



MODULE 1

My vision is a green business

Learning outcomes

You will learn here:

- How to develop ideas
- How to find the tools you need
- How to find the information you need
- How to organise digital information



Figure 1: Your green business idea

Basic information



In this module, you will learn to visualise your green business idea.



This module contains five exercises.



You will need 15 h to finish the module.



You need 66% correct answers to pass this module.



Your lecturers are Gabriele, Michael and Vladimir.

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Welcome to Module 1!

Hello, and welcome to Module 1!

Congratulations on your decision to start a business and focus on a green business. You are acting in a future-oriented way.

You may already know what your green business could look like, but you may need some inspiration. – Here, we would like to help you develop an idea. Inspire yourself with digital tools. Module 1 also focuses on how to find the correct information for your green business on the internet. And to ensure that you don't get lost online, here are ways to store and organise data securely.

Develop creative and purposeful ideas

In this first part of the module, you will learn valuable methods and tools to develop an idea.

With the IKIGAI method, you can find out how to get paid for what you like to do and what you are good at and improve the world.

The creative approach is to develop an idea to create a Vision Board.

At the end of this part, you will learn about the Zurich Resource Model, which can help you to activate your resources.

Finding Your IKIGAI

The IKIGAI method encourages you to visualise your thoughts. This can be a powerful tool to **better understand** your green business idea.

IKIGAI is a Japanese word. The correct pronunciation of IKIGAI is ee-kee-guy. There's no direct translation of IKIGAI into English. Often it is translated as "your reason for being".

The IKIGAI follows two steps:

- 1) First, you explore essential aspects of starting a green business:
 - What you love
 - What you are good at
 - What the world needs
 - What you can be paid for
- 2) In the next step, you discover where your answers overlap. This is your IKIGAI, your power focus.

EXERCISE 1



M 1_E 1: Find your personal green-business-IKIGAI

You can use this free online tool in English to create your personal green-business-IKIGAI and print it out:

<https://www.talbraiman.com/ikigai>

Or you can use this instruction to create one yourself:

Step 1:

It would help if you had an empty IKIGAI graphic:

Find your Green Business-Ikigai



Open a writing programme or take a sheet of paper. On the top, write the number of the module and the number of this exercise.

Draw four overlapping circles using the “Insert tab”. Then, you can add your notes to the document.

Alternatively, you can do the same on a piece of paper. You may also choose different colours for the notes of each circle.

Step 2:

Ask yourself the questions below to find your answers to the four main aspects of your green business and write them down.

What do you never get bored with?

What aspects of life bring you into your heart and make you feel alive?

What do you spend hours doing without noticing how time passes?

In the past, what gave you energy?

What would you do even if you did not get paid?

Question 1: What do you love?

What unique combination of skills do you have?

What do people ask you for help?

What are you great at without having to try very hard?

What parts of former jobs were easy for you?

In what activities are you great in your community?

Question 2: What are you good at?

What can you do that would be good for others?

What problems in the world would you like to solve?

What work will still be relevant a decade from now?

What do you see out there that makes you say:
"Someone should tackle this!"

Question 3: What does the world need?

Question 4: What can you get paid for?

What product/service can you offer that really brings value to others so that they are happy to pay well for it?

What does the competition look like?
Can you spot a niche?

What experiences from previous jobs come to your mind in this context?

Step 3:

Insert your answers to the four questions in the IKIGAI-graphic and find the overlaps. For example, when you are good at contacting new people and love to do this, write “contacting new people” in the field PASSION. Or if you love making useful things from materials that others throw away, you can insert this in the field MISSION.

Continue to do so with the other fields and find out what is overlapping in the centre. This is your personal green-business-IKIGAI and power focus.

When you have completed the exercises, name your digital document with the number of this exercise and save it in the folder of Module 1. If you did the exercise on paper, take readable photos, and keep them.

Additional resources you may like to consult/lookup:

- The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life by Hector Garcia and Francesc Miralles (published initially: in 2016)
- Héctor García, Francesc Miralles and Cleary, H. (2017). IKIGAI: the Japanese secret to a long and happy life. London: Hutchinson.

Creating Your Digital Vision Board

Developing a vision board is an exercise that allows you to gain a clearer understanding of your personal and/or business goals.

You can ask yourself questions such as:

- “What would I like to achieve in the next year?”, or
- “What does my green business look like?”

