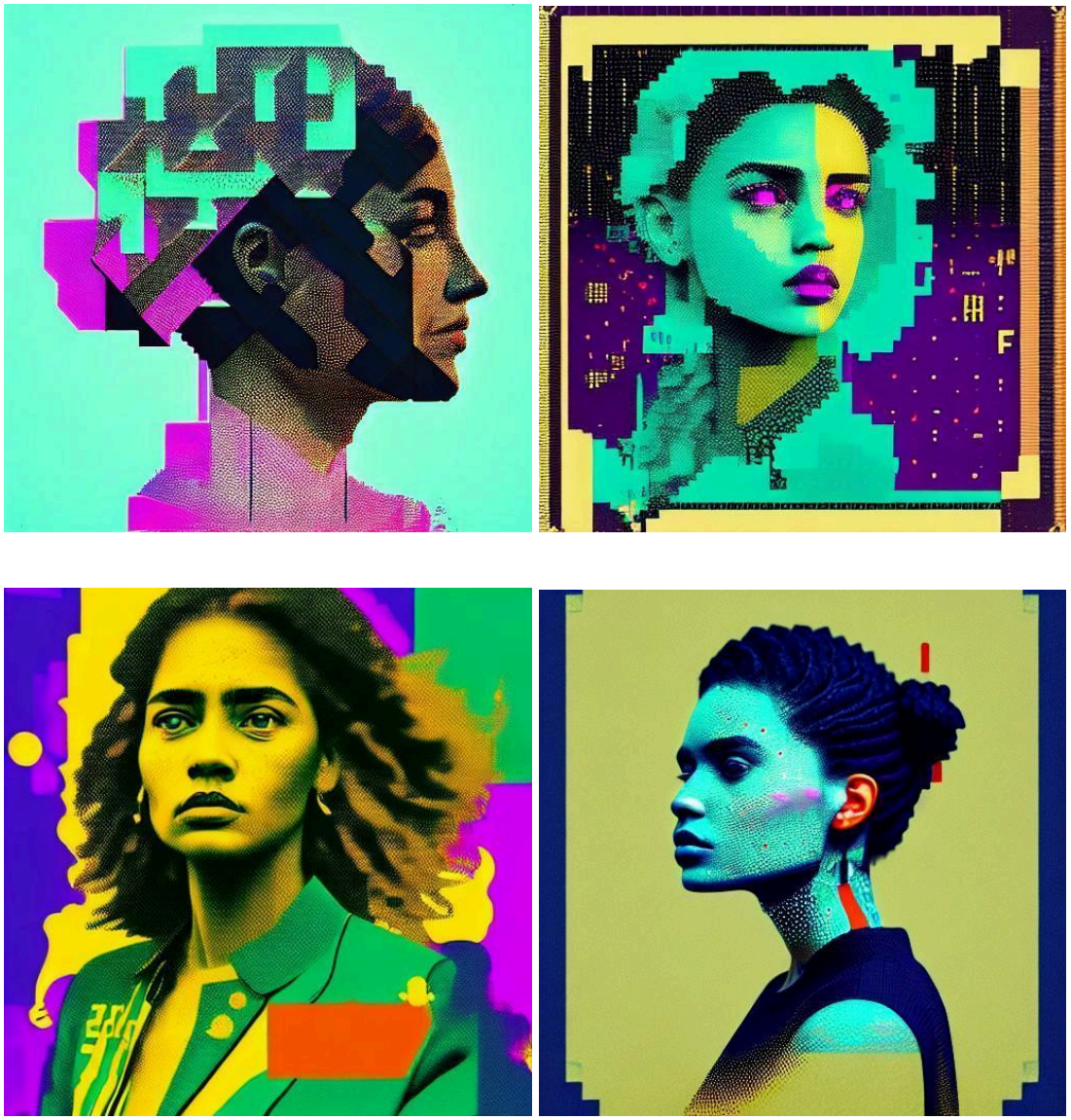
FEMME FORWARD
Empowering Women In Tech

Co-funded by the European Union



November 2024
Deliverable 4.3

Femme Forward

Future Startup Founders
Training and support for training providers

www.femmeforward.eu

About Femme Forward

Femme Forward - *Fast-tracking women into new tech careers and supporting successful female-led start-ups* - is a two-year transnational project funded under the Erasmus+ Programme.
Through an innovative and comprehensive training programme, women with various backgrounds will be empowered to either start a career in tech or employ their experience and knowledge to set up a tech start-up.
Femme Forward will identify, develop and pilot high-quality digital education content to tackle the current gender gap in the digital economy, enabling at least 500 women to start on the track to tech employment or entrepreneurship.
Femme Forward will offer an easy-to-use and extensive repository of tested, high-quality educational materials, available in multiple languages and on a multi-device compatible learning platform: femmeforward.eu.

Project partners

The Femme Forward consortium comprises 15 partners led by SIMPLON.co, bringing together key industry, technology and education stakeholders in Europe.

Full partners

1. SIMPLON.CO (France)
2. TOP-IX (Italy)
3. ENGIM PIEMONTE (Italy)
4. Tech and Teach gGmbH (Germany)
5. BeCode (Belgium)
6. Big Blue Data Academy (Greece)
7. CYPRUS COMPUTER SOCIETY (Cyprus)
8. Asociatia ETIC (Romania)
9. Le Techspace (Belgium)
10. HOCHSCHULE HANNOVER (Germany)
11. Factoria F5 (Spain)

Associated partners

1. AMAZON WEB SERVICES EMEA SARL
2. RANDSTAD NEDERLAND BV
3. FUJITSU SERVICES LTD
4. DIGITALEUROPE AISBL

Subcontractors

Schuman SA

Revision History			
Version	Date	Modified by	Comments
1.0	November 18, 2024	Tech and Teach gGmbH (Codingschule)	Collect data from partners
1.1	November 27, 2024	Tech and Teach gGmbH (Codingschule)	Final Draft / Ready for Review
1.2	November 29, 2024	Tech and Teach gGmbH (Codingschule)	Final Version
2	May 2025	Simplon.co / Le Techspace	Added information for le Techspace. Added collaboration guide

Disclaimer

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Table of Contents

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Introduction

