



D5.3 – Best Practices and Recommendations Report

WP5 Outcomes and Impact Monitoring



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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The DO Impact project aims to strengthen the digital and data-driven capacities of **Social Economy organisations and the enabling organisations that support them**, helping them make better use of digital tools, data and emerging technologies to improve their processes, decision-making and social impact.

A central component of the project was the **DO Impact Learning Journey**, which combined transnational and local capacity-building activities covering topics such as digitalisation and data strategies, open data, data ethics, impact measurement, artificial intelligence, data storytelling and stakeholder engagement. Beyond the acquisition of technical knowledge, the Learning Journey also promoted **peer learning, exchange of experiences and collaboration between organisations from different European ecosystems**.

The effectiveness and knowledge-transfer outcomes of these activities were assessed in **D5.2 – Knowledge Transfer Assessment Report** through a combination of short- and long-term questionnaires, regional assessments and qualitative evidence. The assessment showed that participants valued particularly the practical and transferable nature of the learning, peer exchange and networking, and provided evidence that the knowledge acquired was subsequently applied in different organisational contexts.

Building on this assessment, the final stage of WP5 focuses on **capitalising on the experience generated throughout DO Impact**. This means moving from assessing whether learning and knowledge transfer took place to identifying **which practices and approaches generated value, which needs and barriers remain, and what can be learned from the experience for the design of future capacity-building initiatives**.

D5.3 – Best Practices and Recommendations Report therefore brings together the main lessons emerging from the Learning Journey, with particular attention to the **collective reflections gathered through the Learning Walls during the DO Impact Final Event**. The Learning Walls were specifically designed to capture participants' views on the most valuable learning and its application in practice, future digital skills and needs, effective learning formats, and elements to keep, improve or add in future initiatives.

1.2 Purpose of the report

The purpose of **D5.3 – Best Practices and Recommendations Report** is to identify and consolidate the **best practices, lessons learned and recommendations**



emerging from the DO Impact experience, with a view to supporting the design and implementation of future digital and data-related capacity-building initiatives for the Social Economy.

While D5.2 focused on assessing the effectiveness of the Learning Journey and the extent to which knowledge was acquired, retained and transferred into practice, this report builds on that evidence to examine **what worked particularly well, what participants considered most valuable, what challenges and capacity-building needs remain, and how future initiatives could respond to them**.

Particular attention is given to the results of the **Learning Walls**, which provide a collective reflection from participants at the end of the Learning Journey. These findings are complemented by the evidence generated through the broader project assessment, including participant feedback, the long-term assessment, interviews and the Final Roundtable.

More specifically, this report aims to:

- identify **successful practices and approaches** emerging from the DO Impact Learning Journey;
- analyse the **learning, skills and approaches considered most valuable and applicable** by participants;
- identify **future digital and data-related skills, capacity-building needs and barriers** faced by participating organisations;
- examine which **learning formats and methodologies** participants considered most effective;
- consolidate participants' perspectives on what should be **maintained, improved or added** in future capacity-building initiatives; and
- formulate **evidence-based recommendations** that can inform the design of future programmes supporting the digital transformation of Social Economy organisations.

In this way, D5.3 represents the **capitalisation of the learning generated throughout DO Impact**, translating the project experience and participants' feedback into practices and recommendations that can be considered beyond the project itself.

2. Evidence Base and Approach

D5.3 draws on the evidence generated throughout the DO Impact Learning Journey, with the **Learning Walls conducted during the Final Event as the main source for identifying best practices, remaining needs and recommendations**.

The Learning Walls provide the core evidence for the analysis in Section 3, as they were specifically designed to capture participants' reflections at the end of the Learning Journey. Their contributions were reviewed across the eight completed

posters and grouped around **recurring themes, shared priorities and relevant qualitative insights**. Where questions included predefined categories and sticker voting, the results were also analysed quantitatively to identify the relative weight of the different options.

The findings from this exercise were then considered alongside evidence already collected throughout the project, particularly:

- the **short- and long-term participant feedback analysed in D5.2**, providing evidence on satisfaction, relevance, knowledge retention and application;
- **qualitative feedback and participant interviews**, offering further insight into how learning was perceived and applied in different organisational contexts;
- evidence from **national and transnational Learning Journey activities**, including their implementation and participant experience; and
- reflections emerging from the **Final Event and Final Roundtable**, where relevant to the themes addressed in this report.

These sources were used primarily to **contextualise and validate the patterns emerging from the Learning Walls**, rather than to repeat the assessment already presented in D5.2.

The analysis therefore follows a **thematic and evidence-based approach**. Contributions expressing similar ideas were grouped into broader themes, recurring priorities across the Learning Walls were identified, and these findings were compared with the wider project evidence. This provides the basis for the best practices and recommendations presented in Sections 4 and 5.

The approach is primarily qualitative and interpretative. The Learning Walls capture collective contributions made within table discussions and should therefore not be understood as an individual participant survey. Quantitative results derived from sticker-based questions indicate the **distribution of votes across the available categories**, while qualitative contributions are used to illustrate recurring experiences, needs and suggestions.

3. Learning Walls: Collective Findings from the Learning Journey

The **Learning Walls** were conducted during the DO Impact Final Event in Brussels as a participatory exercise to gather participants' reflections on the Learning Journey and identify the main lessons, needs and suggestions emerging from their experience.

Participants were organised into **eight round tables of approximately six to eight people**, with each table working with the same Learning Wall template. The exercise combined group discussion with individual contributions: participants discussed the questions within their tables and recorded their views directly on the posters using **post-it notes and stickers**.

The Learning Wall was structured around four areas:

1. **Most valuable learning and application in practice** – which topics had been most useful for participants and their organisations, and which knowledge or skills they had already applied;
2. **Future digital skills and capacity-building needs** – which skills participants would like to strengthen and what barriers their organisations face in applying digital and data-related knowledge;
3. **Learning formats** – which formats participants considered most useful for future learning activities; and
4. **Keep, Improve and Add** – which elements of the Learning Journey should be maintained, improved or introduced in future capacity-building initiatives.

Using the same template across the eight tables provided a **common framework for reflection**, while leaving participants space to raise different experiences, priorities and organisational needs.


LEARNING WALL
Your ideas today shape tomorrow's impact!

