



Brussels 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020  
EASME.A.1.1/MP

**Subject: Reference Letter**

By this reference letter, I would like to confirm that the team of external experts, composed of: **Mr Hubert Dyba, Mr Pawel Zebrowski, Mr Radoslaw Ratajczak, Mr Filip Sieracki and Mr Cezary Graul** conducted a project on behalf of EASME (codename: NextEEN), which main goal was to **define, prototype and validate key functionalities of the new internal IT platform dedicated to Enterprise Europe Network consultants.**

EASME is responsible for the managing and implementation of Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) project, since 2008, which helps businesses innovate and grow on an international scale. It is the world's largest support network for small and medium-sized enterprises with international ambitions. The Network is active in more than 60 countries worldwide. It brings together 3,000 consultants from more than 600 member organizations - all renowned for their excellence in business support.

Member organisations include:

- technology poles
- innovation support organisations
- universities and research institutes
- regional development organisations
- chambers of commerce and industry

The NextEEN project consisted of four defined steps:

**Step 1** - The main goal of the Step 1 was the **synthesis of data**, collected in years 2017-2019 such as strategic documents of COSME, EASME and European Commission regarding the activities of EEN, the results of workshops, meetings and brainstorming involved external companies, results of meetings and workshops organized directly by EASME such as e.g. sessions regarding planned functionalities organized during Enterprise Europe Network Annual Conferences in 2017, 2018, 2019, IT Champions Workshop report in 2019 and other relevant

documents suggested by EASME, to select and present key functionalities of the newly designed IT platform. Step 1 was performed from 1st December 2019 to 10th February 2020.

**Step 2** - On the basis of results of Step 1, Step 2 **concentrated on designing prototypes of selected functionalities**, to be tested with real users which were EEN Advisors, to get to know the pros and cons of the selected functionalities from users point of view. Before the design process, workflows of each single functionality were created to better understand and map the process to be more easily transformed into graphical form. The prototype was designed in the Axure RP 9 software and exported into an online cloud environment. Step 2 was performed from 11th February 2020 to 9th of April 2020

**Step 3** - The main element of Step 3 was **testing the prototypes with real users - EEN Advisors**. User testing refers to a technique used in the design process to evaluate a product, feature or prototype with real users. There are several reasons to undergo testing, the most common is that it allows to identify friction in a user experience, so that it can be addressed before being built or deployed. Identifying any issues early reduces the longer term cost. Typically tasks are set which users are asked to perform to the best of their ability, while observers watch, listen and take notes. Step 3 was performed from 14th of April to 15th of June 2020.

**Step 4** - The goal of the last, fourth stage of the project was **to make improvements that were identified during tests carried out under Step 3**. Main improvements and changes, according to the report from Step 3, were applied to the prototype that was subject to user testing in the previous step. The changes implemented in Step 4 mainly concerned the improvement of functionalities that users reported during personalised interviews. Step 4 was performed from 16th of June to 31th of July 2020.

The whole project organization and conduction met all our requirements and goals. Cooperation with the above-mentioned experts was always professional and very responsive, they continuously shared their own vast experiences regarding user needs and product designing. I strongly recommend Mr Dyba, Zebrowski, Ratajczak, Sieracki and Graul as specialists in terms of human-centered design, experienced in comprehensive design processes. They demonstrated a high level of preparation, professionalism which undoubtedly guarantees the highest level of services.

*Marija Popovic*  
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