You can also ask yourself,

- “What skills would I like to improve?”

EXERCISE 2



M 1_E 2: Once you have answered these questions, close your eyes and imagine:

- you have already achieved all your goals for the next year
- you have reached all your essential personal and business goals
- you can master the skills you wish to improve

When you visualise your goals and your successes, it is important that you imagine those goals of yours **as already true**.

For your vision board, you can now choose personal pictures on your mobile phone or photos from the internet.

For example, websites such as Pinterest.com and Unsplash.com inspire you and represent what you want to achieve.

Next, you can go online and search for...

Canva.com

This design tool allows you to create a digital vision board.

You can print out the vision board to remind yourself of your goals. And to remind you that you can achieve whatever you give all your effort and attention to.

On the online platform Canva.com, type in “vision boards” in the search bar at the top of the page.

Then choose a template that you would like to use.

Now, you can upload pictures from your mobile phone or your computer:

- Click on the cloud button in the navigation bar on the left and upload your picture.
- Insert the uploaded pictures into the Canva template.

Drag the pictures from the left into the template that you have chosen. The template now shows on the right side of your screen.

Position the pictures in a way that you like.

Once ready with your design, you can click the “Download” button in the top right corner to save your design on your device.

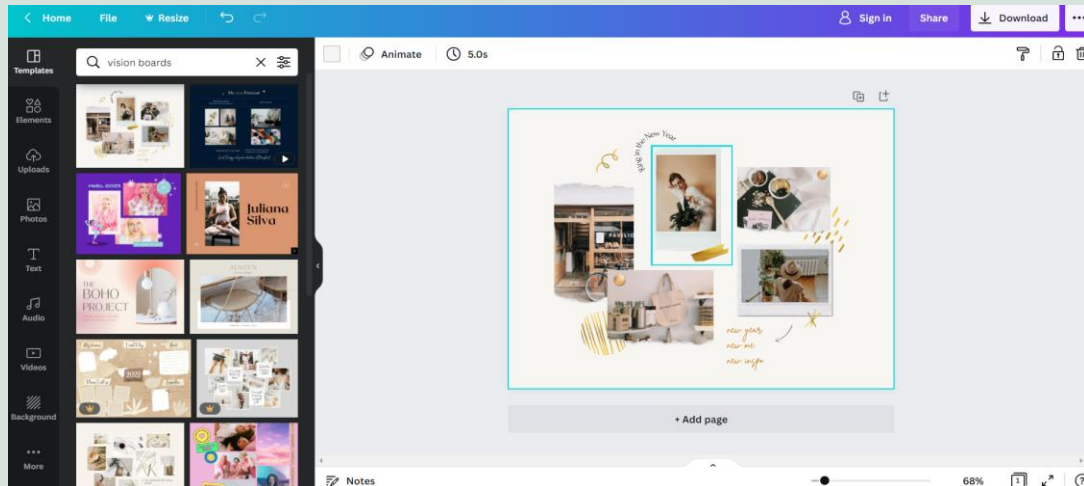


Figure 2: Canva platform, www.canva.com

You can see the Canva website and a selected template on the right.

Alternatively, you can choose to print pictures using photos from your phone, a newspaper, or a magazine.

You can use scissors, glue sticks, or tape to create a colourful collage.

When you have completed the exercises, name your digital document with the number of this exercise and save it in the folder of Module 1. If you did the exercise on paper, take readable photos and keep them.

The ZRM® Online Tool

One of the best and most proven creative visioning techniques is the Zurich Resource Model (Zürcher Ressourcen Modell ZRM®).

It was initially developed by Dr Frank Krause and Dr Maja Storch for scientific studies.

You can use it as an online tool in English, French and German - for free.

Your data will not be stored and used otherwise:

https://zrm.ch/OnlineTool_english.html

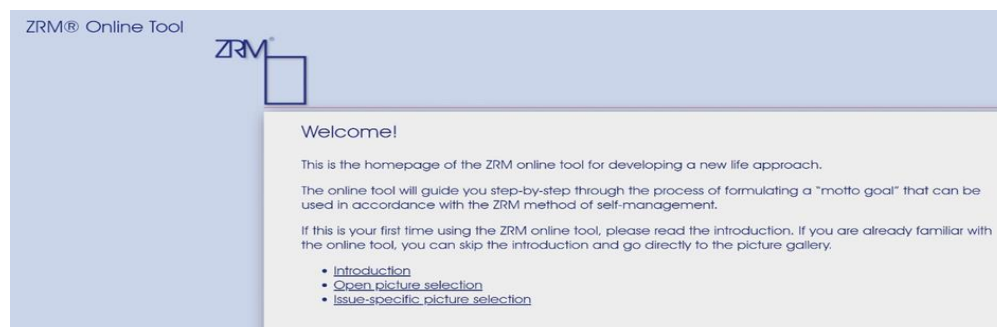


Figure 3: ZRM tool

The ZRM® Online Tool can help you to find your "motto goal".

