

# 40 CHALLENGES

40 CHALLENGES TO DEVELOP KEY SKILLS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP



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**CALL: ERASMUS+ KA204 CALL 2019**

**PERIOD: 24 MONTHS**

**BUDGET: 269.250,00 €**

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Entrepreneurship is in. It is continually present in political speeches and educational debates, and numerous initiatives to foster it are being launched. Advances are being made in training entrepreneurs -be it in the fields of finance, law, taxes or marketing- but there is still some unfinished business. "Many would-be entrepreneurs are in need of developing certain skills, such as leadership, team management and resilience", says Francisco José Saco, lead researcher on the 40 Challenges Project along with Sandra Sánchez and Fernando Fuentes.

This research project, coordinated by the University of Cordoba and on which the SEJ-063 "Business Management and Applied Economics" research group is working, began with the aim to foster the development of social skills for entrepreneurs by means of

**The 40 Challenges Project is working on developing a mobile application to assess and practice the skills needed to be an entrepreneur**

a mobile application, that has a self-diagnosis tool and a catalog of 40 challenges to assess and train key skills for entrepreneurship.

Fostering entrepreneurial activity does not mean just encouraging the creation of new businesses, but also motivating those who have their own ideas and are able to carry

them out. "For us, educating for entrepreneurship means training people who are nonconformists, able to face challenges, who think for themselves and take risks, whether as businesspeople, or as doctors who fight to look for new solutions to a disease or as researchers who work to secure funding", explains the researcher.

One of the foundations on which education for entrepreneurship is supported is that, though there are skills that could be considered innate, any one of them could be improved with proper training. The 40 Challenges research team -in which non-governmental organizations and research institutes in Ireland, Poland, Romania and Lithuania participate as well - has established which 10 skills are the necessary ones for entrepreneurship. They are teamwork, leadership, creativity, initiative, decision making, self-motivation, listening ability, customer service, adaptability and conflict management.

By means of the creation of the mobile application, users can diagnose their level of each skill and improve with different exercises. According to the researchers working on this project, the application will work like "a simple, affordable personal trainer". First of all, the user will do a self-assessment test that will analyze their level of each soft skill. If the test results indicate that a certain skill needs improving, a series of informative content matter and four di-

fferent challenges will be offered in order to improve their performance.

The application will also be linked to an educational resource bank, aiming to enable trainers and those who revitalize employment to use them when helping future entrepreneurs to strengthen and deepen their training in each skill. Besides, success stories of application users who reached their goals will be included.

This tool is made for potential entrepreneurs who find it difficult to implement their business idea, as well as for employment revitalization agents, freelancers' associations and entrepreneur educators that will use it as a support tool in their lessons.

Among the partners that participate in this project, we can find business consultants and via group work, there are also businesspeople and freelancers who complement the academic perspective. The app and the website will be open access when the project finalizes and will be available in five languages.

This is a way to advance the fostering of business culture and to enhance the skills of those who will fight for their niche in a competitive atmosphere in the future. "We have to convey the idea that entrepreneurship is possible, exciting and can even be fun", concludes the lead researcher in 40 Challenges.

