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Acting as an Innovator

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

#Innovate4Palestine

Fostering a development mindset among teachers in Palestine

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INTRODUCTION

Acting as an Innovator is one of three modules of the EU Specialist Qualification in Product Development (180 European Competence Points). It is based on the model of the Finnish National Agency for Education and accredited by the Finnish Ministry for Education and Culture. Acting as an Innovator is a stand-alone program (45 ECP hours). Participants will receive an **EU recognized diploma** conferred upon them by Omnia Joint Authority of Education, accredited by the Finnish Ministry for Education and Culture.

Acting as an Innovator program aims to **spark a positive and innovative digitally inclined development mindset among teachers in Palestine** through equipping them with tangible tools to help spark their imagination to identify challenges in their learning environment, and design and develop solutions to the challenges in the form of powerful and impactful **learning projects with a digital dimension**. In this way, impact is maximized throughout the entire learning ecosystem.

Acting as an Innovator focuses on **teachers as the primary and essential agents in the educational process**; they work on the front lines on a daily basis, and therefore are best placed to

identify challenges within their learning environment. Through the program, participants will develop innovative projects with a digital dimension, aimed at offering solutions to the **challenges highlighted during the Covid-19 global crisis**. All projects are implemented within the participants' immediate learning communities. Encouraging the teachers themselves to engage in this type of thinking and digital experimentation allows for the type of **bottom-up change** that is so crucial to overall educational reform, which cannot happen through a top-down process alone. While a top-down approach is necessary for processes, it can't bring innovation which can only come from the people who are involved in the day-to-day of education.

Acting as an Innovator helps teachers **embrace an innovation mindset** through taking part in interactive online workshops, mentoring from experienced educators, and developing and implementing their projects on the ground. In addition, it follows a **"Training of Trainers" approach** whereby selected members of each cohort receive the additional guidance necessary to become mentors and certified trainers themselves and deliver the program to subsequent cohorts. OEP Finnish experts will train the first group of trainers, and they in turn will train

following group of trainers and mentors, and so on. Khutwa sees this as key to ensuring transfer of knowledge and expertise for program sustainability.

Acting as an Innovator is a **5-month module** comprising 4 sprints of innovation. Each sprint occurs over several stages: **learn, plan, apply, reflect/develop**. Each stage lasts one week and is organized through online activities, peer group meetings, mentor meetings and hands-on implementation in the school. Participants will work on **innovative solutions to pre-selected challenges identified as priorities to Palestinian education**. At the end of four months of the program cycle, participants will **present their development project-based solutions online**.

Acting as an Innovator focuses on co-creation, i.e. working together and also involving outside knowledge and expertise in the process. As each team implements their project, they will also learn how to make innovation visible through digital tools, how to measure its results, and ultimately how to scale it for amplified impact. They will conduct a benchmarking before and during implementation of their projects as part of measuring actual impact.



PROGRAM GOALS

Acting as an Innovator aims to embark participants on a learning journey towards innovation. **A hands-on digital dimension** to learning is a cross-cutting theme within the program and will be applied to all development projects implemented by the teachers.

Acting as an Innovator aims to effectively serve as **a platform of innovative ideas** that will be implemented on a small scale, acting as a testing ground for these ideas, where successful projects can then be taken and replicated on a larger scale. Through the program, we hope to allow teachers who are themselves enthusiastic, innovative and passionate about education in Palestine to try new things and serve as **agents of change in their communities**.

Acting as an Innovator aims to focus on **adopting an innovator's mindset**, through understanding the characteristics of innovation and the culture of experimentation, as well as inspiration from practical examples of innovation projects.

Acting as an Innovator aims to engage educators from the current learning ecosystem on a learning journey towards innovation. Through this process they become part of **the community of change agents that Khutwa aspires to create**, and create a powerful network of teachers embracing an innovation mindset.

Acting as an Innovator aims to highlight the importance of **building synergy** through collaboration towards fostering a strong ecosystem around lifelong learning.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES



Diploma recognized in EU

Graduates will receive an Omnia Joint Authority of Education module diploma recognized by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture.