A MOST VALUABLE LEARNING What has created the biggest impact?	B FUTURE SKILLS & NEEDS Looking ahead	C LEARNING FORMATS How do we learn best?	D RECOMMENDATIONS Imagine the next DO Impact programme
1 Which topic from the DO Impact programme was most useful for your organisation and why? ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA 2 What knowledge or skill have you already applied in practice? ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA	3 Which digital or data-related skills will be most important for social economy organisations for the next 3 years? DIGITALISATION & DATA STRATEGIES APPLIED AI & PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS OPEN DATA ECOSYSTEMS DATA STORYTELLING ETHICAL & INCLUSIVE DATA USE RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT & CRM IMPACT MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORKS DATA SHARING FRAMEWORKS 4 What are the main barriers preventing organisations from advancing their digital transformation? SKILLS FUNDING CULTURE TIME LEADERSHIP TECHNOLOGY DATA QUALITY OTHER	5 Which learning formats work best? WORKSHOPS WEBINARS PEER-LEARNING SESSIONS MENTORING CASE STUDIES HANDS-ON EXERCISES STUDY VISITS 6 What would make future programmes more effective? ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA	7 If you could design the next DO Impact programme, what would you keep, improve or add? KEEP What's working well? ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA IMPROVE What can be better? ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA ADD What's missing? ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA
KEY LEARNING What is the most important learning you are taking away? 💡	ONE PRIORITY SKILL Which skill do you see as the top priority for the next 3 years? 🎯	ONE BEST LEARNING FORMAT Which format works best? 👥	ONE RECOMMENDATION What is your key recommendation for future programmes? ✅

The analysis presented in the following sections brings together the contributions recorded across the **eight completed posters**. All responses are reviewed across the posters to identify **recurring themes, shared priorities and relevant examples**. Contributions expressing similar ideas were grouped under broader themes, while specific responses were retained where they provided additional insight into participants' experiences or needs.

The results are presented following the four areas of the Learning Wall: **most valuable learning and application in practice (Section 3.1); future digital skills and capacity-building needs (Section 3.2); learning formats (Section 3.3); and participants' recommendations to keep, improve and add (Section 3.4).**

The **eight completed Learning Wall posters are included in Annex 1**, providing the full record of the exercise and allowing the findings presented in this chapter to be traced back to the original contributions.

3.1 Most Valuable Learning and Application in Practice

The first area of the Learning Wall focused on the **value generated by the Learning Journey**. Participants were asked two complementary questions: **which topic from the DO Impact programme had been most useful for their organisation and why**, and **which knowledge or skills they had already applied in practice**.

The contributions collected across the eight tables show a diverse range of learning outcomes, reflecting the different profiles and needs of the participating organisations. Nevertheless, several themes appeared repeatedly across the posters. In particular, participants highlighted learning related to **data management and use, impact measurement, artificial intelligence and responsible technology use**, alongside the value of **networking, peer exchange and exposure to other Social Economy organisations and experiences**.

The responses to the second question also show that part of this learning had already moved into practice. Participants provided examples related to the use of AI, data collection and visualisation, impact measurement and connections with other organisations and projects. The findings below bring together the main themes emerging from both questions.

DATA MANAGEMENT AND USE

Participants highlighted **data management, data collection, data protection, open data and data visualisation** among the useful areas addressed during the Learning Journey. Several contributions also referred to applying data-related knowledge in their organisations, particularly in relation to collecting, managing and visualising data. Overall, the responses point to the importance of connecting data skills with concrete organisational needs and day-to-day practices.

IMPACT MEASUREMENT AND SOCIAL IMPACT

Impact measurement and **social impact** appeared across several Learning Walls, including references to impact measurement frameworks and the use of data to understand organisational impact. Participants also reported applying some of these approaches in practice. The responses suggest that linking digital and data capacities with the measurement and communication of social impact was particularly relevant for Social Economy organisations.

AI AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Participants referred to **artificial intelligence, prompt writing and AI integration**, but also to **AI ethics and ethical and inclusive data use**. Some participants reported already using AI-related knowledge and tools in their work. The combination of these responses highlights both the practical interest in emerging technologies and the importance participants placed on their responsible use.

NETWORKING AND PEER EXCHANGE

The value identified by participants extended beyond technical content. **Networking, peer exchange, learning about other Social Economy organisations and ecosystems, and connections with international projects** were also highlighted. These contributions show that interaction between participants was itself an important component of the Learning Journey, creating opportunities to exchange experiences and establish connections beyond the individual learning activities.

3.2 Future Digital Skills and Capacity-Building Needs

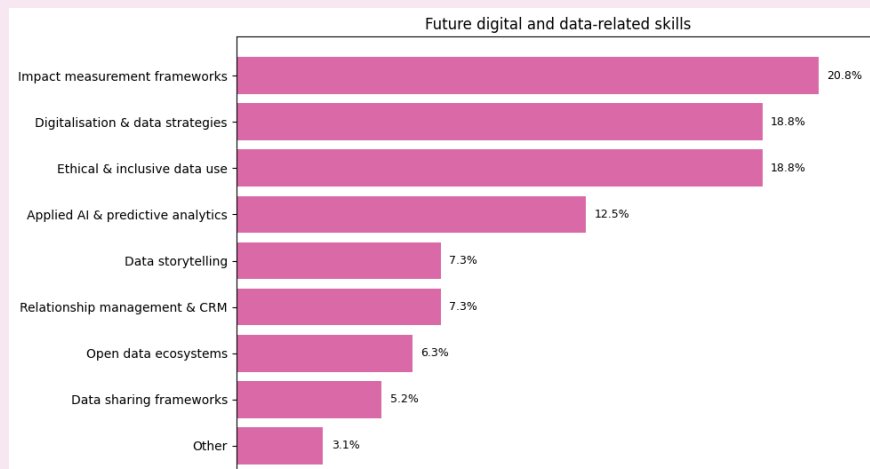
The second area of the Learning Wall looked towards the future, exploring both **which digital and data-related skills will be most important for Social Economy organisations over the next three years** and **which barriers may prevent organisations from advancing their digital transformation**.

For both questions, participants were provided with predefined categories and invited to place stickers on the options they considered most relevant. This provides a quantitative indication of the priorities emerging across the eight tables. As participants could select more than one option, the percentages below represent the **distribution of votes across categories rather than the percentage of individual participants**. In some cases, participants also added **written comments alongside their votes to explain or contextualise their choices**. These qualitative contributions were considered alongside the voting results to provide further insight into the priorities and barriers identified.

FUTURE DIGITAL AND DATA-RELATED SKILLS

Across the eight Learning Walls, **Impact Measurement Frameworks emerged as the most frequently selected future skill, accounting for 20.8% of the votes**. This was followed closely by **Digitalisation & Data Strategies (18.8%)** and **Ethical & Inclusive Data Use (18.8%)**. Together, these three areas represented **58.3% of all votes cast on future skills**.