The Femme Forward Future Founders Track was designed to empower women in developing and launching their own tech startups, addressing the gender gap in entrepreneurship and fostering innovation. A crucial element of this initiative was ensuring that participating training providers had the necessary support and resources to successfully deliver the program. This included fostering collaboration between providers and assisting individual trainers to adapt the training materials to their student base.

The core objective of Deliverable 4.3 is to demonstrate how participating training providers actively supported one another in adopting and implementing the Future Founders Track and extended this support to other providers and individual teachers to enable delivery to their student base.

This report focuses on two key levels of support:

Consortium-Level Support: Participating providers collaborated to share expertise, refine training content, and solve practical issues such as recruitment and curriculum customization. By fostering an environment of knowledge exchange, partners collectively strengthened the program's implementation across all regions.

Local Partner Support: At the local level, training providers extended hands-on support to individual trainers. This included onboarding processes, specific training sessions for educators, and responsive problem-solving during course delivery. By providing trainers with the tools and guidance needed to succeed, local partners ensured that participants received a high-quality and impactful learning experience.

By aligning with the objective of Deliverable 4.3, this report highlights the support mechanisms that were integral to the success of the Femme Forward Future Founders Track. It underscores how collaboration between training providers and practical assistance to individual trainers contributed to the program's ability to empower women entrepreneurs across participating countries.

The following section provides insights from the local partners, highlighting their unique approaches to supporting trainers and implementing the Femme Forward Future Founders Track. These accounts showcase how each partner tailored their methods to ensure effective delivery and address the specific needs of their trainers and participants.