What is a motto goal?

... is a goal you really want to achieve with all your heart.

... will help you to succeed and master challenges.

... will help you to overcome setbacks and failures.

... will strengthen your resilience

A

motto goal will make your entrepreneurial journey fun and fulfilling.

EXERCISE 3



M 1_E 3: Find your motto goal.

The online tool will guide you step-by-step through the process of formulating such a motto goal.

Here you will find the Online Tool:

https://zrm.ch/OnlineTool_english.html.

Please read the introduction if this is your first time using the ZRM online tool. If you are already familiar with the online tool, you can skip the intro and go directly to the picture gallery.

You will be using pictures to find your motto goal.

Why?

Because pictures will help you visualise your ideas.

That means that you will gain a clear(er) understanding of your passion and motivation to start a green business.

- First, you answer some basic and most important questions, ideally in written form, without overthinking.
- Then, you can create pictures and drawings of what you wrote.

Find and access digital content online

If you start with a green business, you need much information. One fast and easy way to access information is to search the net. In the next part of this module, you will find valuable tips for online research. If you are already experienced in online research, you can quickly work through this part, but you may still find some valuable information to improve your skills.

The principles of online research

To receive the best information through the internet, it is essential to be familiar with the principles of online research to receive the best possible data you need.

The principles for searching and accessing quality information on the internet are technical and analytical.

Internet research starts with the search field (or identification field) and the topic of the information you want to receive.



Figure 4: Internet research

As a first step, you must create focused and relevant search terms so that the search engine provides precisely the information you are looking for.

The search terms are also known as a search queries.

The search terms or queries contain keywords or phrases you enter into a search engine.

- Simplifying the search terms is also a way to improve the quality of the internet search.
- You can do this by excluding common words like a, the, in, of, on, and avoiding plurals.

Search engines

The most popular search engine is Google, but there are many more like Bing, Yahoo, Yandex, AOL and Ecosia. Ecosia is recommendable because you are planting trees when using this search engine:

Use Ecosia – and plant trees in regions where trees are needed most:

<https://www.ecosia.org/>

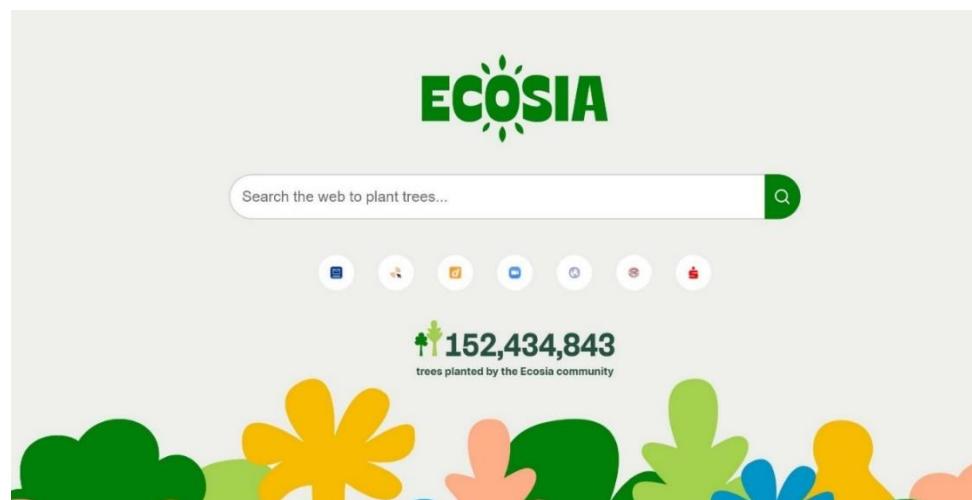


Figure 5: Ecosia search engine

Most search engines provide a function to find results by the type:

all types	
images	
videos	
news	
locations on the map	
books, etc.	