Applied AI & Predictive Analytics accounted for a further 12.5%, confirming the relevance of AI-related capacities while also showing that participants' priorities extended beyond emerging technologies. The remaining votes were distributed across **Data Storytelling (7.3%)**, **Relationship Management & CRM (7.3%)**, **Open Data Ecosystems (6.3%)**, **Data Sharing Frameworks (5.2%)** and **other skills (3.1%)**.



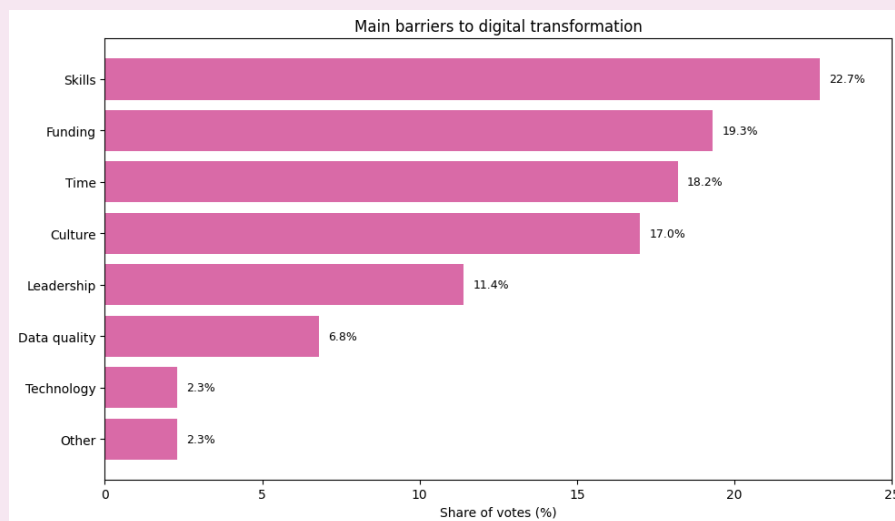
The results point to a **broad understanding of digital capacity-building needs**. Participants placed particular emphasis on the ability to measure impact, develop appropriate data and digital strategies and ensure the ethical and inclusive use of data. At the same time, the relevance given to AI and predictive analytics reflects the growing need to understand and integrate emerging technologies.

The open comments recorded on the posters complement these results. Participants referred, among other areas, to the need to **adapt to continuous technological change, predict future risks and trends, strengthen AI-related knowledge and develop broader digital capabilities**. These comments reinforce the idea that future capacity building will need to combine specific technical knowledge with the capacity to respond to a rapidly changing digital environment.

MAIN BARRIERS TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The second question explored the factors preventing organisations from advancing their digital transformation. Here, **Skills was the most frequently selected barrier, representing 22.7% of all votes**, followed by **Funding (19.3%), Time (18.2%) and Culture (17.0%)**. Together, these four categories accounted for **77.3% of the votes cast**.

Leadership represented a further 11.4%, while Data Quality accounted for 6.8%. In contrast, **Technology itself represented only 2.3% of the votes**, the same share as the Other category.



The distribution is particularly relevant for understanding future capacity-building needs. While digital transformation is often framed as a technological challenge, the Learning Walls suggest that participants see the main obstacles primarily in terms of **people, resources and organisational capacity**. Skills, funding, time and organisational culture were considerably more prominent than technology itself.

The qualitative comments on the posters provide further context to these barriers. Participants referred to issues such as **lack of digital culture, limited human resources, difficulties engaging colleagues and management, resistance to change and insufficient financial resources**. These contributions suggest that acquiring digital knowledge is only one part of the challenge: organisations also need the internal conditions and resources required to translate that knowledge into practice.

Taken together, the findings show that future capacity-building initiatives should address both sides of digital transformation. Social Economy organisations need continued development of **digital, data, impact measurement and responsible technology skills**, but strengthening individual competencies alone is unlikely to be sufficient. Capacity-building approaches should also recognise the **financial, organisational, cultural and time constraints** that influence whether new knowledge and tools can ultimately be adopted and embedded within organisations.

3.3 Learning Formats

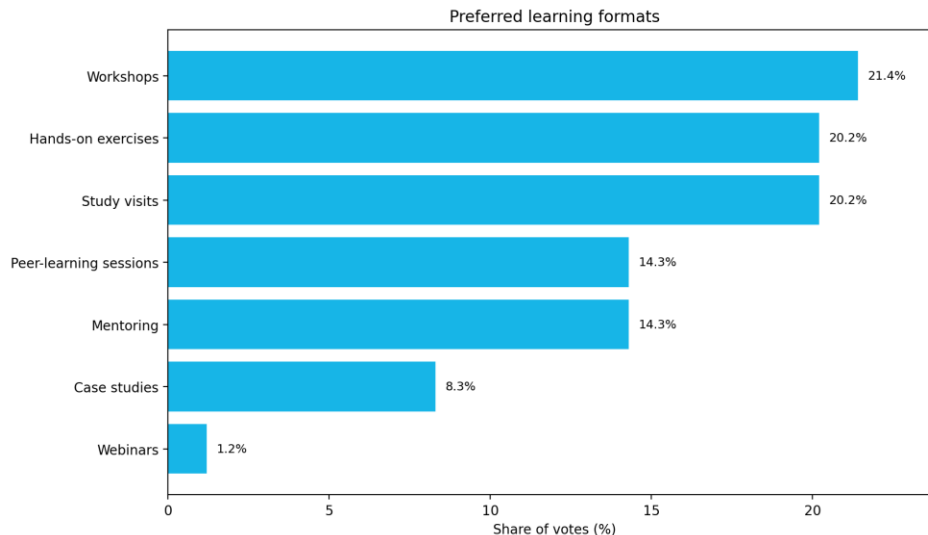
The third area of the Learning Wall explored **how participants prefer to learn** and what could make future capacity-building programmes more effective. Participants first voted on a predefined set of learning formats and were then invited to provide open comments on how future programmes could be improved.

For the first question, participants could place stickers on more than one option. The results therefore represent the **distribution of votes across learning formats rather than the percentage of individual participants**.

PREFERRED LEARNING FORMATS

Across the eight Learning Walls, **workshops received the highest share of votes (21.4%)**, closely followed by **hands-on exercises (20.2%)** and **study visits (20.2%)**. Together, these three formats represented **61.8% of all votes cast**, showing a clear preference for practical and interactive forms of learning.

Peer-learning sessions and mentoring each accounted for 14.3% of votes, while case studies represented 8.3%. By contrast, **webinars received only 1.2%**, making them the least selected format by a considerable margin.



