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Friday, 3rd of July, 2020

TOGETHER IS BETTER

The facilitation of the project team 'Flavours of Malaga'
towards the innovation of an entrepreneurial
ecosystem in tourism in Malaga

SAXION UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

TOGETHER IS BETTER: THE FACILITATION OF THE PROJECT TEAM 'FLAVOURS
OF MALAGA' TOWARDS THE INNOVATION OF AN ENTREPRENEURIAL
ECOSYSTEM IN TOURISM IN MALAGA

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Hanoi, 2020

Declaration of own work

I hereby declare that:

- I am fully informed about the Thesis C assessment criteria;
- all the work I have conducted to fulfill these criteria is entirely my own;
- I have not been assisted by any other person, except the coaching offered within HBS guidelines.

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Preface

This thesis was prepared for the project team 'Flavours of Malaga'. Additionally, it was written for Saxion University of Applied Sciences and Hospitality Business School (HBS) to fulfil the graduation requirements of the Bachelor of Arts (BA): Tourism Management program, based on the guidelines from the HBS Thesis Committee.

Although I ran into some difficulties during the thesis writing process for this was the first time I have written such an intensive academic paper, I managed to finish everything in the end. I would like to thank these specific people who helped and supported me during my thesis writing process.

First of all, I would like to thank my first examiner, Mr Gijs Theunissen for all of his support and dedicated guidance throughout the six months of writing my thesis. This thesis could not be done properly without him. Moreover, I would like to thank two lecturers from the project team 'Flavours of Malaga', Mr Jan Willem Meijerhof and Mrs Almudena Gonzalez, for their support.

I would also like to thank five girls in the project team, Naomi Legin, Daphne Nijkamp, Cristina Voina, Chelsea Whittaker, and Steffi Habicht, for all of their emotional support and cheerful moments. Besides, I would like to thank Carlos Garcia Martinez for supporting me during my research process. Moreover, I would like to thank Antonia Leonhart, Elise Dijkshoorn, and Victor van Straaten for all of their helpful tips.

Furthermore, I would like to thank Mr Michiel Flooren for his valuable knowledge about the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and my best friends, Duong Nguyen and Linh Do, for all their love and constant support.



Hanoi, June 2020

Thanh Duong

Summary

This thesis project discusses the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. For the project team 'Flavours of Malaga', to achieve the ultimate goal of developing the products of community-based tourism, they require a solid entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism as a foundation. Hence, the goal of this thesis project is to finalise the way that the project team 'Flavours of Malaga' can facilitate the innovation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. Two central research questions were formulated to finalise the management problem. During the research process of this thesis, to answer the first central research question, six interviews were conducted to investigate the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. In addition, to answer the second research question, a literature review was conducted to examine the lessons from some of the best practice cases for the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. The structure of the interviews and desk research both covered three aspects. They are material, social, and cultural attributes. The results of the six interviews showed that the key weaknesses of the current ecosystem are the loose relationship among stakeholders and the lack of management. The results of the desk research pointed out the key lessons for a successful entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. They are understanding stakeholders, having a strong network, and having a suitable leadership style. After the analysis of the research results, the advice options were considered. The multi-criteria analysis was applied to assess the three advice options. Finally, after the assessment, the third advice option was selected. The main content of this advice option is that the ecosystem in Malaga should provide both online and offline activities for the stakeholders in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. This thesis suggests that the project team should engage stakeholders and establish a website to facilitate the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga.

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List of abbreviations

R&D – Research and development

NGO(s) - Non-governmental organisation(s)

(The) USA – The United States of America

E.g. – Exempli gratia

PDCA – Plan-do-check-act

FTE - Full-time equivalent

UNWTO – World Tourism Organisation

OECD – The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

1. Introduction

In the first chapter, four topics will be introduced to give an overview of the advisory report. They are client background, description of the reasons, management problem and advice objective, and research objectives and research questions. Then, a reading guide will be provided at the end of this chapter.

1.1 Client background

The project team 'Flavours of Malaga' was founded in 2017 by TUI Care Foundation and Saxion University of Applied Sciences (Hermann, 2019). In the second phase of the project starting from February 2020 to January 2022, the vision of the project team focuses on the development of community-based tourism in the neighbourhood of Trinidad Perchel and the city of Malaga by assisting local entrepreneurs while prioritising female entrepreneurs (Rispen, 2019). Moreover, establishing a network for local (female) entrepreneurs, including La Alacena del Corralon, is one of the most important missions of the project team during this phase. The roles of the team from Saxion University of Applied Sciences in this project are researching, planning events and activities, managing stakeholders and partners, and guiding La Alacena de Corralon and local entrepreneurs towards the sustainable tourism development.

Currently, the official office of the project team is located in Deventer, the Netherlands. The project team includes three lecturers, six thesis students, and one business coach. Additionally, the project team works closely and supports the entrepreneurial activities of La Alacena del Corralon.

There are four goals in the project's second phase (Rispen, 2019). They are:

- Offering support services to increase the entrepreneurial activities of La Alacena del Corralon and local businesses towards the tourism industry by establishing a network/platform for knowledge exchange and capacity building
- Advancing the entrepreneurial skills and leadership position of La Alacena del Corralon and local businesses through training and workshops
- Improving the livelihood of the wider local community by facilitating access to the tourism market to reinforce their socio-economic position
- Providing an exemplary connection between entrepreneurial strategies and sustainable tourism development pillars of urban development in vulnerable areas (Rispen, 2019).

1.2 Description of the reasons

This thesis project mainly examines the different modes that the project team can utilise to innovate the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. In brief, an entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism is the format that combines all the stakeholders in the tourism environment within a region (Stam & Spigel, 2016). The detailed definition of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism will be elaborated in the theoretical framework part of the second chapter. The innovation plan will be finalised by providing a framework from academic sources and researching the factual situation in the area.

This thesis project is essential to the project team because of the following reasons. Firstly, it contributes substantially to the first goal of the project 'Flavours of Malaga' in the sense of providing an official cluster for the local entrepreneurs in Malaga to increase the efficiency of business activities (Rispen, 2019). Moreover, it also aligns with one of the missions in the second phase of the project 'Flavours of Malaga' which is to increase the interaction between local entrepreneurs and other stakeholders in the city (e.g., local and regional governments, educational institutions, and other supporting organisations). Secondly, the concept of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the tourism industry, which is the demand for this thesis, is new to the project team (J. W. Meijerhof, personal communication, February 25, 2020). They do not know

what the actual situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga is like at this moment (A. Gonzalez, personal communication, March 2, 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to provide a piece of advice on how to facilitate the innovation of this concept in the focused area of the project.

According to the current global trends and developments in the tourism industry, this thesis is in line with two external factors. Firstly, co-operation and cluster are two emergent trends in the tourism industry, and these trends will increase and contribute positively to the economics in the next five years (OECD, 2020). Secondly, this thesis project can support the sustainable development goal number 17 from the United Nations' "Partnership for the Goals" (UNWTO, 2015). By engaging the stakeholders in the tourism industry in Malaga, it would contribute to the sustainable development of Trinidad Perchel and the city of Malaga in general.

1.3 Management problem and advice objective

This thesis is a helpful tool to innovate the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. Currently, there is no clear evidence of the existence of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in the city of Malaga. Moreover, based on the observation of the project team in the first phase of the project, there were not many connections between the tourism entrepreneurs and other stakeholders in the area. The lack of cooperation in the area may lead to the fact that the tourism entrepreneurs in the area cannot perform well. Moreover, due to the lack of engagement, it is a threat to the longevity of their companies and generally to the sustainable development in the city. For achieving the ultimate goal of developing community-based tourism products, the project team demands an entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism as a solid foundation. It is hard for only one tourism entrepreneur to create a proper community-based tourism product due to the lack of business experience, knowledge and resources (Davey & Mulos, 2016). Hence, together in one ecosystem, they can offset the others with their advantages, share the resources and difficulties.

As a result, an innovative entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism is required to solve the management problem. Through the content of this thesis, the project team can see exactly the types of actions to execute to facilitate the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. The advice objective has been formulated in line with the aforementioned objective of the project 'Flavours of Malaga'. The advice objective is to establish the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga that allows the local entrepreneurs and other stakeholders in Malaga to share knowledge and to network by the year 2021, based on the current situation of the ecosystem in Malaga and the lessons from the best practice cases. Therefore, to finalise the advice for the thesis report, the management question has been formulated as follows:

Management question: *How can the project team 'Flavours of Malaga' facilitate the innovation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?*

1.4 Research objectives and research questions

There have to be insights into the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga and the best practices of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism to answer the management question.

