



## ABSTRACT

Exploitation of the results of LIFE project, Learning Incrementally from Failed Entrepreneurship.

## LIFE

Learning Incrementally from Failed Entrepreneurship  
H2020 – GA645000

# FINAL EXPLOITATION PLAN

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LEARNING INCREMENTALLY  
FROM FAILED ENTREPRENEURSHIP



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## Objectives

The goal behind the exploitation plan was to find the ways and means how to make the best use of our activities carried out during the project implementation. The foundation of achieving the exploitation goals was the dissemination strategy, therefore the exploitation and dissemination plan needed to go hand in hand throughout the project phases and after the funding ended. Identifying the target audience and appropriate channels to reach out to the ecosystems helped to maximise the impact of LIFE's strategy.

The main purpose of the LIFE project was to understand the components leading to failure, what kind of support activities were interesting for start-ups and where the gaps were in the supporting systems. Relying on the findings of work packages, patterns were identified, thus the consortium aimed at making recommendations of best practices and spreading the word in conferences, forums and local events Europe-wide. LIFE aimed to overcome distributed markets and decentralized policy by providing access to pan-European case stories, talent & relevant expertise, sufficient financing and adequate facilities & networks. As a result of partners' efforts, the strategic goal was to connect the key players of support networks and facilitate collaboration in the fragmented start-up ecosystem in Europe.

More specifically, the main objectives of the exploitation plan were:

- ✓ to establish and maintain mechanisms for effective exploitation in the long term by using the capacity of our networks
- ✓ to inform and raise awareness among stakeholders of the European start-up scene about the stigma surrounding entrepreneurship and identify solutions to overcome them
- ✓ to encourage more levels and types of exploitation of the knowledge produced by the partners of the LIFE project
- ✓ to ensure that the information reaches the target audience on a timely basis and the benefits of the project endure

## Consortium

The LIFE project was about collaborative learning from failure in entrepreneurship and collaborative actions to bring entrepreneurship forward. It aimed to overcome distributed markets and decentralised policy by providing access to pan-European case stories, talent & relevant expertise, sufficient financing and adequate facilities & networks.

## LIFE partners

Consortium coordinator: **startups.be**



*LIFE partners covering the European startup landscape*

## Approach and value proposition

Best practices and lessons learned built a collaborative learning exercise. It consisted of over 160 interviews with startup founders who failed along the way. The main attraction of the project was the Failing Forward conference organised in Brussels. Failing Forward provided a day of inspirational keynotes, workshops, power meetings and networking opportunities to the participants.

Local spin-off events in the partner regions raised awareness that failure was and would be an inherent part of ventures and innovation. Smaller #failingfwd events shared success stories built on incremental learning, and opened the existing startup support programs to web entrepreneurs from all over Europe.

In-depth interviews (VCs, business angels, community builders) completed the initial insights from startup founders. Recommendations from the findings helped increase the level of services provided by the partners. It also facilitated a better approach to help to spot potential risks at an early stage. The partners compiled a list of recommendations for the best format for #failingfwd events as well.

## Work structure

The structure of the LIFE proposal is based on the complementary nature of work packages which all served the exploitation goal. Benefiting from the results of interviews conducted in the frame of WP2 – Collaborative Learning, the consortium gained valuable insights into the start-up ecosystem of the given country, also a broader perspective what could help to avoid failure. WP3 – Collaborative Action was based on recommendations inspired by the findings, and it compiled events organized or attended by partners relating to the failure topic.

WP2 and WP3 played a defining role in how to move forward with mapping the support system and developing LIFE strategy how to adjust partner's services to the needs of start-ups. In parallel, understanding the stages of failure and the pros and cons of current structure of support enabled partners to have a detailed overview of the European ecosystem and advocate more effectively for policy changes both at national and European level.