The results point to a strong preference for formats in which participants can **actively engage with the content, apply knowledge and interact directly with other organisations or experts**. The prominence of study visits is particularly relevant in this context, as it suggests that learning from real organisational experiences and seeing practices in operation was considered valuable alongside more structured training formats.

WHAT WOULD MAKE FUTURE PROGRAMMES MORE EFFECTIVE?

The open contributions to the second question reinforce the preference for practical and participatory learning. Although participants proposed a variety of improvements, several common ideas appeared across the eight posters.

MORE PRACTICAL AND HANDS-ON LEARNING

Participants called for more practical exercises, practical tools and activities focused on **action rather than only theory**. Suggestions included case clinics and opportunities to work directly with tools and real organisational challenges.

MORE TAILORED LEARNING

Several contributions pointed to the value of adapting activities to participants' **different needs, sectors and levels of knowledge**. Suggestions included sector-specific topics, different learning formats and more targeted content rather than applying the same approach to all organisations.

MORE EXCHANGE AND PEER LEARNING

Participants suggested creating additional opportunities to **learn from other organisations and participants**, including open spaces for exchange, World Café-type formats and activities that facilitate the sharing of experiences and practices.

CONTINUITY AND ACCESS TO LEARNING

Some contributions focused on what happens beyond the individual activity, including **building on previous learning, access to learning materials and repositories of useful resources**, and opportunities to continue developing the knowledge acquired.

CLEARER STRUCTURE AND FOLLOW-UP

Participants also highlighted organisational aspects that can make learning easier to apply, including **clear timetables, follow-up opportunities and sufficient space to reflect on and implement what has been learned**.

Overall, the two questions provide a consistent message: participants favoured **practical, interactive and experience-based learning over predominantly passive formats**. Future programmes could therefore benefit from combining structured workshops with hands-on activities, study visits, peer exchange and mentoring, while adapting the content and level of support to the different needs of participating organisations.

3.4 Participants' Recommendations: Keep, Improve and Add

The final area of the Learning Wall invited participants to reflect on the design of future capacity-building initiatives by identifying **what should be kept, what could be improved and what should be added**. The responses across the eight posters show a strong interest in maintaining the collaborative and practical character of the Learning Journey, while introducing more tailored content, stronger follow-up and additional opportunities for exchange.

KEEP — What is working well?

Networking and peer-to-peer exchange were among the most recurrent elements participants wanted to preserve, including opportunities to connect with other organisations, exchange experiences and develop new collaborations.

Participants also highlighted the value of **local workshops, peer-learning sessions and interactive formats**, as well as the overall **content and consortium structure** of the programme.

Other contributions specifically called for maintaining **international exchange, study visits and contact with different Social Economy ecosystems**, confirming that learning from other organisations and contexts was considered an important part of the programme.

IMPROVE — What could be better?

A recurring recommendation was to make activities **more tailored to participants' needs, knowledge levels and organisational contexts**. Participants suggested improving the selection and targeting of activities and ensuring that topics respond more closely to the needs of the organisations involved.

Several comments also called for **more practical and interactive approaches**, including practical workshops and activities that facilitate the application of learning. Participants additionally mentioned **better access to learning materials and resources**, clearer communication around activities, and stronger continuity between the different parts of the programme.

Some contributions pointed to the importance of **follow-up after activities**, allowing organisations more time and support to translate learning into practice rather than ending the process once a workshop or event is completed.

ADD — What is missing?

Participants proposed expanding opportunities for **practical exposure and direct exchange**, including **business visits, additional study visits and more opportunities to learn from real organisational experiences**.

Other suggestions included **wider frameworks for digital transformation, more Social Economy-specific content and programmes, and greater involvement of young people**. Participants also proposed additional opportunities for **networking and collaboration**, including spaces where organisations could continue exchanging practices and developing connections after the formal learning activities.

Taken together, the recommendations are consistent with the findings from the previous Learning Wall areas. Participants generally did not call for a fundamentally different model, but rather for **strengthening the elements they found most valuable**: practical learning, peer exchange, networking and exposure to real experiences. At the same time, they identified opportunities to make future programmes **more tailored, continuous and connected to organisations' concrete needs**, with stronger mechanisms for applying and sustaining learning beyond individual activities.

4. Best Practices Emerging from DO Impact

The analysis of the Learning Walls, together with the wider evidence collected throughout the DO Impact Learning Journey, points to a number of approaches that contributed positively to **learning, knowledge transfer, participant engagement and practical application**.

The best practices identified below capture the **key approaches and elements that contributed to the effectiveness of the DO Impact Learning Journey**. They reflect the main lessons emerging from the implementation of the programme and from participants' feedback, highlighting the practices that supported learning, knowledge transfer, engagement and practical application.

4.1 Identified Best Practices

BEST PRACTICE 1 | PRACTICAL AND APPLIED LEARNING

What worked: Combining conceptual content with **hands-on exercises, practical demonstrations, case studies and real organisational examples**.

Why it matters: Participants consistently valued opportunities to understand how concepts and tools could be applied to their own organisations. Workshops, hands-on exercises and study visits were also among the most strongly supported formats in the Learning Walls.

Key lesson: Practical application should be embedded directly into capacity-building activities, allowing participants to **test tools, work with real examples and connect learning with concrete organisational challenges**.

BEST PRACTICE 2 | PEER LEARNING AND NETWORKING

What worked: Creating opportunities for participants to **exchange experiences, discuss common challenges and learn directly from other organisations.**

Why it matters: Peer exchange and networking became part of the learning process itself. Participants valued small-group discussions, exchange of experiences and the openness with which organisations shared challenges and practical solutions.

Key lesson: Peer interaction should be deliberately incorporated through **group work, peer-learning sessions, mentoring, networking and facilitated exchange between organisations.**

BEST PRACTICE 3 | DIGITAL LEARNING GROUNDED IN SOCIAL ECONOMY REALITIES

What worked: Connecting digital and data-related topics with **real organisational needs, decision-making and social impact**, rather than approaching digitalisation only from a technological perspective.

Why it matters: The Learning Journey connected topics including data strategies, open data, ethical data use, impact measurement, AI, data storytelling, CRM and data sharing with their potential application within Social Economy organisations.

Key lesson: Digital capacity building is more relevant when technology and data are presented as **tools for strengthening organisations and their social impact.**

BEST PRACTICE 4 | LEARNING ADAPTED TO DIFFERENT DIGITAL MATURITY LEVELS

What worked: Recognising that participating organisations have **different starting points, capacities and levels of digital maturity.**

Why it matters: Some organisations require foundational support while others are ready to work with more advanced digital and data strategies. Evidence from the Learning Journey therefore pointed towards differentiated and modular approaches.

