



**STRENGTHENING  
THE VIETNAMESE  
HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM  
TO IMPROVE GRADUATES'  
EMPLOYABILITY AND  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS**

**Policy White Paper:  
Recommendations from  
the National Conference  
on Graduate Employment  
and Entrepreneurship**

**D5.4.1 Policy White Paper**



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
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# **POLICY WHITE PAPER: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**D5.4.1 Policy White Paper**



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Participations of the National Conference

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. The V2WORK National Conference

The National Conference on Graduate Employment and Entrepreneurship, a networking event organized by V2WORK, took place at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (USSH) in Ho Chi Minh City on October 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019. This event – an important task of the V2WORK project – is an active cooperation between eight Vietnamese universities and three European universities, and was organized with the support of the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Ho Chi Minh City.

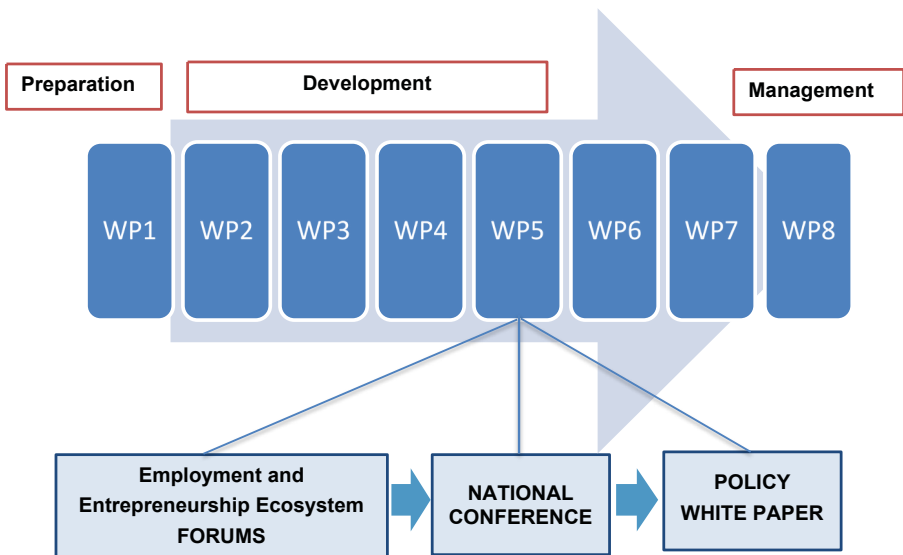


Figure 1: V2WORK's work packages and the National Conference

V2WORK is a capacity-building-in-higher-education project co-funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ programme (contract # 586252-EPP-1-2017-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP) that brings together eight Vietnamese and three European universities, the MOET, the Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the student association AIESEC. The project aims to strengthen the capacities of the Vietnamese higher education system so as to improve the employability & entrepreneurship skills of its graduates, and to reinforce its relationships with the labour market, in line with the Vietnamese government's priority of improving graduate employment at a national level.

## 1.2. Objective of the National Conference

The objective of the National Conference on Graduate Employment and Entrepreneurship was to stimulate dialogue and debate on the current employment situation of university graduates as well as on the entrepreneurship ecosystem present in Vietnam for young entrepreneurs at the national level. It built off the Employment and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Forum (EEEEF) which was held in 8 different provinces during the summer/fall of 2019. The National Conference was divided into different discussion panels and brought together employers and graduates to discuss the expectations vs. reality of transitioning from the higher education environment to the labour market and to have young successful Vietnamese entrepreneurs share their success stories as well as having various keynote speakers present on the topic at hand.





Figure 2: Key participants of the National Conference at USSH

The National Conference in Ho Chi Minh City attracted many participants from the university community (managers, professors, career centre staff, and students), graduates, employers, policy makers and employment agencies. This was a unique opportunity for different voices to come together to discuss issues such as mismatch between graduates' competence and employers' needs, the transition from higher education to the labour market, or the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Vietnam.

### 1.3. Discussion panels at the National Conference

Many of these discussions took place over the course of two days through a series of panels:

- “Employability of Vietnamese Graduates”
- “Transitioning from Higher Education to the Labour Market”
- “Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Vietnam”
- “How I Became an Entrepreneur”

These panels presented results of all discussions made in the previously held EEEF in the eight provinces, as well as thoughts from representatives of the labour market, successful entrepreneurs, and the MOET. These discussions, when taken into account with inputs from various keynote speakers on youth employment as well as the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Vietnam, and an analysis done by the V2WORK project on graduate employment and entrepreneurship in Vietnam, were all brought together in the closing session of the conference in order to formulate some policy recommendations.

