

# D2.3 DIGITAL4Business Employability Strategy

Deliverable 2.3

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# 1 - Executive Summary

In crafting our employability strategy, we anchor our approach in the comprehensive definition provided by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop). According to the Skills Panorama Glossary, employability encompasses a synergistic blend of elements, including job-specific skills and soft skills. It is this unique combination that empowers individuals not only to navigate entry into the workforce but also to sustain their positions and advance throughout their careers.

The objective of the Employability Strategy is to provide the guidelines that the Consortium will have to follow to actively encourage an evolution of the career path of the learners who will attend the DIGITAL4Business Master's degree *educational offering (full-time/part-time Master degree or a variety of modules)*, whether they are young recent graduates or professionals with several years of experience who have decided to invest in a professional development or career transition path. We will identify what will be the mandatory initiatives to be undertaken during the training courses which will serve to bring learners, the academic world and corporate realities into contact such as project work, case studies, company testimonials but also scholarships and internships. We will outline a learning path called "Career evolution path" where learners can be trained and followed in the development and enhancement of their professional growth through training, networking activities, hackathons, simulations. We will explain the channels to be used for the dissemination of student curricula and which shared channels will be used by students for possible new job positions.

## 1.1 - Program Overview:

The DIGITAL4Business European Masters Programme is a market-driven and sustainable educational experience focused on Advanced Digital Skills. The program aims to train a large number of graduates within a dynamic pan-European stakeholder network, including Higher Education Institutions, Research Centres, Employment Services, and Industry experts. It is designed to address the current and future upskilling requirements of SMEs and Companies, with a strong focus on the practical application of advanced Digital Skills in the business landscape.

The program covers essential areas such as Digital Transformation, Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, Blockchain Technologies, Internet of Things (IoT), Programming, Quantum Computing, Data Governance & Ethics, Generative AI, Innovation, and Risk & Change Management. These digital skills and knowledge areas are vital for ensuring the ongoing competitiveness and growth of European businesses.

The program integrates academic and industry content to ensure that graduates are not only well-versed in theory but also job-ready with digital skills aimed at a successful career path. Graduates will receive academic accreditation and valuable industry certifications from leading IT sector partners.

The program structure includes both part-time and full-time online master's programs delivered by six recognised Higher Education Institutions in the field of Advanced Digital Skills training. The curriculum is designed to align with the stated Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and includes a combination of online and offline activities, electives, projects, challenges, and hackathons. A comprehensive learner support program is also provided to guide and assist them throughout their educational journey.

The curriculum framework of the 60-credit Master's in Advanced Digital Skills program includes a mandatory module on Digital Transformation, which serves as the cornerstone of the program. This module establishes essential knowledge and skills that underpin various specialized fields and creates a holistic learning experience by linking with other modules across the curriculum. In addition to the core module, the program offers 12 elective modules that cover specific digital skills and knowledge areas. These areas include AI (Artificial Intelligence), Data Science, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, Blockchain Technologies, IoT (Internet of Things), Programming, Quantum Computing, Data Governance & Ethics, Generative AI, Innovation, and Risk & Change Management.

## 1.2 - Market Analysis<sup>1</sup>

The demand for advanced digital skills in the EU27 countries varies due to factors such as economic development, technological advancement, national policies, and investments in digital transformation. Countries with advanced digital infrastructure and technology-driven industries have a higher demand for skills like AI, IoT, Blockchain, Data Science, Cloud Computing, and Cybersecurity. Large enterprises are more likely to adopt new technologies compared to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) due to factors like financial resources and organizational capacity. SMEs face barriers such as limited awareness, data security concerns, and lack of resources for technology adoption. Countries that prioritize specific digital domains witness a higher demand for corresponding skills. Differences in educational systems and training frameworks also contribute to variations in the availability and quality of digital education and skill

<sup>1</sup> DIGITAL4Business\_ WP2\_D2.1\_NeedsAnalysisReport\_V1.3\_30062023

development programs. Demand for advanced digital skills in emerging technology areas has the potential to drive innovation and improve efficiency across sectors. Policymakers, educators, and industry leaders should consider these implications when designing strategies and initiatives.

The market analysis conducted by DIGITAL4Business highlights that businesses lacking advanced digital skills may struggle to remain competitive as digital transformation reshapes industries and creates new business models. The shortage of skilled professionals with advanced digital skills across EU27 countries can create recruitment challenges, intensify competition for skilled individuals, and lead to higher labor costs. SMEs also face obstacles in attracting and retaining qualified professionals due to competition from larger firms and limited resources. The analysis suggests that SMEs may need to invest more in talent acquisition or outsource digital tasks, but excessive reliance on outsourcing can increase expenses and reduce control over critical digital processes. Advanced digital skills are crucial for driving innovation and productivity gains within businesses, but without access to skilled individuals, SMEs and businesses in general may struggle to leverage these technologies to their full potential, hindering innovation and productivity growth.

The analysis also mentions the most affected functional areas in terms of future employment growth in the EU27, which include administrative services, finance and insurance, ICT services, and professional services. It emphasizes the need for skilled individuals in technology, legal, and administrative roles and highlights the importance of embracing new technologies for operational efficiency, innovation, and growth.

## 1.3 - Target Job Roles<sup>2</sup>

In the ever-evolving digital landscape, the specialized Digital4Business Master's program is emerging as a bridge between traditional education and the dynamic demands of today's job market. This program takes a holistic approach, tailoring its curriculum to equip learners with the skills necessary for success in a wide array of job roles and industries.