Key lesson: Capacity-building programmes should provide **flexible learning pathways and different levels of support**, rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach.

BEST PRACTICE 5 | TRANSNATIONAL EXCHANGE COMBINED WITH LOCAL LEARNING

What worked: Combining **transnational learning and exposure to different European ecosystems with local and contextualised activities**.

Why it matters: Transnational activities allowed participants to discover different practices and organisational experiences, while local activities helped connect learning with their own contexts. Study visits also provided direct exposure to real organisational environments and were positively valued during the Learning Journey.

Key lesson: Combining European exchange with locally grounded learning makes knowledge both **transferable across contexts and relevant to participating organisations**.

BEST PRACTICE 6 | CONTINUITY AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

What worked: Providing opportunities to **continue applying, sharing and developing knowledge beyond individual learning activities**.

Why it matters: Participants highlighted the value of continued access to resources, follow-up, mentoring and further opportunities for exchange. Recommendations emerging during the Learning Journey also included shared digital resources, thematic working groups and peer-to-peer learning cycles.

Key lesson: Capacity building should be approached as a **continuous learning and knowledge-transfer process**, supporting organisations in embedding learning into their practices over time.

5. Recommendations for Future Capacity-Building Initiatives

The experience of DO Impact provides useful lessons for the design and implementation of future European capacity-building initiatives supporting the digital and data-driven transformation of the Social Economy. The recommendations presented in this section build on the approach implemented throughout the project, the best practices identified through the Learning Journey, and the needs and feedback collected from participating organisations.

A key feature of DO Impact was the connection between **needs assessment, programme design, capacity building, knowledge transfer and continuous monitoring**. The project started with an analysis of the Proximity and Social Economy (PSE) ecosystem and used the results to identify and prioritise digital needs, map relevant tools and solutions, and subsequently define a shared Capacity Building Strategy and modular Digital and data-driven Programs. These programmes were first delivered at transnational level to Social Economy enabling organisations and subsequently implemented towards local Social Economy SMEs, with activities adapted to local and regional priorities.

Building on this experience, the following recommendations are addressed to the **European Commission, programme designers, implementing consortia and organisations developing future capacity-building initiatives for the Social Economy**.

1) Build Capacity-Building Programmes from Identified Needs

START WITH NEEDS, NOT WITH PREDEFINED TRAINING

Future capacity-building initiatives should begin with a structured assessment of the **needs, challenges and digital maturity of the target organisations and ecosystems**. The results should then guide the selection and prioritisation of topics, skills and support mechanisms.

This sequence was embedded in DO Impact. The project first mapped the digitalisation, technology, skills and data-management needs of Social Economy SMEs and enabling organisations. It then mapped available digital tools and solutions and used both elements to develop the common strategy, methodology and capacity-building programmes.

Recommendation: Future EU programmes should provide sufficient space at the beginning of capacity-building projects for **needs assessment and priority setting**, while allowing implementing consortia to translate the evidence collected into the actual learning programme.

2) Design Modular and Adaptable Learning Pathways

AVOID A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH

Needs may differ significantly between countries, sectors, organisations and levels of digital maturity. Capacity-building programmes should therefore provide a common framework while retaining enough flexibility to adapt activities to the participants and their context.

DO Impact was designed around modular programmes combining training, coaching, knowledge transfer, matchmaking and acceleration services, with activities to be adapted according to **local needs, priorities and different levels of digital maturity**.

Recommendation: Future European initiatives should encourage **modular and flexible capacity-building pathways**, allowing implementing organisations to adjust the level, content and format of activities while maintaining common programme objectives.

3) Connect Digital Skills with Real Social Economy Challenges

DIGITALISATION SHOULD RESPOND TO ORGANISATIONAL NEEDS

Digital capacity building should not focus on technology adoption in isolation. Digital and data-related skills should be connected to the **operational needs, organisational development and social impact objectives** of Social Economy organisations.

This principle was central to DO Impact, which combined areas such as data strategies, data management, impact measurement, AI, CRM and data sharing with practical organisational applications. The project also sought to connect Social Economy actors with digital and technology providers so that existing solutions could be better adapted to the needs of the sector.

Recommendation: Future capacity-building initiatives should frame digital technologies as **tools to address concrete organisational and social challenges**, and should facilitate dialogue between Social Economy organisations and technology providers.

4) Prioritise Practical and Participatory Learning

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO APPLY AND TEST KNOWLEDGE

Future programmes should combine knowledge acquisition with opportunities for participants to **apply concepts, explore tools and work on real organisational challenges**.

This is consistent with the DO Impact Learning Journey, where practical workshops, hands-on exercises, case-based learning and study visits were important components of the capacity-building approach. The final Learning Walls also showed a clear preference for workshops, hands-on exercises and study visits over more passive learning formats.

Recommendation: EU-funded capacity-building initiatives should provide sufficient time and resources for **practical experimentation and application**, complementing theoretical learning with real cases, tools, demonstrations and hands-on activities.

5) Use Enabling Organisations to Multiply Knowledge at Local Level

BUILD KNOWLEDGE-TRANSFER MECHANISMS INTO PROGRAMME DESIGN

One distinctive element of the DO Impact model was its **two-level capacity-building approach**. Transnational activities primarily strengthened the capacities of Social Economy enabling organisations, which could then transfer relevant knowledge, tools and resources to SMEs in their local ecosystems. This knowledge-transfer function was explicitly included among the project objectives.

Local activities subsequently brought the knowledge and tools acquired through the transnational programme into regional ecosystems and adapted capacity-building modules to local needs.

Recommendation: Future European programmes should consider **train-the-trainer and multiplier approaches**, strengthening intermediary and enabling organisations that can continue supporting Social Economy SMEs beyond the direct reach and duration of an EU-funded project.

6) Combine Local Relevance with Transnational Learning

USE THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION AS PART OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

The combination of transnational and local capacity building allowed DO Impact to connect **European-level knowledge exchange with locally relevant implementation**. Transnational activities supported peer learning and knowledge transfer between enabling organisations, while local activities adapted this knowledge to regional Social Economy ecosystems.

This combination also created opportunities for organisations to encounter different practices, experts, tools and ecosystems while maintaining a connection with their own organisational realities.

Recommendation: Future European capacity-building initiatives should preserve a balance between **transnational exchange and local implementation**, using cross-border activities as a learning mechanism and local activities to contextualise and transfer the knowledge generated.