Moreover, search engines provide functions to filter the content based on date range, language, etc.

EXERCISE 4



M 1_E 4: Videos and books about Green Business

Search the internet for videos and books about Green Business.

Open a writing programme or take a sheet of paper. On the top, write the number of the module and the number of this exercise.

List the names of the videos and books in your document. If you use a digital document, you can also insert the links to the websites you found them on. Write some critical words about the content next to the videos and books. Find at least five videos and books you find interesting. **When you have completed the exercises, name your digital document with the number of this exercise and save it in the folder of Module 1. If you did the exercise on paper, take readable photos and keep them.** Simply putting the search terms in the search engine reverts mixed results, including results containing synonyms of the word or the phrase. **Synonyms are words with the same or a very similar meaning.**

But in some cases, you might need to receive more specific information.

Searching for specific information

Several techniques specify the search terms if you need to receive more specific information.

You are putting your search term in quotation marks (“ ... ”) makes the search engine search and display results specifically for that specific word or phrase.

In this case, the search engine will display slightly different results.

This will allow you to receive results only for that word or phrase and exclude derivative forms of the word or phrase results.

If the search query is a phrase, the search will be limited to that phrase rather than all of the component terms individually.

EXERCISE 5

M 1_E 5: How to start a green business



Search for the phrase “How to start a green business?”

Did you find those websites?

- <https://www.wikihow.com/Start-a-Green-Business>
- <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/multimedia/podcasts/4-how-start-green-business>
- <https://articles.bplans.com/how-to-start-a-green-business/>
- <http://feelgoodfranchise.com/>

Now search in your first language (mother tongue).

What did you find?

When you have completed the exercises, name your digital document with

the number of this exercise and save it in the folder of Module 1. If you did the exercise on paper, take readable photos and keep them.

You can specify the internet search also by removing words that might not be relevant to your online search.

You can exclude these words by placing a dash/minus (-) before the word you want to exclude.

Then the search engine will revert to results that are not containing this word.

Using operators

You can also refine your internet search by using operators.

Operators are characters and terms that will narrow your internet search in more targeted ways.

Several operators might be helpful for your internet search.

Use a relevant word's star symbol (*) as a placeholder.

This operator will allow you to do a wildcard search and might be beneficial when you need to know the full text of the phrase.

If you need to learn a wildcard search, **please search it on the internet.**

By using OR between the terms you can do a combination search: The search engine will display pages where one of the terms is used, not necessarily both.

The combination search might be done also by using the operator AND between the terms: The search engine will display results that include the names of both search terms.

Search engines will also allow you to search on a specific website by:



In this case, the search engine will display the results only from this website.

Advertisements

It is important to know that most search engines display advertisements (ads) alongside search results.

Advertisements, for example, appear at the top of the search results or below.

In most cases, they are marked as ads.

These advertisements are based on your search terms and frequently resemble other search results.

While they can be helpful in some situations, it's usually better to concentrate on the actual search results.

Keep record!

It is beneficial to keep a record of the websites you have visited and the information you will use.

Although there is plenty of quality information available, there might also be information that needs to be more credible.

Additionally, you might need more than the quality information you find online to be useful for your internet search aims.

Keeping records is beneficial if you need to revisit the websites later or refer to these websites in other digital or paper documents.

To keep a record, you copy the address of the website where you took the information from in a word document and add the date.

