder(s): Academic staff

Skills to develop: soft, cross-functional, entrepreneurial, technical and intercultural skills

Evaluation/reward: 3 ECTS upon assessment of report, study, literature review, pitch by teachers

HEALTH INTERDISCIPLINARY DAY

Format/innovation method: in-person

Location: university campus

Duration: 1 day

Nb of participants: 500

Profile of teams: mix of following fields: occupational therapy, physiotherapy, psychomotor therapy, medicine, ergonomics

Project holder(s): Academic staff

Skills to develop: clinical reasoning, soft, cross-functional and hard skills

Evaluation/reward: skills no evaluation, no reward but penalty for poor work performance or lack of involvement

Young Enterprise Project

Format/innovation method: in-person challenge

Location: university campus

Duration: 5 sessions over 2 months

Nb of participants: 100

Profile of teams: marketing, business administration, accounting, communication

Project holder(s): associations

Skills to develop: soft, cross-functional hard and entrepreneurial skills

Evaluation/reward: prize upon deliverables (report, sketch, final pitch) assessed by jury with professionals and academics

IAthon

Format/innovation method: virtual hackathon

Location: online

Duration: 3 weeks

Nb of participants: 30-50

Profile of teams: electronics, Electromecanics, Informatics

Project holder(s): companies, associations, public institutions

Skills to develop: soft, cross-functional hard and entrepreneurial skills

Evaluation/reward: no reward, evaluation upon deliverables (modell, pitch)

University of Applied Sciences Windesheim

Business Project Week

Format/innovation method: in-person challenge

Location: university campus

Duration: 4 days

Nb of participants: 50

Profile of teams: electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, industrial design, product design, logistics

Project holder(s): 4 enterprises

Skills to develop: soft, cross-functional hard and entrepreneurial skills

Evaluation/reward: 1 ECTS by coaches and gift vouchers prizes by jury upon final pitch: best pitch, best innovation, best feedback

International Carousel Week (BIP)

Format/innovation method: in-person design-thinking

Location: several european universities

Duration: 1 week

Nb of participants: 50

Profile of teams: industrial engineering, management, logistics

Project holder(s): 1-5 enterprises, public institutions

Skills to develop: soft, cross-functional hard and entrepreneurial skills, intercultural work

Evaluation/reward: 3 ECTS and a prize upon final pitch

International Week minor MAD

Format/innovation method: in-person design-sprint (with hybrid preparation)

Location: university campus, museum

Duration: 1 week

Nb of participants: ap. 40

Profile of teams: electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, industrial design, product design, informatics

Project holder(s): 1 museum

Skills to develop: soft, cross-functional hard and entrepreneurial skills, intercultural work

Evaluation/reward: 2-3 ECTS and a prize by jury for the 3 best products upon deliverables (modell, pitch, poster)

HÖGSKOLAN DALARNA

Dalarna 24h

Format/innovation method: in-person design-thinking challenge

Location: Regional Science Park

Duration: 1 day

Nb of participants: 15-30

Profile of teams: all programs: electrical engineering, energy, ergonomics, medicine, computer science, informatics, business administration

Project holder(s): companies, public institutions

Skills to develop: soft, cross-functional hard and entrepreneurial skills

Evaluation/reward: gift card as prize upon final pitch assessed by jury

Imagine

Format/innovation method: virtual design-thinking challenge

Location: online

Duration: 4 hours

Nb of participants: 15-70

Profile of teams: nurse and pedagogy

Project holder(s): no direct project holders, challenges identified during internships

Skills to develop: soft, cross-functional hard and entrepreneurial skills

Evaluation/reward: no evaluation, no reward

Special Student working group

A group of six UTBM students specializing in 'data science and data storage' has been working on the UPSIDED project throughout the semester since the end of March 2026.

Their work shall support the UPSIDED team in the Work Package 2, precisely in the Activity 2, *State of the Art of innovation challenges*, since this activity involves extensive research and analysis, with a wide range of complex sources and methods. Their results and progress will help to inform the UPSIDED project, and vice versa.

Their research question is as follows: "How can heterogeneous data from hackathons be structured and analyzed in order to identify success factors and develop a transferable methodological framework for higher education institutions?"