7) Recognise Peer Learning and Ecosystem Collaboration as Capacity Building

CONNECT SOCIAL ECONOMY AND DIGITAL ECOSYSTEMS

Capacity building can also take place through relationships between organisations. DO Impact deliberately activated actors from both the **Social Economy and Digital and Technological ecosystems**, involving enabling organisations, clusters, SMEs, experts and other stakeholders in sharing knowledge, practices, approaches and digital solutions.

This is also consistent with the Learning Wall findings, where networking, peer learning and opportunities for exchange were repeatedly valued by participants.

Recommendation: Future programmes should recognise **peer learning, mentoring, matchmaking, study visits and ecosystem collaboration as integral capacity-building mechanisms**, and allocate adequate programme time and resources to them rather than treating them only as complementary networking activities.

8) Embed Monitoring and Feedback throughout the Learning Journey

USE EVALUATION TO IMPROVE THE PROGRAMME, NOT ONLY TO REPORT RESULTS

Monitoring should accompany capacity building throughout implementation. In DO Impact, follow-up activities were designed to collect the results, strengths and weaknesses of both transnational and local activities and feed this evidence back into the Strategy and subsequent activities.

WP5 complemented this process by assessing the outcomes of transnational and local activities, the impact of the Capacity Building Strategy and the effectiveness of knowledge transfer from enabling organisations to SMEs.

Recommendation: Future EU-funded initiatives should embed **continuous monitoring and participant feedback loops** into their capacity-building model. Evaluation results should be used not only for accountability and final reporting, but also to adjust activities, identify emerging needs and improve subsequent stages of the programme.

9) Support Continuity Beyond Individual Training Activities

APPROACH CAPACITY BUILDING AS A PROCESS

The DO Impact experience and participant feedback indicate that digital transformation requires more than participation in individual workshops. Organisations need opportunities to revisit learning, access resources, exchange experiences and gradually apply new practices.

The project itself combined different forms of support, including training, coaching, mentoring, knowledge transfer and matchmaking, rather than relying on a single training format.

Recommendation: Future capacity-building programmes should be designed as **learning journeys rather than isolated training events**, connecting needs assessment, learning, practical application, peer exchange, organisational knowledge transfer and follow-up.

Implications for Future EU Capacity-Building Programmes

Taken together, the DO Impact experience points towards a **needs-driven, modular and iterative model of capacity building**. Its value lies not only in the individual activities delivered, but in the sequence connecting ecosystem analysis, identification of needs and priorities, programme design, transnational learning, local implementation, knowledge transfer and continuous evaluation. This logic was embedded in the original project design, which explicitly connected the initial analysis of the PSE ecosystem with the development of modular programmes adapted to local and regional needs.

For the **European Commission and future programme designers**, this suggests that capacity-building frameworks should provide sufficient flexibility for consortia to **identify needs before finalising learning priorities, adapt activities to different levels of maturity and local contexts, and refine the programme based on evidence collected during implementation**. At the same time, programme structures should recognise the value of enabling organisations as multipliers, transnational and peer learning, practical experimentation and continued support.

The experience of DO Impact therefore suggests moving beyond a model focused mainly on the **number of training activities delivered** towards one that considers the full capacity-building pathway: **understanding needs, building relevant skills, enabling their application, transferring knowledge across organisations and ecosystems, and creating the conditions for learning to continue over time**.

6. Conclusions

D5.3 brings together the main lessons emerging from the DO Impact Learning Journey and translates them into best practices and recommendations for future digital and data-related capacity-building initiatives for the Social Economy. In doing so, the report completes the WP5 assessment process by moving beyond the measurement of learning and knowledge transfer to consider **what generated value, which needs and barriers remain, and how the experience can inform future programmes**.

The findings show that the value of the Learning Journey came not only from the topics addressed, but also from **how capacity building was designed and implemented**. Participants particularly valued practical and applied learning, peer exchange and networking, exposure to other organisations and ecosystems, and opportunities to connect digital and data-related knowledge with concrete organisational needs. The evidence also supports the importance of adapting learning to different levels of digital maturity and providing continuity beyond individual activities.

At the same time, the Learning Walls point to areas where continued support is needed. Future capacity building will need to respond to priorities such as **impact measurement, digitalisation and data strategies, ethical and inclusive data use and emerging technologies**, while recognising that digital transformation is not solely a technological challenge. Skills, resources, time and organisational culture can significantly influence organisations' ability to translate knowledge into practice.

One of the main lessons from DO Impact is therefore the importance of approaching capacity building as a **needs-driven and continuous process**. The project connected the analysis of the Social Economy ecosystem with the identification of digital needs and priorities, the development of a shared Capacity Building Strategy, transnational learning and subsequent implementation at local level. This approach allowed the Learning Journey to combine a common European framework with learning adapted to different organisational and territorial realities.

The experience also highlights the role that **enabling organisations, peer networks and European exchange** can play in extending the reach of capacity building. Strengthening organisations that can transfer knowledge within their ecosystems, while creating opportunities for collaboration between Social Economy and digital actors, can help learning extend beyond the direct participants and individual project activities.

For future European initiatives, the overall lesson is that effective capacity building requires more than the delivery of training. It requires a pathway that connects **needs assessment, relevant and adaptable learning, practical application, peer and transnational exchange, knowledge transfer, monitoring and follow-up**. DO Impact provides a practical example of how these elements can be brought together to support the digital and data-driven transformation of the Social Economy.

Ultimately, the findings of this report suggest that future programmes should create the conditions for Social Economy organisations not only to **acquire digital knowledge, but to apply, share and sustain it within their organisations and ecosystems**. This is where capacity-building initiatives can generate value beyond individual learning activities and contribute to longer-term organisational capacity and digital transformation.

ANNEX I - Learning Walls



DO Impact LEARNING WALL

Your ideas today shape tomorrow's impact!

A MOST VALUABLE LEARNING

What has created the biggest impact?

- 1 Which topic from the DO Impact programme was most useful for your organisation and why?

SHARING EXPERIENCES
DATA MANAGEMENT
NETWORKING
TRUST ASPECTS OF DATA
HOW TO TELL A STORY USING DATA

- 2 What knowledge or skill have you already applied in practice?

PROMPT WRITING & TIPS FROM BARCELONA
IMPACT MEASUREMENT & A.I.

ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA

B FUTURE SKILLS & NEEDS

Looking ahead

- 3 Which digital or data-related skill is most important for social economic impact in the next 3 years?

