Creativity and Innovation in Europe:
from a shared vision to a common action plan[1].

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The message on the importance of creativity and innovation in all spheres of society contained in the Manifesto of the European Ambassadors for Creativity and Innovation represents a call to rethink European development. It deserves to be followed up not simply with some unconnected appropriate actions in the different fields, but with a "framework for action" able to transform the principles contained in the Manifesto into proposals for activities at the policy, at the organizational and at the "grassroots" levels.

With the aim to contribute to the creation of such a framework, the Learnovation Stakeholders Roundtable (**www.learnovation.eu**) has launched an internal consultation with the objective of providing, for each one of the seven priorities set by the Manifesto, a likely framework for action.

The seven Manifesto priorities are:

1. Nurture **creativity in a lifelong learning process** where theory and practice go hand in hand.
2. Make **schools and universities** places where students and teachers engage in creative thinking and learning by doing.
3. Transform **workplaces** into learning sites.
4. Promote a strong, independent and diverse **cultural sector** that can sustain intercultural dialogue.
5. Promote **scientific research** to understand the world, improve people's lives and stimulate innovation.
6. Promote **design** processes, thinking and tools, understanding the needs, emotions, aspirations and abilities of users.
7. Support **business innovation** that contributes to prosperity and sustainability.

A first conceptual contribution deals with the centrality of creativity in the Lifelong learning process, considered as the organising principle of the new Europe where creativity and innovation can be fostered at all levels, among the seven priorities identified above, as in the following picture.
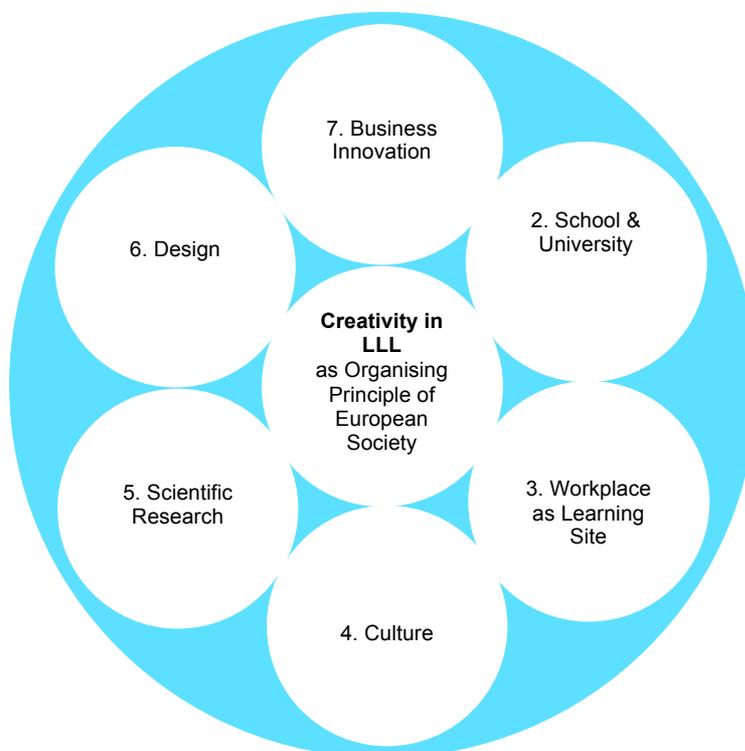
In the following pages we present a first attempt to move from isolated priorities to "frameworks for actions", in line with two key principles of the Learnovation Stakeholders Roundtable. First, the need to differentiate solutions and actions depending on the different contexts: that is why we propose frameworks for actions that are adaptable to national, regional and local contexts and to sectors specificities. Second, the need to involve all relevant stakeholders categories in the dynamic of a genuine top-down and bottom-up dialogue: that is why we include both the policy and the organisational/grassroots levels in the frameworks.

For each Manifesto Priority a table is presented, organised according to three levels:

♦ **Main Orientations for action** directly connect to the priority and set the value/principle orientations of the suggested actions.

♦ **Actions** express recommendations for long term intervention, with a systemic – although not necessarily comprehensive - vision.

♦ **Catalyst Initiatives** are recommendations/suggestions for the short term, often instrumental to the implementation of broader and long term recommendations.

Each table is also divided into a left side, containing those recommendations that require public policy intervention at all institutional levels, and a right side that is addressed to all kinds of organisations (educational institutions, but also companies, associations, the Public Administration as employer).

