



Report from RSW no. 1

Transferable skills in the non-profit sector

Date: 10.9.2020

Place: Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

Organizing institution: Matej Bel University, Faculty of Economics, Tajovského 10,
Banská Bystrica

No. of participants: 10 regional stakeholders (2 online) + 3 members of UMB

DocEnhance team

Agenda for Regional Stakeholder Workshop:

1. Introduction

- a. DocEnhance introduction
- b. Compliance with ethical standards
- c. Introduction of the RSW
- d. Objectives of the RSW
- e. Introduction on transferable skills

2. Interactive sessions

- a. Gallery walk on sectoral requirements and needs on transferable skills
- b. Brainstorming on transferable skills in non-profit sector
- c. Presentation and discussion on results from DocEnhance Internal stakeholder events
- d. Working session

3. Conclusions

- a. Synthesis of gallery walk, discussion on Internal stakeholder events and working session
- b. Sectoral conclusions and recommendation towards understanding skills needed for the non-profit sector
- c. Drawing up a final list of transferable skills identified for making researchers more '*sector- and society- ready*'





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- **OBJECTIVES OF THE RSW NO.1**

- To discuss specifics of the non-profit sector and employability of doctoral candidates and graduates in the non-profit sector.
- To identify transferable skills essential for working in the non-profit sector.
- To prepare a final list and ranking of transferable skills identified as crucial for working in the non-profit sector.

- **CONCLUSIONS**

Synthesis of gallery walk, discussion on Internal stakeholder events and working/interactive session/s

Participants of the workshop came from a wide spectrum of non-profit organisations acting in the following fields: ecology and environmental protection, security, arts and culture, health and community life, history, democracy, sports, and volunteering.

Gallery walk method provoked a very good discussion on sectoral requirements in transferable skills and competences. Participants of the workshop jointly agreed that university educated people including doctoral candidates are highly valued in the non-profit sector. However, several participants were concerned whether salaries in the non-profit sector are attractive enough for doctoral graduates when choosing their careers. On the other hand, doctoral candidates and graduates might perceive the non-profit sector as an opportunity to learn a new set of skills. Young people today are used to change jobs and sectors more often than in the past. Experience from different sectors and different kind of jobs is seen as an advantage and it might be also useful when applying for higher management positions. This counts especially in abroad where experience from non-profit sector is highly valued when applying for a job.

After the general discussion, participants were divided into three groups (4-3-3) with the aim to prepare the list of transferable skills required in the non-profit sector and to do the ranking of the most important transferable skills.





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The first group listed and ranked the following skills: creativity, vision; management skills and entrepreneurial skills; teamwork, communication; language skills.

The second group named and ranked three groups of transferable skills as follows: skills related to personal attitudes – resilience, adaptability, problem solving, self-reflection; interpersonal skills; out-of-box thinking, communication skills including language skills and writing skills.

The third group discussed about multitasking, management skills and adaptability as crucial skills related to work in non-profit sector. They also listed conflict resolution, teamwork and communication skills (both oral and writing) as very important.

In the further discussion, participants agreed that there was a great potential to empower the non-profit sector with participation of doctoral graduates in it. At the same time, they recognised that there was a lack of information and low awareness of transferable skills of doctoral candidates and graduates as they are generally perceived as researchers only. They encourage universities to promote their graduates in order to reflect needs from different sectors.

Sectoral conclusions and recommendation towards understanding skills needed for a selected (non-profit) sector

Participants of the workshop agreed that working in the non-profit sector requires a specific transferable skill, competence or ability which is ***empathy***. They pointed out that behind the motivation to work in the non-profit sector there is usually an ambition and drive to change the world for the better. They proposed that in times of crisis of democracy **understanding democracy and democratic values** including human rights and importance of civic participation should also be listed on the list of transferable skills. Participants further suggested attitude, ethics and value anchoring as very important for work in the non-profit sector. They also discussed the importance of doctoral supervision. If the supervisor is able to fully support the potential of the doctoral candidate and work with





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him/her properly, it might significantly influence his/her career - also towards acting in non-profit sector, whether as a volunteer, an active citizen or a leader.

Skills such as project management, problem solving, financial skills and budgeting were also defined as highly valued in non-profit sector. Writing skills acquired during doctoral studies were considered as very useful as they are crucial in preparing project proposals and drafting different types of reports. The same counts for language skills as non-profit organisations are often applying for funding in international or foreign grant agencies and organisations.

Participants of the workshop agreed that **communication** and **presentation skills** are essential for every type of organisation in the non-profit sector.

Teaching skills are perceived as very useful in some areas of the non-profit sector, e.g. work with marginalized groups or educational activities and projects. Doctoral graduates with experience from teaching and lecturing are highly valued in the educational activities of non-profit organisations and might have strong competitive advantage in comparison with other applicants for a job in the non-profit sector.

Final list of transferable skills identified for making researchers more ‘industry- and society- ready’

- Personal and people skills and abilities: empathy, motivation, resilience, adaptability, flexibility, ethics, social responsibility.
- Communication and presentation skills: oral – face-to-face, writing, listening.
- Organisational and execution skills: project management, financial management, creativity, out-of-box thinking.
- Management and entrepreneurial skills, leadership, problem solving, critical thinking.
- Teamwork.
- Language skills.