In terms of public outreach, WP4 – Failing Forward flagship conference provided a pan-European forum to draw attention to the stigma surrounding entrepreneurship – particularly failed entrepreneurs – in Europe, nevertheless offers a platform for networking between the key actors in the field. Lessons learnt, best practices shared and connections made during the event were the cornerstones of eliminating the stigma and create a more favourable environment for enterprises in Europe. Videos and publications extracted from the conference’s line up and disseminated by the partners induced debates and fuelled the conversation in the ecosystems throughout Europe.

In WP5 – Evaluation the team set up an exchange scheme, in form of (virtual) meetings between teams to discuss issues of evaluating services provided to start-ups and entrepreneurs. The team also collaborated with WP6 team members to publish relevant evaluation results in community events like conferences and forums. WP5 played a vital role in researching the available failure literature in Europe and its implications on the European policy framework. A thorough document was presented by the end of the project which could be further used by partner organisations.

WP6 – Exploitation and Dissemination concentrated all activities that were related to the project exploitation and dissemination strategy. The dissemination strategy was a means to reach the exploitation goal. The dissemination activities aimed at making the project known in the start-up community, to attract more accelerators, investors, incubator networks and other stakeholders to the LIFE network and to provide evidence that these structures had a positive impact on start-ups and on the economy of the European Union.

## Actions and Planning

According to the action plan developed in WP3, the team regularly updated the database of future events where LIFE partners were involved or the failing forward concept was addressed. Monitoring of events provided LIFE partners with a realistic overview of how the public outreach that had been achieved and thus helped to tailor partners’ efforts as well. Nevertheless, WP3 worked together closely with WP2 to find ways of putting WP2 findings on partners’ programmes into action, along with mapping out potential beneficiaries who can take advantage of our recommendations.

The continual monitoring of the dissemination activities and the exploitation methods were essential to adjust to the changing landscape. WP5 provided scientific evaluation and feedback on publications related to the project.

Following-up on WP2 – Collaborative Learning, recommendations were made on how to better address the needs of start-ups in the local ecosystems, where to concentrate service providers’ resources to provide valuable services that could prevent failure and what were the key messages to the policy makers both at national and European level. The second phase of WP2 in collaboration with WP5 exploited the extensive knowledge and experience of senior staff members in each organisation (in-depth interviews).

The flagship conference of the consortium, Failing Forward, took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October. Exploitation of the event was of paramount importance since it gathered several influential actors from the field. Addressing the LIFE project during the conference remarkably raised the visibility of the project and had the potential to engage new partners and supporters. Facilitating the networking aspect was also a key objective for the organizers. Nonetheless, the outcome reached a broader audience in LIFE, ecosystems, in particular in the Belgian Europe-wide. To

achieve this goal, the Failing Forward inspirational speeches were distributed and published in various social media channels of the partners. It contributed to building the Failing Forward brand and earned great reputation for the LIFE project and its goals.

WP6 continued to work towards higher visibility of the results and activities carried out in the work packages.

GENERAL				
GOALS	Establishing a strong network	Exploring further cooperation	Discussion forums and knowledge sharing	Failing Forward concept
<b>ACTIVITIES (strong link to dissemination)</b>	attending conferences, reaching out to investors, incubators, accelerators, public bodies, local organizations	collaborating with other European projects in a meaningful and sustainable way, advisory board was selected for this strategic purpose	using existing channels to share best practices and information/services	attracting participants from all fields and corners of Europe (or even further), applying the concept to local events in Europe
<b>IMPACT</b>	maintaining links between partners and creating a platform for start-up support ecosystem	facilitating a more favourable entrepreneurship environment in Europe, stronger voice to influence public policies	reaching the public, opening up access to knowledge, building links between actors	changing the attitude towards failure, putting the topic in the spotlight, spark interest and keeping the conversation ongoing
<b>END OF PROJECT</b>	25+ local events, collaboration with major events (TNW), 2x Failing Forward	Launching the European Startup Network with some partners' involvement	failbetter.eu and f6s website along with partners' channels	NUMA's Founder Story concept

## Exploitable results

### WP2 - Interviews

The Collaborative Learning work package encompassed interviewing 10-20 startups from each ecosystem to gain a better understanding of the influential factors in failure. Altogether 200 interviews were carried out by the partners, some of them with delays, therefore 160+ were analysed and addressed in the White Paper.

