

Fobia BOOST Site LMS

Study and Implementation Plan

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Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme
2014-2020



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund

Study and implementation plan

[BOOST Site Portal](#) was developed within [the FOBIA Project](#). The main objective of the FOBIA Project (2017–2020) was to enhance business competitiveness of forestry service enterprises in the northern and peripheral regions of Finland, Sweden, Scotland and Ireland. The origin of the project lies in the need to improve the enterprises' ability to meet increased service demands and challenges of developing operational environment.

BOOST Site Portal is a virtual learning environment for studying leadership and management of a forest service business. Furthermore, the Portal includes a material bank, with a supply of articles and publications, as well as digital tools and applications produced in the FOBIA Project.

Courses

Here you will find all our courses listed, including a brief summary under each module. To get started, go to [the Learning Site](#) and login as a student. We are constantly updating the courses and adding contents, so changes are possible.

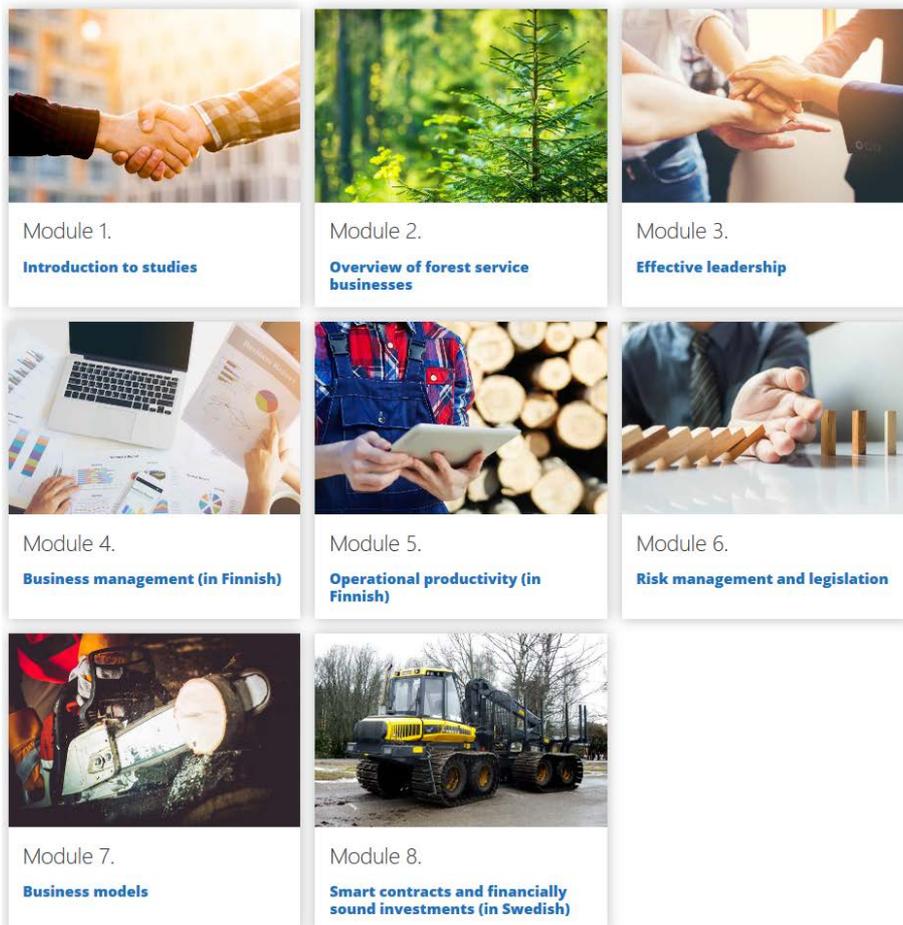


Figure 1. The list of courses available at <https://boostsite.org/en>.

[BOOST Site Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#), which can be accessed via the BOOST Site Portal, is where the actual course contents are located. It was created in the context of the project's Work Package T3: Digital Platforms, and it was coordinated by TTS, a Finland-based education and research institution. BOOST

Site consists of eight study modules, each handling different themes of leading and managing forest service enterprises in the northern periphery. All material can be accessed freely once registered.