### *1. Procurement Professional*

For aspiring procurement professionals, the program recognizes the importance of advanced digital skills. Modules on Cybersecurity, Ethics and Governance, Data Science, Cloud Computing, and AI form the backbone of a curriculum designed to ensure adeptness in protecting financial data, ensuring compliance, and embracing automation in financial processes.

### *2. Small Business Owner*

Entrepreneurs, as small business owners, find a tailored curriculum that directly impacts their ventures. The emphasis on Data Science, Cloud Computing, AI, Cybersecurity, Ethics and

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<sup>2</sup> DIGITAL4BUSINESS\_WP2\_D2.2\_CURRICULUM DESIGN\_V1.2\_31102023

Governance, Risk and Change Management, and Innovation aligns with the core needs of managing and growing a small business in a digital era.

### ***3. HR Professional***

In the realm of Human Resources, the program recognizes the transformative power of digital technologies. HR professionals are guided through AI, Data Science, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, Ethics and Governance, Risk and Change Management, and Innovation, enabling them to leverage cutting-edge tools for talent management, workforce planning, and ethical decision-making.

### ***4. Business Operations Manager***

Business Operations Managers are equipped with a curriculum prioritizing Data Science, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, AI, Innovation, Ethics and Governance. This strategic blend ensures proficiency in making data-driven decisions, leveraging scalable solutions, protecting sensitive data, embracing automation, and fostering a culture of innovation.

### ***5. Salesperson***

In the competitive realm of sales, professionals benefit from a curriculum focusing on AI, Innovation, Ethics and Governance, Risk and Change Management, along with optional modules like Data Science, Cloud Computing, Programming, and Cybersecurity. This empowers them to harness AI for enhanced sales processes, navigate risks, and stay competitive in the digital marketplace.

### ***6. Junior Software Engineer***

Junior Software Engineers delve into essential modules such as Programming, Data Science, AI, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, Innovation, Ethics and Governance, and Risk and Change Management. This foundational curriculum ensures a solid understanding of coding, data analysis, AI technologies, and ethical software development practices.

### ***7. Legal Professional***

Legal professionals navigate the complexities of the digital world with a curriculum emphasizing Ethics and Governance, Cybersecurity, AI, Data Science, Cloud Computing, along with optional modules like Programming, Blockchain, IoT, Quantum Computing, Innovation, Risk and Change Management, and Generative AI. This diverse range of modules ensures legal practitioners are well-versed in the ethical and legal implications of digital technologies.

### ***8. Facilities Management Professional***

Facilities Management Professionals find a tailored curriculum covering IoT, AI, Data Science, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, Innovation, Ethics and Governance, Risk and Change Management, Programming (optional), and Blockchain (optional). This comprehensive approach ensures

proficiency in implementing smart technologies, optimizing efficiency, and navigating ethical considerations.

#### ***9. Supply Chain Management Professional***

Supply Chain Management Professionals embark on a curriculum highlighting AI, Data Science, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, Innovation, Ethics and Governance, and Risk & Change Management. This strategic combination ensures proficiency in leveraging AI for predictive analytics, optimizing data-driven decision-making, and navigating the complexities of the modern supply chain.

#### ***10. Engineering Professional***

Engineers find a curriculum tailored to their needs with modules on AI, Data Science, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, IoT, Programming, Blockchain (optional), and Quantum Computing. This diverse set of modules ensures that engineers are not only proficient in traditional engineering but also at the forefront of emerging digital technologies.

#### ***11. Office Administrator***

Office Administrators engage with modules on Cloud Computing, Data Science, Cybersecurity, Programming, AI, Risk and Change Management, Ethics and Governance, and Innovation. This diverse curriculum ensures that administrators are equipped to harness digital tools for enhanced productivity, data-driven decision-making, and navigating ethical considerations.

#### ***12. Finance Professional***

Finance professionals navigate the digital financial landscape with modules on Cybersecurity, Ethics and Governance, Risk and Change Management, Data Science, Cloud Computing, and AI. This strategic blend ensures proficiency in protecting financial data, complying with ethical standards, and leveraging AI for operational efficiency.

#### ***13. Product Manager***

Product Managers engage with modules on AI, Data Science, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, Innovation, Ethics and Governance, Risk and Change Management, along with optional modules like Blockchain, IoT, Programming, Quantum Computing, and Generative AI. This comprehensive curriculum ensures that product managers are not only adept at product development but also at harnessing cutting-edge technologies.

#### ***14. Marketing Professional***

Marketing professionals engage with modules on Data Science, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, AI, Ethics and Governance, and Risk and Change Management. This strategic blend ensures proficiency in data-driven marketing strategies, protecting customer data, and navigating ethical considerations.

### ***15. Project Manager***

Project Managers navigate the complexities of digital projects with modules on Risk and Change Management, Ethics and Governance, Data Science, AI, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, Programming (optional), and Innovation. This diverse curriculum ensures that project managers are not only skilled at traditional project management but also at leveraging digital tools for enhanced project outcomes.

### ***16. Customer Services Professional***

Customer service professionals engage with modules on AI, Data Science, Cybersecurity, Ethics and Governance, Risk and Change Management, Cloud Computing, Programming (optional), Blockchain (optional), IoT (optional), Quantum (optional), Innovation, and Generative AI (optional). This diverse curriculum ensures that customer service professionals are well-equipped to navigate the digital customer service landscape.

