Technische Hochschule Wildau [FH]
Technical University of Applied Sciences

lab[2]learn

Preserving innovation competencies of companies affected by demographic change – Integrative approaches to develop competencies in a creative lab environment

Aim

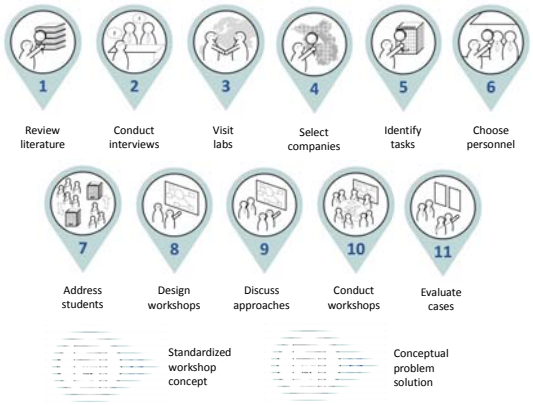
The aim of the lab[2]learn project is to develop methods, that allow to preserve and increase innovation competencies of SME by linking and combining knowledge bases and specific abilities of older and younger persons under the aspect of innovation competencies.

Project duration

February 2014 - March 2015

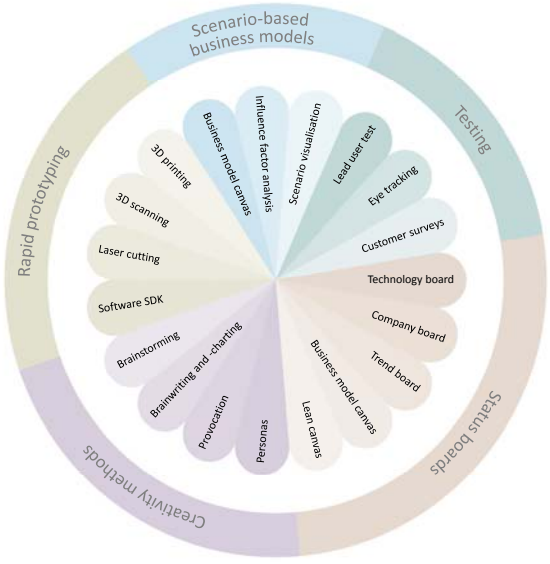
Approach

Twenty innovative companies from the federal state of Brandenburg were selected to conduct interviews with. The interviews serve as basis to find out about innovation competencies, effects of the demographic change on the company, current innovation projects and problems, that occurred during the innovation process. After an analysis of the data, four of the interviewed companies were invited to participate in a workshop-based solution finding process.

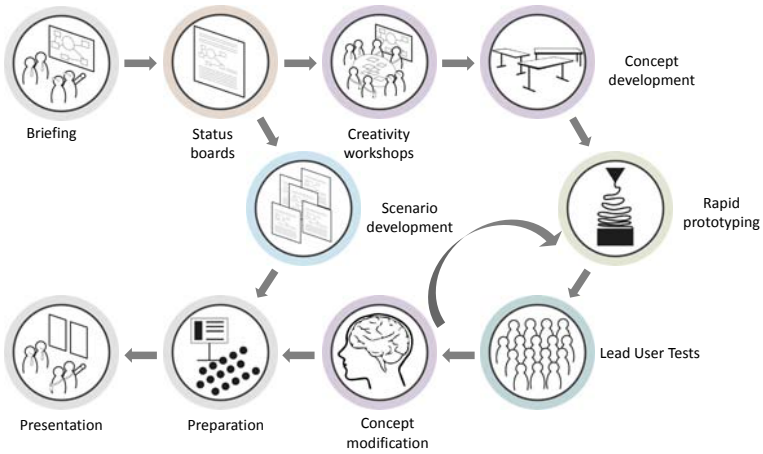


Methods

During the lab[2]learn project new methods will be developed and combined with existing ones. The task at hand is to find new ideas and approaches to solve pressing innovation issues of participating companies.



Workshop-based problem-solving process



Subject areas of the problem-solving process

a.) Smart materials

The intention of the seeking company was to identify possible scopes of application for smart materials in buildings. The technology is in a very early stage and subject of various research projects. By using creativity methods & rapid prototyping, participants of the workshop developed four different concepts that range from the usage of smart materials as cost efficient option to improve health care in developing countries to fully self-sufficient buildings in terms of energy and water supply.

b.) Indoor navigation

The task at hand was to identify possible fields of application for a newly developed technology. Although there are many different technological approaches - the utilized technology works on the basis of optical collimation marks. Participants identified the areas of search&rescue and the broad field of recreation/leisure as very promising. By using technology- and trend boards as well as creativity methods and sophisticated rapid prototyping, workshop participants developed an overall of four promising applications.

c.) 3D-capable shopping glasses

Wearables offer a whole lot of new possibilities for companies to develop innovative services and business models. The seeking company had an already working prototype of 3D-glasses and a precise idea of what market segment to serve. Therefore the aim was to broaden that scope and find additional areas of application. After developing three new concepts the main focus of this group was testing. Two rounds of lead user tests and online surveys led to two new business proposals.

d.) Scenarios on the future of logistics

To prepare for increasing competitive constraints, a medium sized trimodal logistic company was seeking ways to adjust its business model for future developments. Participants therefore used a scenario based approach to derive new business opportunities from selected projections of the future. Focus was on identifying the key factors that are going to have a major impact on the development of the logistic market. During the workshop four very diverse scenarios have been drafted and possible business opportunities were identified as fundamentals for a future business model.

Project partners

Transnational project partners

Finland Futures Research Centre (University of Turku, Finland)

Innovation Labs (European wide)

National partners

ZAB Brandenburg GmbH

e.g., Facade-Lab GmbH, Leipa Logistic GmbH, eayse GmbH

Research Group Telematics (UAS Wildau)

Forschungsgruppe Innovations- und Regionalforschung
Research Group for Innovation and Regional Development

ViNN:Lab

Land Brandenburg
Ministerium für Arbeit, Soziales, Gesundheit, Frauen und Familie

Europäische Union
Europäischer Sozialfonds

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