Contents for each module were created by partner organizations of the project. The LMS offers a management training package for forest service enterprising in Scotland, Ireland, Sweden and Finland—in English, Swedish and Finnish, respectively.

The basic idea of BOOST Site LMS is to deliver distant learning opportunities, e.g. for harvesting contractors, who often have limited time for classroom studies and few chances to participate in training when operating in distant locations.

Modules and various approaches

Introduction to studies

The introductory course demonstrates the student how the study modules work and what are the key features of the LMS. It was also built for the partner organizations as an example on how a study module could be structured. Each module is proposed to contain course description and objectives, required skills and resources, timetable, exercises and practice, further reading and materials for the advanced. In the future, this module could be further developed to match the existing modules, and it could contain more refined options for various learning paths. This module was built by TTS and it is available in English.

Overview on forest service businesses

Forestry has a vital role in the economies of Sweden, Scotland, Ireland and Finland. It is true that forestry service businesses in these countries have many differences due to historical and cultural reasons, but there are many similarities too. These countries' forestry business models, development needs and current state of digitality are summarized in this module based on the latest research conducted in the FOBIA Project. This module was built by TTS and it is available in English.

Effective leadership

This module will encourage the student to explore the difference between a manager and a leader. It introduces some ideas about what makes a good leader, and how these theories can be applied in a small business context. It also allows the student to reflect on her own approach to leadership and give her some key management skills to use in her business. Although there is plenty of material, it should be easy to digest as it applies microlearning, i.e. it is divided into small learning units. The module was built by the Inverness College UHI and it is available in English.

Business management

Systematic and goal-oriented financial management is the basis for success. Keeping this in mind, the student is guided through e.g. business planning and service design, investments, taxation and financial statements—all from the perspective of a forestry service business. This module was built by TTS and it is available in Finnish.

Operational productivity

This module turned out to focus on machine productivity and service pricing, forestry road investment calculation and self-monitoring through three online tools. After a brief, general motivation and introduction, the student will explore each tool and theme through educative videos and assignments.

Step-by-step guidance and multiple-choice questions are used to guide the student through the topics. This module was built by TTS and it is available in Finnish.

Risk management and legislation

On one hand, legislation and risk management are extremely important topics to any forestry entrepreneur regardless the country in which the business is being practiced. On the other hand, due to the differences in each country's legislation and practices, the project group found it challenging to produce universal study material that would greatly benefit entrepreneurs in all countries involved. The project group noted that for further development, the material could be divided into country-specific sections which could be further divided into Legislation, Managing workplace Health and Safety, Business Risks in Forest Services.

Business models

What is a business model? How to be innovative in creating a business model? What are some of the main barriers in business model innovation? These are the three main themes in which the study module is divided, alongside with a self-assessment which finalizes the learning experience. The contents were produced by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and it is available in English and Swedish.

Smart contracts and financially sound investments

Besides providing a great service or product to clients, an entrepreneur needs to know the basics of running a business. This module will lay out some of the basic concepts and key figures of business economics. Moreover, the entrepreneur will learn how to make smart contracts and investments on machinery. Smart contracts form a basis for a successful forest service business and protects the company against rising costs. Well-planned and timed investments on machinery guarantee productive and advanced logging process. The contents are divided into three parts which are further sub-divided into listening, reading and quizzes. Contents for this module were produced by the Swedish Association of Forestry Contractors and it is available in Swedish.

Future use and development needs

From a purely technical perspective, BOOST Site has already proven to be a well-functioning platform. Contents created in the FOBIA Project will remain in the platform and are to be used freely by anyone interested in the themes. Ideally, each study module would be further revised based on users' comments and needs. This, as well as providing all contents in three languages, would be great base for a further project.