### 1.4. The Policy White Paper

A National Policy Paper will be built using experience gained during the project, insights obtained from the EEEF, and discussions stimulated at various panels of the National Conference and then introduced to policy makers.

The aim of the Policy White Paper is to present the policy recommendations reached at the conclusion of the National Conference in the hopes that they may be of use to the furthering of the Vietnamese higher education system’s ability to support its graduates in finding meaningful employment, or in their entrepreneurial endeavours.

## 2. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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### 2.1. On the Employability of Graduates

Supporting graduates in job hunting is one of the many tasks for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to perform in addition to educational training programs, scientific research, etc.

HEIs have a mission to integrate theoretical training, skills training, and work attitudes training into their educational programmes so that students can be well equipped to find meaningful jobs after graduation.

Career counseling centers in HEIs are tasked with helping students navigate career choices, become knowledgeable about the industries, be well informed about the labour market so they can find suitable jobs after graduation.

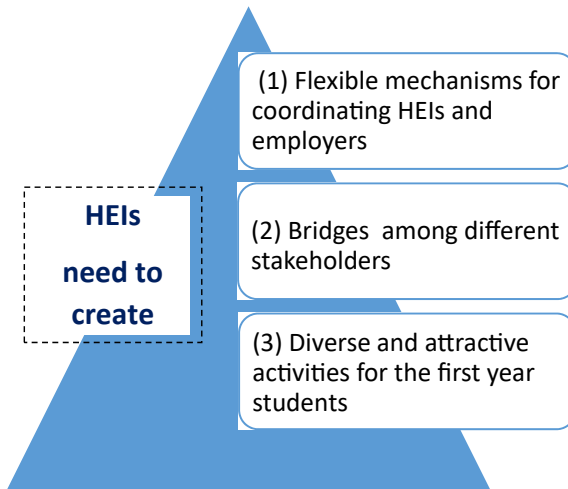


Figure 3: Three creations on which the HEIs need to focus

Given the fact that the employment data and students' capacity to look for jobs vary from region to region, HEIs need to (1) create a flexible mechanism of coordination among HEIs and employers in a creative and proactive manner; (2) create a bridge among different stakeholders to make a beneficial connection for both students and businesses; (3) create various, diverse and attractive activities for first-year students, such as company visits, entrepreneur talk shows, job fairs, career fairs, internships, career idea contests etc. by taking full advantage of business sponsorships to support skills training for students.

Enhance career orientation with career orientation clubs, extracurricular activities, promotion of individual and collective initiatives, counseling and training sessions on necessary skills for students before graduation such as foreign languages, information technology, making a good CV, interview skills, communication, attitude, cooperation, etc.

It is necessary to have an accurate forecast system of local and national human resources needs as well as connections among universities. Updating information on HEIs' career and employment websites is also essential. Both the MOET and HEIs need specific, in-depth and up-to-date policies on career orientation in training programs as well as having connection with other HEIs and different stakeholders (businesses, students, organizations, etc.)

## 2.2. On Entrepreneurship in HEIs

Training in entrepreneurship skills for students is another task that HEIs should perform in addition to their educational training programs, scientific research, jobs search, etc.

Career counseling centers at the HEIs are tasked with helping students navigate their careers in relation to entrepreneurship, become knowledgeable about the industries, be well informed about the entrepreneurial ecosystem, kindle entrepreneurial spirit, develop entrepreneurial thinking on the basis of skills knowledge (problem solving, financial management, human

resource management, intellectual property, capital raising skills, etc.) so as to be able to start an appropriate business after graduation.

Given the entrepreneurship situation and different entrepreneurship competencies in many regions, HEIs should organize various entrepreneurship activities such as:

- Opening refresher courses and additional training courses on entrepreneurship skills.
- Establishing entrepreneurship spaces (such as business incubator, entrepreneurship support center, Business Alumni Club, etc.)
- Practice implementing entrepreneurship projects based on students' ideas and projects.
- Regularly organize entrepreneurship ideas competitions at different stages of startup development and provide practical support for candidates.

