

# The Innovation Challenge

**Category of Competencies:** Productivity Skills

**Description:**

This activity challenges participants to develop a creative solution to a real-world problem, fostering skills in creativity, innovation, and decision-making.

**Activity Categories:**

Group, In-person or Online, Needs Lots of Preparation, Easy to Implement, One-off Session, Requires Equipment

**Main Competencies Involved:**

Creativity, Innovation, Leadership

**Other Competencies (Different Category):**

Problem-Solving, Teamwork, Decision-Making

**Resources Needed and Practical Considerations:**

A real-world problem or scenario relevant to the participants, materials for brainstorming and prototyping (e.g., paper, markers, cardboard, digital tools), access to research materials or the internet, a timer, list of real-world problems/scenarios (annex)

**Estimated Time:**

90 minutes

**Description of Activity:**

Step 1: The facilitator presents a real-world problem or scenario (see annex) that requires an innovative solution. Participants are divided into small groups of 4–6 people and are tasked with developing a creative solution within a set time frame.

Step 2: Groups brainstorm potential solutions, drawing on their creativity and innovation skills. They may use the internet or other resources to research existing solutions and generate new ideas. They are encouraged to think outside the box and consider various approaches.

Step 3: Each group selects their best idea and begins to create a prototype or detailed plan. This phase emphasises decision-making, as participants must choose which ideas to pursue and how to allocate their time and resources.



Step 4: Groups present their solutions to the larger group or a panel of judges. They explain their decision-making process, the innovation behind their solution, and how they managed their time and resources. The session concludes with feedback and discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of each solution.

#### Debriefing questions:

What were the key challenges you faced during the innovation process? How did your group overcome them?

How did your group decide on the final idea to develop? What factors influenced your decision-making process?

In what ways did your group's solution demonstrate creativity and innovation? Are there aspects of your solution that you would like to improve or develop further?

How did your group manage leadership and collaboration during the activity? Were there moments where leadership was particularly important?

How can the skills you practised during this challenge be applied to real-life situations or future projects? What have you learned about your own strengths in these areas?

How did the feedback from the presentation influence your understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of your solution?



## Scenarios

### 1. Environmental Sustainability

- *Problem:* Plastic waste is overwhelming the planet, polluting oceans, and harming wildlife.
- *Task:* Design an innovative solution to reduce plastic waste in your local community.

### 2. Youth Mental Health

- *Problem:* The mental health of young people is a growing concern, with issues like anxiety, depression, and stress becoming more prevalent.
- *Task:* Create a campaign, tool, or resource to promote mental well-being among youth in your school or community.

### 3. Digital Literacy and Cyberbullying

- *Problem:* Many young people face cyberbullying and online harassment.
- *Task:* Create an educational initiative or platform to help your peers navigate the internet safely, improve digital literacy, and combat cyberbullying.

### 4. Climate Change Preparedness

- *Problem:* Climate change is causing more frequent and severe weather events. Your community has not yet prepared for these changes.
- *Task:* Come up with a project or strategy to help your community become more resilient to the effects of climate change.

### 5. Access to Education

- *Problem:* Many students around the world lack access to quality education due to financial barriers, geographical location, or other challenges.
- *Task:* Develop a solution to help ensure that more young people have access to educational resources and opportunities.