To complement the findings, partners mutually agreed to move forward with in-depth interviews including both senior partners and 3 ecosystem builders (VCs, business angels and community builders) from all partner countries. The WP5 leader drafted the interview script

and carried out the interviews with the relevant ecosystem builders (identified and recruited by each partner) in the last months of 2015. The results from the partner interviews are incorporated in the WP5 Evaluation report, and also played an important role in the WP3 Second Action Plan. With this deviation from the original plan but coming to relevant output, the consortium “practiced what she preaches”, i.e. that it’s fine to mis-judge or make mistakes, as long as you learn from them and can find an alternative course of action to achieve your goals.

#### **Exploitation:**

- ✓ interviews were used to create the White Paper (public document) and served as the base of the WP3 recommendations (public). These findings are to be shared and disseminated in partners’ communities. - questionnaire (with the lessons learned) could be used as a basis for future surveys (with the necessary refinement)
- ✓ findings also helped partners to get a detailed view on incremental aspects of startup development - findings can be shared with startups/incubators/accelerators

### **WP3 - Recommendations**

WP3.1 and 3.2 were directly related to the results obtained in WP2. The main objective was to suggest the implementation of best practices to participating partners (mostly accelerators) and to measure the impact of these best practices over time.

Chamberi Valley (leaders of WP3), with help and support from Tetuan Valley and Oversight, have analysed the results of the 200 interviews. Through this analysis, they were able to obtain a list of the most common challenges that startups face and to propose a series of recommendations to improve the chances of success for the technology companies. Respectively: team management, product development, fundraising and legal matters

The suggestions included in this report should be considered with a view towards the future, as their implementation might not be possible in the short term due to ongoing partner programmes. Also worth noting is the fact that the measurement of the impact of these and other suggestions cannot be obtained in the short term. This is due to the nature of technology startups and the fact that success does not happen overnight. A large enough sample is also required in order to establish strong conclusions.

#### **Exploitation:**

- ✓ recommendations were based on the interview findings combined with startup ecosystem builder in-depth interviews - shared and used by ecosystem builders
- ✓ contacts established/strengthened during the process will nurture collaboration
- ✓ recommendations were implemented in line with partners’ individual structure and strategy - cross-fertilization of pan-European best practice
- ✓ based on the checklist, it can be revisited, measured and implemented in any stage of the organisation’s development - structural guidance
- ✓ the report contains several best practices to be shared within European networks

### **WP3 –Local Failing Forward events**

The organisation of local editions of Failing Forward, as well as smaller events to promote entrepreneurship in various ecosystems was another key aspect of WP3. Once the events were completed, partners were asked to provide event details in a spreadsheet so the outreach could be monitored. A good example of local events was The Next Web satellite event organised in 2016, another exciting example was LIFE’s dissemination leader’s moderation of an exciting panel at Slush about how well-known tech leaders learned to fail forward.

**Exploitation:**

- ✓ Contacts and experience gathered during the events contributed to the (non-public) database of speakers - can be used for future events/panel discussions/workshops
- ✓ Channels for further distribution of relevant content - onboarding of participants for future programmes/events

**WP4 - Failing Forward conference**

An event of high value for exploitation and dissemination is the Failing Forward conference. Startups.be, with the cooperation in LIFE, achieved the break-even point and, in future, should be able to organise the conference without additional funding. This was a direct enrichment of the entrepreneurship landscape in Europe promising sustainable impact on the entrepreneurship practice and culture. Flagship conferences like Failing Forward had the potential to change the attitude in Europe, praised a more inclusive style of conference organization with workshops, open speeches, knowledge sharing and one-on-one clinic sessions. Startups.be envisaged to franchise the model to local events with the same or similar structure, and as they believed in the positive impact it has on the participants and stakeholders.

Materials such as videos of speeches in the conference were distributed and spread in social media, as well as being published on the partner's own communications channels in order to reach as many potential stakeholders as possible. Raising awareness and put the key message of Failing Forward in the spotlight encouraged more and more entrepreneurs to talk freely about their failure and draw lessons on how to avoid them in the future.