The list of expected deliverables is as follows:

1. Structured and documented database: a dataset containing all the collected data, cleaned and organized, along with a variable dictionary.
2. Methodological report: a detailed description of the data collection methods, the structuring choices, and the data processing applied.
3. Results analysis: interpretation of statistical analyses, with the identification of typologies and success factors.
4. Dashboard or visualization tool: an interactive interface allowing users to explore the data and results.
5. Structured toolbox proposal: recommendations for higher education institutions wishing to organize hackathons.

The aim is for them to build a robust database on the various innovation challenges around the world in three phases: data collection, data storage and data analysis.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee has been set up to guide strategic direction, approve milestones, and resolve major issues alongside the UPSIDED project. The first Steering Committee meeting has taken place during the UTBM innovation challenge "Crunch Time" the 19th of March 2026, as all university partners of UPSIDED were present. The Steering Committee has officially approved and validated the results of activity 1, Work Package 2, namely the study done for the existing consortium and its results. The main feedback and questions were the following:

- Important to focus our data collection and analysis of innovation challenges, especially about the feedback collection, their success factors and impacts.
- Important to include in the future toolbox for organizing innovation challenges reference frameworks such as EntreComp, GreenComp, CEFR, and AEFA (AFEST)
- Important to set up a 4 Erasmus priorities guide throughout the UPSIDED project.

Project's progress, Crunch Time 2026

The organization of innovation challenges is the cornerstone of the UPSIDED project, the beginning and the end of it. Each innovation challenge organized and run in each consortium's university is the occasion for all project participants to discover different practices via real immersion and to stimulate reflection and research for UPSIDED – as the project itself contributes to renew and reshape each university's challenge. In this way, the organization of innovation challenges is part of activity 1, Work Package 3 about the experimenting of challenges. Theses challenges are also the opportunity to test, refine first outcomes of the past project activities and the opportunity to spread the word about the project among the stakeholders (other universities, students, project holders – companies, associations or any other public institutions).

In total, 17 persons from UPSIDED countries could participate at this Crunch Time edition: 9 teaching and administrative staff, and 8 students from Dalarna University. Every morning, the whole UPSIDED team self-crunch itself working on 2 different topics related to the project. All consortium members were invited to immerse themselves in the innovation challenge of UTBM, Crunch Time, by being coaches and facilitators for student teams. A first introduction session was organized online before the challenge, and training session for coaches took place each day during the challenge.

Self-crunch workshops and their results

- Subject A: Designing a toolbox – What resources are needed to organize an Innovation Challenge?
- Subject B: Deploying and sustaining a toolbox – Designing a system for adoption, evaluation, and knowledge sharing.

} 2 teams of international staff *(teachers.researchers, officer.ect)*

Subject A

Transforming the traditional "toolbox" into an interactive and immersive experience in the form of a **serious game**.

The objective: enable universities to learn how to organize an innovation challenge by simulating it, rather than reading a theoretical guide.

Simulator Crunch Time is therefore an educational video game in which the user takes on the role of an event organizer and must design, manage, and successfully deliver an innovation challenge.

Subject B

A **centralized digital platform** combining a practical toolbox (guides, templates, videos, timelines) with role-based resources for teachers, students, and industry partners to easily design and run innovation challenges.

A **community-driven ecosystem** with interactive features (chat, contact directory, shared experiences, success stories) to foster collaboration, peer learning, and continuous knowledge exchange between universities.

A **continuous improvement and recognition system**, integrating feedback and evaluation tools, enriched with real-case insights, and introducing a **certification/label** to recognize universities and partners who successfully adopt and implement the toolbox.