DIGITALISATION & DATA ANALYTICS
APPLIED AI & PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS
DATA STORAGE
PREDICTION
FUTURE PEOPLE, STORIES, IDEAS TO BE TOLD TO BE TRUSTED
MEASUREMENT WORKS
DATA SHARING FRAMEWORKS

- 4 What are the main barriers preventing organisations from advancing their digital transformation?

SKILLS
FUNDING
CULTURE
TIME
LEADERSHIP
TECHNOLOGY
DATA QUALITY
OTHER HUMAN RESOURCES
ANY DEVELOPMENT ACTION NEEDS FUNDING
SE Zedra do not have digital skills they are not willing to learn with many tasks
NGO'S DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH FINANCIAL RESOURCES
Lock of digital culture
ON TO E WAS TO BE MADE BY THE LEADERSHIP
There is staff in the way to change digitalisation in

C LEARNING FORMATS

How do we learn best?

- 5 Which learning formats work best?

WORKSHOPS
WEBINARS
PEER-LEARNING SESSIONS
MENTORING
CASE STUDIES
HANDS-ON EXERCISES
STUDY VISITS
PITCH BUSINESS
IT COMBINES MANY OF OTHER ASPECTS INTO ONE

- 6 What would make future learning effective?

FUNDING
BUILDING ON THE LEARNINGS
OPENING PROGRAMS TO MORE ORGANISATIONS
Involve Eastern Partnership Countries in consortium

D RECOMMENDATIONS

Imagine the next DO Impact programme

- 7 If you could design the next DO Impact programme, what would you keep, improve or add?

KEEP
What's working well?
PROGRAM OPEN TO MANY ORGANISATIONS
CONTENT
CONSORTIUM STRUCTURE IS GOOD
DIFFERENT LOCATIONS

IMPROVE
What can be better?

ADD
What's missing?

BUSINESS VISITS

ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA

ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA

KEY LEARNING

What is the most important learning you are taking away?

PEOPLE IN A FIRST PLACE - HUMAN FACTOR
SELECTION OF TECHNOLOGIES, YOU DO NOT HAVE TO USE ALL TOOLS, TRY & CHOOSE

ONE PRIORITY SKILL

Which skill do you see as the top priority for the next 3 years?

Adaptation according to changes

ONE BEST LEARNING FORMAT

Which format works best?

Study visit

ONE RECOMMENDATION

What is your key recommendation for future programmes?

Show must go on

Your ideas today shape tomorrow's impact!

What has created the biggest impact?

[illegible]

to look at alternatives to current business processes

Support for Social Economy

Develop a Social Enterprise CRM system

Looking ahead

 DIGITALIZATION & DATA STRATEGIES	 APPLIED AI & PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS
 OPEN DATA ECOSYSTEMS	 DATA STORYTELLING
 ETHICAL & INCLUSIVE DATA USE	 RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT & CRM
 IMPACT MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORKS	 DATA SHARING FRAMEWORKS
 OTHER	

different levels of well-being of individuals
no boundaries

Factor	Level (Dots)
SKILLS	4
FUNDING	2
CULTURE	2
TIME	1
LEADERSHIP	1
TECHNOLOGY	1
DATA QUALITY	2
OTHER	1

How do we learn best?

BUTTERFLIES

WITCHES

PETER RABBIT
KINDNESS

MATHS

CARE STORIES

HANDS ON
EXERCISES

STORY VALUE

I have a great idea for a new activity for my class
10/10/20

Imagine the next DO Impact programme

[illegible]

What is the most important learning y

Which skill do you see as the top priority for the next 3 years?

PI history
the 1974
Liquor license

What is the best?

1. Accounting
 2. Accounting
 3. Accounting
 4. Accounting
 5. Accounting
 6. Accounting
 7. Accounting
 8. Accounting
 9. Accounting
 10. Accounting
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 94. Accounting
 95. Accounting
 96. Accounting
 97. Accounting
 98. Accounting
 99. Accounting
 100. Accounting

recommendaation for future

[illegible]

Your ideas today shape tomorrow's impact!

D RECOMMENDATIONS

Imagine the next DO Impact programme

7 If you could design the next Do Impact programme, what would you keep, improve or add?

KEEP What's working well?

LOCAL WORKSHOPS

RETRAINING

KEEP PART-TIMERS WITH EXPERIENCE

IMPROVE

IMPROVE

What can be better?

ACCESS TO LEARNING MATERIAL

TAKE THE COURSEWORK ONLINE

SELECTION PROCESS

ADD What's missing?

WIDER FINDING FRAMEWORK (ITERATION WORKSHOPS)

SOCIAL PROGRAM

TO INVOLVE MORE YOUTH

Give call to youths

Share our ideas to the world

future



NOT TO BE
AFRAID OF
FAILURE

DO Impact LEARNING WALL

Your ideas today shape tomorrow's impact!

A MOST VALUABLE LEARNING

What has created the biggest impact?

1 Which topic from the DO Impact programme was most useful for your organisation and why?

Yellow sticky notes with handwritten text:

- Small impact measurement
- ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA
- 2 principles of data ethics
- Small impact measurement
- Small impact

2 What knowledge or skill have you already applied in practice?

Yellow sticky notes with handwritten text:

- DO Impact programme
- Impact measurement
- DO Impact programme
- ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA
- Data literacy for our organisations

B FUTURE SKILLS & NEEDS

Looking ahead

3 Which digital or data-related skills will be most important for social economy organisations for the next 3 years?

DIGITALISATION & DATA STRATEGIES	APPLIED AI & PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS
OPEN DATA ECOSYSTEMS	DATA STORYTELLING
ETHICAL & INCLUSIVE DATA USE	RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT & CRM
IMPACT MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORKS	DATA SHARING FRAMEWORKS
OTHER	

4 What are the main barriers preventing organisations from advancing their digital transformation?

SKILLS	FUNDING	CULTURE	TIME	LEADERSHIP	TECHNOLOGY	DATA QUALITY	OTHER
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Handwritten notes on barriers:

- Skills: Lack of skills to create value from data
- Funding: Lack of funding to create value from data
- Culture: Change the priorities and structure the transformation
- Time: Time and organisational culture will be transformed
- Leadership: Leadership
- Technology: Technology
- Data Quality: Data quality
- Other: Other

C LEARNING FORMATS

How do we learn best?

5 Which learning formats work best?

WORKSHOPS	WEBINARS	PEER-LEARNING SESSIONS	MENTORING	CASE STUDIES	HANDS-ON EXERCISES	STUDY VISITS
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6 What would make future programmes more effective?