**Exploitation:**

- ✓ Infrastructure behind Failing Forward allows to reach a broad audience with its message - format can be used as best practice
- ✓ Platform for speakers to share their stories - partners can refer speakers
- ✓ LIFE panels featured hands-on #failingfwd stories and this kind of exercise may continue as a good practice - space for European founders to give testimonials

**WP5 - Evaluation framework and failure literature review**

Using the information generated in Tasks 2 & 3, Oversight developed a questionnaire for project partners with 31 questions focused on subjects such as: factors behind failure, fundraising, the output of services provided by partners, the perception of failure in partner countries and the best/worst practices to promote learning from failure. A contact person was identified in each organisation (someone with an overview of the services provided and of the local ecosystem). In total 14 interviews were carried out lasting between 45 minutes and 1 hour during the last trimester of 2016. The results of the interviews were analysed, compared and the conclusions were included in Deliverable 5.1, along with: 1) Information taken from the questionnaires developed in WP2 (Startup focus) 2) Information from speakers and accounts at the Failing Forward Conference 2015 3) A review of literature, material and research that already exists on the topic

**Exploitation:**

- ✓ Thorough failure literature review - crucial reading material to anyone engaged in better understanding of failing forward culture and its relation with Europe
- ✓ Prevent-Discuss-Respond leaflet is to be shared broadly after the project - straight-to-the-point summary of best practices

- ✓ Evaluation of the project - to be used by the project partners to identify strengths and weaknesses of project execution (future best practice), especially in case of those who participated in EU-funded projects at first time

### WP6 - White paper

This formed part of WP6 and was one of the deliverables already at hand (D6.2). The White Paper was the public presentation of the project including valuable insights gained from the interviews conducted in WP2, in line with promising best practices in general.

#### Exploitation:

- ✓ White Paper formed the core of the Collaborative Learning and Action reports, also played an important role to define further the dissemination strategy

### WP6 - Dissemination plan

It builds on web presence primarily; each partner were expected to publish insights and valuable datasets on their websites and social media channels. It was advised to publish documents of different dissemination levels as well as infographics and some quotes by the interviewees. Web presence did not only consist of a traditional static website, but included elements of social networking. Just as important was the use of social networking through channels such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and accelerator-specific platforms including, of course, f6s.com and Tech.eu.

#### Exploitation:

Examples of disseminated content to put #failingfwd in the spotlight:

- ✓ <http://tech.eu/inside/4584/fail-better/>
- ✓ <http://tech.eu/features/5895/arthur-tolsma-failing-forward/>
- ✓ <http://tech.eu/features/6264/oscon-leslie-hawthorn-fear-failing/>

Series of articles published based on WP2 findings:

- <http://tech.eu/features/11063/life-project-talent-shortage>
- <http://tech.eu/research/11107/life-project-startup-basics>
- <http://tech.eu/research/11159/life-project-money-team-customers>

Dissemination lead, Tech.eu published a great compilation mentioning the project:

<http://tech.eu/brief/founders-skype-spotify-supercell-slush-2016-video/> -

Failing Forward conference with LIFE panel summarized in a Storify story: <https://storify.com/startupsbe/failing-forward-2016#1237f7>

Failing Forward conference: album on Facebook is [here](#).

#### Numbers:

- ✓ 160+ interviews with startup founders
- ✓ 30+ local events focusing on #failingfwd
- ✓ 50+ best practices & recommendations for service providers
- ✓ media exposure -> 7 (so far) articles on Tech.eu & a number of public appearances (I still don't have the exact number on dissemination & reach, sorry - but will let you know)
- ✓ Failing Forward side event during The Next Web
- ✓ 2x Failing Forward conference in Brussels

#### Videos:

[YouTube playlist 2015 talks](#) (Failing Forward conference)

[YouTube playlist 2016 talks](#) (Failing Forward conference)