3 Student teams working on UPSIDED during Crunch Time & results

Subject 1: Imagine the international Crunch Time of tomorrow – a hybrid and connected format

- Identified problems: jet lag, human contact, language, task distribution, isolated teams, distraction, tools
- First solution: challenge with connected desk with high technological solutions like hologram etc. BUT too expensive, not accessible and fair for all universities/students
- Final solution selected: taking the Dalarna model as example: use of visio boxes with VR Meta Quest and digital boards

Subject 2: Reinventing Crunch 2030 – designing the Crunch experience of the future

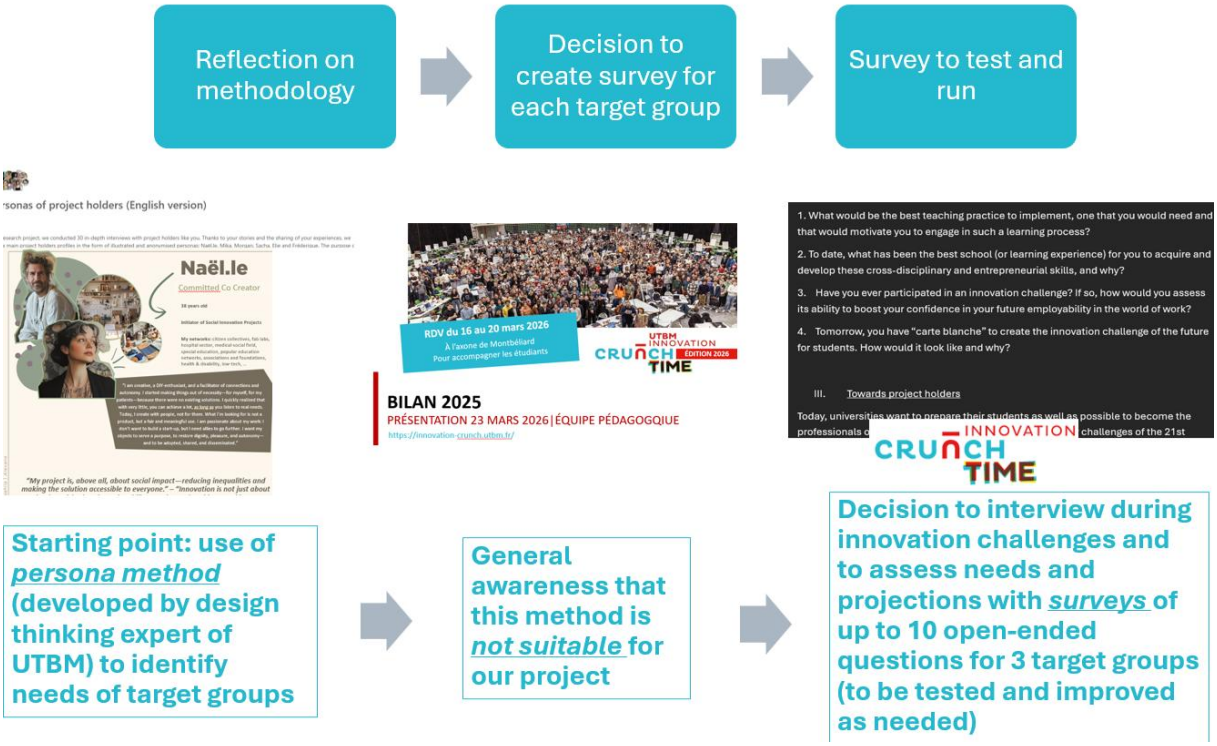
- Challenge with 800 pre-selected via and volunteer students
- Organized each year by an university member of UPSIDED and open to other university worlwide
- Aspect of excellence: selection process, impactful recognition and certification and special reward: 5000eur prize
- 4 main themes: AI, Energy, Mechanics, Medicine
- Team: 10 students, 1 prototype, 1 screen and 1 board
- Visible big promotion & ads on the building
- Last challenge day open for all, possibility to discover prototypes

Subject 3: Building an international community – designing a vibrant network of innovation challenge stakeholders

- Identified problems: challenges are isolated, limited in their visibility, not structured globally
- Solution chosen:
  - One unified system inspired by world cup & les négociales with a competition structure, starting locally, ending up globally
  - Recognition system: patches, certificates, CV recognized globally
  - Building a network with the support of Ministry of Education, and a shared european innovation week
  - Invite professors to discover the project abroad and students via Erasmus+ short mobility programs
  - Digital official platform with different entries (students, universities, companies)
  - Attract companies with success wall of past projects, use of alumni networks, recruitment deals, targeted linkedin campaigns

Needs analysis

The UPSIDED project is based on various observations and needs expressed by different stakeholders– universities, students and socio-economic actors (=project holders) - directly or indirectly impacted by the Higher Education and its teaching practices. Throughout the project, a gap needs analysis is planned and has already started to make sure that the project outcomes are aligned with concrete real needs. The image below outlines the various steps at the start of the project that led to the decision to adopt a particular approach:



After consulting an expert and lecturer-researcher in design thinking at UTBM, the team decided to gauge the expectations and needs of the various target groups directly in the field during the various innovation challenges.