However, what will define the platform's future is whether it will attract users. At the time of writing, already two other forestry-related projects were granted the permission to use BOOST Site as an e-learning platform. A project focusing on forestry and nature-based service companies' learning and networking needed a platform to publish its Webinar recordings. Another project, which intends to build a brief training concept to further improve forest machine operators' nature management and continuous cover forestry skills, was looking for a suitable e-learning platform. BOOST Site is clearly a convenient platform for both materials as it is Moodle-based, and the contents can easily be transferred to other platforms in SCORM packages.

There are promising opportunities to develop BOOST Site further. First of them, the language versions of study modules need to be completed, provided that the contents of each module are applicable to the varying conditions of the partner countries. If this is not the case, a new approach should be applied to the respective modules. Further, the Fobia partners can develop their own course supply, and use BOOST Site

as a digital platform, even for commercial purposes in the future when BOOST Site will be open for business applications.

BOOST Site LMS was an educative experiment of development of a full-bodied e-learning environment. Fobia partners proved that there are various ways to create virtual training for forest service entrepreneurs. The diversity of implementations in study modules supported well the innovative approach of BOOST Site training package.

We have had discussions with Fobia partners, and there is a common view on how to progress with BOOST Site. The efforts we have made have been fruitful, and we have a sound basis to progress with the BOOST Site in the future. As a coordinating partner of the Work Package “Digital Platforms”, TTS will continue to develop BOOST Site by taking initiatives for seeking funding the follow-up project(s) and promoting cooperation within Fobia partners.

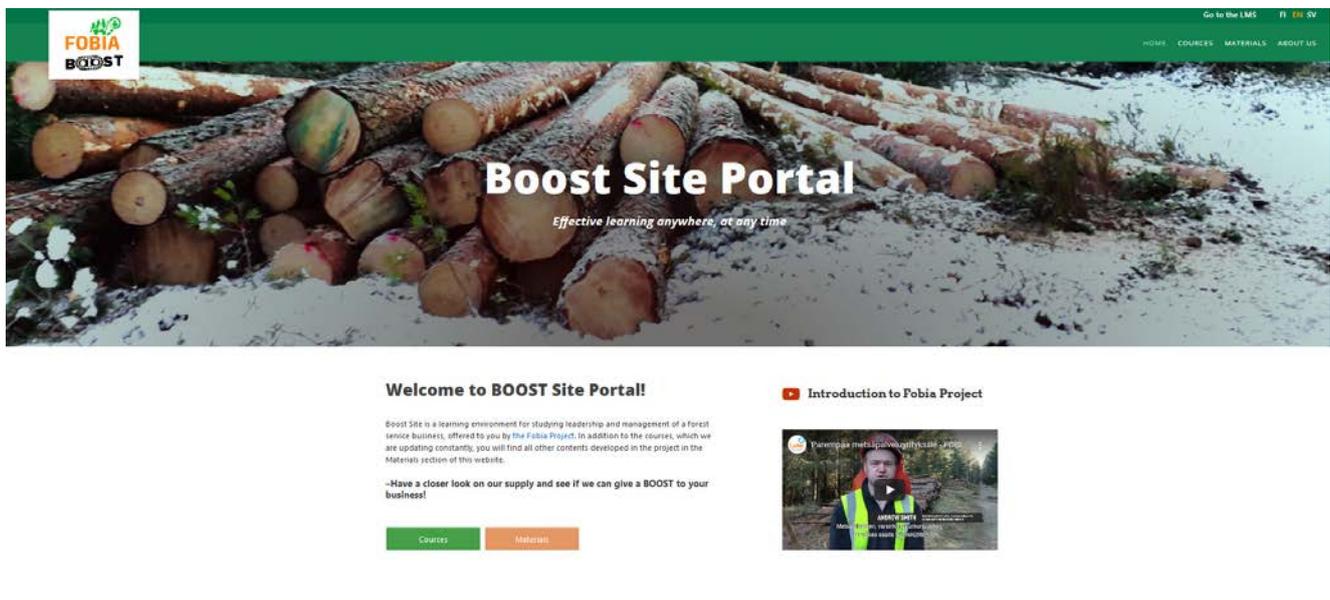


Figure 2. Screenshot from homepage of BOOST Site Portal (<https://boostsite.org/en>).