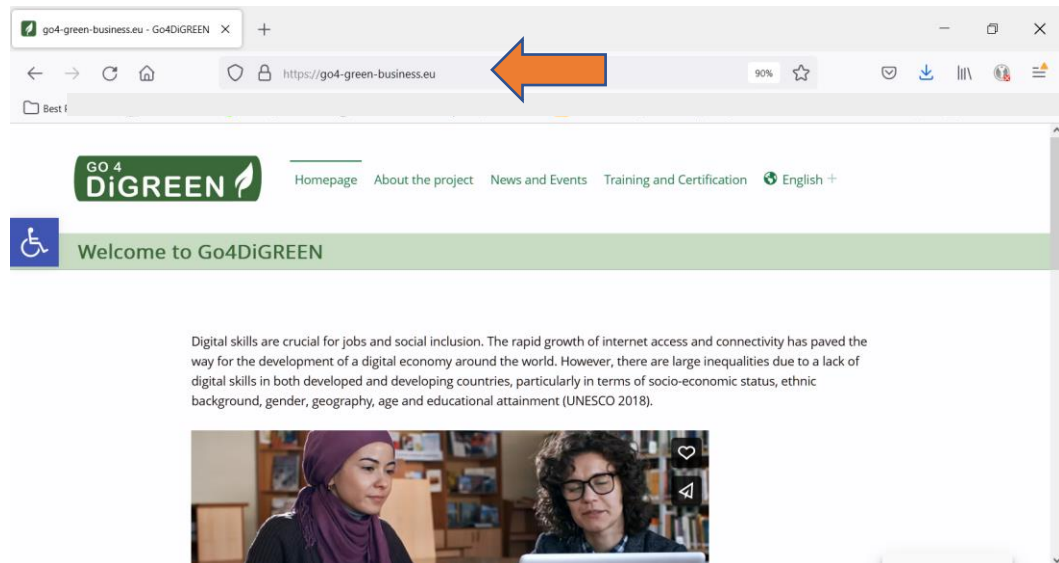


Figure 6: Address of a website

Open data portals

Open data portals are reliable sources of accurate and verified information.

Open data portals are web-based interfaces that help users find reusable information.

Like library catalogues, they contain metadata records of datasets published for reuse, with most information relating to raw, numerical data rather than written publications.

They make it easier to identify datasets of interest when combined with certain search functions.

Some open data portals provide direct and automated data access for software programs.

Most open data efforts include open data portals used by public administrations at the European, national and municipal levels in EU countries.

The open data portals shall supplement national, regional, and thematic available data portals and the EU's Open Data Portal.

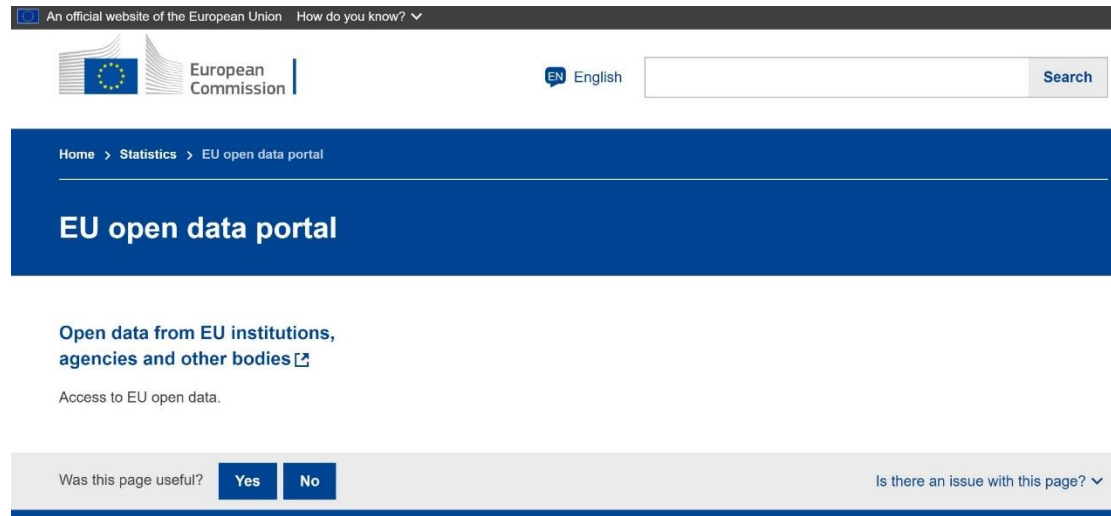


Figure 7: EU open data portal, ec.europa.eu/info/statistics/eu-open-data-portal_en

Each of these portals caters to specific user groups by providing personalised content.

They make cross-border usage of reusable information in Europe easy, by

- enhancing data findability across nations and
- Assisting in the development of applications that include data from several countries.

For instance, by assisting with necessary licensing criteria.

Organise information, data, and content

You need to organise what you have found on the Internet so that you can easily retrieve the data when you need it. In this part of the module, you will learn how and where to store your data best. If you are already familiar with storing your data, you can quickly work through this part, but you may still find some valuable tips to improve your skills.

In the digital environment, data and information are stored in the form of files, so the data and information can be called files.

Efficiently organising the files will prevent loss of time when you are looking for specific information and data.

Moreover, efficiently organising information and data will allow you to collaborate better with others if you work with a team.

The organisation of the data means

- How to structure the files and folders and
- How to also add context to your data, called "metadata".