Where possible, care had to be taken to ensure the diversity of the interviews in several respects. This was not an obvious consideration given the unplanned and opportunistic nature of the discussions. The Crunch Time on 9 March 2026 at HEIG-VD in Switzerland and the Crunch Time at Axone during the week of 19 March 2026 provided an opportunity to meet many of the stakeholders brought together by these innovation challenges.

Questions were categorized by theme, with as many open-ended questions as possible to avoid bias and pre-determined responses.

Firstly, the interview guide for university management staff focused on the following key themes:

- The institution's vision and pedagogical success
- Current experience and practices regarding innovative teaching methods
- The obstacles and drivers for implementing these practices
- Specific needs
- A vision of the ideal pedagogical innovation challenge

Secondly, the interview guide for project holders (companies, associations, public institutions, etc.) focused on the following main themes:

- Relationships and interactions with higher education
- Needs and expectations regarding universities and student training
- Ideal forms of cooperation with higher education
- Experience with innovation challenges
- A vision of the ideal pedagogical innovation challenge

Thirdly, the interview guide for students covered the following elements:

- Idea of good teaching practice to be implemented, as a driver of learning
- The best learning experience to acquire and develop cross-disciplinary skills
- Tools and methods used to learn outside traditional classes
- Experience with innovation challenges
- A vision of the ideal pedagogical innovation challenge

Given the packed schedule of the UTBM Crunch Time event, fewer people than anticipated could be interviewed. However, the few discussions proved very fruitful, confirming some of the assumptions underpinning the UPSIDED project and sparking new ideas for it. Furthermore, this was the first time we had tested this approach – this 'exercise' of conducting needs-based interviews – within the framework of the project. This initial version is set to evolve and be refined over time, and particularly during future innovation challenges.

This activity report simply aims to summarize the key observations drawn from these interviews. These initial discussions form part of a much broader qualitative study spanning a longer period, marked by the future innovation challenges of the various partners in the UPSIDED project. This initial 'draft', which is therefore limited in scope, has given rise to certain findings or ideas that clearly need to be developed, supported or

rejected through further discussions. A degree of caution is therefore warranted regarding the findings that have emerged from these interviews.

A total of eight interviews were conducted: four with stakeholders in higher education, three with project holders and just one with two students.

The analysis of these interviews began with transcribing the audio recordings into text, followed by identifying the themes, motifs, their various connections and the emerging trends within the different verbatim accounts. The processing of this qualitative data enabled us to identify similarities and differences between the UPSIDED project's target groups.

Below are the most relevant findings and the most significant conclusions that the analysis highlighted regarding the need for pedagogical innovation among the target groups:

1) First and foremost, we should begin with the most striking, obvious and recurring observation among all those interviewed: the concept of temporality and continuity.

Lecturers, directors, staff and the two students unanimously express the need for a long-term approach and continuity within the framework of an exercise though designed specifically to be short. The sustainability of exercise and long-term learning seem to be of concern to everyone.

According to one lecturer, the very process of innovation is an iterative and lengthy one that does not call for an immediate solution to a given problem. In his view, the challenge should ideally be conducted in two stages: an initial, compressed phase during the challenge itself, and a longer second phase to allow the best solution to emerge. As a deputy university director also points out, projects emerging from the challenges should be able to be continued as part of the curriculum. Students, for their part, express frustration at having to do things by halves during Crunch Time and not being able to prototype 'all the way through', and that the final product cannot go into production or be marketed at the end of the challenge – a sentiment shared by the project holders. Some of the latter specifically mention the possibility of funding being made available for their favorite projects via a foundation or incubators. Others say they preferred the Crunch Time format with days entirely dedicated to the projects, as the deliverables and prototypes at the end of the challenge were significantly better developed.