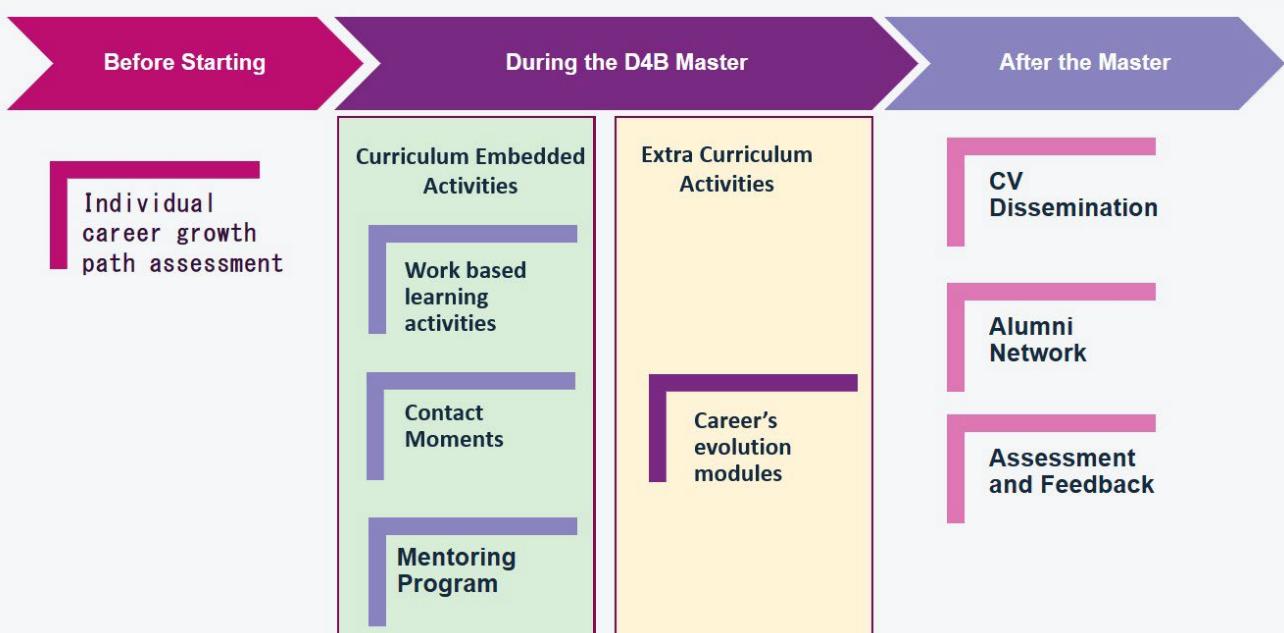
# 2 - The Employability Strategy

## 2.1 - Introduction

The Digital4Business Master Program has an objective: to provide innovative digital skills to those persons who need them to work, act and move inside the business world. The Master has a real added value due to the fact that its objective and its contents are shared transversally at European level by the Universities that are part of the project. Additionally, one of the strengths of the Master will also be the strong presence of the corporate world, integrated into the training path in a variety of different ways.

The employability strategy is embedded in the DIGITAL4Business educational offer through two different channels:

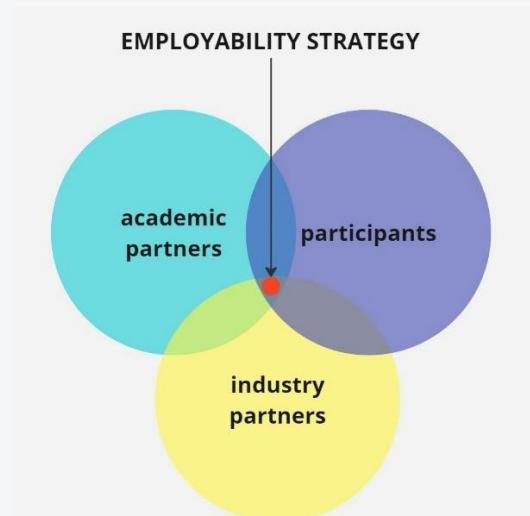
- firstly, various activities will be integrated within the planned training modules, becoming integral parts of the curriculum content.
- secondly ad hoc activities and a specific employability pathway will be designed to be taken on-demand and in parallel to advanced digital skills modules and curriculum in order to offer flexibility to learners, allowing the employability strategy to support the different career transition or professional evolution needs of the persons enrolled in any of the DIGITAL4Business Master's program components.



## 2.2 - Cooperation and synergy

For the Employability Strategy to be successful, it is necessary to start from the assumption that a profound synergy must be created between 3 main actors:

- The **academic partners**, in the capacity of those who deliver the Masters' courses,
- The **Industry partners**, who provide services and activities to support career guidance and employability for the learners, will be the protagonists of all those extracurricular activities that will complement the educational path.
- **The participants** who, with their involvement, will be users and an active part of the work-based learning activities.



The real challenge is in finding the right balance and integration between stakeholders and activities to be implemented, with an engagement and a common goal that is to create employability opportunities for participants.

It is through traineeships, work-based and work-related didactics, developed in synergy with higher education, that learners can strengthen their employability given that all these practices help the construction of a business-like, professional culture and a knowledge of the job market within the relevant curricula and programs.

Embedded employability support services, tools and resources into the curriculum, accompanied by academics and university engagement, will provide scope for learners to receive greater and more consistent exposure to the type of support that will enable them to excel in all facets of the employment process.

The collaboration will make it possible to offer students internship opportunities, workshops, activities of which the objective is to learn "in the field" in particular through the development of projects aimed at putting into practice the skills acquired through the academic courses in the curriculum.