The diploma is competency-based, not exam-based, where participants must implement a project and conduct benchmarking in order to earn the diploma.



Local trainers

The program will adopt the **Training of Trainers** approach whereby a certain number of program participants receive additional training allowing them to become certified trainers themselves.



Experienced mentors

The program develops **a network of mentors** whose role is to support participants during their program learning journey and the development of their projects.



Arabized module

Khutwa will **Arabize** the entire module by the end of the first round in order to better tailor the program to the Palestinian context and reach the greatest number of participants in coming rounds.



Digital competency

The program supports the **digital competency development of Palestinian education and educators.**

Online resources and digitally apt teachers are a must in developing Palestinian education.



Digital development projects

During the program journey, participants develop **a number of innovative projects with a digital dimension** that can be implemented on the ground or used as a good idea. These projects address challenges facing the educational environment in Palestine within a general framework related to education in Palestine, and reflect the priorities that must be emphasized within the Palestinian context today.

INNOVATION DRIVERS

The program focuses on these innovation drivers:



Development mindset:

the power to implement a new and innovative project to solve a current problem in education.



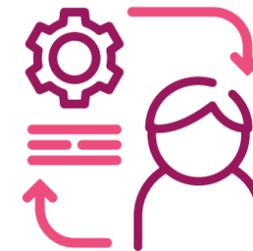
Frugal innovation:

seeing a lack of resources as an opportunity, not a crippling obstacle.



Creative thinking:

thinking outside the box beyond traditional formats and methods of learning.



Hands-on tools:

practical tools to create positive results in the classrooms.



Dialogue:

discussion to share practices and experience to arrive at common visions and effective solutions.

PROGRAM FACILITATORS: OMNIA EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

Khutwa first partnered with Omnia Education Partnerships in 2018 to implement the groundbreaking program, **Sparking Dialogue on Education**, which took 25 Palestinian educators on a unique learning journey including a study visit to Finland to observe the top-ranking Finnish education system up close, followed by a series of workshops in Palestine. In this regard, **OEP is well familiarized with the issues that govern Palestinian education** overall as well as the challenges and aspirations of Palestinian educators in particular.

Building on our already established partnership, Khutwa is teaming up with OEP to implement Acting as an Innovator in Palestine. Working together, we hope to support Palestinian teachers in bringing an innovation mindset to education. The Finnish experience shows us that the backbone of a good education system is that it should always have **grassroots programs and projects** initiated at

the level of the educators themselves. This is an ongoing process, innovation is a constant necessity.

Omnia Education Partnerships offers expertise building on **world-class Finnish education and training solutions**, tailored to the needs of educational organizations, governments and private sector entities worldwide. Diplomas conferred by OEP, the commercial arm of the Omnia Joint Education Commission, are **accredited by the Finnish National Agency for Education, recognized by the EU** and on a global level.

OEP also has a strategic partnership with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) aimed to bring high-quality accredited education to vulnerable populations and hard-to-reach areas.

TOWARDS A COMMUNITY OF CHANGE AGENTS

We at Khutwa are excited to bring the internationally recognized program Acting as an Innovator to Palestine for the first time. Based on the levels of passion, dedication and engagement we have witnessed, we believe that Palestinian teachers will respond incredibly well to the program. We see this program as attracting a group of innovators who act as a driving force, and whose enthusiasm and experience will guide us in learning how to develop education further. It is exactly these individuals that we want to empower with the possibility of implementing a pilot project, to spark the imagination and excitement of others in the field. The program will serve as a valuable pilot project that

can test out a range of different solutions and develop a number of projects, in order to find those that can be turned into best practices and adopted on a larger scale.

Overall, the program sparks **optimism, innovation, and a positive outlook**, while equipping educators with real tools and methodologies to put this into action. By adopting an innovation mindset and embracing a culture of experimentation, this community of teachers will be a **driving force of change** towards the type of learning we aspire to in Palestine.

To learn more about Acting as an Innovator,
please refer to:

Program Module

Program Implementation in Palestine

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