#### Publications (non exhaustive list):

- ✓ <http://tech.eu/features/11063/life-project-talent-shortage>
- ✓ <http://tech.eu/research/11107/life-project-startup-basics>
- ✓ <http://tech.eu/research/11159/life-project-money-team-customers>
- ✓ <http://tech.eu/inside/4584/fail-better/>
- ✓ <http://tech.eu/features/5895/arthur-tolsma-failing-forward/>
- ✓ <http://tech.eu/features/6264/oscon-lelie-hawthorn-fear-failing/>

## Dissemination platforms

Tech.eu & F6S: both platforms were and remain instrumental for disseminating the results of the projects as they provided invaluable platforms for public outreach. Both partners pledged to remain partners in future exploitation should #failingfwd stories come around or events should be promoted.

Sources to track failed startups - e.g. graveyard <http://startupgraveyard.io/> or <http://autopsy.io/> will remain valuable sources to find stories to learn from.

Partners assembled a great number of articles from various resources in a Dropmark account. Thanks to its features, such compilation is easy to share and contribute to. <http://failforward.dropmark.com/>

Social media channels, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn (with particular emphasis on the new Startup Europe LinkedIn group) would play an important role in sharing the findings once the F6S site with all public deliverables is live.

## Collaboration

Cornerstone of all ICT13 projects was the umbrella of Startup Europe. They provided a platform and continuous collaboration during the project, organised joint reviews with advisors which proved valuable throughout the project duration. Startup Europe's PR agency, Hugin & Munin continuously supported promoting the events related to LIFE.

The Startup Europe team facilitated a great collaborative environment amongst the web entrepreneurship projects. Continuous review and advisory meetings (Brussels and Lisbon) helped to form partnerships (formal and informal) which proved valuable for exploitation of the



 **Diána Páti** @dianapati\_hu · 24 May 2016  
Failing forward talk on stage at #StartupFestEU. Way to go to change our attitude! #LIFE @StartUpEU @adavideo

LIFE results. The partners involved in the ICT13 projects were eager to share information in their networks, thus extrapolating the outreach of LIFE activities. Of international uptake, a great was a satellite event addressing “failing forward” under the flag of The Next Web in Amsterdam, 25-28 May. As a highlight, one of the LIFE partners from then Tetuan Valley, Carmen Bermejo (currently running the Spanish Startup Association) was a panellist during the Startup Fest (a high-level event right before TNW organised by Startup Delta) where she actively engaged talking about the importance of #failingfwd.

Startup Europe proved to be a crucial factor in facilitating collaboration throughout the year 2016. In particular, back in March a common meeting with the projects and advisors were held in Lisbon which helped to strengthen the relationship between coordinators. LIFE signed a collaboration agreement with MYWAY which resulted in failing forward session in 3 student conferences. It started in London (February), then continued in Lisbon (October) and in Treviso, Italy (December). Panels were appreciated by the participants as failure still bears a stigma in Europe. Starting educating young, wannabe entrepreneurs by showing them that a failed business idea is not game over could go a long way empowering more and more entrepreneurs in Europe.

Not only MYWAY, but a MOOC-enabled project, Digistart initiated a collaboration through which the videos of Failing Forward conferences became part of Digistart’s curriculum and displayed on their website.

FuckUp Nights – a concept deriving from Mexico – were also a vital source of speakers and collaborators throughout the project. In some countries partners approached their local FuckUp Nights organisers who contributed to the project.

LIFE project formed the cornerstone of the Failing Forward conference, and built on the experience a #failingfwd session moderated by the Brussels FuckUp Nights organiser was inserted into Startups.be’s Tech Startup Day event as well.

## European outreach

Startup Europe - an umbrella of startup hub connectors and other European initiatives aiming to connect startup communities across Europe. The one-stop-shop for startups and ecosystem builders, thus a great source of information for actors in the startup ecosystem. Thanks to Startup Europe’s efforts, LIFE project gained valuable exposure and partnerships with SE projects and due to the high-quality network SE advisors. The connections made with Startup Europe will continue to play a role in spreading the word about the final project results.