This will also ensure a learning-by-doing methodology and approach at the core of the DIGITAL4Business Masters program. It will also enable the Masters to ensure a solid basic preparation and a high degree of focus on the specific topics of the Master, together with the possibility of directly approaching the working realities of these sectors.

In setting up the employability activities, it is important to set the following goals:

- provide learners with opportunities for socialization with the world of work;
- apply what has been learned theoretically to work practice;
- understand the directions in which to orient educational offerings so that they are close to the needs of businesses.

As part of what we can consider a collaborative agreement between universities and companies, a whole series of initiatives are to be developed to complement face-to-face lectures and academic content, following a learning-by-doing approach:

- meeting and testimony initiatives of business managers for the development of soft skills;
- outreach meetings with companies;
- laboratory moments of joint work in the classroom with trainers, to experience the dynamics, especially relational, of the corporate world.
- networking opportunities, direct exchange and informal contact being favored; this will help each learner understand how to build their own network of contacts, a key asset to navigate professionally

In the next sections are described the activities that should be embedded into the DIGITAL4Business Master's program, either at curriculum level or at individual module level.

## 2.3 - Industry engagement guidelines

In line with the strong focus on cooperation and synergies detailed above, the following guidelines will have to be adhered to ensure purposeful engagement with enterprise.

### 1. Identification of Corporate Professionals:

- a. Establish partnerships with industry leaders, companies, and alumni networks to identify corporate professionals willing to provide testimonials or deliver lectures.
- b. Align the selection with the curricular content, ensuring relevance and applicability to students' academic pursuits.

### 2. Curriculum Integration:

- a. Collaborate with course instructors and curriculum developers to seamlessly integrate corporate testimonials into relevant curricular courses.
- b. Identify key touchpoints in the curriculum where real-world insights and industry perspectives would enhance students' understanding.
- c. Encourage professionals to share not only success stories but also challenges and lessons learned to provide a realistic perspective.

**3. Interactive Sessions:**

- a. Design interactive sessions that allow students to engage with corporate professionals through Q&A sessions and panel discussions.
- b. Facilitate direct dialogue between students and professionals, fostering a conducive environment for knowledge exchange and networking.

**4. Testimonial Documentation:**

- a. Develop a structured framework for collecting and documenting testimonials, ensuring consistency and clarity in messaging.
- b. Encourage professionals to highlight the transferable skills gained from their academic experiences and how these skills are valued in the corporate world.

**5. Feedback Mechanism:**

- a. Implement a feedback mechanism where students provide insights on the impact of corporate testimonials on their understanding of real-world applications.
- b. Gather testimonials from students themselves, illustrating the practical application of knowledge gained from these sessions.

**6. Continuous Improvement:**

- a. Regularly assess the effectiveness of integrating corporate testimonials, seeking feedback from both students and corporate professionals.
- b. Use insights gained to refine and enhance the integration strategy, ensuring it remains responsive to the evolving needs of students and the industry.

## 2.4 - Project KPIs

In the pursuit of an effective employability strategy, key performance indicators (KPIs) have been meticulously outlined to gauge the program's success. Weekend Workshops, Networking Events, and Guest Lectures, a quarterly occurrence hosted by diverse Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), are set at a **minimum of nine** over a three-year period. Complementing this, a series of Webinars and hybrid online/offline networking events, totaling a **minimum of twelve** over four years, are designed to bridge the realms of education and industry, spotlighting pivotal program outputs, activities, and case studies. Another critical facet involves establishing collaboration agreements with industry partners, with a set target of a **minimum of twelve** signed agreements, fostering a symbiotic relationship as associate partners within the consortia. These carefully delineated KPIs serve as tangible benchmarks, reflecting the commitment to fostering a dynamic and impactful employability initiative.

<p>Number of collaborations with industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Weekend Workshops, Networking Events and Guest Lectures from digital skills experts and business leaders (1 per trimester hosted by a different HEI, min 9 in total over 3 years)</li> <li>o Webinars and hybrid online / offline networking events for both Education and Industry, highlighting key outputs, activities and case studies from the programme. (Min 12 in total over 4 years)</li> <li>o Number of cooperation agreements signed with industry partners to join the consortia as associate partners.</li> </ul>	Min 9  Min 12  Min 12	M 12-48  M 12-48  M 48
<p>Number of job-placements/internships/in-company upskilling carried out by the students as part of the employability programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Number of SMEs/companies with existing staff enrolled in D4B.</li> <li>o Number of SMEs/companies employing graduates from D2B (From Y2 FT intake of 150 students)</li> <li>o Number of new job placements or internships in SMEs/companies during studies. (Employability &amp; Mobility Programme)</li> </ul>	Min 400 Min 100 Min 400 students	M 48 M 48 M 48

However, even if these indicators are important, to guarantee an effective impact in the whole learning path, some additional KPI related to Employability should be strongly recommended.

## 2.5 - Employability KPIs

Activities	KPI
Career's evolution modules	They will be defined ones the partners will identify in detail which modules they will activate in WP4
Business Cases and Testimonials	1 business case per D4B module
Intensive teaching workshops and project works	At least 1 workshop per D4B module
D4B Hackathon	1 Hackathon per learner cohort
Industry Mentoring Program	1 program per learner cohort
Visits to corporate facilities	1 visit per learner cohort
Open lecture co-designed and co-led with students.	1 open lecture per semester
Events and networking moments	1 event/fair per learner cohort
CV Dissemination	They will be defined ones the partners will identify in detail which dissemination channels they will activate in WP4.
Alumni network	80% of learners enroll in the alumni network

# 3 - Employability activities

To reach these targets, all the partners of the consortium will be involved in finding enterprises available to join the activities providing projects and business cases. It will be necessary to evaluate whether enterprises expect and should be compensated for any of these activities and how this will be taken into account.