TOP-IX - Country of delivery: Italy

Implementation period: November 8, 2023 - January 19, 2024

Trainer Composition and Onboarding

TOP-IX engaged both internal employees and external trainers to deliver the Future Startup Founders program effectively. Specifically, the team collaborated with 12 external trainers and 4 employees, creating a diverse pool of expertise. Each trainer was provided with anonymized participant information, collected during the assessment phase, to tailor their approach to the needs of the learners. Individual onboarding sessions were organized before every lesson, during which trainers reviewed their materials with the TOP-IX team and tested the platform together. A standardized slide template was supplied to ensure consistency across teaching content. To further enhance confidence and preparation, a TOP-IX representative attended every session to facilitate lessons and provide in-the-moment support to trainers.

Support Received from Project Partners

During the project, TOP-IX collaborated closely with Codingschule (Tech and Teach gGmbH) to align the Future Startup Founders program structure and training design. This synchronization allowed for a cohesive approach across the consortium. TOP-IX also leveraged its extensive prior experience in digital entrepreneurship training and startup support, as well as its established network of professionals and organizations in this field, to inform the training content and delivery.

Knowledge Sharing and Contribution to the Consortium

As one of the first partners to implement the Future Startup Founders track, TOP-IX shared its insights and experiences during consortium meetings. This included feedback on participant needs and expectations, based on initial assessments and ongoing training delivery. By doing so, TOP-IX supported other partners in refining their approaches to meet the specific requirements of their own cohorts.

Facilitating Trainer Success

To ensure trainers were well-equipped, TOP-IX provided continuous technical and operational support throughout the training. Individual preparation sessions before each lesson enabled trainers to refine their content and adapt it to the platform. During sessions, the active presence of a TOP-IX representative allowed for real-time troubleshooting and assistance, fostering a seamless and productive learning environment for both trainers and participants.

Le Techspace - Country of delivery: Belgium

Implementation period:

Cohort 1 : October 19, 2023 - January 25, 2024

Cohort 2 : March 11, 2024 - Mat 31, 2024

We delivered two consecutive cohorts to ensure iterative improvement and greater reach. The first served as a pilot to validate the training design and identify potential adjustments, while the second benefited from optimized formats and increased participation.

Trainer Composition and Onboarding

We mobilized a team of 6 trainers and facilitators, combining internal staff with external experts in digital entrepreneurship, cybersecurity, cloud fundamentals, soft skills, and project management.

Each trainer was individually onboarded with:

- An anonymized participant profile overview, enabling adaptation to learners' levels and aspirations.
- A standardized Femme Forward slide deck template, ensuring visual consistency.
- 1:1 preparation sessions before each module to align on content delivery, pedagogical approach, and technical setup.

Additionally, a member of the our team was present at each session to facilitate logistics, provide real-time support, and ensure smooth interaction between trainers and participants.

Support Received from Project Partners
We received training materials and training structure from Codingschule, which served as the backbone of the Future Startup Founders program implemented in Belgium. This included:

- The full TechFounder curriculum.
- Pedagogical guidance and trainer resources.
- Branding assets and communication templates.

This support was incredibly helpful in setting up the training as a whole.

We also benefited from:

- Ongoing coordination support from the Femme Forward consortium.
- Access to consortium meetings for feedback sharing and strategy alignment.
- Knowledge exchange through inter-partner workshops and Slack channels.

Knowledge Sharing and Contribution to the Consortium

In addition to delivering the core curriculum, Le Techspace contributed by adding a dedicated Project Management module under the Soft Skills and Empowerment track. This module covered:

- Basic project lifecycle structure.
- Agile methodologies and task prioritization.
- Tools for planning and collaboration. This addition helped bridge the gap between ideation and execution, empowering participants to confidently manage their entrepreneurial or digital projects.

Le Techspace also shared valuable feedback with the consortium on:

- Participant engagement strategies (e.g. coaching moments, checkpoints).
- Adapting pacing and content based on participant availability and background.
- The importance of including real-life use cases and industry speakers to anchor the training in practical application.