On the one hand, it is necessary to understand each stakeholder's strengths, weaknesses, and concerns when it comes to the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. Currently, the project team does not know enough about the reality of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in the area (J. W. Meijerhof, personal communication, February 25, 2020). Therefore, conducting field research to find out more is a must. The present context is the baseline of every single piece of advice since only knowing where the advantages and disadvantages lie can optimally formulate a piece of advice. The structure of this type of information is divided into three sections: material attributes, social attributes, and cultural attributes. This

operationalisation is adapted from the model of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism (Stam & Spigel, 2017). The theoretical framework part of this report will elaborate on this model. These three attributes are the core elements of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. Therefore, gathering all the insights from these factors can complete the information required for the advisory chapter. The description of each attribute will be presented in the theoretical framework part. This type of information will be obtained from the stakeholders in Malaga via semi-structured interviews.

On the other hand, it is not enough to create a good piece of advice without the lessons from the best practices in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. Since the concept is new to the project team 'Flavours of Malaga', learning from the successful model is an efficient way to know how to innovate. From the insights from the best practices, the suitable successful keys will be selected to implement while avoiding the mistakes from their past (Dressler, 2004). The insights will also help the project team have a clear overview of the action plan, and for the advisory part, this could work as a benchmark of the ecosystem in Malaga compared to the other ecosystems in those destinations. The structure of this type of information would be divided similarly to the first type of information with the three attributes: material, social, and cultural attributes. The same structure applies to this type of information because the research subject is the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism, which is similar to the subject of the first one. This type of information would be collected from the articles and information from the best practice cases.

In conclusion, the research objective is the combination of the sources of information described above to formulate the piece of advice for the thesis report. The first research objective of this thesis is to investigate what the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga is at this moment. The second research objective of this thesis is to investigate what the project team can learn from the best practice cases to facilitate the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. To get the right information and achieve the research objectives, two central research questions have been formulated with six sub-questions presented below.

Research question 1: What is the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?

- **Sub-question 1:** What is the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga regarding the material attributes?
- **Sub-question 2:** What is the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga regarding the social attributes?
- **Sub-question 3:** What is the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga regarding the cultural attributes?

Research question 2: What are the lessons from the best practice cases for the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?

- **Sub-question A:** What are the lessons regarding material attributes from the best practice cases for the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?
- **Sub-question B:** What are the lessons regarding social attributes from the best practice cases for the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?
- **Sub-question C:** What are the lessons regarding cultural attributes from the best practice cases for the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?

1.5 Reading guide

The second chapter is the research chapter, which includes five main parts. They are theoretical framework, methodology, research results, conclusion, and discussion. The theoretical framework explains how the core concepts are derived from the academic literature and the models of the core concepts. The

methodology describes the research strategy, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analysis methods used in the process. Additionally, the theory and the substantiation of the chosen methods will be explained. Then, the research results will be presented and summarised in the conclusion to answer the two research questions. The reliability and validity of this research results will be presented in the discussion. The third chapter is the advisory chapter, where three advice options will be presented and evaluated to finalise one advice option. Then, the implementation plan and financial implications of the chosen advice option will be presented. The final chapter of this report is the afterword reflecting on day-to-day practices and the value of the thesis for the industry.

2. Research

This chapter aims to find out the answers to the two central research questions which will be used for creating the piece of advice. The research objectives are to find out what the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism is at this moment and what the project team can learn from the best practice cases to facilitate the innovation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. In this chapter, the theoretical framework, methodology, research results, conclusion, and discussion will be presented.

2.1 Theoretical framework

Three core concepts will be discussed in this chapter, including the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism; community-based tourism; and the entrepreneurship innovation in tourism. These core concepts form the backbone of this research and the implementation plan.

2.1.1 Description of search terms and method

The core concepts of the theoretical framework have been built up by the literature review. The search process includes the following steps: using the search engines; typing in the search term(s); customising the search features (such as publication date; author et cetera); choosing a suitable search result; analysing, and repeating those steps for each concept. The reliable search engines used to provide the sources for these core concepts are Google Scholar, Saxon Library, ResearchGates, ScienceDirect, and Academia. The genres of the sources used for the literature review are book, journal article, and PhD thesis. All the selected sources were assessed with the model of AAOCC criteria. The search commands and combinations, and the AAOCC model are presented in Appendix I.

2.1.2 Literature review

The three core concepts will be elaborated by the method of literature review. The combination of all the concepts is a complete picture of the thesis. To achieve an ideal version of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga, an entrepreneurship innovation is required to take place to improve the current situation. Community-based tourism is the theme and the direction to innovate and develop the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. It will affect the choices during the innovation process of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. Meanwhile, as mentioned above, the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism will be the tool and strong foundation to assist the project in achieving one of the objectives of the project 'Flavours of Malaga'. Therefore, those are the description of the relationship among the core concepts.

2.1.2.1 Entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism

The definition of the *entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism* is important to this thesis project because this is the concept of the direct demanding outcome of this report from the client, and this is the most suitable concept for the requirement of engaging local or regional stakeholders for more valuable creations.

Definition

The definition of the *entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism* is the combination of two separate terms: *tourism entrepreneurs* and *entrepreneurial ecosystem*. The theory of *tourism entrepreneur* does not contain many differences in the articles from the 1980s until now. Also, there is a limited number of articles written about this topic. The most up-to-date definition of *tourism entrepreneurs* is the "persona causa" of tourism evaluation who set up the business and operationalise the activities in commerce. They have shaped themselves in the tourism environment to deal with tourists, destinations, and services (accommodation,

food and beverage, and mobility) (Power, Domenico, & Miller, 2017). This definition is considered the most up-to-date due to the publication year and the references to this definition until now.

The concept of the *entrepreneurial ecosystem* is adapted from biology. In the glossary of biological terminology, an ecosystem can be understood as “a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment” (Stam & Spigel, 2016, p. 4). When it comes to the entrepreneurial field, the characteristics of “interacting” aspect remain. Boutillier, Carre, & Levratto (2016) defined an *entrepreneurial ecosystem* as the formation of the different independent stakeholders that constitute communal strategic interests by standardising and sharing the common behaviour, resources, knowledge, and finance in many formats. Also defining the term *entrepreneurial ecosystem*, Stam & Spigel (2016) shifted the focus to the interaction among the stakeholders. However, slightly different from the first definition, Stam & Spigel (2016) claimed that in this cluster system, entrepreneurs are the core actors, and they are the main focus of all activities, decisions and policies. Besides, Stam & Spigel (2016) also mentioned that knowledge is essential to the ecosystem, and the types of advisable knowledge which should be shared among the stakeholders are “social”, “organisational”, and “production” (p. 7). To wrap up, those authors agree on the definition that an *entrepreneurial ecosystem* is a system of stakeholders that allows to interact with others and share certain interests. Between the equal power distribution and entrepreneurial focus, the definition by Stam & Spigel (2016) seems to be closer to the wish of the client since the project team would like to have the ecosystem which centralises the entrepreneurs in Malaga and involves the other stakeholders in the community as supporters to enhance the efficiency of tourism business activities. Combined with the definition of *tourism entrepreneurs* above, the definition of the *entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism* is the formation of diverse stakeholders in the tourism environment within a region. They share and agree on some common categories, and they cluster toward their mutual aims.

Model

The models of an *entrepreneurial ecosystem* can be applied directly to the tourism context because the elements would stay the same as long as the business activities are mentioned. The only difference is that the scope of some factors will be smaller, limited within the indicators of tourism industries.