Following there are some examples of work-based activities that must be done during the training activities.

## 3.1 - Before the Master starts

### 3.1.1 - Individual career growth path assessment

After the application to the D4B Master, an individual assessment session could be organized for all enrolled learners with the objective of highlighting their specific needs in terms of employability activities and growth. This would enable each learner to have a more personalized career modules pathway, providing them with a better ability to leverage employment opportunities and/or align with their professional career goals. Some different solutions are under consideration by NCI and The Adecco Group.

## 3.2 - During the Master

### 3.2.1 - Career evolution path

The DIGITAL4Business university and industry partners will jointly work to offer to learners career services and support, leveraging, notably, existing university career centers / services and industry partners' expertise/services, as well as their respective local networks. The set-up of these activities will be coordinated by The Adecco Group.

A series of preparatory modules for the evolution of one's professional career will be made available in different ways, either through lectures or through online modules. Below are listed some of the most relevant modules for DIGITAL4Business learners. This list is not exhaustive.

Module Title	Module Synopsis
<b>CV AND MOTIVATION LETTER</b>	Creating a professional Curriculum Vitae is the first practical step to approach the job opportunities. From basic information to more personal choices, we identify the formula that can be adopted to create the perfect CV and motivation letter for the learner who are interested to find a new job.
<b>ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES AND INTERVIEW PREPARATION</b>	The context of professional assessment is a frightening challenge at all ages, whether if you are an experienced professional but even more if you faced with it for the first times. For this reason, we create a moment of sharing aimed at guiding learners behind the scenes of this world, so as to create awareness and consequent reassurance to perform at their best when the moment presents itself.
<b>DIGITAL REPUTATION</b>	Due to the daily time spent on the internet and social media nowadays, our digital identity has become a natural extension of our person. It is therefore becoming increasingly important to become aware of the impact, for better or for worse, that the information we share can have in terms of digital reputation, especially from a professional perspective.
<b>LINKEDIN &amp; NETWORKING</b>	Most potential job opportunities are invisible to the eye naked, hidden in the great game of relationships and networking. LinkedIn becomes a great ally at this juncture, allowing us to break down barriers that divide us from high-potential contacts and new career prospects. We can accompany the learner to discover the functionalities and logic of this platform.
<b>NETWORK FOR GROWTH</b>	Explore the mindset required for effective networking. Topics covered include: the mindset shift required for successful networking; networking essentials to position yourself effectively to others; how to extend your influence by creating a targeted action plan.
<b>NAVIGATE THE CHANGE</b>	Explore how to effectively manage organisational change at a personal and team level. Key learning objectives will be: how to internalize the role of an accountable manager during change; discuss the impact of continuous change and apply strategies; recognise resistance and learn strategies to manage it; apply practical skills to exhibit empathy while creating focus and positive momentum.
<b>THINK BEYOND TECHNOLOGY</b>	When thinking of the word digital, software and data may come to mind – but the connectivity, speed and volatility of constant change in the digital environment touches everything and everyone. To lead or navigate effectively through digital transformation (DX), you must think beyond technology. This module aims to give the learner insights into the drivers of the digital environment, explore the mindset shifts necessary to lead / navigate DX, learn proven DX leadership characteristics and behaviors.
<b>INTERVIEW PREPARATION</b>	Coaching to perform a job interview in the best way.

<b>PUBLIC SPEAKING</b>	In today's world of work, appropriate soft skills are as much in demand as hard skills. Among these, the ability to speak in front of an audience of people in an effective and confident manner is one of the most requested skills. We will therefore offer a training module during which learners can experiment under the careful guidance of communication experts to improve their communication skills.
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### 3.2.2 - Work based learning activities

- **Business Cases and Testimonials**

Enterprises will be invited to take part in the lessons to show a particular business case related to the module's topic creating a moment of discussion with the learners. Enterprise's experts will be invited to take part in the lessons to speak about their daily job and how innovative technology is changing it.

- **Intensive teaching workshops and project works**

These are experiences in which learning takes place through the activation of students' skills and energies with respect to a 'real' business need. The students involved are required not only to understand and critically analyze the issue presented to them by the enterprise, but also to propose creative solutions. The company intervenes both at the beginning of the process with a testimony in the classroom in which it explains and assigns the objective to the students, and in itinere by closely following the work of the groups, and at the end of the experience by participating in the activity of evaluating the outputs, also in terms of the applicative sustainability of the proposals that emerged.

- **D4B Hackaton**

At the end of the training experience, all students will be invited to participate in an international competition. The idea is to collect some challenge ideas from companies interested in the project, companies that will make up the final jury (around 10 companies would be an adequate number) together with some representatives of the Consortium. The organization of the Hackaton will have to allow a hybrid presence (online and offline) to give the teams the opportunity to create themselves, work together and present themselves to the jury. The strong points of the Hackaton must be the involvement of companies and the possibility of working together on the topics addressed during the master. The prize must be decided and shared within the Consortium.