Facilitating Trainer Success

To ensure trainer confidence and effectiveness, we provided:

- Technical walkthroughs of the learning platform.
- Session rehearsal meetings for each trainer to finalize structure and adjust content.
- A dedicated moderator during each live session for timekeeping, learner interaction, and tech support.
- Debrief meetings post-session to gather trainer feedback and continuously optimize.

This support framework allowed trainers to focus on pedagogy and engagement, resulting in high satisfaction from both trainers and participants.

Cyprus Computer Society CCS - Country of delivery: Cyprus

Implementation period: 03 April 2024 - 05 June 2024

Trainer Composition and Onboarding

CCS employed a team of 25 external trainers for the Femme Forward Future Founders program. This diverse group included 16 female and 9 male trainers, primarily drawn from the business sector, with a smaller number coming from academia. Their expertise spanned a range of entrepreneurial and technical disciplines.

Support Received from Project Partners

CCS collaborated closely with Codingschule (Tech and Teach gGmbH) to ensure the logical structure and consistency of their program design, benefiting from Codingschule's prior experience as the first partner to implement the program. Furthermore, CCS relied heavily on the expertise of Mr. Panis Pieri, a renowned growth hacker and blogger, who, along with CCS Project Manager Mr. Neofytos Xenofontos, coordinated the program. Both individuals were integral to the planning, facilitation, and delivery of the workshops. Additionally, CCS leveraged its extensive network built over years of involvement in digital entrepreneurship projects and initiatives.

Support Provided to Trainers

To ensure the successful delivery of the program, CCS conducted briefing sessions with each trainer prior to their sessions. These sessions addressed technical aspects, provided anonymized participant profiles (e.g., experience, expectations, group dynamics), and explored any specific trainer requirements, such as the need for polls, breakout rooms, or pre-distributed materials. During the sessions, CCS provided hands-on support, including technical assistance, facilitation of Q&A segments, and management of chat comments and raised hands. The team also distributed supplementary materials, such as Miro boards and PDF presentations, both before and after the sessions.

Onboarding and Preparation of Trainers

CCS ensured that all trainers were thoroughly prepared and confident before delivering their sessions. Full technical support was provided, including guidance on the platform's functionalities (e.g., setting up polls, breakout rooms, and videos) and ensuring smooth execution during the sessions. CCS also facilitated interaction between trainers and participants by managing logistical elements, such as group work setups and live question handling, thereby creating an environment that allowed trainers to focus on content delivery while ensuring participant engagement.

Codingschule (Tech and Teach gGmbH) - Country of delivery: Germany

Implementation period: October 9, 2023 - November 30, 2023

Trainer Composition and Onboarding

Codingschule engaged a total of 19 trainers and role models for the Femme Forward Future Founders Track, with one trainer being an employee of Codingschule. The remaining trainers were sourced from Codingschule's trusted network of experts, with whom the organization has cultivated long-standing relationships over several years.

Support Received from Project Partners

As the lead organization running the pilot training program, Codingschule was the first partner to implement the Future Founders Track. During the preparation and onboarding phases, Codingschule benefited from the collective experiences and feedback of the consortium partners through regular consortium calls and one-on-one discussions. Insights provided by partners such as TOP-IX were particularly valuable in structuring the agenda, timing, and intensity of the online curriculum. This collaborative exchange allowed Codingschule to address critical aspects such as course scheduling, optimal session frequency, and content prioritization, ensuring the pilot program was implemented effectively.

Support Provided to Project Partners

Throughout the implementation of the 8-week pilot program, Codingschule maintained close contact with all partners to share insights, tips, and lessons learned. This exchange included a comprehensive "roadmap" detailing the sequence, prioritization, and estimated time requirements for each project step. Codingschule also highlighted potential pitfalls and areas for improvement, such as scheduling sessions consistently on the same days and times each week. By sharing its learnings, Codingschule aimed to help partners refine their approaches and adapt the program to their local contexts effectively.