In terms of business networking, the HEIs should collaborate with businesses in many activities such as:

- Inviting successful entrepreneurs over to give inspirational talks to students at job fairs, career orientation days, start-up camp fairs, admissions counseling days or mentoring, sponsoring entrepreneurship activities.
- Promoting the formation and development of entrepreneurship materials and curricula. HEIs should proactively distribute the number of credits suitable to each faculty and include them in compulsory or elective training programs in accordance with the MOET regulations.
- Organize Career counseling centers' retraining courses about entrepreneurship knowledge to gain appropriate professional skills.

The MOET and HEIs need specific, in-depth and up-to-date policies on the formation and development of entrepreneurship ecosystems in training programs as well as connections with other HEIs and stakeholders (enterprises, students, organizations, ...).

The Science and Technology Development Fund must reserve a part for the students' entrepreneurship activities. It is necessary to connect entrepreneurship training programs among HEIs. Flexible and coherent policies are needed in the use of financial resources of domestic and foreign enterprises.

**TABLE 1: ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACTIVITIES**

	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4
Promoting Entrepreneurship	Open refresher courses	Establish entrepreneurship spaces	Practice implementing entrepreneurship projects	Organize entrepreneurship ideas competition
Business networking	Invite successful entrepreneurs to inspire students	Promote entrepreneurial materials and curriculum	Organize Career Centres counseling services	

### 3. CONCLUSION

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The National Conference provided an excellent opportunity for representatives from HEIs, domestic and foreign enterprises, small and medium enterprises, as well as students, to discuss the situation of employment and entrepreneurship of students and graduates at universities throughout the country.

Key points gained from the Conference include:

- Finding financial support solutions and knowledge from businesses is an important task both for the career centres and the HEIs.
- Creating and developing networks among universities, between universities and businesses, and between universities and students is required to successfully improve graduates' employability and entrepreneurship skills.

The recommendations presented here are based on discussions made at various panels of the National Conference. It is hoped that both the MOET and HEIs will take them under consideration to improve the capacity to find suitable jobs for students as well as creating a healthy, solid entrepreneurship ecosystem to support their innovative business projects.



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## ANNEX

### List of panels

No.	NAME	PANEL MEMBERS
1	<b>Employability of Vietnamese Graduates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• USSH – Ho Cam Nhung</li><li>• TVU - Nguyen Thi Ngoc Van</li><li>• TDMU - Truong Thi Thuỷ Tien</li><li>• NTU - Do Quoc Viet</li><li>• TNU - Tran Trung Dung</li><li>• IUV - Tran Huynh Quang</li><li>• HUST - Tran Van Top</li><li>• UD – Ngo Thi Ngoc Hoa</li></ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Vo Trung Hung, The University of Danang</p>
2	<b>Transitioning from Higher Education to the Labour Market</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr. Doan Huu Duc – Managing Partner, Vietnam Consulting Group</li><li>• Mr. Phan Quoc Tuan – President, Song Binh group, Agency of Fedex in Vietnam</li><li>• Mr. Le Vinh Truong - Vice president, JUST IN TIME</li><li>• Vo Hieu Nghia - MC, alumni of Education Department</li><li>• Ngo Minh Nhut - alumni of Sociology Department</li><li>• Trinh Lam Thi Thien Kim, Head of Business development, FPT University</li></ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Truong Thi Thuy Tien, Thu Dau Mot University</p>
3	<b>Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Vietnam</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• USSH – Tran Le Hoa Tranh</li><li>• TVU – Nguyen Duy</li><li>• TDMU - Truong Thi Thuy Tien</li><li>• NTU - Do Quoc Viet</li><li>• TNU - Tran Trung Dung</li><li>• IUV - Tran Thi Bich</li><li>• HUST - Pham Tuan Hiep</li><li>• UD – Le Vu</li></ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Dinh Van Hai, Hanoi University of Science and Technology</p>



4	<b>How I became an Entrepreneur</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. Vo Thi Phuong Lan, CEO, Amerasian Shipping Logistics Corporation, Chairwoman of the Advisory Council for Supporting the National Business Start-up Program in the South</li><li>• Mr. Francesco Tran Van Lieng, Chairman, VINACACAO'S GROUP OF COMPANIES</li><li>• Ms Selena Le, Founder, No Waste Vietnam</li><li>• Mr. Dinh Minh Quyen, CEO, Talkcafe 100% English</li><li>• Nguyen Quang Nhut, Director, Shojiki Advertising JSC</li></ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Nguyen Phuong Thao, Bureau for Employers' Activities, VCCI</p>
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