Boutillier et al. (2016) presented a model with three layers: “Aggregate Value Creation”; “Entrepreneurial Activity”; and “Entrepreneurial Elements” (p. 56). There are ten elements presented in the model, and they are grouped into two categories. The first category is systematic conditions, including networks, leadership, finance, talent, knowledge, and support service/intermediate. The remaining four elements are formal institutions, culture, physical infrastructure, and demand, all under the category of framework conditions. The model by Stam & Spigel (2017) only focuses on the elements in the ecosystem instead of combining with its procedure like in the first model. Instead of being divided into two categories, eleven elements were divided into three categories. The first category, material attributes, discusses the hard-core elements for the formation of the ecosystem. It includes policy, university (knowledge and R&D – research and development), infrastructure, market, and support service. The second category, social attributes, consists of the flexible and connective elements, which are networks, mentor and role model, worker/talent, and investment capital. The last category is cultural attributes, which are the soft elements and the root of the ecosystem, including support culture and histories of entrepreneurship. It can be seen that there are some overlapping elements between the two models. However, the preferable model for this thesis project is the model by Stam & Spigel (2017). It studies the elements of *entrepreneurial ecosystem* creation, and it is the stage that the thesis project focuses on. Moreover, the division of the second model shows a more concrete relationship between the categories. Notwithstanding, leadership should be added into the third category because, in a group, leading is essential to keep them moving forward and on track (Boutillier et al., 2016). Moreover, since the model would deal with tourism, the element of spatial should be added to the first category of the model by Stam & Spigel (2017). The operationalisation is presented in Appendix II.

2.1.2.2 Community-based tourism

Community-based tourism is the backbone of the thesis project and is also the type of tourism that the project team would like to promote. The ultimate goal of this advisory part, the *entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism*, is to develop *community-based tourism* in the next phases of the project 'Flavours of Malaga'. Therefore, understanding the concept of *community-based tourism*, in the beginning, can help the research operationalisation stay on the right track.

Definition

Blackstock (2005) defined *community-based tourism* as the procedure of increasing the inclusivity of the host community into the destination management procedure, and this type of tourism would be used as a tool in the sustainable development by expanding the number of sustainable industries. Giampiccoli, Mtapuri, & Jugmohan (2015) focused on the benefits of *community-based tourism* in their given destination. In their perspective, *community-based tourism* is the kind of tourism that results in opportunities for local economic development, empowerment, and social affairs. Besides, in a journal article by Giampiccoli & Saayman (2018), they slightly changed the definition of *community-based tourism* compared to the definition in 2015. It is said that *community-based tourism* is "about social justice, empowerment, equity of benefits, redistributive measures, ownership of the tourism sector and holistic community development" (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018, p. 7). In addition, Giampiccoli and Saayman (2018) invested deeper into the *community-based tourism* in the urban area, and compared to rural focus, this type of tourism in the city pays more attention to economic growth, social affairs, and cultural heritage preservation than preserving the natural environment. In the end, the definition would be a combination of the subject and activities of *community-based tourism* in the concept of Blackstock (2005) and its benefits which are mentioned in the article by Giampiccoli & Saayman (2018). They gave a full overview that is closer to the scope of this research. Malaga, in general, is an urban area.

Model

There are two models regarding *community-based tourism*, and they are both analysed in the two articles by Professor Giampiccoli. The first model defines *community-based tourism* in three sectors known by the name of "triple bottom lines". The terms used in the article are economic development, social development, and environmental development. This model is from the article by Giampiccoli et al. (2015). This operationalisation is a familiar division in the sustainable development topic on the impacts of tourism to its internal environment and external environment. In the article by Giampiccoli & Saayman (2018), the model of eight Es has been used. The eight Es are endogenous, environment, evolving, entrepreneurship, empowerment, enduring, education, and equity. What fascinating about these two models is that they complement each other perfectly. The three terms can be the main aspects, and the eight elements of the eight Es model can be divided into the three main aspects. The operationalisation of this concept is presented in Appendix III.

2.1.2.3 Entrepreneurship innovation in tourism

The understanding of the *entrepreneurial innovation in tourism* is important to the thesis because this core concept will lead the charge to change the current situation into the new version of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. Besides, this core concept orients the direction of the innovation process, which is another important purpose of the thesis. Therefore, this core concept is relevant to this report.

Definition

Stojanovic (2018) defined the *entrepreneurship innovation in tourism* as the movements in the working organisation belonging to the tourism and leisure environment that lead to economic development by using

new ideas or advanced technology. This definition is primarily concerned with the economic area using the unique methods which will result in a niche strategy of innovation for a company or organisation. However, it does not cover all the aspects which might lead to innovation. Different from this definition, Sorokac & Misota (2017) defined *entrepreneurship innovation* as the process of creating new values to the business depending on the correlation between the market and technology. This definition stems from the economic point of view solely, so the tourism aspect is missing. Lastly, Solhiem (2017) argued that *entrepreneurship innovation* is the process of (an) entrepreneur(s) in learning from the trial(s) or error(s), improve or change the current context to adapt to the mobility from internalities and externalities. This definition fully covers the scope of this core concept, but the only disadvantage of this definition is that it does not include the tourism aspect. Hence, the addition of the tourism aspect from the definition by Stojanovic (2018) will complete the term of *entrepreneurship innovation in tourism*.

Model

Mostly, the models of innovation are adapted from the technological area, but they are still applicable to the tourism industry since the indicators of the tourism business innovation are still markets, technology, internal and external conditions. Sorokac & Misota (2017) presented four types of innovation. Sorokac & Misota (2017) used two scales which are market and technological impacts. There are four types of innovation in this model: sustaining, disruptive, radical, and incremental. In the model used in the article by Stojanovic (2018), there are four types: product innovation, process innovation, organisational innovation, and marketing innovation. Mostly, based on the definition by Stojanovic (2018), these four types of innovation use new markets and advanced technology as the foundation, so it seems to be the details in the disruptive innovation. In the third model used by Solhiem (2017), it discusses the steps of an innovation process, including realising gaps or errors, selecting the goal of innovation, selecting the form of innovation, implementation, and evaluation. The final model can cover the aspects of the first two models. Therefore, this one is chosen to be the main aspects, and the two first models will be the sub-aspects. The operationalisation will be presented in Appendix IV.

2.2 Methodology

An explanation of the research methods will be presented and elaborated within this section. A research overview table was created to summarise the choices of research strategy, data collocation method, sampling technique, and data analysis method. The table will be presented in Appendix V.

2.2.1 Research strategy

The research strategy is qualitative research. The definition of qualitative research is the method which deals with non-numerical information (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). This type of research brings researchers closer to reality to obtain the requisite information and data (Verhoeven, 2016). Also known as “holistic research, the research elements are studied on their turf, in their normal surroundings” (Verhoeven, 2016, p. 135). The central research questions attempt to find out about the hidden “arguments and motives” in a specific context.

There are two reasons why qualitative research has been chosen for this research. First of all, the types of information demanded by this research process are the current situation in Malaga and the reasons, the successful and failure stories and the factors leading to those facts. In this research, the insights from the stakeholders in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism and from the best practice cases were collected through the methods of interviews and desk research, respectively. Both of these data collection methods belong to the qualitative research strategy. According to Verhoeven (2016), as long as the information is not numerical, qualitative research is a suitable strategy. Moreover, it requires some books and articles to

get the information from the content analysis. Thus, there are no other suitable research strategies than qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

2.2.2 Data collection method

Two data collection methods were applied to this research: interviews and desk research. Doing interviews is the data collection method for the first central research question because the goal of this question is to gain a deeper insight into the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. “An interview is a conversation in which the interviewee’s perceptions are paramount” (Verhoeven, 2016, p. 141). The main purpose of the interview is to collect a piece of information about a specific research subject. A deep insight is the typical type of information for qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Therefore, this data collection method fits the research strategy. The interviews are semi-structured because the number of interviewees of this research is small, which does not require a group interview. Moreover, even with a list of pre-structured topics, this type of interview can still leave room for respondents to add the information which they might find relevant to the topic (Verhoeven, 2016). This is because a semi-structured interview does not contain a pre-structured questionnaire like a structured interview. Dealing with a new topic such as entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism, this method can help to discover other interesting information during the interviews, even outside the planned interview guide. However, doing this type of interview can cost more time than doing a group interview (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Before conducting the interviews, the interview guide was established to identify the interview topics. The used interview guide can be found in Appendix VI. Six interviews were conducted via Skype due to the physical distance between the interviewer and interviewees, as well as the social distancing policy to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. The advantages of the interviews via Skype are time-saving and cost-saving for the interviewer. However, the drawbacks of the interviews via Skype are the time difference between the locations of the interviewer and interviewees and the internet connection. Therefore, time planning and the preparation for alternative solutions are essential. All the six interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcripts of these six interviews can be founded in Appendices XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, and XVIII.

