Guidelines for co-productive focus groups

To develop the IO3, focus groups will be established in each country to discuss entrepreneurship and the support that is needed to enable the development and setting up of one enterprise.

It is important to bear in mind that, in the context of the IN-CUBA project, the concept of enterprise has a broad interpretation, referring to the action of starting a new project or undertaking, or developing an idea, even when it does not result in the creation of a business (commercial or social). All entrepreneurial activities are considered, whether or not they be for profit, or whether they have a commercial or social aim.

You are free to organise the focus groups in the most suitable way according to your situation however you may wish to consider organising them in several sessions to better enable service users and family members to process information. The following points should be considered during the co-productive focus groups:

1. What is understood by "enterprise" and "entrepreneur"? Explain the concept of project in its wider possible meaning
2. What is understood by an "incubator"?
3. What "good ideas" and / or interests do you have?
4. What entrepreneurial project would you like to develop?
5. What would be required to start such a project?
6. What things might get in the way or may it difficult?
7. What help and resources do you think you will need?
8. What would be the benefit to you of being an entrepreneur?
9. What would you want from a structure that supports the development of entrepreneurial projects (incubator)?
10. Identify a project to take forward (it will be tested in the pilot actions) - why do you think this is a good project?
11. How can you start to put the project into practice?

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Some methodical points

- **Information on inclusive co-productive focus groups** may be found in the results of the project Enable www.co-production.eu. For example, in the guide on "How we design inclusive learning situations for a co-productive approach" (See file enclosed)

- Have a look at the 6 pillars of the **co-productive approach** (assets, capabilities of each participant, blurring roles, mutuality, professionals as catalysts, networking) and the 4 **steps** in co-production (design/plan, decide, carry out and evaluate together).

- **Composition of co-productive focus groups**: to have a view from different angles and to gather a range of experience and skills, it is good to have people from different disciplines or domains who can enrich the research. Bear in mind that these may not always be the most "obvious" people or those usually involved in supporting the lives of the service users - be creative and exploratory in your thinking - ask around in your communities and networks. A focus-group should not be too large (6-8 fix members, but this is not a rule). You can also invite other people or experts occasionally. You can also split up the group for specific tasks. Example: 3 people will do a specific task until next time, 3 others take care of another task…

- **Involve the participants on an equal basis:** each one has ideas, experience and competences. Find out together the assets of the participants in the focus group; distribute tasks together respecting the interests and abilities of each one.

- **Clarify everyone's roles in the group:** who is the coordinator, writer, and timekeeper; who keeps the participants informed between meeting. You could consider the use of role cards to make this clear during meetings.

- **Designate one person as facilitator** to explain and support participants with Intellectual Disability in language that is easily understood, to help them participate in group discussion,

to visualise and interpret difficult concepts or descision. This person should not be the same as the moderator of the focus group.

- **Use easy to understand and easy to read language**
  More information are available here: https://easy-to-read.eu/european-standards/

- **Organise the meeting clearly:** topics/agenda on the flipchart, presence list, red-green-yellow cards for stop-vote-ask to speak…

- **Use interactive methods for working on topics; change the working methods throughout the meeting:** do not only discuss around a table; mover around, make tandems (professional participant and participant with ID), use crafts, use video-clips to see and discuss, …

- **Allow short breaks during the meeting**

- **Make a short written or visual report as a reminder** containing also photos of flipchart drawings and writings and of other manual activities carried out during the meetings

- Plan the **time to prepare the participants** with intellectual disability between the focus groups (repeat, go into more depth on some aspects...).

- Visit other entrepreneurs, have a look at **good practice examples** around your topic or/and use pictures and videos to inspect and discuss existing examples around the topic that you have chosen.

- **Invite people to interview** participants on their experience during the focus group.