**European Startup Network** – for some organisations which connected via the LIFE project and in the European ecosystem initiated by the Startup Europe projects proved to be fertile ground to strengthen the collaboration of startup organisations. By uniting all national startup associations, leveraging their best practices and interconnecting their networks, ESN aims to open up access to the talent, expertise, funding and customers for all European startups. The grassroots network to allow European startups to

scale globally as its founders firmly believe that in forming a single European startup ecosystem counts. ESN counts 21 members as of now and LIFE project substantially contributed to its establishment. Thanks to ESN, startup associations working on startup policy in EU member states now have a platform to share best practices, coordinate data collection and together help shape Europe into a more unified tech and startup ecosystem. Such European networks are major actors in cross-fertilizing and exploit the knowledge created in European projects for example, also could act a facilitator to the uptake of best practices across Europe and an efficient gateway to go-to-market efforts.

## Sustainability

Below LIFE partners' pledges how they will integrate LIFE's results into their daily routine after the project ended.

**startups.be** **Startups.be:** the Failing Forward platform established through a joint effort with the Flemish government is going to continue and share #failingfwd stories. Documents produced are to be displayed on their website and shared via Startups.be's communication channels. The European Startup Network, which was co-founded by Startups.be, is going to disseminate and use the findings to identify gaps and initiate future action items, eventually projects.

**Outsight:** scientific dissemination (according to GA task)



**F6S:** FailBetter.eu website - was redirecting to LIFE page on F6S. F6S newsletter to around 70.000 European founders. Both Failing Forward events were created on the platform and disseminated through the platform (e.g. direct emails, newsletters). Other events and results were also disseminated through F6S channels and network. All the resources produced during the LIFE project lifetime will be collected, shared and disseminated on the project website at <https://www.f6s.com/life>.

**Tech.eu:** As an online media publication, we have run regular news articles about the project, the learnings and the various events. These have been included in our weekly newsletter, published on our website and shared across our social media network. Through our regular involvement in conferences and events across Europe we have been able to spread news and information about the project through WOM. Robin has maximised his opportunity to include the LIFE project in his discussions with stakeholders across Europe. Going forward we will continue to integrate the board project message in all articles and communications, where the message has relevance.



**Beta-i:** Promoting events & stories/content produced on social media (facebook, twitter), newsletters. Through the organization of events. Updated the acceleration programmes and mentoring activities with the know-how from the project. Linking to the FuckUp Nights Lisbon initiative and possibly leveraging on the material developed by the project to support research on failure with an academic partner (talks ongoing).

**Chamberi Valley:** Word of mouth and at informal lunch meetings at Chamberi Valley. IN3 will be run on a yearly basis and our goal is to continue to encourage the discussion of startup failures in the community.



**Tetuan Valley:** We shared the white paper and the article by Tech.eu via direct email to all of our community, and also shared them in all our social media platforms. We also talked about the LIFE Project at many events we attended, and organized specific

events on fear of failure. We plan to continue to mention the LIFE Project and its findings in any event where we see fit, and to share with our network the final report from the project.

**NUMA:** We promoted the actions that we conducted for the project on our social networks (twitter mostly as most founder stories are private). We also tried to mention the LIFE project every time we had the opportunity to talk about our action at EU level and to promote synergies with other StartupEU projects



(invitation of WeHubs to a conference on access to funding at EU level organised at NUMA, participation of NUMA to a Webinar on how to help startups go international). Founder stories are definitely a format that we will keep. We will probably adapt the interviews of the founders that we publish after each founder story. As a matter of fact, all founders tend to give the same advice to startups. On the other hand, if we focus the articles on their entrepreneurial journey (roadblocks, failures, pivots), all founders that we interview will have a different story to tell. We want to ask more question about failure.



**OCC:** We relied on our events (described above), Twitter & Facebook pages. Mostly we are planning to disseminate any quality information related to the Project via our social media channels – Twitter & Facebook.

