# Pilot project application template

## Contact details of the facilitator

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## Summary of the pilot project (Max. 1600 characters)

(Including stakeholders, problem/challenge, approach, relevant links)

For more than 10 years, LRTAC has been implementing a programme “Promotion of Youth Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas”. The target group of the programme are young people (18-40 years old) who are interested in developing their own business in rural areas. During the participation in the programme they are working with their business advisor from LRATC and have possibility to take part in trainings preparing them to elaborate their business plan into something real. With the support of business advisors and numerous mentors and experts which are working with young entrepreneurs, participants of the programme can apply for the business plan competition. Overall, more than 2300 young people have been trained, nearly 600 business ideas have taken part in the competition, more than 250 ideas have become real business in this programme.

In recent years, creation of new businesses in Latvia has decreased, particularly in rural areas, and there must be more and more thinking about addressing and encouraging young people in business, thereby promoting the development of rural areas, creation of new workplaces and the development of innovative products.

To make training process more practical and easier LRATC advisors and mentors who both are working with the young rural entrepreneurs have agreed that it would be useful to create material supporting advisors and mentors in their work with young rural entrepreneurs. The idea is to create material with practical tasks “100 days to start your business” which would be both – handbook for advisors and mentors and supportive material for rural entrepreneurs during the phase of developing and running their business.

Worth fact to mention is that this material will be created by the focus group consisting of advisors, mentors, experts and young rural entrepreneurs. LRATC see that the red thread of this supportive material would be Spiral of initiatives which would be used as the core of the material. Idea is to take phases described in Spiral of initiative and work them through by finding what exactly advisor and rural entrepreneur should consider during each of the phase.

The material is planned to go step by step through the generation of ideas, setting up targets, inspiring others, defining warm network, analysing who is in your network and who is not and how to reach them, creating a product, researching the target market, preparing a business plan, drawing up the production process, developing marketing and selling skills. In general, everything what is necessary when one is developing business or providing advisory service for someone developing business. As part of tasks, collaborative innovation techniques will also be included to develop new innovative products in rural areas and to improve communication skills in collaborative projects.

In the best traditions of the i2connect, creation of the supportive material will be pure co-creation as according to the plan young entrepreneurs, mentors, business advisors in regions and lecturers (participants from different sectors and with different knowledge) would jointly create material. It is also necessary to create an interactive and visually attractive design so young people have the motivation and interest to do their tasks. The material is planned as a notebook in a printed A5 form with approximately 120-150 pages, collection of practical tasks.

As the main objective of the i2connect project is to boost capacity of the advisors then LRATC consider this supportive material as great help for rural business advisors and mentors who are working with young entrepreneurs in rural areas.

As the first step of the pilot project would be (1) to set up the focus group who will work together to create the material for supportive material; (2) organize 1-day trainings for focus group giving insight in i2connct methods as the Spiral of initiatives, Network analysis, Triangle of co-creation, Energy timeline and other is there is enough time for that. Trainings will be provided by the LRATC internal trainers who have organizes i2connect national trainings or have been participated in them. The aim of these training would bring all involved actors onto one page and reach the common understanding, especially about the Spiral of initiatives as this method is planned to be a red thread through all the supportive material. As it was written above, Initiative spirals’ phases would be the leading motive in filling in the information about what young entrepreneur should consider while building own business. (3) organizing focus group workshops/ meetings to agree on the content of the supportive material; (4) prepare content and print supportive material; (5) organizing i2connect national trainings for business advisors who are closely working with young farmers and entrepreneurs to fill them up with i2connect philosophy regarding importance of co-creation and networking.

More information about project can find here: <http://llkc.lv/lv/nozares/lauku-attistiba/jauniesi-uznemejdarbiba>; Facebook: @Laukiembut

## Motivation for this proposal to be selected as a pilot project (Max. 1000 characters)

As the success of the young entrepreneur during the programme is partly dependent on qualification and knowledge of rural business advisor, it is crucial to support existing and new advisors who are joining the team. Material will help rural business advisors, mentors and future entrepreneurs during the business plan creation process and will lead with easy, structured steps through the entire business start-up and development cycle. It will serve as a practical diary in which to make your own notes, write down ideas and prepare for writing a business and financial plan. The material will also serve as a tool for lecturers in training and business advisors in individual support work with future entrepreneurs. It is planned to describe collaborative innovation methods so promote the understanding and using them in the development of business ideas. Since such material has not been developed so far and it is innovative in the Latvian market, it is necessary to support material’s creation in the spring and summer of this year. It is planned that at the end of the summer notebook’s test group will be set up and using collaborative innovation methods feedback will be received so we could improve material so that it could be printed to the new participants in the new training season in autumn.

The practical supportive material for starting a business will serve as a good example for i2conect partners to develop new businesses and innovative products in the rural area.

**Outcome**

* Focus group - young entrepreneurs (, mentors, business advisors in regions and lecturers, young farmer from board of Latvian Young Farmers’ Club.
* 1 training day for focus group (6-8 participants)
* New material for young entrepreneurs in rural areas (including young farmers) and practical supportive material for advisors who work with young entrepreneurs (electronic and printed (500 exemplars, A5)
* i2connect national trainings for rural business advisors (10-12 advisors, 2.5 days)