“Desk research involves two types of methods: literature research and achieve studies, and content analysis” (Verhoeven, 2016, p. 144). Because these methods deal with gathering and analysing information, it fits the research strategy (Verhoeven, 2016). This data collection method is used for dealing with the second central question, and those two types of methods were applied. Literature research was applied to find the best practices previously researched and the research results reported in the reliable journal articles. Content analysis was used to analyse the information about the best practice cases found on the well-known newspapers or critical essays/reports. Moreover, it was also used to analyse the available information on the official websites of the best practice cases.

2.2.3 Selection of data sources

The selection of data sources includes the population of this research and the applied sampling techniques. The choices of population and sampling techniques will be later explained.

“Population is the domain in which your research will be investigating” (Verhoeven, 2016, p. 179). The population of the interviews is comprised of four groups. They are entrepreneurs, municipalities, universities/educational institutions, and mentors/NGOs. The population group division is based on the theory by Stam & Spigel (2017) on the network/cluster’s requirements. Moreover, the population groups match with the reasons for writing this thesis and the first research question because the mission of this advisory report is to find a way to facilitate the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. To innovate an entrepreneurial ecosystem, the process requires the involvement of different stakeholders outside of solely entrepreneurs (Boutillier et al, 2016). Moreover, the first research question concerns the insights into the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism, and no one can

understand it better than the stakeholders in Malaga. To narrow down the size of the population in order to select the potential interviewees for this research, a sample was drawn from the population. A sample is a part of the population who will represent the research subjects (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The chosen type of sampling is not random because the samples for this research depend on the list of the client's requirements and the requisite characteristics given beforehand. The sample for the first central research question was drawn, and the chosen sampling technique was quota sampling. Quota sampling deals with a given number of requisite characteristics (Verhoeven, 2016). This technique fits the context of this research while the list of the population was determined by the theoretical framework and partly by the client with the necessary characteristics. The characteristics of the sample and the list of potential interviewees can be found in Appendices VII and VIII. Ten potential interviewees were chosen and invited to the interviews. The ten potential interviewees were divided into the four groups mentioned above. However, only six interviewees responded because of the Coronavirus pandemic and time conflicts. The list of respondents is presented in Table 2.1.

Interviewee number (code)	Name	Population group	Interview time	Nationality
Interviewee #1	Phong Nguyen	Entrepreneurs	01/05/2020	Spanish/Vietnamese
Interviewee #2	Phuong Dao	Universities / Educational institutions	03/05/2020	Vietnamese
Interviewee #3	Raquel Caba Cabrera	Entrepreneurs	06/05/2020	Spanish
Interviewee #4	Carlos Garcia Martinez	Entrepreneurs and Mentors	07/05/2020	Spanish
Interviewee #5	Catalina Cruz	Universities / Educational institutions	09/05/2020	Spanish
Interviewee #6	Luz Molina	Municipalities	14/05/2020	Spanish

Table 2.1 – List of interview respondents

The population of the second research question is the best practice cases of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. Snowball sampling was applied because it was limited to the keywords and clues from the required information. Therefore, with this technique, it can start with the first keyword to find the document, and from that first document, based on the references, there can be opportunities to find other information (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). In the end, ten best practice cases were selected. Out of the ten best practice cases, three cases were chosen based on a set of criteria. They are the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Singapore (Singapore), North Carolina (USA), and Ljubljana (Slovenia). The list of criteria and the assessment matrix of the ten best practice cases can be found in Appendix IX.

2.2.4 Data analysis

To analyse the data from the interviews, the collected information had to go through the coding process. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2018), a standard coding process has eight steps to organise the data in a logical sequence. All of these steps were taken by the researcher. The eight steps are:

- Step 1: Divide the text into small paragraphs and summarise each paragraph in one key term
- Step 2: Evaluate the used terms
- Step 3: Apply open coding by using a maximum of three codes (words)
- Step 4: Group the open codes (words)
- Step 5: Organise the open codes (words)

- Step 6: Connect the open codes (words) by using axial coding
- Step 7: Structure the axial codes by using a tree diagram, mind map or table
- Step 8: Evaluate the result (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018)

Coding is suitable for this research because the results from the interviews contain a huge amount of information. The coding process involves two coding methods (Verhoeven, 2016). Open coding is the process of summarising the key content from the interview, and axial coding is the process of grouping the codes which are the results taken from the open coding step (Verhoeven, 2016). The coding process was based on the interview transcripts, and from those transcripts, the information from the interviews was coded. There are ten axial codes used: market, spatial, infrastructure and support services, network, finance, coaching/mentoring, current situation, policy, leadership, and support culture. The ten axial codes were divided into three groups, which are material, social, and culture attributes. This is because these axial codes are the elements of those three attributes (Stam & Spigel, 2017). The overview of the coding can be found in Appendix X. Regarding the desk research, the method of text analysis was applied because this method is the most suitable (Verhoeven, 2016). Then, the key contents of the three best practice cases were curated and organised into a tree diagram. “A tree diagram can help organise the information logically and show the relationship between different groups of information” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018 p.245). The information from the desk research was structured based on the operationalisation of the three sub-questions of the second central research question. The tree diagram can be found in Appendix XI.

2.3 Research results

To answer the first research question, six interviews were conducted, and the first part of the research results was developed from these interviews. All of the six interviews focused on the three subjects by Stam & Spigel (2017): material, social, and cultural attributes. Each topic raised the question of whether the sub-attributes under these topics are performed properly or still have rooms for improvement.

To answer the second research question, the best three practices of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism have been chosen. They were analysed according to the three topics by Stam & Spigel (2017). The structure of the results of the second research question has been divided similarly to that of the first research question. The results of the second research question have thrown some light on the lessons to be learnt and the mistakes to be avoided by project team ‘Flavours of Malaga’ in the process of innovation.

2.3.1 Current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga

The results of those six interviews have contributed to the three sub-questions to find the answer to the first central research question.

2.3.1.1 Material attributes

The first topic is ‘material attributes’, and there are four sub-attributes. They are market, spatial, infrastructure and support services, and policy.

Market

All the interviewees had a clear overview of which group should be targeted for the tourism entrepreneurs in Malaga based on a reliable source. According to the responses of all the interviewees, they all chose “culture lovers” as their target group. The culture lovers were described as “a group of people who are interested in cultural heritage, local architecture, art and history” (Interviewee #1). This group is also the main target group for Malaga in the Agenda to 2025, aiming to turn Malaga into a cultural destination. The reason for having this similarity is that all the interviewees gave their answers based on the annual investigation of tourist preference in Malaga conducted by the Department of Tourism. It is noticeable that

the government data has a big impact on the entrepreneurs' choice of market, and the entrepreneurs know which sources to base on when choosing the target group. Hence, it is beneficial that the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga now shares one target group. Besides, it is notable that the culture lovers group is an important tourist group to Malaga city, and the interviewees also prefer to attract this tourist group to Malaga. To conclude, the choice of the target group can be considered the strength of the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism because all the interviewees have a clear image of the target group. Additionally, they all have similar opinions about the target group.

Spatial

Sharing the same target group, all the interviewees agreed to promote the cultural heritage of Malaga in their products offer. However, each entrepreneur with a different heritage choice would like to promote tourism based on the characteristics of their business. Interviewee #1 chose the local homes and families in Malaga because his business focuses on providing the stay with local people to display Malaga's living habits. Meanwhile, interviewee #3 chose local insights and storytelling because her company's products will base on the opinions of local people. Another idea came from interviewee #4. His organisation chose to promote the local cuisine experience and ancient buildings with representative architecture in Malaga to tourists. It is observable that there is a difference in the choices of the cultural heritage in Malaga promoted by each entrepreneur. However, this should not be considered as a negative point because this difference can make the tourism product portfolio within the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism more diverse. Even though all the interviewees had their own choices of the tourism resources of Malaga that they would like to promote, they all used the cultural heritage and resources of Malaga with help from local people. In a way, the entrepreneurs have passively supported community-based tourism by choosing the cultural heritage of Malaga to promote. Moreover, according to interviewee #5, on the path of turning Malaga into a cultural destination, the Department of Tourism in Malaga chose local cultural heritage for tourism promotion. Based on these data, the choice of promoting the cultural heritage of Malaga can be considered a good point of the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism because it allows the stakeholders in the ecosystem to do business easily.

Infrastructure and support services

In this sub-topic, there are three factors investigated through the six interviews. They are marketing, meeting and working space, and research and development (R&D).