MANIFESTO PRIORITY 1:
NURTURE CREATIVITY IN A LIFELONG LEARNING PROCESS WHERE THEORY AND PRACTICE GO HAND IN HAND

POLICY LEVEL	ORGANISATIONAL/GRASSROOTS LEVEL
Main Orientations for Action	
• Put Lifelong Learning at the centre of policy concern in a knowledge society. • Reward citizens' learning initiative and learning achievements and encourage learning processes in and by policy making.	• The European workforce is being and will be required with continuous upskilling actions for Europe to be able to compete worldwide: innovators should be recognised and rewarded at all levels and in all sectors. • Embed learning focus in any transformation process at organisational level.
Actions	
• De-tax all investments in learning. • Public administration should pioneer the principle "best jobs to best lifelong learners" by choosing leaders able to lead change. • Implement micro-credit lending schemes for all types of learning.	• Develop and sustain learning organisations benchmarks. • Use ICT potential to generate and sustain inter-organisational communities of practice and project-based learning.
Catalyst Initiatives	
• Generalise the practice of a lifelong learner self-assessment for all European citizens to strengthen their identity as learners and citizens.	• Set up a European Foundation for Creativity (or a Unit on Creativity at the EIT) promoting the creation of community laboratories at local level within the Member States. Such laboratories should be open to the members of the community (regardless of their age) and provide the infrastructure and support for people to make their ideas come true.

MANIFESTO PRIORITY 2:
MAKE SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES PLACES WHERE STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ENGAGE IN CREATIVE THINKING AND LEARNING BY DOING

POLICY LEVEL	ORGANISATIONAL/GRASSROOTS LEVEL
Main Orientations for Action	
• Creativity, openness and flexibility should be enhanced by allowing freedom of expression and by valorising the creative profiles of individuals since the early stages of the learning path. • Exploit all the potential that ICT and media developments can offer to support learner-centred education. • Consensually maintain long-term objectives of Education and Training policy beyond political and government discontinuities: A really integrated Lifelong Learning system, easy to understand and access by all learners, should be a common policy aim across Europe. • Put learning competences on top of the "PISA tower".	• Bring education closer to the societal needs. • Curricula and examination practices should be fundamentally revised, overcoming existing system resistances. • Ways to identify and certify non-formal or informal learning should be found, building on what has been developed in the Accreditation of Prior Learning field.
Actions	
• Teachers training should include creative and innovative approaches; ways of incentivising creative people to apply their creativity to teaching should be explored. Moreover, teachers and trainers should be supported in exploiting the potential of informal learning. • Utilise virtual mobility to make international experiences accessible to all students and teachers, to build intercultural dialogue, to support internationalisation and to promote global cooperation between universities. • Develop a European policy on Open Educational Resources and Open Educational Practices, able to take into account all stakeholders concerns and expectations.	• Project work should be promoted as a curricular activity throughout all school levels. • Examination practice should be transformed to allow differentiation of learning paths and recognition of skills and competences developed. • More focus should be put on explaining and demonstrating processes such as problem solving, self assessment, information search and filtering, team work, evaluation, critical thinking, networking.
Catalyst Initiatives	
• Introduce in the LLP funding streams for the design and implementation of training programmes to strengthen the educational competences of all parents. • Open a permanent strand in Comenius for teachers training on creativity and innovation. • Set up a "Young education policy makers club" at the EU level in order to get their views included in the discussion, thereby also exploiting the potential of "digital nativeness heterogeneity" in the process of educational policy making.	• Set up a EU competition among national governments/regional authorities for the development of rewarding systems for innovative teachers. • Set-up an Award for Universities/schools/VET establishments which apply the learning outcomes approach and are able to recognise achievements of prior learning.

MANIFESTO PRIORITY 3:
TRANSFORM WORKPLACES INTO LEARNING SITES

POLICY LEVEL	ORGANISATIONAL/GRASSROOTS LEVEL
Main Orientations for Action	
• Promote a paradigm shift from the concept that skills development shall merely follow the needs of the labour market to the concept that the labour market shall support the achievement of societal aims such as equity and environment sustainability. • Promote Mobility, Collaboration and Co-opetition within and among companies, flexibility (e.g. e-Working from home), openness, alliances (e.g. public-private, corporate-education), and Integration of Technologies.	• Learning already takes place in workplaces through peer-to-peer interaction and problem solving. The issue is not only and not so much to promote learning, but to valorise the learning outcomes workers do achieve on the job and to set up mechanisms to facilitate exchange of work knowledge and experiences. • Promote innovative workplace structures, top-down (e.g. competence development) and bottom up (e.g. empowerment), documentation of 'abilities' e.g. individual e-Portfolios, organisational e-Portfolios ('org-folios'), individual, group-based, inter-organisational, and inter-sectoral learning.
Actions	
• Agreeing on EU-wide guidelines on recognition of workplace learning (e.g. project management) and disseminating them in the Member States. • Encourage and support cooperation between stakeholders on encouraging learning at the workplace, keeping on fostering public–private partnerships. • Introduce/generalize incentives for learning, including subsidisation of e-Portfolios costs, with a granular and customised approaches for different settings, e.g. large companies, SMEs, public sector, self-employed persons.	• Support the use of ePortfolios and ePortfolios Management Systems by employees and make sure that they are accepted by the industry networks. • Create conditions for (self-organised) learning, including Open Learning and Web2.0 oriented programmes. • Foster social learning and communication, by implementing both managerial (top-down) and collegial peer (bottom–up) support.
Catalyst Initiatives	
• Launch a permanent observatory on innovation skills in Europe, with the tasks of monitoring the progress of national governments and regional authorities in providing compulsory training and re-training actions for the unemployed.	• Produce showcases of good practices, based on the logic 'Let learners tell their stories', based on individual statements and accounts of learners and of managers on barriers, solutions and benefits.

