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D 5.2
Delivery of the Training Program



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Full title: **Setting up a multidisciplinary joint master degree dedicated to the Next Production Revolution**

Delivery of the Training Program

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History of revisions

Rev N	Description	Author	Review	Date
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Executive summary

The D 5.2 provides an account of the delivery of the training sessions planned as per the D 5.1. The logistics of the event according to the project description involved arrangements for a physical location; however, as the training format was changed from presential to remote, the event was organized considering that the experience of the training program would be fully online.

In preparation for the training program kick-off, scheduled for October 12th, a number of necessary arrangements were made. These include: creating the main virtual spaces for the training program within the chosen videoconference platform -Microsoft Teams, providing information to trainers related to the NePRev project to aid them with the development of materials and agenda for their training modules, and providing technical support to the trainees willing to take part in the training program.

The delivery of training sessions started from the kick-off and progressed with only minor technical disturbances caused by internet connection issues. The trainers developed their training materials according to the topic of their specific module. Trainees were given the opportunity to participate with questions or comments at any point during the presentation.

A total of 68 trainees participated in the training program, out of which 26 had accumulated the minimum number of attendance marks required for the awarding of certificates of attendance.

By the end of the training program it was possible to obtain feedback about the planning and delivery by reaching out to trainers and by circulating a survey among trainees (Annex 1). A number of trainers denoted their desire for a more active participation among the trainees during the training sessions. In contrast, the trainees offered a series of improvement suggestions which seemed to indicate that they might not have been engaged to the degree the trainers desired due to having had a traditional face-to-face approach with only one-way communication.

The immediate challenges posed to the WP5 by the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak were largely overcome by adopting a remote modality for the training program in order to minimize the impact of delays. However, based on the feedback obtained from both trainers and trainees, it is important to remark that an additional challenge emerging from the current context is the ability to tailor and deliver a training session -originally intended for a presential class- entirely in the online format. Educators and students all over the world are struggling with this transition, and this was also the case for the trainers and trainees that participated in the training program. The

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strategy to address such challenge for the next iteration of the training program during the year 2021 will mainly depend on whether the circumstances at the time will prevent a presential training from taking place and the NePRev consortium will have to resort to an online modality for the second time.

1. Introduction

The D 5.2 is the second deliverable of the WP5. The work package is dedicated to the training of the selected staff on the contents developed in the previous two work packages WP3 and WP4. The staff training is fundamental for the exchange of ideas and methodologies in order to define the courses' contents, to design research and teaching activities for the laboratories and to prepare appropriate teaching materials. The deliverable D 5.2 presents:

- The preparations in anticipation to the training program kick-off in Section 2
- The delivery of the training modules in Section 3
- The results and feedback about the training program in Section 4

2. Preparation for the Training Program Kick-Off

As the training program for teachers and staff was scheduled to kick-off on October 12th a number of arrangements were made in anticipation to the training program kick-off. These include the creation of the main virtual spaces for the training sessions using the chosen videoconference platform Microsoft Teams, the orientation of trainers concerning the NePRev consortium expectations for their individual training modules, and the technical support for trainees willing to participate in the training program.

a) The Platform

Following the results obtained from the survey completed by the trainees, Microsoft Teams was chosen as the video conferencing platform used for the online webinars. Within the Microsoft Teams Platform two main virtual spaces were created: a meeting room for holding the training sessions and a repository to store and share with all trainees' materials related to the program.

Based on POLIMI's teaching staff experience regarding the emergency transition from presential to online teaching during the Spring semester of the A. 2019/2020, a single meeting room where to hold all trainings was defined in order to avoid confusion among the organizers, the trainers and the trainees. The repository stores the following materials: slides used during the presentations, additional resources uploaded by the trainers such as scientific publications, websites, reports, etc., the

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training program schedule, details about the training modules, and other important information. Recorded sessions, in contrast, will be uploaded in a shared platform.

b) The Trainers

The trainers were individually contacted in order to receive information upon which to develop the corresponding training module contents. The information relayed included a brief presentation of the NePRev project focusing on the aims and specific objectives as well as important details about WP5 concerning the training program. The trainers were also given information related to the individual profile of trainees that was gathered through the survey, namely, their academic rank and/or degree, teaching subject, and research area. This information was intended to provide the trainers with a better understanding about the audience to support the development of materials tailored not only to the overall objectives of the project but also to the trainees in particular. Furthermore, the trainers were advised that the training sessions would be recorded and they will be required to sign a release form before the recordings are published.

c) The Trainees

A total of 155 survey respondents showed interest in taking part in the training program. They were contacted and given the specifics of how and when to join the training sessions. Trainees who were willing to participate in the program but did not respond the survey within the deadline reached out to the organizers and were promptly added to the main list of participants. Trainees experiencing issues with the platform were given technical support in anticipation to the kick-off. Furthermore, trainees were advised that their attendance would be tracked and that certificates of attendance would be provided to those who participated in at least 10 modules during the training program.

