



Teacher Guide

Welcome to WERT

Welcome to the WERT course which has been designed to help you to help develop the business skills of start up and experienced women entrepreneurs involved in rural tourism (accommodation, crafts and food provision).

The course content builds on the needs identified in our research. The draft course outline was then verified through discussions with women entrepreneurs. The course content aims to help women entrepreneurs to feel more confident and up to date with technology, finance and legal aspects to market and manage their businesses effectively.

The course is designed to have the flexibility to be delivered in a way that suits a particular group of learners and their cultural needs. The WERT project team very much welcomes your feedback on the course and any suggestions for improvements. .



Course structure and length

The course is divided into six units which help learners to develop an overall plan for their business. The WERT Course Plan provides details of the learning outcomes, blended learning structure, topics, assessment and resources. By blended learning, we mean workshops followed by weekly guided learning at a time and place to suit participants.

The course length is estimated to be around 20 hours for workshops plus 2 hours per week for guided learning giving a total of around 60 hours. This may vary depending on the learner group's needs and prior learning.

Learner profile

When recruiting learners to the course, try to ensure a balance between start up and experienced entrepreneurs. Start ups will be able to learn from the experienced entrepreneurs whilst the fresh ideas of new entrants will help those already in business to rethink their approach.

A mix of learners from different sectors of rural tourism (accommodation, crafts, attractions and food provision) will help to encourage co-operative links between businesses and broader thinking.

A discussion or interview with prospective course participants is recommended to determine their motivation and commitment.



Workshop planning

Workshops should be used to review any previous learning and introduce the next unit topics using the course plan to guide you. There are many resources available within the course materials: sources and resources, stories from women entrepreneurs and videos and there is also a resource bank folder for each unit available in the virtual learning environment. You will need to provide the learners with course materials in the preferred format. Our research showed

that printed format was the most popular but you should also encourage use of the online format.

There is some flexibility in terms of the number and length of workshops. This will depend on factors such as timing to suit the learner group, distance for travel, etc. You may decide to hold the workshop in a rural community to make it more accessible to participants. You will need to advise your learners of the course schedule.

You will need to ensure that participants are clear on the reading and activity they need to complete and how they should send this to you for feedback before the next workshop.

Workshop tips

- Allow enough time for discussion to reinforce learning from each other
- Invite guest expert speakers e.g. local bank manager
- Don't try to give business advice as a consultant – your role is a learning facilitator
- Encourage a friendly informal atmosphere to put participants at ease e.g. sit in a circle as this may be less threatening than classroom style
- Ask participants to introduce themselves to the person sitting next to them and then that person introduces them to the group
- Invite input to the WERT course materials e.g. stories of how they started their business – input is also welcome from you as teacher!
- If participants feel confident enough, invite them to present in a foreign language to develop and assess their language skills
- Encourage participants to think of the bigger picture – the stories from around Europe may be helpful here
- Organise study visits to different women entrepreneurs' premises or hold workshops there – this can help to provide an informal yet inspiring learning environment.
- Encourage participants to network and make links between their businesses and local communities to meet customer needs

Assessment

From our research, we found that women entrepreneurs had a wide range of skill levels and prior learning achievement. To assess the starting point, you should have an informal discussion with them prior to the workshop. To find out their expectations and any concerns they may have, you should ask them to complete the Individual Learning Plan and review at mid point and at the end of the course to monitor and measure progress.

Formal, informal and non formal learning should be recognised through a range of assessment methods including:

- Self assessment
- Professional discussion
- Presentations – allow participants to present in a way that suits them
- Question and answers e.g. how do you deal with situations e.g. customer complaint, what legal aspects affect your business, etc.
- Observation
- Assessment of activities and business plan
- IT skills assessment

Evidence of assessment should be collected. Assessment grids for the activities, business plan and presentation are available (see separate documents for each unit activity available on the virtual learning environment via the website www.wertedu.eu). You should complete the grid for each activity submitted and return to the learner to help them build their business plan.

Course evaluation

Evaluation forms should be completed by participants and teachers at the end of each workshop, unit and at the end of the course. Workshop evaluations will provide useful feedback and you may wish to modify your approach in subsequent workshops based on feedback. Please collate and return evaluations to your country co-ordinator so that we can evaluate and improve the course.

Online learning

From experience, we have found that face-to-face communication is most effective. Participants can share ideas, learn from others on the course and gain vital feedback to help with their development and motivation.

If, for any reason, a learner is unable to attend workshops, you should either send them the materials or encourage them to access them online and provide any help they may require. For women entrepreneurs in remote areas, you may wish to offer an online learning option but will need to ensure that they have the necessary skills and access to a suitable pc and internet access (preferably broadband) and you will also need to allow time to support them.

Access to online learning

To access the course online, you need to follow the steps below:

- Go to www.wertedu.eu
- Select the WERT course in the language of your choice
- You should now be able to see the units and activities
- Click on the document of your choice to open or save
- There is a resource bank folder for each unit where you will find additional information
- There is also a news forum where you can send a message or respond to other participants.

We recommend that you try out the virtual learning environment before you start teaching the course so that you are able to help participants. Please provide participants with your contact details (e-mail or telephone) in case of difficulty. If you need help, please contact your country co-ordinator.

The WERT Community

We also recommend that you join the WERT Community on our website www.wertedu.eu to help course participants to develop their learning further, share ideas and experiences, market their business, offer services and expand their network with other European women entrepreneurs.

We very much hope you enjoy teaching this course and that you find it a rewarding experience. Best of luck!