Onboarding and Trainer Support

Codingschule conducted thorough onboarding sessions with all trainers, briefing them on the program's structure, technical requirements, and logistical details. To foster collaboration and resource sharing, Codingschule created a Miro board where trainers could upload their contact details, presentation links, book recommendations, and other materials for both participants and the organizing team. The program manager of Codingschule played a pivotal role in facilitating the training sessions, managing technical

logistics such as opening Zoom rooms, welcoming participants, monitoring the chat, supervising optional breakout rooms, and addressing technical issues. This allowed trainers to focus entirely on delivering their content while ensuring a seamless and engaging learning experience for participants.

Challenges

Diverse Trainer Composition and Onboarding
The implementation of the Future Founders Track across multiple regions presented significant challenges related to trainer composition and onboarding. Partners had to coordinate between internal employees and external experts, each with varying levels of familiarity with the program structure and participant dynamics. Ensuring consistency in delivery and content quality required substantial efforts, including standardized templates, anonymized participant profiles, and tailored onboarding sessions. Managing such a diverse group of trainers also highlighted the need for continuous communication and personalized support to address unique requirements and ensure readiness.

Cross-Partner Collaboration
While collaboration between consortium partners offered valuable insights, it also required significant coordination. Early implementers like Codingschule and TOP-IX faced the dual challenge of piloting the program while simultaneously sharing lessons learned with other partners. Balancing the demands of delivering high-quality training with providing guidance to consortium members proved time-intensive and logistically complex.

Technical and Logistical Support
Providing adequate technical and logistical support to trainers was another key challenge. Partners like CCS and Codingschule reported dedicating extensive resources to facilitate seamless delivery during online sessions, including setting up platforms, managing polls, breakout rooms, and Q&A segments. Ensuring trainers were equipped to navigate these technical aspects often required detailed preparatory work and real-time troubleshooting.

Consistency Across Regions
Despite a shared curriculum, variations in local needs and contexts posed challenges in maintaining consistency. Partners had to adapt session content, schedules, and delivery methods to suit their regional cohorts, making it difficult to standardize the program fully while ensuring its relevance and effectiveness.

Participant Engagement and Dynamics
Managing diverse participant groups required a nuanced approach. Understanding group dynamics, expectations, and experience levels necessitated ongoing adjustments. Partners also noted that fostering engagement during online sessions demanded creative facilitation strategies and robust technical setups.

Conclusions

The Femme Forward Future Founders Track successfully highlighted the benefits of collaborative, transnational training programs in equipping women with the skills and confidence to pursue careers in tech and entrepreneurship. By drawing on the collective expertise of consortium partners and incorporating local insights, the program was able to adapt to the diverse needs of participants across regions while maintaining a shared framework.

A key strength of the program was its adaptability. Early implementers, such as Codingschule and TOP-IX, shared valuable insights and practical advice, allowing other partners to refine their implementation strategies. This collaborative approach ensured that the training materials and delivery methods could be tailored to regional contexts without compromising the overall program structure.

Challenges such as onboarding a diverse pool of trainers, managing technical and logistical requirements, and balancing standardized content with local customization were addressed effectively through strong preparatory measures and ongoing support. Providing trainers with detailed onboarding sessions, technical resources, and standardized templates helped maintain a consistent quality of instruction across all locations.

Building a strong community among trainers, participants, and alumni proved to be a significant outcome of the program. Platforms like Slack, WhatsApp, and Miro enabled real-time communication and resource sharing, fostering a sense of connection and continuity beyond the training itself. These networks have laid the foundation for ongoing collaboration and professional growth among participants.

In summary, the Femme Forward Future Founders Track has demonstrated the value of collaboration, adaptability, and thoughtful program design. The experiences gained and lessons learned provide a clear pathway for future projects aiming to replicate its success, ensuring sustainable impact and continued support for women entering the tech and entrepreneurial sectors.