Local and cloud storage of data

The data can be efficiently stored, structured and maintained

1. in a local environment - in the memory of the desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or another device, as well as
2. in a cloud environment - platforms like OneDrive, SharePoint, Google Drive, Dropbox, and others.

Some of the solutions allow the storage of the data both in the cloud and in the local memory with synchronisation.

Most cloud-based platforms can be used free of charge, but there are some limitations to the storage, number of devices, or other functions.

Both approaches have their pros and cons. It would help if you considered both, based on your needs and requirements.

1. **The main advantage of storing data locally on your device** (computer, laptop, or tablet) is that you have access that does not depend on your internet connection. Moreover, some options exist to share the files and folders in your network.
2. **The main advantage of cloud data and information storage** is that you can access it from any device connected to the internet and share it easily with others.

Another benefit is that in case of damage or malfunction of the device, your data will still be available because it is stored outside of it, and you will still have access to it.

In most cases, installing additional software or apps is not mandatory; you can access your data from the internet browser by logging in to the platform.

The platforms that allow storing data and information both locally and in the cloud have the two main advantages of both approaches.

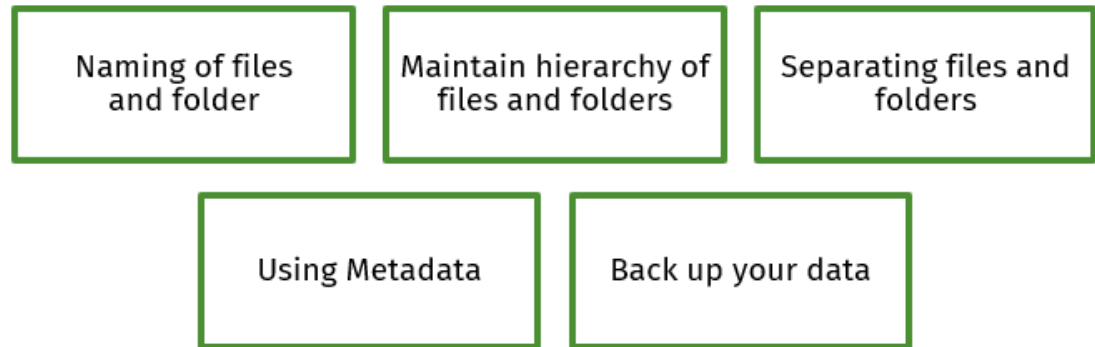
The information is accessible from all devices connected to the cloud but is also accessible on a local base without the internet.

These solutions, in most cases, might require installing software or apps on the computer or the devices.

Data protection (GDPR) should also be necessary when choosing the information and data storing approach. There are some differences in the data protection standards if the data is stored locally or in a cloud-based platform.

Using data structure

After you have chosen the storage approach, the next important aspect is creating the structure.



Using folders allows easy to organise the files in a structure, and the proper naming of the files and folders is essential for the system's orientation and will avoid confusion.

The naming of files and folder

Consistent naming and folders and putting the files in the respective folders is important for developing information and data management schemes. Sticking to this consistent scheme will make the work and the process easier.

Maintain hierarchy of files and folders

We are storing the files and folders hierarchically, based on a different level, also optimising the process of organising data and information.

At the basic level, a limited number of folders on different topics and issues and inside these folders might be created folders on specific folders containing the respective files. This limits the confusion of too many existing folders.

Separating files and folders

To optimise the processes, the files and folders that are no longer in use or not actually can be separated. These, for example, might be for finished projects. Separating the files and folders that are no longer in use will mitigate the confusion of too many files. It is important that you can separate them instead of deleting them. You might need and use them in the future; they might be references. Separating these files and folders that are no longer in use is a process of creating the archive. Keeping the archive structure and naming consistent is essential to make a file easy if needed.

Using Metadata

Using metadata of the files and folders is another way of maintaining and organising data and information. The metadata is additional information about the file. It is helpful for better orientation among the files and for grouping and filtering the files and folders.

Some examples of metadata might be the file's creation date, subjects, tags, rating, author, etc. The types of metadata in a file vary by type of file.

For example, an image file can contain details about the camera and the lens used for taking the photo, or a music file can have a type of genre as metadata. You can easily find the metadata in the document properties.