Yellow sticky notes with handwritten text:

- More practical exercises
- ONE POST-IT - ONE IDEA
- More study visits
- Interactive peer-to-peer learning
- More practical exercises

D RECOMMENDATIONS

Imagine the next DO Impact programme

7 If you could design the next DO Impact programme, what would you keep, improve or add?

Yellow sticky notes with handwritten text:

- KEEP: What's working well?
 - Keep the good things, format
- IMPROVE: What can be better?
 - More practical exercises
 - More study visits
- ADD: What's missing?
 - More practical exercises
 - More study visits

KEY LEARNING
What is the most important learning?

Yellow sticky note with handwritten text:

- The importance of data literacy for our organisations

ONE PRIORITY SKILL
Which skill do you see as the top priority?

Yellow sticky note with handwritten text:

- Impact measurement

ONE BEST LEARNING FORMAT
Which format works best?

Yellow sticky note with handwritten text:

- More practical exercises

ONE RECOMMENDATION
What is your key recommendation for future programmes?

Yellow sticky note with handwritten text:

- More practical exercises

DO Impact LEARNING WALL

Your ideas today shape tomorrow's impact!

A MOST VALUABLE LEARNING

What has created the biggest impact?

1 Which topic from the DO Impact programme was most useful for your organisation and why?

Stress management for the HR team in the UK
Digital Transformation a simplified approach
The integration of social media in digital marketing approach
Very Academic approach in Tunisia
ONE POST IT - ONE IDEA

The need of internationalisation
2 or more in different and a shared voice
3 ideas of it in the future (digital content)

2 What knowledge or skill have you already applied in practice?

digital and HR tools
Marketing tool
ONE POST IT - ONE IDEA

Can not put the finger on it but the project has impacted my approach when setting up business
Collaborative in 10 countries 20 projects

B FUTURE SKILLS & NEEDS

Looking ahead

3 Which digital or data-related skills will be most important for social economy organisations for the next 3 years?

DIGITALISATION & DATA STRATEGIES
OPEN DATA ECOSYSTEMS
ETHICAL & INCLUSIVE DATA USE
IMPACT MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORKS
OTHER

APPLIED AI & PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS
DATA STORYTELLING
RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT & CRM
DATA SHARING FRAMEWORKS

4 What are the main barriers preventing organisations from advancing their digital transformation?

SKILLS
FUNDING
CULTURE
TIME
LEADERSHIP
TECHNOLOGY
DATA QUALITY
OTHER

C LEARNING FORMATS

How do we learn best?

5 Which learning formats work best?

WORKSHOPS
WEBINARS
PEER-LEARNING SESSIONS
MENTORING
CASE STUDIES
HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES
STUDY VISITS

6 What would make future programmes more effective?

A RESEARCH in order to create evidence that will be useful
More hands on practical sessions
More engaging speakers
Practicality tools based on real needs also training and outputs for instance

D RECOMMENDATIONS

Imagine the next DO Impact programme

7 If you could design the next DO Impact programme, what would you keep, improve or add?

KEEP
What's working well?

ONE POST IT - ONE IDEA
Pitch sessions (covered with steps and much)
The content was the best (out of 10) +1

IMPROVE
What can be better?

2 ideas of more practical sessions and more role play
Round table about the program
Engaging speakers practical hands-on exercises that replicate

ADD
What's missing?

Something truly exciting
ONE POST IT - ONE IDEA
A RESEARCH in order to create evidence that will be useful
+5

KEY LEARNING
What is the most important learning you are taking away?



ONE PRIORITY SKILL
Which skill do you see as the top priority for the next 3 years?



ONE BEST LEARNING FORMAT
Which format works best?
HANDS ON + WORKSHOPS



ONE RECOMMENDATION
What is your key recommendation for future programmes?



Your ideas today shape tomorrow's impact!

What has created the biggest impact?

1 Which topic from the DO Impact programme was most useful for your organisation and why?

AI ethics
applied to the
repet sector

DATA
- DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
- PROGRESS & IMPACT

Innovation in the
Social economy
sector y

ONE THAT IS - ONE THAT

THE INFLUENCE OF
TECHNOLOGY ON
THE FUTURE OF AI
AND THE FUTURE OF
WORK & SOCIETY

Regulation
and the
future

AI ETHICS
ways of AI
in policy

2 What *knowledge* or *skill* have you already applied in practice?

Looking ahead

3 Which digital or data-related **skills** will be most important for social economy organisations for the next 3 years?

DIGITALISATION & DATA STRATEGIES	APPLIED AI & PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS
OPEN DATA ECOSYSTEMS	DATA STORYTELLING
ETHICAL & INCLUSIVE DATA USE	RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT & CRM
IMPACT MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORKS	DATA SHARING FRAMEWORKS
OTHER	

4 What are the **main barriers** preventing organisations from advancing their digital transformation?

Category	Percentage
Skills	20%
Funding	10%
Culture	10%
Time	10%
Leadership	10%
Technology	10%
Data Quality	10%
Other	10%

How do we learn best?

5 Which learning formats work best?

WORKSHOPS

WEBINARS

PEER-LEARNING SESSIONS

MENTORING

CASE STUDIES

HANDS-ON EXERCISES

STUDY VISITS

6 What would make *future programmes* more effective?

Imagine the next DO Impact programme

7 *If you could design the next Do Impact programme, what would you keep, improve or add?*

Networking opportunities
to connect with
customers & other
new prospects

how to reach
+ how
marketing

different
opportunities
partners!

Marketing
Peer-to-Peer

IMPROVE

What can be better?

IMPROVE
CONV. AND
COSTS
of ~~acquisition~~

workshops
with product
teams

DISCUSS WITH
BRAND PARTNERS

EMPHASIZING
COMPETITIVE
ADVANTAGES

Develop new
product lines
to drive the
business

new ideas
for sales
(e.g. online
services)

ADD

What's missing?

MANAGE THE
TEAM
EFFECTIVELY
Solve customer
problems

HOW TO PUT IT - ONE VIEW

What is the most important learning you are taking away?

DEVELOPING IT IS AN ESSENTIAL FOR THE SOCIAL ECONOMY, BUT ONLY WITH BEING AWARE RESPONSIBLY AND WITH SUSTAINABLE THINKING



Which skill do you see as the top priority for the next 3 years?

FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS AND DATA CULTURE
TO IMPROVE UTILIZATION AND DATA
PRACTICES



Which format works best?

PEER LEARNING SESSIONS



What is your key recommendation for future programmes?

programas?

KEEP AND IMPROVE NETWORKING