Collaboration guide for providing support

Introduction

Effective collaboration among training partners is essential to the success of multi-country programs like the Femme Forward Future Startup Founders Track. The diversity of participant backgrounds, regional contexts, and delivery teams called for structured coordination, shared resources, and continuous feedback. This guide draws on the collaborative practices and lessons learned during the Future Startup Founders training and proposes a framework for supporting trainers in future iterations or similar initiatives.

It complements and aligns with many of the strategies developed during the Future Tech Careers Track. These can be found within deliverable 5.3.

1. Establish a Clear Collaborative Structure

- **Facilitate early synchronization among partners:**

Early implementers such as Codingschule and TOP-IX played a key role in aligning approaches, ensuring the initial curriculum design and sequencing were consistent and realistic. Future projects should identify lead implementers who can help define shared structures and provide real-time guidance.

- **Schedule regular exchanges:**

Maintain consortium-level meetings, feedback loops, and bilateral calls to ensure smooth coordination and timely problem-solving across partners. *This suggestion is in common with those provided within deliverable 5.3.*

2. Leverage Diverse Expertise

- **Utilize pilot experiences:**

Leverage the experiences of early training cohorts to share what works and what doesn't—especially in structuring agendas, timing sessions, and setting expectations for trainers.

- **Encourage cross-organizational mentoring:**

Partners with more experience in digital entrepreneurship or training facilitation (e.g., CCS, Codingschule) should mentor others in areas such as onboarding practices, engagement strategies, and content customization. *This suggestion is in common with those provided within deliverable 5.3.*

3. Use Effective Communication Tools

- **Enable continuous and flexible exchanges:**

Tools such as Slack and WhatsApp supported live updates and informal support between trainers, participants, and organizers. These should be maintained and formalized as part of the trainer support ecosystem.

- **Create shared workspaces:**

Use platforms like Miro to co-create materials and gather trainer input. Codingschule's use of a Miro board to centralize trainer resources (e.g., contact info, presentation links, book recs) proved especially helpful. *This suggestion is in common with those provided within deliverable 5.3.*

4. Co-create and Refine Training Materials

- **Create adaptable templates:**

Standardized slide decks (as used by TOP-IX) helped create consistency while allowing for content adaptation. This balance should be maintained in future iterations.

- **Continuously integrate feedback:**

Future programs should establish lightweight feedback systems between trainers and coordinators to adjust session content in response to participant needs.

5. Support and Empower Trainers

- **Tailor onboarding and preparation:**

One-on-one onboarding sessions—especially those held just before each lesson (e.g., by TOP-IX and CCS)—helped trainers address technical needs and customize delivery. Providing anonymized participant profiles was key to enabling inclusive and targeted delivery.

- **Provide real-time facilitation support:**

Assigning a staff member to each session for technical assistance and chat moderation (e.g., at CCS and Codingschule) proved critical in letting trainers focus on content delivery.

- **Build a trainer resource library:**

Tools and guides for trainers (including templates, FAQ docs, and session walkthroughs) can be hosted centrally to ensure alignment and consistency.

6. Address Regional and Contextual Needs

- **Balance standardization with local adaptation:**

All partners reported the need to localize elements of the training—whether in terms of examples, pacing, or methods. This should be planned for from the outset by allowing flexible delivery models while maintaining core structure.

- **Leverage local expertise and networks:**

Trainers and guest speakers from the local startup or business ecosystem added strong value (as done by CCS with Mr. Panis Pieri). This strategy should be encouraged to ground the training in real-world relevance. *This suggestion is in common with those provided within deliverable 5.3.*

7. Foster Long-Term Communities

- **Support ongoing engagement among trainers and alumni:**

Creating spaces for continued discussion and exchange after the training (e.g., WhatsApp, Slack) helps maintain the collaborative network and allows trainers to continue learning from one another.

- **Link to mentorship and development opportunities:**

Where possible, alumni and trainers should be offered the chance to continue contributing—as mentors, coaches, or community ambassadors—to support future cohorts and deepen program impact.

By implementing these strategies, future training programs can ensure a cohesive, adaptable, and high-quality training environment that supports trainers and learners alike across diverse regional and organizational contexts.