MANIFESTO PRIORITY 4:
PROMOTE A STRONG, INDEPENDENT AND DIVERSE CULTURAL SECTOR THAT CAN SUSTAIN INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

POLICY LEVEL	ORGANISATIONAL/GRASSROOTS LEVEL
Main Orientations for Action	
• Fostering openness, cooperation, cultural awareness and tolerance as well as the expression of cultural identity in the school and higher education systems. • Enhance institutional collaboration between Universities, Culture institutions and Research Centres, to build networks of incubators for intellectual work and cultural expression. • Facilitate the development agenda of the creative industries, considering education as one of the pro-creativity ecosystems. • Embed culture and cultural expression into every-day life, especially in lifelong learning experiences.	• Encourage inter-cultural dialogue and develop a climate of openness to cultural diversity, within and beyond education establishments. • Introduce and support media literacy, communication and cultural expression competences among all organizational procedures, while support the digital and learning-to-learn competences among staff members as well as among related communities and social groups.
Actions	
• Deploy, also though appropriate teachers training, culture-related learning experiences aiming at the enhancement of key competences for cultural awareness, openness and tolerance in school and higher education. • Provide support, building on existing programmes (e.g. eTwinning), to school visits to other regions-countries-cultures. • Support the mobility of students and faculty members of the Humanities Universities Departments. • Develop the full learning and partnership potential of cultural institutions by supporting their collaboration with other stakeholders and by encouraging them to become effective learning spaces.	• Advance networking and collaboration competences among staff members and organizations from the Culture, Education and Business sectors. • Develop collaborative schemes for both the organization of cultural activities, the documentation of cultural heritage as well as of the contemporary intellectual work. • Deploy professional development schemes for staff members as well as thematic, vocational and professional communities. • Engage in European and especially in community level networking to foster the relations between the different "cultural worlds" and education, with specific attention to excluded youngsters.
Catalyst Initiatives	
• Adopt the development of creativity, the cultural expression as well as inter-cultural networking and collaboration as key education (policy) objectives in the formal education systems (ISCED 1-4), at regional and national level. • Enhance and financially support media/digital literacy building initiatives, within and beyond intercultural and intergenerational communities.	• Undertake and join pro-social initiatives, engaging the citizens/learners in activities deploying digital technologies, inter-organizational collaboration schemes and interoperability solutions (among the emerging "digital cultural/intellectual work repositories"), thus enhancing the interactivity between intellectual and cultural work and societal learning, across Europe.

MANIFESTO PRIORITY 5:
PROMOTE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO UNDERSTAND THE WORLD, IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES AND STIMULATE INNOVATION

POLICY LEVEL	ORGANISATIONAL/GRASSROOTS LEVEL
Main Orientations for Action	
- Recognise and valorise the multi-layer and multi-stakeholder knowledge production process in the knowledge society. - Open societal dialogue on the role of scientific research in the knowledge society.	- Promote social relevance of research and social responsibility of researchers. - Support a multistakeholder definition process of the research agenda.
Actions	
- Improve the level and effectiveness of the European dialogue between policy makers, business leaders and the research community. - Generate better co-ordination schemes between Europe-wide research and innovation strategies (i.e. EIT, Research Council, CIP, Framework Programs, LLP...) and national priorities, namely involving the deployment of structural funds for research and innovation programs. - EU and Member States research funding should be reviewed in terms of effectiveness and impact; three categories for research funding should be created: basic research (no tracking of direct impact), development funding (limited tracking of impact) and innovation funding (full tracking of value creation). - Increase investment and diversify sources of funding for mobility of knowledge workers. - Clear accountability for results should be established, beyond delivery of specified project outputs.	- Create mechanisms for a proper co-ordination at European level of national research and innovation agencies. - Encourage the formation of clusters of knowledge-driven industries and services, as well as cross-border initiatives directed at enhancing collaborative innovation-driven activities at regional and sub-national levels, building on the Regions of Innovation programme results. - Reward analysis and cooperation between academia and enterprises at local/regional policy levels. - Encourage the creation of national Fora integrating representatives of policy-makers, business leaders and researchers.
Catalyst Initiatives	
- Establish a dialogue platform integrating the existing national and local research and innovation agencies, including the EIT, allowing the pursuit of common/shared/coherent goals. - Include in all European research, innovation and development programs proper incentives to accelerate new knowledge transfer between universities and users communities in business, public administration and society at large.	Supply consultancy, financial and venture capital incentives to the aggregation of knowledge-driven enterprises as well as to the formation of cross-border clusters, involving both knowledge institutions and entrepreneurial business initiatives directed at enhancing collaborative innovation-driven activities at local and regional levels.