### 3.2.3 - Industry Mentoring Program

The Industry Mentoring Program is a dynamic initiative aimed at bridging the gap between business professionals and current students to enhance their career and professional development. By connecting students with experienced professionals, the program offers a platform for personalized advice, valuable insights, and strategic career planning. This collaborative effort not only fosters individual growth but also expands students' professional networks, providing a unique avenue for learning from real-world experiences. When constructing a mentoring program, clear boundaries and expectations are crucial

components. Establishing a defined time budget for mentees, restructuring meeting formats, exploring group conversations, experimenting with virtual meetings, and identifying ways to transform existing commitments, such as professional events, into mentoring opportunities are essential considerations. These strategic elements ensure the effectiveness of the program, empowering students to develop employability skills and confidence through meaningful interactions with industry mentors

### 3.2.4 - Contact moments

- **Visits to corporate facilities.**

Companies voluntarily make their training spaces available to universities in order to offer students learning experiences dense with highly specialized content, even in a one-off logic within the framework of different teachings.

- **Open lecture co-designed and co-led with students.**

This is an innovative practice, in which the object is an event to be implemented within one of the Master's modules. The particularity lies in the fact that, from the outset, a control room is formed between the teaching staff and a small group of students. This working group identifies specific online and offline coordination arrangements, carrying out both the planning and the operational implementation of the event. The relationship with companies and their managers is also jointly managed by faculty and students, who are highly empowered in this way.

- **Events and networking moments**

In executing our strategy to involve students in thematic fairs relevant to their areas of study, a systematic approach is imperative. We propose a multifaceted strategy that involves meticulous identification of pertinent fairs, seamless coordination, and targeted participation.

1. Thematic Fair Identification:

- a. Utilize data analytics and industry reports to identify upcoming thematic fairs in the fields of technology and innovation relevant to our master's program.
- b. Establish partnerships with industry associations and organizations to gain insights into exclusive or niche events that align with our focus areas.
- c. Leverage online databases dedicated to professional events to stay abreast of the latest fairs.

2. Students' mobility:

- a. Leverage the existing mobility program to seamlessly integrate financial support for students participating in thematic fairs.
- b. Implement a streamlined application process within the mobility program for students seeking financial support for fair participation, ensuring transparency and fairness in the selection process.

3. Post-Fair Integration:

- a. Implement a post-fair debriefing session to extract insights gained, fostering knowledge sharing among participating students.
- b. Encourage students to leverage their newfound connections for potential internships, collaborative projects, or mentorship opportunities.

**OBJECTIVE: 1 event/fairs per learner cohort**

### 3.3 - After the Master

#### 3.3.1 - CV Dissemination

Each University and the project partners themselves who deal with HR services for corporate purposes will be responsible for collecting and disseminating the CVs of the Master's participants as well as conveying them through their usual channels (career centre, The Adecco Group network). For this purpose, it will be necessary to prepare an authorization for data processing shared by all the partners of the Consortium.



#### 3.3.2 - Alumni Network

In developing the strategy for the D4B Master alumni network we recognize the unique opportunity to create a robust and expansive network that goes beyond the confines of a traditional alumni association.. This initiative aims to leverage the collective expertise and experiences of graduates

from various academic institutions, fostering a dynamic community focused on the cutting-edge field of advanced digital skills. This interconnected web of alumni transcends individual institutions, creating a rich tapestry of knowledge exchange and collaboration.

An alumni network, as traditionally understood, serves as a valuable avenue for graduates to maintain connections, share insights, and support each other. However, this approach amplifies these benefits by incorporating a wide range of academic backgrounds. Graduates from different universities bring diverse perspectives and skill sets, enhancing the collaborative learning environment. To engage with this expansive alumni network, participants can connect through designated coordinators, update contact details, subscribe to a tailored newsletter, and foster connections on platforms like LinkedIn.

This strategy positions the alumni association as a dynamic and comprehensive resource, offering not only traditional networking opportunities but also a gateway to a wealth of experiences from various academic landscapes. Through this initiative, alumni become mentors, sharing specialized knowledge and providing support to current students. The network becomes a catalyst for career advancement, offering informational interviews, professional networking opportunities, and insights into diverse industries.

### 3.3.3 - Assessment and Feedback

The assessment and feedback mechanism for the DIGITAL4Business Employability Strategy is designed to ensure the effectiveness and continuous improvement of the program. The multifaceted strategy involves various stakeholders, including academic partners, industry partners, and participants. The assessment process encompasses key performance indicators (KPIs), work-based learning initiatives, resource development, and events and networking moments.

Please find here more detail on the implementation of each assessment method.

**1. Key Performance Indicators Assessment:**

- a. Periodic evaluations will be conducted to measure the success of KPIs, such as workshops, networking events, guest lectures, webinars, and collaboration agreements with industry partners.

**2. Work-Based Learning Initiatives Assessment:**

- a. Ongoing evaluation of work-based learning initiatives, including business cases, testimonials, intensive teaching workshops, project works, and hackathons.
- b. Feedback will be sought from participating students, industry partners, and academic facilitators to measure the practical applicability and effectiveness of these initiatives.
- c. Continuous refinement of work-based learning activities based on feedback to enhance their contribution to the overall employability of learners.

**3. Resource Development Assessment:**

- a. Evaluation of the effectiveness of resource development initiatives, such as CV dissemination and alumni network creation.
- b. Monitoring the reach and impact of CV dissemination efforts, ensuring that participant CVs are effectively conveyed to potential employers.
- c. Regular assessment of the growth and engagement within the alumni network, seeking feedback from alumni and current participants to refine the strategy.

**4. Events and Networking Moments Assessment:**

- a. Rigorous evaluation of events and networking initiatives, including thematic fairs, open lectures, and industry visits.
- b. Analysis of participant feedback to gauge the relevance, impact, and success of these events in bridging the gap between academia and industry.
- c. Continuous optimization of event participation strategies based on feedback to ensure maximum benefit for learners.