Back up your data

It is essential to have information and data back-up in case the device or the platform where the stored data is down or crashes due to unexpected circumstances or by mistake. When you have a backup system, the files can be recovered quickly from the backup in case of lost data.

Maintaining data backup means regularly creating a copy of the information and the data on other data storage - on another device (another computer, external hard drive, or flash drive) and/or on a cloud platform.

The 3-2-1 data backup principle

The best practice for data and information backup is to have a copy of your files on different storage devices and locations. It is also known as the 3-2-1 backup principle:

3 - create one primary backup and two copies of your data.

2- save backups to two different types of media or locations.

1 - keep at least one backup file offsite.

This principle of backup of the information and data reduces the impact of a single point of failures, such as a failed hard drive or a lost item.

You could, for example, keep a backup on an external hard drive, a USB device, or the cloud.

Identify simple digital tools to create innovation

Now that you are familiar with online research and data organisation let's close the circle: In this final part of Module 1 you will learn how to use digital tools and environments to create innovation from your ideas.

Innovations, like new products, services, methods and tools, are the core of every successful business. This is particularly true in digitalised environments.



Figure 8: Digital

All innovations grow from ideas.

Digital tools support the development of ideas.

Online tools for facilitating innovations are very diverse and greatly vary in complexity. They allow, for example, gathering, discussing, assessing and prioritising ideas and keeping track of and maintaining accountability for their development.

You will learn some practical methods valuable for your green business in the following.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is one of the most common practices for the creation of innovations.

It is a way of generating ideas, sharing information or finding solutions for a specific challenge.

Brainstorming is a group exercise where members express their ideas as they arise. Participants are encouraged to think freely. You write down the ideas without evaluating them or checking their feasibility. In this phase, the only goal is to collect as many ideas as possible.



Figure 9: Brainstorming in a team

At the end of the session, ideas are classified and prioritised for further action.

For efficient brainstorming, it is critical to precisely specify the topic.

- A topic that is too specialised might constrain thought.
- A topic that is too broad will not create enough immediately applicable ideas.

Online brainstorming is an excellent method for gathering ideas remotely.



Figure 10: Online Brainstorming

Online brainstorming allows participants to be more creative and productive.

Remote, online idea gathering is easier with virtual brainstorming tools.

Shared files

You can use shared files (Google Docs or Microsoft Word) for more than just file sharing and version control.

Everyone may record their thoughts independently and subsequently add them to the page or can add them in real-time.

Additionally, there are a lot of specialised online tools for brainstorming.

Online tools example

- IdeaBoardz: a web-based application that allows one to create a virtual board and invite partners.

Make sections for the many areas in which you want to collect thoughts.

- Realtime Board: a collaborative, online whiteboard place that also uses virtual post-it notes.

To arrange your project, you can start with a blank page or utilise a template.

- Lucidspark : <https://lucidspark.com/>

You can use three online whiteboards per month for free to work together with collaboration features. You can add emphasis with emojis and freehand drawing.

Mind mapping

Mind mapping and brainstorming are other widely used method for creating innovations.

It is a method of arranging information graphically.

Because it is built on natural connections, it is beneficial for getting ideas out of your mind and into paper.



Figure 11: Mind mapping

Organising your thoughts can assist you in getting out of your brain and identifying biases and gaps in your thinking.

It can help you to communicate your concept with others.

The brainstorming tools listed below are ideal for autonomous thought mapping.

The primary **distinction between brainstorming and mind mapping** is that:

- brainstorming aids in the generation of new ideas, whereas
- mind mapping aids in the creation of linkages between ideas.

Online tools example

- Freeplane: a mind mapping and knowledge management program with advanced structuring features.

Add thoughts intuitively without needing to link them. Then, arrange them using nodes, lines, metadata, and styles.

You can also use filters to help you find relevant material.

- MeindMeister: with this tool, you can create many subtopics and explore your ideas by colour coding. You can add context to themes by including or embedding attachments and other elements.



In Module 15, you will learn how to use Mind Mapping to solve problems.