MANIFESTO PRIORITY 6:
PROMOTE DESIGN PROCESSES, THINKING AND TOOLS,
UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS, EMOTIONS, ASPIRATIONS AND ABILITIES OF USERS

POLICY LEVEL	ORGANISATIONAL/GRASSROOTS LEVEL
Main Orientations for Action	
• Good design Is not accidental: design and creativity are intimately linked. Design processes start with the formulation of problems and questions based on a deep understanding of human needs, both practical and aesthetic. Creativity is at the core of formulating solutions to design challenges. Design, as a subject of study, and as a process and practice that can be developed and honed, can be the means for individuals to explore and develop their own creative talents. While it may not be easy to teach creativity, it can be developed through teaching and developing an awareness of design and design practices and processes.	• Embed design thinking as an essential component of agile, flexible organisations. Education, training and up-skilling activities should be developed in a way that visibly includes 'design' (processes, tools, client/user-centred practices, visual and aesthetic considerations, ease of use of products, or interactions with the organisation). This will in many cases require new and fresh thinking and the sourcing of appropriate skills. 'Design' should be thought of a one of the 'new skills for new jobs', and should be a mainstream consideration for all organisations.
Actions	
• Ensure that principles of universal design are applied in all spheres of daily life; this will require that all Member States have appropriate audit tools and observatories in place. • Introduce 'design' as a mandatory cross-curricular subject in schools and other educational institutions, as a natural complement and contributor to the development of their critical awareness and their innovative, imaginative and creative skills.	• Develop a 'design mindset' and ensure that adequate training is available to staff at all levels, so that all activities and process are subject to constant critique and open to re-design. • Think about the 'learning organisation' as the 'design organisation'. Learn the power of 'design thinking' – through which organisations can find and address new challenges, developing a proactive rather than a reactive stance.
Catalyst Initiatives	
• Develop a "European design competition/challenge" that would run on an annual basis. Each year a new set of challenges and new briefs could be set, in order to engage people of all ages, from school children to adults, as "co-designers of their environments".	• Develop an open observatory for relevant case studies of design in action, applicable in different sectors, with a dynamic rating and recommendations facility. Ensure that the observatory is in itself an exemplar of best design practice and that it also functions as a repository of useful resources related to all aspects of design.

MANIFESTO PRIORITY 7:
SUPPORT BUSINESS INNOVATION THAT CONTRIBUTES TO PROSPERITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

POLICY LEVEL	ORGANISATIONAL/GRASSROOTS LEVEL
Main Orientations for Action	
• The key challenge of our time is to extract new value from technology, even with only incremental improvements of existing technology: policies need to take into account the sea changes in the overall economic fabric, beyond ICT. • Open and innovative services should be considered as the main value creators in advanced economies: policies need to reflect this change.	• Innovation initiatives need to stay close to market realities. Sustainability and prosperity need to and can be combined. Market driven innovation such as smart grids, data centre consolidation with huge energy savings, intelligent metering, intelligent power supplies can achieve more impact that artificial schemes driven by purely policy-led objectives.
Actions	
• Policy to support innovation should be reformulated after assessing its modest achievements and spontaneous dynamics of societal change.	• The EU must become a role model for creative collaboration and inter-organizational learning. • Human resource policies must be revised so that a sufficient degree of fluidity can be created within the EU and the global context.

Catalyst Initiatives
• An initiative "Innovating innovation" should be launched. Based on the understanding that innovation will be the only path leading out of the crisis in a sustainable way the "best minds" need to be brought together to make an inventory of best practices in innovation and to work on "next practices". A set of innovation principles, tools and methods has to be provided, targeted to business, the public sector, education, health and governance. This must include organization models, mindsets, competencies and innovation–support skills. It needs to cover the whole lifelong learning process of EU citizens, starting with early education. The initiative must be innovative in the way it is managed. Leadership and trust must replace excessive control and bureaucracy. Clear objectives and measurement of those (new qualitative and quantitative indicators to be consensually developed) will be the means to keep track.