**5. Overall Employability Module Assessment:**

- a. Continuous assessment of the employability module's effectiveness
- b. Regular feedback sessions with participants to understand the practical application of the module's content in real-world scenarios.
- c. Iterative improvements to the module based on feedback and evolving industry trends to ensure sustained value for learners.

**6. Continuous Improvement Feedback Loop:**

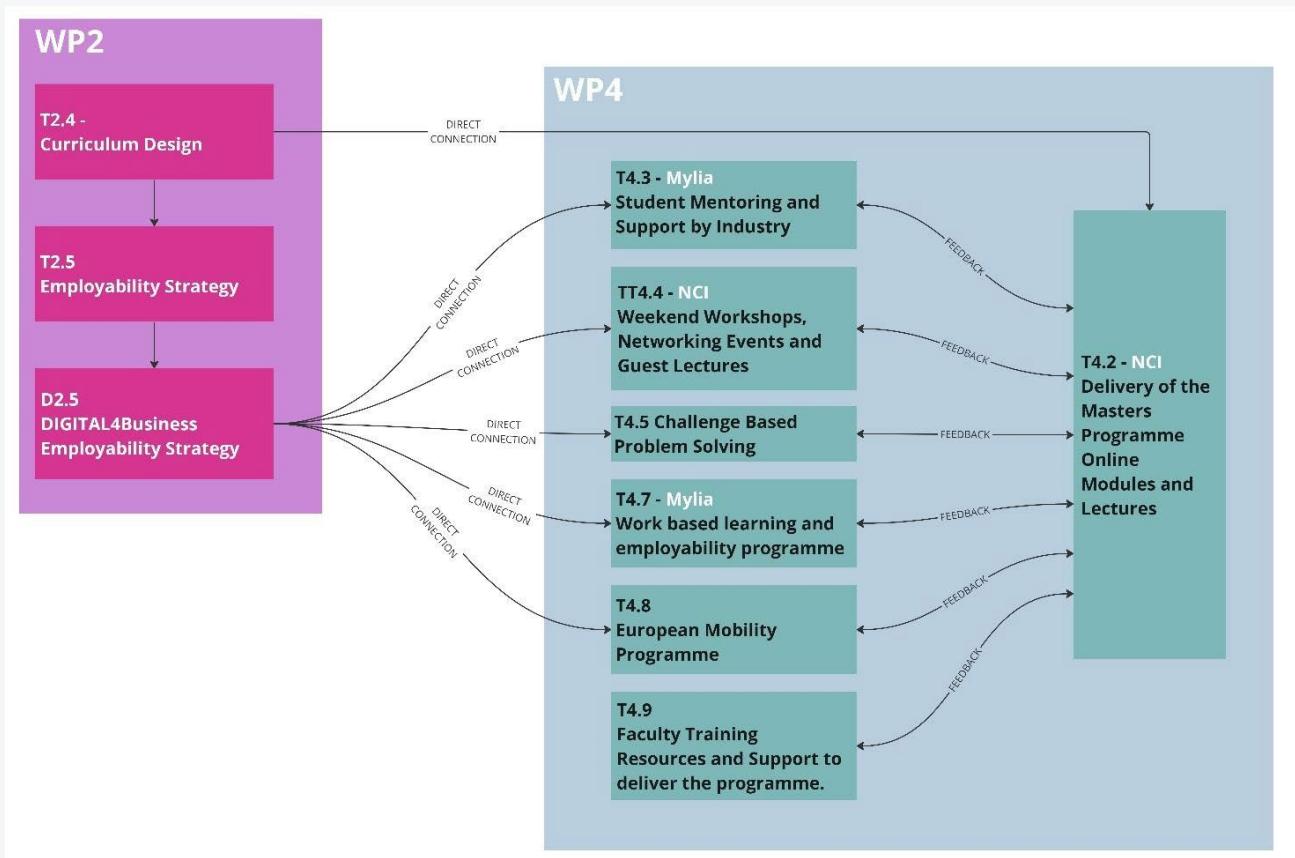
- a. Establishing a continuous improvement feedback loop involving all stakeholders, with regular meetings and surveys to gather insights.
- b. Encouraging open communication channels for participants, academic partners, and industry partners to share suggestions for enhancement.
- c. Regularly reviewing assessment outcomes to inform strategic decisions and adaptations to the Employability Strategy.

## 4 - From WP2 to WP4 with the Employability Strategy

The Employability Strategy within Work Package 4 is a nuanced framework, deeply interwoven with the project's core activities. It manifests primarily through five pivotal tasks, each strategically contributing to fostering enhanced employment prospects for participants:

- **T4.3 - Student Mentoring and Industry Support:** Facilitating direct engagement with industry professionals ensures students receive practical insights and guidance, aligning their skills with real-world demands.
- **T4.4 - Weekend Workshops, Networking Events, and Guest Lectures:** By incorporating immersive learning experiences, networking opportunities, and expert insights, participants are exposed to multifaceted perspectives, enriching their professional acumen.
- **T4.5 - Challenge-Based Problem Solving:** This activity promotes critical thinking and practical problem-solving skills, directly correlating with the dynamic challenges of the professional landscape.
- **T4.7 - Work-Based Learning and Employability Program:** Grounded in experiential learning, this initiative bridges the gap between academic knowledge and workplace demands, enhancing participants' employability.
- **T4.8 - European Employability Program:** This pan-European focus aligns participants with diverse employment landscapes, fostering adaptability and a broadened skill set.
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These activities synergize with T4.2, "Delivery of the Program," establishing a seamless flow of information and ensuring the comprehensive integration of employability strategies throughout the project. This strategic depth enhances the transformative impact of the project on participants' readiness for the professional realm.