2) Furthermore, the need to 'open up' and 'expand' these innovation challenges to foster greater diversity and interdisciplinarity is a view unanimously shared by all target groups.

Everyone agrees on the benefits and positive impacts of having a diverse range of topics, teams and participants in the challenges. Everyone is asking for more. Academics are considering proposing and rolling out their scheme to other universities, in order to create a genuine community. Project holders are calling for greater use of innovation challenges to bring together and unite all local socio-economic stakeholders (=project holders) across all sectors. The two students themselves express a desire for teams that are more varied in terms of specialization and skills, with greater diversity across the disciplines represented. Everyone is convinced of the need for interdisciplinarity and diversity within the framework of innovation challenges.

3) When it comes to helping students acquire certain skills, everyone in the academic community agrees on the need for teaching practices that are geared towards the real-world needs of the professional world.

Recognizing that essential skills encompass professional skills, methodologies, cross-disciplinary and entrepreneurial skills – which are not merely facts to be learnt by heart and assessed through a theoretical exam – all parties express a desire to train students through practical work, project-based learning, compulsory internships, innovation challenges and so on. However, in most cases, it is clear that these targeted skills are addressed only indirectly and implicitly stated by the courses or the universities themselves. Everyone laments that these teaching methods remain in the minority and are insufficient. Project holders, for their part, are more interested in the curiosity, independence and adaptability of students, their future recruits. They all express a need to be consulted more and involved in defining students' training needs, to achieve a better match and alignment between the reality of the labour market and student profiles.

4) It is interesting to note that universities also find themselves in agreement on the sticking points regarding the organization of an innovation challenge. The first difficulty mentioned concerns the resistance of teaching staff to change teaching method.

The primary challenge for those who initiate and organize innovation challenges at universities lies, in fact, in motivating staff and securing their buy-in. Fears of falling behind schedule, doubts about the relevance of the challenge, reluctance to alter working hours... and so on. These are all constraints that academic staff are likely to fear when faced with this kind of unconventional exercise.

Alongside human resources issues, logistical, material and financial constraints are raised by everyone in the academic community. Nevertheless, the most recurring issue remains the rigidity of administration and academic timetables, which makes it difficult

to integrate such an innovation challenge into the various study courses and programmes. A need for flexibility is called for by all.

Regarding the factors facilitating the organization of innovation challenges, the following points were raised:

- effective, consistent and positive communication demonstrating a "win-win-win situation" (students, universities, project holders)
- an existing model of a challenge that can be replicated, enabling the launch of such an initiative
- and charismatic and committed leadership capable of steering the project from start to finish

5) Finally, apart from the points mentioned above, none of the discussions gave rise to any ideal, projection or vision that went beyond the existing framework of innovation challenge (of Crunch Time in particular). Satisfaction, enthusiasm, recognition and support for the Crunch Time model from all those interviewed, as an innovative teaching practice, shows that this model is well established and endorsed by all target groups. Admittedly, areas for improvement and needs have emerged in the discussions, but the basic principles are not being called into question. The momentum and desire to innovate in teaching methods within the academic environment, with a focus on innovation challenges, appears for the time being to be a common denominator.

Conclusion

This report concludes the first activity of the first work package, which focused on analyzing the innovation challenges faced by the partners in the UPSIDED consortium. Having identified the similarities, differences, strengths and weaknesses in their approaches to innovation challenges, the partners are continuing their examination of the various types of innovation challenges. Between now and the next stage – the second activity of the work module – attention will turn outwards, towards other universities and other initiatives involving innovative teaching practices in Europe and beyond. Building on their face-to-face meetings during the Kickoff in November in Belfort, but above all on their vivid and immersive experience of the Crunch Time in Montbéliard in March, their collaboration with UPSIDED is intensifying and taking shape with these initial results. They are moving forward together, confident in this initial working basis which will ultimately serve as the foundation for the creation of the toolkit and the community centred on innovation challenges.