3. Delivery of the Training Program

Notifications about the training sessions were sent to all trainees in the morning of the day of the presentation including information such as the contents to be addressed by the modules, the corresponding trainer's professional bio, and additional materials for consultation before the session. The training program kick-off was on October 12th, opening with remarks given by Prof. Pierluigi Leone and Dr. Elisa Negri, the main representatives from the European Partners POLITO and POLIMI respectively. Trainees were given an introduction to the NePRev program and were also reminded of information previously forwarded such as the program schedule, timing of the sessions, certificates of attendance, etc.

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Depending on the topic being covered, the trainers used different structures for their presentations and made use of materials such as videos, animations, and online whiteboards. Trainees were encouraged to actively participate to the sessions with questions or comments at any point during the presentation. Often the Q&A took place at the end of the presentation during approximately 10min.

The training sessions carried on smoothly with only minor disturbances such as few seconds of unintended noise or low quality video caused by internet connection issues. These disruptions were minor and did not affect the delivery of the training sessions to a large degree.

The schedule did not undergo major modifications throughout the training program. Only in one instance a training module had to be rescheduled due to personal reasons. The change did not cause a negative impact as the trainees were informed timely.

4. Results and feedback about the Training Program

A total of 68 trainees participated in the training program. The main results are summarized in Table 1 on the next page.

A number of trainers were able to provide feedback about their experience a few days after their presentation. The main points highlighted by the trainers was that a more active interaction among participants would have been preferred, citing the following instances:

- A trainer would made a call to action during the presentation but received no response from the trainees.
- At the beginning of the session, a trainer asked the trainees to introduce themselves and their research areas and received no response. Only after insisting the trainees did turn on their microphones and started to introduce themselves.

These instances appear to have been the result of conducting the training sessions as traditional face-to-face classes with only one-way communication, which may not have been engaging trainees to the degree the trainers desired.

Table 1. Main figures related to the training program attendance

Total Scheduled Sessions	24
Curriculum Development	14
Ecosystem Building	7
General Contents	3
Participants	
Total No. of Trainees	68
No. of Trainees' Affiliated Institutions	6
No. of Trainees with at least 10 attendance marks	26
Attendance Rate	
Overall average attendance	23
Average attendance per module type	
<i>Curriculum Development</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Ecosystem Building</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>General Contents</i>	<i>22</i>

Upon completion of the training program, the trainees were asked to complete a survey (Annex 1) sharing their thoughts and opinions about the training program.

Among the respondents of the survey, almost 60% attended at least 12 modules (Figure 1). When asked to rate their experience in the training program (Figure 2) almost all respondents agreed to being satisfied with the program structure and organization, and that the contents covered are beneficial for the definition of teaching and/or research activities as well as their personal development.

Figure 1. Number of modules attended by the respondents

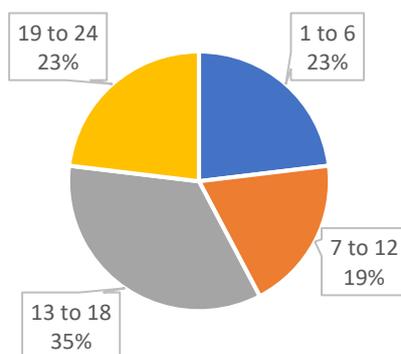
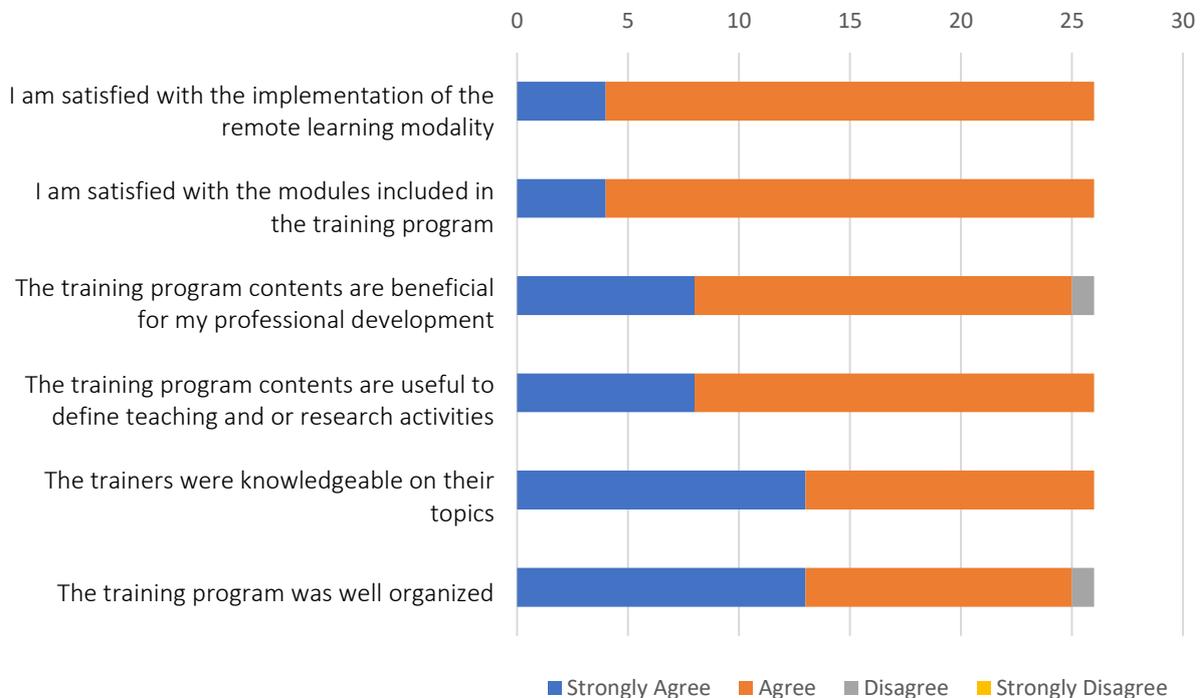