**Startup100:** Advertising the Failing Forward conference in our networks and in our newsletter (our media reaches over 10000 entrepreneurs, investors and startup influencers monthly). Sharing the learnings of the research in our networks and in our newsletter. Continuing sending leads on stories of failed entrepreneurs for Tech.eu. Sharing the reports and the upcoming brochure. Possibly publishing a list of failed startups on startup100.net



**Startup Wise Guys:** Social media channels will be actively used to promote the project findings.

**UnternehmerTUM:** We used various events to present and discuss the project and its' outcomes. We also used our marketing channels (Facebook, Newsletter and Twitter) to promote the project, events and the FF conference. We plan to disseminate a final conclusion about LIFE after the FF Conference: roadmap and key learnings from the project.



**Rob Aalders:** Via the events, Digimark platform and Facebook posts. Besides social media, Dropmark list will be used and updated, also the insights gained from the project will be published and spread in the Dutch, with focus on the Eindhoven startup ecosystem.

**ZIP:** Word of mouth, informal meetings in ZIP, through the media. At least one event per year where startups from Croatia will talk about the failure and the lessons from it. Examples of public outreach:



<http://www.poslovnipuls.com/2016/07/08/zip-demo-day-startupi-diplomirali-ali-i-naucili-iz-neuspjeha/>

<http://www.netokracija.com/zip-startupi-deveta-generacija-121245>

<http://www.tportal.hr/gadgeterija/tehnologija/435743/ZIP-ce-sudjelovati-u-konferenciji-o-neuspjehu.html>

<http://www.ictbusiness.info/poslovanje/zip-startupi-diplomirali-ali-i-naucili-iz-neuspjeha>



**Startup Norway:** Through closed events and our closed network – and through social media, emails etc. We have used general knowledge sharing system. We will advertise the failing forward conference in Startup Norway's channels in social media and newsletters, and take care of the network and knowledge that came out of this project. We will help project partners spread the word on relevant initiatives.

## Future and Impact

### Potential collaboration with Startup Europe projects:

In order to exploit LIFE project to the fullest, it is instrumental to keep the ties established in the Startup Europe community alive and cross-fertilize the channels of each other to reach a broad audience with the findings. Startup Europe partners could also provide a vehicle to form new collaboration and upgrade the LIFE concept into a similar project proposal – with a refined focus and streamlined number of partners.

### Startup Europe call:



LIFE's coordinator is considering to build on the incremental findings of LIFE project and build a consortium which would tackle another soft topic, team building for scale ups which may also touch upon a sensitive, yet mostly underrepresented topic: mental health issues of entrepreneurs. LIFE project was a perfect first lesson to learn the ins and outs of European project formation and how to make an impact with limited resources in a defined timeframe. Such calls like ICT32 of Horizon 2020 deem

vital to nurture projects and deepen collaboration on a pan-European level.

### Prevent-Discuss-Respond:

LIFE's newly created tagline is a perfect summary of how the consortium and associated partners can make best use of the findings. A checklist of how to identify signs of failure early on, precautionary methods built into service providers' offerings and events highlighting the importance of embracing #failingfwd are the cornerstones of the strategy.

**A) PREVENT:** Try reduce the risks of failure amongst start-ups.

**B) RESPOND:** Introduce adequate mechanisms so that should start-ups fail, they can positively learn from this experience and go on to succeed with a future entrepreneurial opportunity.

**C) DISCUSS:** Change the negative perception of failure by creating forums where stories can be shared and the subject can be discussed.

The combination of these three measures would reduce people's fear to failure and encourage entrepreneurial activity, strengthening as a result the European start-up ecosystem.

### #FailingFwd is key to build a healthier entrepreneurial culture

Acceptance of failure is incremental towards a paradigm shift in Europe. LIFE project succeeded shaping the failure subject into a critical yet rational discourse. Widespread stigmatisation of those who entered the bumpy road to success starts to tarnish. Instead, rising like a phoenix attitude should become an integral part of European education. Eliminating the stigma will trigger a broader societal effect. It can lead to significant policy changes, for instance easing bankruptcy legislation. Our hope is that LIFE project played a role in igniting an incremental change in the European entrepreneurial culture.