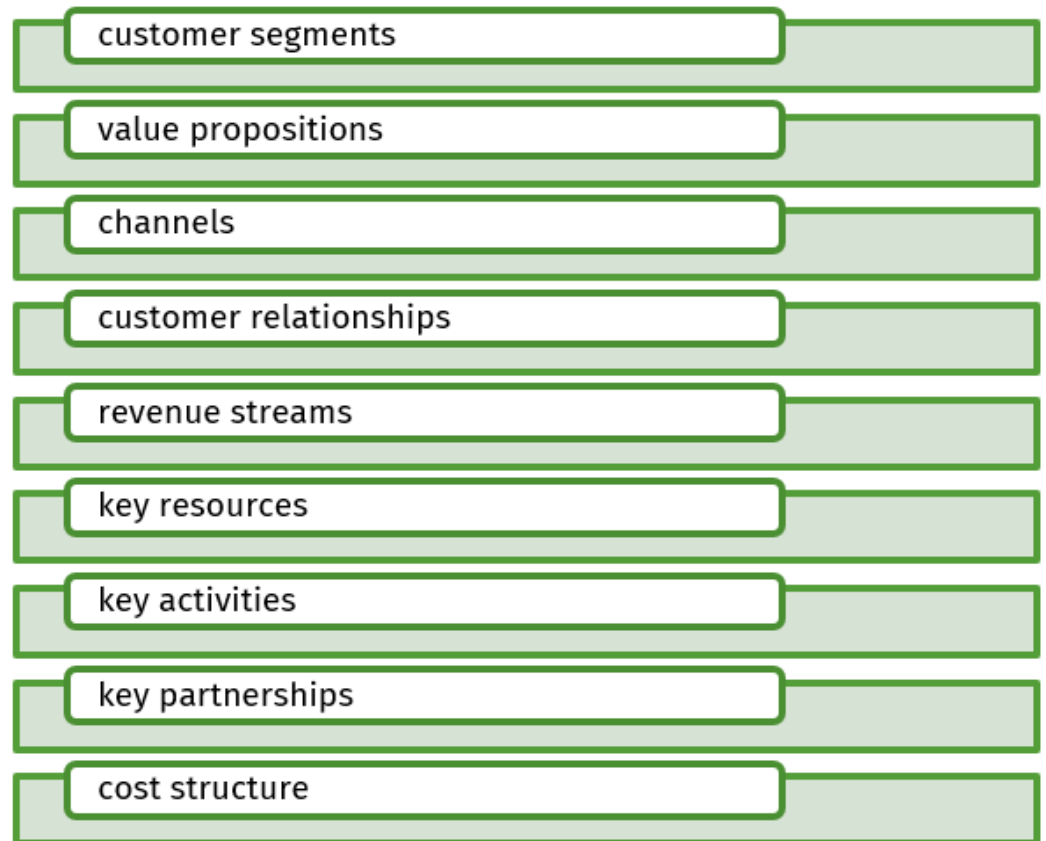
Business Model Canvas

Business Model Canvas is one of the most popular approaches for creating business concepts.

Both start-ups and large-scale businesses use it to outline the aspects and assumptions associated with a business idea or concept.

A business model canvas is a graphical depiction of a company model that highlights all major strategic elements.

The business model canvas consists of the following components:



In Module 9, you will learn how to use a business canvas to develop a business model.

Online tools example

- Miro provides a lot of canvas templates, including a business model canvas that allows remote work. This tool supports the use of your imagination. You can plan projects from every perspective and construct centralised information hubs to include everyone you like.

- Metro Retro is another tool for visualising ideas interactively and collaboratively. This online tool provides a Lean Canvas template as an alternative to the Business Model Canvas.

Prototyping

Prototyping is another significant approach to developing innovation in ideas.

Prototyping is a process and an experiment. Design teams turn ideas from paper to digital and, from there, into tangible objects.

We can create prototypes to try out ideas and test them on consumers. You can modify and validate your ideas and designs with prototypes to deliver the proper items.

The online tools for prototyping and their functionalities can significantly vary by the nature and the type of the idea where the prototype originated.

The significant benefit of some of the digital prototyping tools is that the produced prototype might be interactive.

Online tools example

- JUSTINMIND: a prototype tool that supports the creation of designs. The tool has an extensive collection of animations and effects and its drag-and-drop editor.
- FIGMA: a design platform that assists you in conceptualising, creating, testing, and delivering prototypes. This tool has several essential plugins, and its collaboration capabilities allow you to quickly share the task with a team.

Congratulations!



You finished Module 1. You are now able to take a quiz on the platform to test your knowledge and apply for a certificate with ECQA.

Reference list

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Zürcher Ressourcen Modell ZRM®, developed by Dr. Frank Krause and Dr. Maja Storch for the University of Zurich: <https://zrm.ch/>

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