Five out of six interviewees said that they used online marketing to promote their products. The given reasons for this choice are cost-saving, environmentally-friendly and customer efficient. Interviewees #1, #3, and #4 gave their answers based on the fact that they are small businesses and the source of their target customers comes from online platforms. Meanwhile, interviewees #2 and #5 referred to the research on marketing strategy conducted last year by the University of Malaga. Only interviewee #6 responded that her organisation (Promalaga) mainly used online marketing but still kept a part of offline marketing for internal marketing. It is because because they are a governmental organisation, so "some procedures have been keeping in the traditional way" (Interviewee #6). However, even with a clear marketing strategy, the marketing plan is still weak because of the lack of personnel and a high marketing cost. "With a small business or new company, the costs for human resources and marketing are not an easy thing to manage" (Interviewee #1). In the interview with interviewee #6, even though she claimed that Promalaga was willing to help with the marketing plan, interviewee #1 said that he did not know where to find the support to implement his marketing strategy. Moreover, according to interviewee #5, she had the full knowledge of marketing in tourism, but no one approached her to ask for help. These contrasting responses reveal the insufficiency of marketing planning, the inequality between marketing ability within the ecosystem and the internal connection within the ecosystem regarding marketing service. Therefore, both internal and external

marketing services have to be improved during the innovation process of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism.

Regarding meeting and working space, the three entrepreneurs replied that they did not rent a physical office because of cost reduction and their small-sized businesses. As for interviewees #2, #5, and #6, they work at the physical buildings of Promalaga or the University of Malaga. Besides, Promalaga offers a co-working space for new start-ups up to the first two to three years with a special discount, depending on each building. Based on the replies, it can be seen that there are many choices of meeting and working space for the entrepreneurs in Malaga which are suitable for all financial conditions and levels of demand. Hence, this is another strength of the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism, and it could be advantageous for the future innovation process.

Lastly, there are mixed opinions regarding R&D. Interviewees #1, #3, and #4 chose to come to the consultant firms or governmental organisations in Malaga like Promalaga and Andalucia Lab. Two students from the University of Malaga said they would go to the research department of their university. However, they also gave the reasons why the entrepreneurs in Malaga mostly do not contact their university for R&D purpose. It is because the university does not promote this service widely to the entrepreneurs in Malaga. Hence, the approach to the R&D resources and the connection among entrepreneur(s), education institution(s), and municipality should be improved during the innovation process of the ecosystem.

Policy

All the interviewees agreed that the start-ups and small businesses in Malaga can receive the special tax policy from the government. In the first three years, the entrepreneurial tax will be reduced, and the level of decrease is lower in the following years. This seems like a motivation for the local people who want to become entrepreneurs. According to interviewee #6, the registration procedure for new businesses has also been digitalised in recent years. Moreover, Promalaga offers the service with fees for the entrepreneurs who need help with the registration procedure. This can be the strength of the policy for the new entrepreneurs in Malaga. However, the law for cooperation and clusters, which benefits the new businesses and start-ups in Malaga, has not been developed yet. Therefore, this should be improved during the innovation.

2.3.1.2 Social attributes

The second topic is 'social attributes'. Three sub-attributes include network, finance, and coaching/mentoring.

Network

No respondent has a full cycle of the quadruple helix model in entrepreneurship because most of them only have a connection with one or two stakeholders. The quadruple helix model is the cycle of connection in a modern ecosystem or business cluster, including entrepreneurs, municipalities, education institutions, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and media (Boutillier et al., 2016). This model is the advanced version of the triple helix model. For example, "the university only contacts with the government mainly for research purpose and rarely with the entrepreneurs in Malaga" (Interviewee #2). In contrast, interviewee #3 said that if she required the R&D activities for her business, she would contact a governmental organisation like Andalucia Lab because she was not even aware of the existence of the research services by the university. Interviewee #6 said Promalaga hosted some workshops and networking events. They mostly intend to increase the connection between the entrepreneurs within the organisation, and not with the other stakeholders in the ecosystem like universities or NGOs. According to these interviews, communication and the interaction between the stakeholders within this entrepreneurial ecosystem in

tourism are weak. In addition, the awareness of the other stakeholders in the ecosystem and their functions is lacking in the current situation. Hence, the network should be improved and strengthened.

Finance

Two issues discussed in this part are the sources of investment capital and the calculation of the costs of entrepreneurs. According to the interviewees, it is convenient and easy for an entrepreneur in Malaga to search for an investment. The entrepreneurs in Malaga can find the angel investors themselves or can come to the governmental organisations to ask for help in finding the investors for their business ideas. Regarding the investment from the government, “when it comes to the public money, there will be some requirements” (Interviewee #6). However, the organisation can only provide this type of support in this part as long as the entrepreneurs who come to Promalaga have their ideas and are passionate about those ideas. This is a good point that can be continued and developed in the innovation process. Regarding the business costs, in the beginning, personnel costs and marketing costs are the two primary concerns, based on the responses from interviewees #1, #3, and #4. According to interviewee #6, Promalaga can waive the marketing costs in the first year by providing an advisory service, but the entrepreneurs who use this type of service have to take care of the personnel costs by themselves. Hence, this point should be improved.

Coaching and mentoring

According to the interviewees who are entrepreneurs, they did receive the mentoring services from such governmental organisations as Promalaga or Andalucia Lab. Comparing the results of six interviews, the local universities in Malaga seem to be excluded from the supply chain and the connection for business coaching even though they have a huge resource of data. The information shared within the ecosystem has been limited to the connection between the government and the entrepreneurs. Moreover, a part of the entrepreneurs in Malaga is not familiar with new technology. This fact was confirmed by interviewees #4 and #5, so it should be a noticeable issue for the innovation of the ecosystem in the future. Therefore, the level of the knowledge shared within this entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism is average, and it should be improved during the process of innovation, specifically to focus on the role and involvement of the local universities.

2.3.1.3 Cultural attributes

The third topic is ‘cultural attributes’. There are three sub-attributes: current situation, leadership, and support culture.

Current situation

Currently, all the interviewees agreed that they have been through the most difficult time in their tourism career. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, “the tourism in Malaga has been stopped, and the future is uncertain. Due to the social distancing policy, people tend to work from home and organise their meetings online” (Interviewee #6). According to interviewees #1, #3, and #4, their launching plans have been delayed. Some processes even took more time than usual, or the duration lasted longer than expected. Besides, as for interviewees #2, #5, and #6, their personal plans and their organisations were all negatively affected by the Coronavirus pandemic due to the lockdown policy from the government. It can be seen that many different stakeholders in the ecosystem have to face many difficulties at the moment. However, this could be an opportunity to grow and develop after the pandemic using the advantages from the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism.

Leadership

There are two opposing opinions of leadership in a company or an organisation. According to interviewees #1, #3, and #4, because their businesses are small and have a limited number of employees, they do not

have a leadership style. In contrast, interviewees #2, #5, and #6 follow the style of top-down leadership, meaning that the decisive power will depend mainly on the leader(s) of that company or organisation. This was also confirmed by interviewee #2 that this is a traditional leadership style in Spain applied by many organisations. Besides, several Spanish cultural traits have been mentioned as having many impacts on the working culture. They are time management and the high demand for deep personal connections. They should be considered carefully while innovating the ecosystem. In general, the leadership style of the ecosystem has not been developed yet. Hence, this should be improved during the innovation process.

Support culture

The roles in the tourism industry of the entrepreneurs and female entrepreneurs in Malaga were discussed during the interviews. In general, all the interviewees agree that the entrepreneurs in Malaga play an important role in the development of the tourism industry. The entrepreneurs are considered “the fresh minds and creativities of the tourism industry when bringing many new ideas to the industry” (Interviewee #3). Also, they have contributed to turning Malaga from a beach destination to a cultural destination. The female entrepreneurs in Malaga have been the role models for the women in Malaga who want to start their own businesses in the tourism industry. They made an effort to fight for gender equality in the workforce of the industry, and in the local economy in general. In short, it can be seen that the entrepreneurs have been putting into the centre of the tourism development in Malaga, and the value of the women in the industry has increased strongly. Accordingly, these positive responses show that the supportive culture is another strength of the current entrepreneurial ecosystem.

2.3.2 Lessons from best practice cases

The answers to the second research question result from the process of grounded analysis and literature review. Of all the ten best practice cases, three of them have been chosen. They are Singapore (Singapore), North Carolina (USA), and Ljubljana (Slovenia). These three cases were analysed based on three sub-topics, namely material attributes, social attributes, and cultural attributes. The introductions of these three cases are presented in Appendix XII.

