THE COOPWORKING EXPERIMENT

STEP 1

"The journey of a thousand miles begin with one step
Lao Tzu

LOOKING FOR A COOPERATIVE PROJECT

Welcome to step 1 of StartToCoop !

Through this first step, you will guide participants to discover a new perspective about economy and enterprises and to apply it to their own context.

The objectives of step 1 are:

• To start working together as a team, defining and accepting democratic rules.

• To think about how cooperative values and principles can be translated into enterprises activities and have an impact in the transformation of your communities.

• To think about possible project ideas in your own context, decide democratically the most adequate to be shaped into a worker coop project.

We propose you the following activities and resources (but remember: you take what you need!)

A \\ Cooperative values and principles (90')

You can set the stage of the coop working journey by reading all together with participants this infographics **[Step 1 -Focus point 1 – Cooperative Values]** about the main cooperative values.

The pioneers who created the first cooperative enterprise in Rochdale (UK) in 1844, draw their inspiration from these humanistic values to set the seven cooperative principles, that were intended as the basic rules that regulated the cooperative functioning. Since 1844, they were transmitted and preserved with just minor changes: they represent the cooperative move-

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ment DNA, the essence that shape the values into the daily practice of co-operative organisations all over the world.

Today, they still stand more relevant than ever and mark the cooperative difference compared to other types of organisations and enterprises.

Here **[Step 1 -Focus Point 2 – Cooperative Principles]** you can find a brief description and explanation of the seven cooperative principles.

We propose you now a simple activity inspired in cooperative learning methodology (want to know more about Cooperative learning? Consult Step 1 -Fact sheet 1 – Cooperative learning that will help participants to understand more in depth the cooperative principles, link them to the co-operative values and connect them to their own experience).

Material: white canvas, colour pencils, post-it®.

    a. Give to all participants a copy of the brief description of the seven cooperative principles and leave them 5 minutes to read it. Do not answer or clarify any questions at this stage.

    b. Divide the participants in groups of 3 to 5 persons.

    c. Depending on the number of groups created, assign to every group one or two of the cooperative principles in the template provided here (Step 1 - TFS 1 – Coop Principles).

    d. Within every group, participants have 15 minutes to discuss and respond collectively to the questions posed in the template. You can help each group by answering questions and clarifying concepts, but provide that they reach by their own their conclusions.

    e. Then, every group presents its answers to all participants, who can contribute to the discussion and ask for clarifications to the group presenting its work (30 minutes).

    f. Finally, the whole group will resume graphically on a white canvas the seven principles, deciding how to represent them: there are no special rules or indications other than being creative and colourful! (15 minutes).

In Cooplab we created our own representation of the seven principles and we propose it to you here **[POSTER ON COOP PRINCIPLES]**. If you like it and find it useful help us disseminating it: share it on the social networks that you and the participants use.

Print some copies in full colour and in big format (we suggest A0 and A1) and stick it in your classroom, in the school or in other relevant public spaces.

Finally, following this link to CoopLab webpage you can find some interesting examples of cooperative values at work! **[link to videos and resources]**[1]

1. Annex list of video and resources coop values

Warning: **in STEP 1 – TFS 2- Values, Principles, practices** *we provide you some advises about the relationships between values and principles, in order to support your work.*

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B \\ Generate ideas of possible coop working projects (60')

So, now that participants have entered in the cooperative "mood", they shall think about **what could they undertake together**. Not when they are older, in the future or after university...but now and here.

What can you do?

In order to start generating ideas we suggest you a simple and dynamic cooperative learning activity that promotes the participation of all the group members.

[STEP 1 – FACTSHEET -2 – THINK PAIR SHARE].

Here are the steps:

1. **Make them think individually about situations and realities in their close environment (20')**

Make them think about situations and realities (in their school, in the local park, in their community, etc...) that they do not like and that they would like to improve together with their mates. Consider physical situations, but also relationships, emotions, services that they would like to improve. Consider also what they like, the passion they would like to share and involve in with other people.

Make them ask themselves: 'What can we do about it?'

We suggest some simple instructions that may help generating and defending their ideas.

You can print and distribute this template to each participant, so he/she can write his/her thoughts on post-its and stick them. **[link STEP 1- TFS 3 – Proposal Resume]**.