Figure 2. Respondents experience as rated on agree-disagree scales



Additionally, the respondents also provided suggestions for the improvement of the training program on the next iteration in year 2021:

- Encourage communication between trainers, in order to avoid redundancy in the contents covered.
- Inclusion of practical contents such as demonstrations and case studies, in order to have more interactive sessions.
- Inclusion of specific activities that create interactions between the trainer and the trainees.
- Encourage trainers to adopt teaching methodologies that aim to increase engagement in the audience.
- Forwarding notifications about the modules a few days prior to the session.
- Scheduling the training sessions at a different time during the day.

At the end of the training a Certificate of Attendance was released as shown in ANNEX 2 as an example for one of the participants. The Certificate was signed by the Project Coordinator and WP Leader.



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5. Conclusion

The D 5.2 gives an account of the delivery of the training sessions planned as per the D 5.1. The onset of the COVID-19 emergency represented a challenge for the realization of the training program as it was originally intended. Nonetheless, all necessary arrangements were made in order to provide trainees with a fully online training experience that was able to transfer the contents developed in D 5.1. Preparations related to accessing the videoconference platform, providing support to trainers and trainees, and other details were finalized in anticipation to the kick-off scheduled for October 12th.

The feedback obtained from trainers and trainees brought into light an additional challenge generated by the transition into a new format, which is the ability to tailor and deliver a training session -originally intended for a presential class- entirely in the online modality.

The ability to effectively deliver a class in the online format requires the development of a whole new set of skills that are not as relevant for presential classes. The shift in the staff training program format from presential to online was part of the emergency transition that several institutions all over the world experienced due to the onset of the coronavirus outbreak. Educators and students are struggling to keep up with all the changes brought forward by this transition, and this was the case for the trainers and trainees that participated in the training program for teachers and staff.

The trainers for the most part delivered their modules as they would during regular presential classes, but effective online teaching requires instructors to rethink the format and structure of their lectures, in order to increase engagement among their audience. Likewise, regardless of the duration of a class or program, constant interactions between instructors and students can result in the creation of a community where the learning experience can be improved. For this reason it's also important that the trainees take ownership of their learning experience and assume a more active role within the program.

The strategy to address such challenge for the next iteration of the training program during the year 2021 will mainly depend on whether the circumstances at the time will prevent a presential training from taking place and the NePREv consortium will have to resort to an online modality for the second time.



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Annex 1

NePRev Project - Training Program Feedback

Thank you for your participation in the Training Program. Please let us know your thoughts and opinions about the program by filling this brief survey.

* Required

1. Affiliated Institution *

- ENIT
- ISGIS
- FSJEGJ
- ENIGA
- Other:

2. How many modules did you attend? *

- 1-6
- 7-12
- 13-18
- 19-24





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3. Please choose the options that best describe your experience: *

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am satisfied with the implementation of the remote learning modality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with the modules included in the training program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The training program contents are beneficial for my professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The training program contents are useful to define teaching and or research activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The trainers were knowledgeable on their topics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The training program was well organized	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3.1. Please write down any comment about your choices above:

Your answer





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4. What topics would you have liked to see addressed that were not included in the training program? *

Your answer

5. What did you like about the training program and why? *

Your answer

6. What did you dislike about the training program and why? *

Your answer

7. What would you like to be changed or modified in the training program? *

Your answer

8. What would you suggest to the trainers to improve their teaching approach? *

Your answer

9. Do you have any comments or suggestions to help improve the training program? *

Your answer

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ANNEX 2



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CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE

This certifies that

Wyssal ABBASSI

attended the Staff Training Program as part of the *NePreV Project - Setting up a multidisciplinary joint master degree dedicated to the next production revolution* during October & November 2020.

Politecnico di Milano
Elisa Negri

Politecnico di Torino
Pierluigi Leone