2.3.2.1 Material attributes

The first topic is ‘material attributes’. Two sub-attributes are the governmental policy and infrastructure and support services.

Governmental policy

All of the three best practice cases showed their strong points in the supportive policy from the regional government to the entrepreneurs within the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. In Singapore, if a company is a part of the ecosystem as an official member, the registration fee will be waived, and the first-year will be tax-exempt (Manimala & Wasdani, 2015). In the next two years, the government will offer a special tax rate for the companies in the ecosystem depending on their revenues. In North Carolina, the Office of Policy within the ecosystem will assist the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem in completing the registration procedure without service fees as the procedures in the USA are quite complicated (Kline, Duffy, & Clack, 2018). Moreover, they also offer a special tax rate for the companies that participate in the ecosystem. It can be seen that the local and regional governments understand what the most difficult, unclear, and unfamiliar things for entrepreneurs in the beginning are. The lesson from this topic is that the management team of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism should thoroughly understand the difficulties that the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem have to deal with the local public administrative procedures and policies. Then, the team can find a way to negotiate with the government for the benefits of the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem.

Infrastructure and support services

In this sub-attribute, the cooperative marketing strategy and online resources will be analysed. First, each case has its way of implementing the cooperative marketing strategy within the ecosystem. In Ljubljana, the management team of the ecosystem has tried to gather as many types of start-ups as possible (Pierre & Marinopoulou, 2016). Hence, the companies that specialise in tourism marketing can help other companies in designing the marketing plan. This strategy can, on the one hand, help the marketing companies find new clients and the other companies to sell products, or define the market sufficiently. Meanwhile, in Singapore, they launched their official website where all the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem can promote their businesses on that platform. Besides, on the internal website, they created a webpage, where they provide the guidelines for doing business (Forbes, 2018). Additionally, the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem can share their experience, so they can easily learn from each other. It can be seen that the management team know how to explore the advantages of a part of the ecosystem to benefit the whole group. The lesson from this part is to learn how to explore and utilise the strengths of each company in the ecosystem.

Regarding the online resources, all of the three cases have built their intranet where they can support the knowledge sharing services in many different formats. In Singapore, the entrepreneurs and relevant organisations can go to the internal website of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism to access to the free online library or the sharing forum (Forbes, 2018). This allows them to reach the big storage of the core knowledge from many academic books and soft knowledge from the entrepreneurs' experience. Besides, to support work from home, in North Carolina, they have developed a free app for the members of the ecosystem, where the entrepreneurs can cooperate and contact the others easily (Kline, Hao, Alderman, & Kleckey, 2014). Within a company, the employees of that company can use this app to manage the process of their work and projects conveniently. These online services can help the entrepreneurs in North Carolina in saving costs and time for their management jobs as well as a part of R&D. It can be seen that applying technological innovation can help the members of these entrepreneurial ecosystems in tourism work and cooperate more efficiently.

2.3.2.2 Social attributes

The second topic is 'social attributes'. There are three sub-attributes, namely, network, finance, and mentoring and role model.

Network

Strengthening the network among the different stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism is the survival condition (Kline et al., 2014). In North Carolina, keeping a strong relationship inside the current network is the ultimate goal. Providing workshops, creating and facilitating the cooperation among the stakeholders, and keeping up-to-date news to the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem are key activities to engage people (Kline et al., 2014). Normally, a workshop will be hosted each month. Mostly, the governmental organisations in tourism in North Carolina will host the workshops. Besides, the management team is also very supportive of the new members of the ecosystem so that they can adapt rapidly to the working environment. Moreover, a meeting with all of the stakeholders in the ecosystem is operated each quarter to review the ecosystem's activities during the previous period, to listen to the needs and wants of the stakeholders, and to plan for the upcoming period. The meeting ensures that all the stakeholders' voices will be heard and those stakeholders will not miss any updates on the ecosystem. This example reveals that good communication is the key to a successful ecosystem. Meanwhile, in Ljubljana, they encourage the old members of the ecosystem to invite their external business partners to join the ecosystem (Kozorog, 2018). Once a member successfully invites a new entrepreneur or organisation, that member will get a reward. Besides, in all the three best practice cases, the structures of their entrepreneurial

ecosystems in tourism have been built based on the quadruple helix model. This can support the main activities of the ecosystem sufficiently. Once again, the importance of understanding and using each stakeholder's advantage was emphasised.

Finance

The model of cost-sharing is a good example from North Carolina. In North Carolina, the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem can split the marketing costs if they use the supportive services of marketing with no more than five businesses per account (Kline et al., 2018). This can help businesses lower the marketing fee, which is considered one of the highest costs for businesses. Besides, in Singapore, they have a mutual fund to help the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem in some difficult economic times, such as unprofitability, economic crisis, or natural disasters (Owoade, 2016). This can make the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem in Singapore feel safer when participating in the ecosystem. Hence, analysing and predicting the financial struggles while doing business will help to run the ecosystem smoother and engage the entrepreneurs in the community.

Mentoring and role model

Mentoring and role models motivate the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem to perform well and direct them towards the goal of the ecosystem. In Singapore, the management team will nominate an entrepreneur to be 'The entrepreneur of the Year'. This entrepreneur can share his or her story and experience. The document and the name of the company will then be on the headline of the official website (Forbes, 2018). Hence, everyone can look up to that business and learn from that entrepreneur. Moreover, this can also be the stimulation to push the performance of the companies in the ecosystem by using healthy competitiveness within the ecosystem. In North Carolina, they have a monthly internal workshop called 'Peers to Teachers' (Kline et al., 2014). This is an event where entrepreneurs who have struggles in a specific issue can come to be matched with another entrepreneur or organisation who experienced a similar problem in the past. It is believed that nothing can compare to a real experience, and through the event, the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem can help each other and have more room for connections.

2.3.2.3 Cultural attributes

The third topic is 'cultural attributes'. The importance of leadership and the impact of regional or local culture on working and leadership styles will be discussed.

Leadership

"Having a strong and clear leadership strategy is essential to an ecosystem because it creates the unity in actions within the ecosystem" (Manimala & Wasdani, 2015, p. 249). Without leadership, the relationship among different stakeholders within an ecosystem would be loose, and in the worst-case scenario, that ecosystem would vanish. For instance, before becoming a successful model, Singapore failed in the first try because they did not have a leader or manager to organise activities and give directions (Owoade, 2016). Consequently, the first model was not successful because all the stakeholders in the ecosystem did not share a mutual goal, and the connection was weak.

Culture and leadership style

"Regional or local culture plays a big role in shaping a suitable leadership style for the entrepreneurial ecosystem" (Kline et al., 2018, p. 12). Human habits have been built based on their educational and cultural impacts. This opinion has been proved by the choice of leadership style per each best practice case. For example, the American society values freedom of speech and individualism, so the democratic style of leadership is suitable for them to give space for each stakeholder to express his or her ideas while contributing to the ecosystem (Kline et al., 2018). In contrast, Singaporeans respect rules and uniformity

(Manimala & Wasdani, 2015). Therefore, autocratic leadership is compatible with the traits of people there. It is obvious that every leadership style has its pros and cons. However, putting one style in the right context can maximise the advantages and minimise the disadvantages of that style. The context might contain cultural aspects as well as the goals of the ecosystem.

2.4 Conclusion

From the research results, several insights and relations between the attributes have emerged. Within this part of the report, a summary of the research results will be provided. To answer the two central research questions, the sub-questions will be answered. The sub-questions were structured according to the model by Stam & Spigel (2017). The model includes these main attributes: material, social, and cultural attributes. Two central research questions are:

Central research question 1: What is the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?

Central research question 2: What are the lessons from the best practice cases for the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?

The research followed the qualitative research strategy. The data collection method for the first central research question was semi-structured interviews. The data collection method for the second central research question was desk research. The conclusion will be divided into two small parts, and each part will answer one research question. After answering the questions, the results will be compared to the theory from the relevant literature.

2.4.1 Current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga

Regarding the material attributes, half of the sub-attributes performed well, and half of them should be improved during the innovation. On the one hand, the ecosystem did well in clearly choosing the type of tourism, providing many choices for meeting and working space, and having a supportive policy for new businesses. All the interviewees have the same opinions on the sub-attributes of market and spatial. They all head to the same type of tourism, which is community-based, and this will help develop the vision and objectives for the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in the future. Besides, having various choices for meeting and working space is an advantage because it can be flexible depending on the context of each business and suitable for many types of companies. Additionally, the support from the government in tax policy and the new development in register procedure would benefit the new businesses in Malaga, and this is a good condition to increase the number of entrepreneurs in the future. On the other hand, internal and external marketing should be improved because of the weaknesses in marketing planning and stakeholder connection. The connection issue is the main reason why the R&D function did not perform well. Furthermore, the support and policy of the government for business cooperation should be facilitated more. To conclude, in general, on the scale from bad to good, the material attributes are currently at the average level.