Here they can find some inspiration **[link to videos and resources]**.

At this stage everyone thinks individually and write in a post it or paper his/her ideas.

2. **Pair ideas (10')**

Divide the group in pairs so that each person tells the other about his/her idea and explains its purpose, its strengths and weaknesses, the problems or necessities it solves, etc.

3. **Share their ideas in the whole group (30')**

During the whole group discussion, everyone has 2 minutes to expose their idea to their mates. Use the classroom wall or a big white canvas to stick all the templates with everyone's proposals, then fa-

cilitate the discussion to group the ideas that are similar or have contact points: order them under appropriate titles for each category / area and draw the connections among the ideas in a way that make sense to the group.

Remember that at this stage all the ideas are welcome and participants need to be creative collectively: build on others' ideas, combine and redefine them to get new solutions, do not limit to stick all the ideas on a wall… As a result, the ideas must be grouped, ordered and presented clearly enough to be readable.

Warning: fix a maximum time for the discussion and grouping of ideas (we suggest 25-30 minutes), take care everyone has the chance to talk but limit the duration of interventions and do not let this become a never-ending debate!

C \\ Identify the idea that you are going to shape into a coop working project (30')

Time to experiment a little bit of democracy!

We suggest that participants vote for the projects they consider the more adequate to be shaped into a coop working project.

According to the size of the class, it can be **only** 1 project for all the students (it's the best solution if you have only 10-15 students) or 3, 4 or 5 projects (it's best solution if you have more than 30 students) which will be implemented virtually (or maybe in reality) by 3, 4 or 5 teams.

Before voting for the best proposal(s) we suggest that participants think about the value of each of them using this easy assessment tool **[link to STEP 1 – TFS 4 – Evaluation grid]**. Participants are called to agree on the value to assign to each proposal from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high) according to different criteria: in this way they rank the proposals according to the sum of their points.

Then, they are called to anonymously vote for the proposal they like the most: it should not be necessarily the proposal that ranked first and you will see that often it is not!

In order to make the voting anonymous you can choose to ask them to vote by raising hands keeping their eyes closed.

Warning: Do not forget to celebrate the selected project idea as a **collective effort** that will need the engagement and talent of everyone in the group to be shaped into a coop working project.

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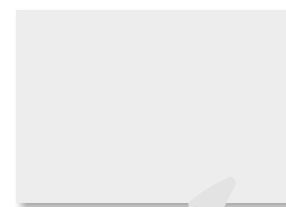
D \\ What did we learn? (20')

Here you have an interactive quiz to test participants' learning about the topics covered in step 1. It is fun and interactive! [lien vers Playcoop]

Then, here is a resume of the main learning points of step 1 to help you keep on track during the journey. [Link to STEP 1 – TFT – Learning Points Resume]

As a resume…

Time	Content	Activity - Methodology	Resources	Materials	Skills Developed	Coop Principles Related
90'	Cooperative values and principles	Exposition Work in groups Group dynamics	· Trainer's Guide · Step 1 -Focus point 1 – Cooperative Values · Step 1 -Focus Point 2 – Cooperative Principles · Step 1 -Fact sheet 1 – Cooperative learning · Step 1 – Tools for students 1- Coop principles · Step 1 – Tools for students 2 – Principles, Values, Practices · Poster about cooperative principles · Links to videos and resources in Cooplab webpage	· White Canvas · Pencils and markers · Post it · Internet connection	· Listening and communication ability · Working together and sharing ideas	All coop principles
60'	Identify possible coop working project ideas	Think, Pair, Share	· Step 1 – factsheet 2 – Think, Pair, Share · Step 1 – TFS 3 – Proposal Resume · Links to video and resources in Cooplab webpage	· Post its · White Canvas · Markers · Internet connection	· Creativity · Capability to elaborate and defend ideas · Organizing ideas · Negotiation	Democracy
30'	Identify the idea that you are going to shape into a coop working project	Vote Group discussion Evaluation	· Step 1 – TFS 4 – Evaluation grid	· Post its · White Canvas · Markers	· Decision making · Assuming responsibilities · Democracy	Democracy Voluntary and open membership
20'	¿What did we learn?	Group reflection Coop-game	· Step 1 - Learning points · Coopgame	· Internet Connexion		

Total time 200'