## 5 – Conclusion

The Employability Strategy for the DIGITAL4Business Master's degree program is designed to guide the Consortium in actively shaping the career paths of learners, whether recent graduates or seasoned professionals seeking career development. The strategy integrates innovative digital skills into the educational offering, emphasizing transversal collaboration at the European level. The Employability Strategy is embedded within both integrated training modules and on-demand activities, giving more flexibility to learners. The key to success lies in fostering synergy among academic partners, industry contributors, and active participant learners.

The strategy emphasizes a collaborative approach between universities and enterprises, creating a dynamic learning environment through initiatives like internships, projects, and business cases. The Master's program facilitates a unique blend of theoretical and practical training, enhancing students' employability by bridging academia and industry. The Employability Strategy sets clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including workshops, networking events, and collaborations with industry partners, to measure its effectiveness over time.

Work-based learning is a central component, involving partnerships with enterprises to provide real-world projects and business cases. The strategy aims to seamlessly integrate corporate professionals into the curriculum through testimonials, interactive sessions, and collaborative projects. The goal is to enhance students' understanding of real-world applications and provide insights into industry perspectives.

The strategy also outlines various work-based activities, such as business cases, intensive teaching workshops, and the DIGITAL4Business Hackathon, offering practical experiences aligned with industry needs. Visits to corporate facilities, open lectures co-designed with students, and a comprehensive career evolution path further enrich the learning experience.

To support learners in their career journey, the strategy includes modules on CV and motivation letter writing, assessment techniques, digital reputation management, LinkedIn networking, and communication skills. Resource development involves CV dissemination through university and project partners, promoting students to potential employers.

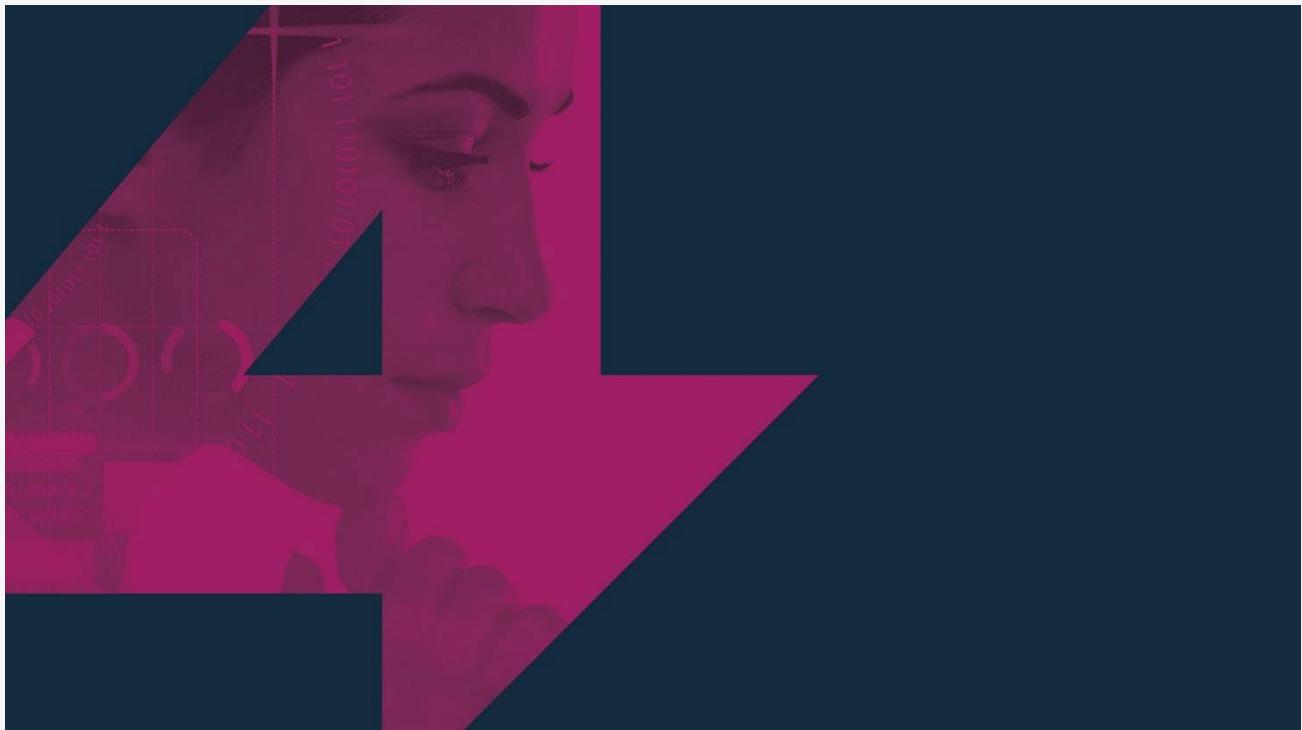
An alumni network strategy expands beyond traditional associations, fostering collaboration among graduates from diverse academic backgrounds. This interconnected network becomes a valuable resource for mentorship, career advancement, and knowledge exchange. Events and networking moments, including thematic fairs, aim to provide students with exposure to industry professionals, offering opportunities for internships, projects, and mentorship.

The Employability Strategy is a comprehensive framework that aligns academic excellence with industry relevance, preparing learners for successful careers in the digital era. The outlined

objectives and initiatives create a roadmap for continuous improvement and impact assessment, ensuring the strategy's efficacy over the program's duration.

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