Overall, the social attributes of the current ecosystem did not do well. On the scale from bad to good, the social attributes are currently at a low level. Even though there are some positive points, such as having a singular connection between the stakeholders in the ecosystem or offering some training sessions, there are two points that need improvements. First, the stakeholders in the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism were not fully aware of the existence of each other as well as the support they can exchange. Also, weak communication showed through the loose connection among the stakeholders in the current ecosystem. A close relationship and communication are two essential key points for the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in general, so this point must be innovated. Second, due to the difficulty in personnel costs inside the business of entrepreneurs, there is room for improvement because, in an ecosystem, it is

supposed to connect and together overcome the obstacles. It is meaningless when an entrepreneur within an ecosystem has to solve a problem alone without any help from other stakeholders. Again, this goes back to the low interactive level within the ecosystem and the lack of awareness about the ecosystem.

On the scale from bad to good, the cultural attributes of the ecosystem performed quite well. Despite the bad situation at this moment in the tourism industry, every stakeholder tried their best to get over the situation. This brings hope for the future after the pandemic as well as for the future ecosystem after the innovation. Furthermore, as for the supportive culture, the importance of the entrepreneurs and female entrepreneurs in Malaga has been correctly defined based on the responses of the interviewees. However, for the fact of not having a leadership style and a management team for the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism, these are points that should be innovated regarding the cultural attributes.

Compared to the theory by Stam & Spigel (2016), the drawbacks that the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism have are mostly common in the beginning phase, especially in the bad network among the stakeholders in the ecosystem and the lack of management. In conclusion, from the current situation, the social attributes should be improved the most among the three main attributes. On the level of sub-attributes, it should be focused mainly on the network, infrastructure and support services, and leadership.

2.4.2 Lessons from best practice cases for the innovation

There are two lessons from the best practice cases regarding the material attributes. The first lesson is that the needs and wants of the stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism should be learnt. Then, the management team of the ecosystem should have solutions to ask the government to provide as many benefits as possible. Hence, this can promote the work efficiency of the stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism, especially the entrepreneurs. The second lesson is using the advantages of each company or organisation in the ecosystem and applying technological innovation. Thus, the advantages of each company and technology can benefit the ecosystem in time and cost-efficiency. This lesson could be interesting to the ecosystem in Malaga because this could be an idea for the innovation process of the ecosystem.

There are two lessons from the best practice cases regarding the social attributes. The first lesson is that communication and a strong relationship are the keys to a successful entrepreneurial ecosystem. To achieve those key points, it is crucial to understand the strengths and struggles of each stakeholder within the ecosystem. This lesson might be interesting to the ecosystem in Malaga because at this moment, the level of interaction within the ecosystem is weak, and the relationship among stakeholders is loose. The second lesson is that it is important to have a role model and training process to direct the stakeholders in the ecosystem into the right path. However, the role model should be relatable and easy to approach, so the members of the ecosystem will learn more efficiently.

Lastly, regarding the cultural attributes, the lesson from the best practice cases is that it is essential to have a management team with a suitable leadership style with the goals of the ecosystem and local/regional culture in mind. The importance of having a management team is to organise a good ecosystem with clear vision. In terms of leadership, there is no superior style, but a suitable leadership style. The suitable leadership style should contribute to the advantages of the ecosystem, minimise the drawbacks, and fit with the cultural background of the ecosystem. This lesson might be beneficial to the ecosystem in Malaga because of the lack of leadership strategy and a management team at the moment.

2.5 Discussion

In this chapter, the quality of the research results will be discussed in terms of reliability, construct validity, internal validity, and external validity.

2.5.1 Reliability

According to Verhoeven (2016, p. 188), reliability is “an indication of the degree to which your research is from these random errors”. There are eight requirements to test the level of reliability of the qualitative research result. They are standardisation, pilots, peer feedback, reporting and justification, intersubjectivity, triangulation, random errors, and iteration. For this research, the requirement of intersubjectivity is not applicable.

As for the research part regarding the first central research question, the requirement of standardisation has been met since the coding method was applied to analyse the content of all the interviews. To make sure that the research design met the standards, the feedback from the project team’s members was collected. Hence, the feedback helps to increase the reliability of the first central research question’s results. As for the requirement of reporting and justification, the logbook has been kept to look back on the process to detect the possible errors of the research. Additionally, the interviews were recorded and the transcripts have been kept along with the logbook. Moreover, the standard process of conducting an interview was repeated for each interview. Hence, it contributes to the research result’s reliability. Besides, triangulation has been applied when interviewing the different types of populations with the same questionnaire and comparing the results with the relevant theories. However, a pilot interview was not conducted because there were no suitable candidates for a trial interview. In addition, there were two random errors in the process of conducting the interviews. During the first interview, the internet connection from the side of the interviewee was disrupted and the interview was discontinued for one hour. In the fifth interview, the interviewee had another meeting after the interview, so at the end of the interview, the answers were shortened. From these two incidents, it is believed that the answers from those two interviewees were affected, resulting in lower reliability. Therefore, the reliability of the research part regarding the first central research question’s results is not large.

As for the research part regarding the second central research question, the requirement of iteration has been met as the process of finding the relevant articles and reviewing them was applied to all the ten best practice cases before curating the best three cases. Regarding the requirement of reporting and justification, the used articles and the logbook have been kept for double-checking. The requirement of standardisation has been met as well because a tree diagram was applied to summarise the research results. Besides, for the results of this central research question, random errors and pilot requirements are not applicable. However, triangulation was not applied. Moreover, the findings were not discussed among peers or colleagues, so the level of reliability is lower. Hence, the reliability of the research part regarding the results of the second central research question is moderate. To conclude, the reliability of this research is moderate.

2.5.2 Construct validity

Based on Verhoeven (2015, p. 194), construct validity is “the measurement to the used measurement method” using in the research. The measurement instrument for qualitative research can be understood as the quality of the content structure, which was used during the research process. The interview guide had been created before the data collection process started. The interview guide was developed based on the operationalisation of the core concepts being in the theoretical framework chapter. Similar to the research part regarding the first central research question, the structure of the research part regarding the second central research question has been referred to the operationalisation of the core concepts. Because the research methodology and results are based on literature reviews, the construct validity of the whole research is large.

2.5.3 Internal validity

Internal validity is described as the degree of conclusion's correctness based on research participants, research's context and duration, and methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). To check if the research results are internally valid or not, six elements need to be checked. They are the selection of the participants, maturation, history, instrumentation, drop-out rate, and test-effect (Verhoeren, 2016). In this research, maturation is not applicable since the data collection duration lasted one month and a half. Additionally, the test-effect is not applicable because it mainly checks the internal validity of an experiment. Besides, for the research part regarding the second central research question's results, the requirements of history and mortality are not applicable.

The process of choosing the interviewees and the best practice cases was done carefully and accurately based on a list of criteria. This list has been made according to the references from the theoretical framework part and the requirements of the client. Furthermore, during the data collection process, a similar questionnaire has been applied to all of the six interviews, and the same content structure has been applied to the process of analysing the second research question's results. Hence, these points increase the level of the results' internal validity. During the six interviews, no participant dropped out in the middle of the interview. However, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the target number of interviews could not be reached. It is a pity that one professor from the University of Malaga could not participate in the interview. Missing out on the insight of a local university did impact the results of this research since university policy and relations are the important pieces of information which cannot be obtained from the university students. To wrap up, in general, the internal validity of this research is large.

2.5.4 External validity

"External validity is the degree of how the research samples correctly reflect the population in reality" (Verhoeven, 2015, p. 193). As for the research part regarding the first central research question, the interviewees represent all the four population groups for this research. However, due to the fact that the number of interviews did not meet the requirement of the interview quantity, it adversely affects the external validity. As for the research part regarding the second central research question, the number of best practice cases was over the expected quantity. Therefore, it could be said that the results of this research represent the population in reality. In conclusion, the external validity of this research is not significant.

3. Advice

In this chapter, the advice for the project team "Flavours of Malaga" will be provided. The advice is the answer to the management question of this advisory report. The management question is: "How can the project team 'Flavours of Malaga' facilitate the innovation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?" The advice objective is to establish an entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga, which allows the local entrepreneurs and other stakeholders in Malaga to share knowledge and to network by the year 2021, based on the current situation of the ecosystem in Malaga and the lessons from the best practice cases. Firstly, three advice options will be examined and evaluated carefully to choose one final advice. Secondly, the implementation plan and financial implications of the chosen advice option will be presented.

3.1 Advice options

Within this section, the mutual core content of the advice, in general, will be provided. Then, three advice alternatives will be described in detail.

3.1.1 Core content

Based on the needs and wants of the client and the research results, there are several points that the project team should take into consideration when executing the implementation plan. Also, these are the areas that the chosen advice option has to cover. Two advantages should be continued and strengthened. Three disadvantages should be adjusted through the actions from the implementation plan of the final advice option.

The first advantage is that the entrepreneurs in the current ecosystem share the same direction in their tourism business activities. Based on the research results, they chose to promote community-based tourism, which aligns with the client's wish. According to Stam & Spigel (2016), sharing a similar goal and vision is an advantage which shapes the core values of the ecosystem and contributes to the consistency of the activities within the ecosystem. Therefore, it is recommended that the project team should select the entrepreneurs who have their core business in community-based tourism and would like to develop this type of tourism. The second advantage is the awareness of the importance of the entrepreneurs and female entrepreneurs in Malaga. This helps to set the priority for the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism to the entrepreneur. Then, it is advised that the project team should consider the tourism entrepreneurs in Malaga as the most important stakeholders, and all the activities should benefit them. Also, due to the rising trend of paying attention to the female entrepreneurs in Malaga, it is recommended that the project team should educate the stakeholders within the ecosystem more about the role of the female entrepreneurs in the tourism industry. Also, it is suggested that the project team should empower the local female entrepreneurs to inspire other women through their stories via workshops or networking events. These activities can enrich the diversity of the ecosystem as well as contribute to the long-term goal of the project team, which is improving the sustainability of Malaga's society.

However, the project team is suggested to take action in fixing some drawbacks of the current situation in order to facilitate the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. The first disadvantage is the weakness in the business activities of some entrepreneurs in the ecosystem. According to the research results, some entrepreneurs have several difficulties with the marketing plan and personnel costs. Therefore, to help the entrepreneurs in Malaga to overcome these difficulties, it is suggested that the project team should establish a platform where the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem can ask for help and access the advisory services easily. These activities can help the entrepreneurs to reach support easier and to stimulate the interaction among the stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. Furthermore, according to the research results, for the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism, these

activities will increase the working efficiency of the entrepreneurs and synchronise the entrepreneurial standard within the ecosystem. The second disadvantage is the loose relationship and lack of communication among the stakeholders in the ecosystem. Based on both the theoretical framework and the needs of the client, these are extremely important to the ecosystem. In order to improve the current situation, it is recommended that the project team should create an internal forum and open more workshops or networking events to strengthen the relationship between the stakeholders in the ecosystem. Hence, the awareness of the ecosystem and other stakeholders will increase. The third disadvantage is the lack of leadership within the ecosystem. The entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism is currently at the natural stage, with a lack of orientation and a formal structure. Therefore, in order to facilitate the innovation of the ecosystem in Malaga, it is suggested that the project team should form a management team to manage and organise the activities of the ecosystem with a clear and suitable leadership style. The management team can help the ecosystem to work more efficiently, mapping out the missions and vision of the ecosystem, and coordinating the relationship between the stakeholders in the ecosystem.

3.1.2 Advice options

Based on the research results and the core content presented above, three alternatives were offered. They are three different methods and directions on how to innovate the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism and how the project team can facilitate innovation. Namely, they are Famala Centre, Malanet, and Malaga Hub. All of the three advice options will be presented following a three-paragraph structure. The first paragraph describes the direction of innovation and the reasons for choosing this direction. Then, the second paragraph describes the project team's roles during the process of innovation, the length of the process, and the main cost structure. Lastly, the third paragraph describes the expected outcome of the advice option after the process of innovation.

Advice option 1: Famala Centre

It is advised that the project team should arrange a project to construct an office building for the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. The building is called 'Famala Centre' meaning family Malaga. There are two reasons for this idea. Firstly, it is inspired by the concept of Promalaga when providing the entrepreneurs in Malaga with a co-working space where people can receive all kinds of support from the beginning of their business and can have a space to communicate. Additionally, regarding the research results, the interactive level within the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga is weak due to the lack of awareness and recognition of the stakeholders in the ecosystem. Hence, providing a space to increase the chance to meet, connect, and interact between the stakeholders in the ecosystem is a great chance to improve the relationship within the ecosystem. Secondly, according to Boutillier et al. (2016), providing infrastructure for working, meeting, and networking is extremely important to the development in the long-term future of an ecosystem. The reason is that it is convenient and cost-saving for the management team when hosting an event, workshop, or training session within the ecosystem. Moreover, based on the research results, this means a lot to small and new companies since there is a space to work with support from many stakeholders in the tourism industry.

There are two main phases in this project: constructing the building and operating the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. The first phase in this situation is the condition for the second. In the first phase, the role of the project team is to manage the construction project. Then, in the second phase, the project team responds to supporting the activities and engaging the stakeholders in the ecosystem. Because the construction process includes many actions in between, so the length of the implementation plan of this advice option is around four to five years. The main cost structure of this advice option for the project team includes personnel costs, infrastructure costs, and travel expenses. The construction and furniture will base on the investment from the government or private investors. The sources of expected turnover from this advice option come from the rental fee of the entrepreneurs.

When the innovation process is completed, the Famala Centre will provide the physical working space for the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem with a low renting rate. The entrepreneurs can stay there as long as they want, and it is different from the Promalaga's buildings when the entrepreneurs in Promalaga have to leave the co-working space after two to three years. Inside the building, there will be some meeting rooms for multiple purposes, such as company meetings, networking events, or workshops. Moreover, there will be a research and development department for business innovation and trend forecasts. This department will collaborate with the local universities, and the students of the universities in Malaga can come here to work. Besides, the advisory department will be located in the building to address the requests or problems with the operational activities of the entrepreneurs and the cooperation between the stakeholders in the ecosystem. Promalaga will also provide an advisory service. From the description above, it can be seen that all the main activities of the new ecosystem are offline activities, and many types of support are approachable. Moreover, the project team will control and have ownership of the strategy and operation of the ecosystem since the team founded the centre. In general, there are five stakeholders involved in the whole innovation process. They are entrepreneurs, municipality, investment capital group or individual, and universities.

Advice option 2: Malanet

It is advised that the project team should develop an online platform to innovate the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. The platform is called 'Malanet' meaning Malaga's net or Malaga internet. There are three reasons for this advice option. Firstly, based on the research results, the Coronavirus pandemic has affected all the interviewees due to the social distancing policy. Most of the business activities have been conducted online. Secondly, based on the research results, the entrepreneurs and relevant organisations in Malaga currently work and connect via online platforms or have the strategy to digitalise the works for several reasons, such as small-sized companies, cost-saving, and convenience. Thirdly, based on the research results, one of the lessons from the best practice cases is applying technology to the ecosystem's infrastructure for higher work efficiency due to the high accessibility and popularity of the internet and big data. Therefore, it is reasonable to create an online working platform to engage tighter the stakeholders in the ecosystem and to make many types of support more accessible.

The main role of the project team in this advice option is preparing for the activities of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism on the online platform. To implement this advice option, it takes nine months to one year. The main cost structure of this advice option includes personnel costs, travel expense, infrastructure costs, and marketing costs.

Once the website is established, the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem can access the online working space service with the functions of internal communication, meeting, and document exchange. Besides, the platform will provide free access to an online library with the collaboration with the University of Malaga. The library allows the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem to upgrade their knowledge and do self-research and business innovation. The best practice case in Singapore inspires this. Also inspired by this best practice case, on the online platform, there will be an internal forum where the entrepreneurs can reach the other stakeholders in the ecosystem and ask for help, or share their business experience. This forum will be a chance to increase the interaction between the stakeholders in the ecosystem, and it is also a big data resource for business research. Lastly, there will be a direct connection to Promalaga, where the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem can come and ask for help about the public administrative procedure. The stakeholders who involve in the implementation of this advice along with the project team are entrepreneurs, municipality, and universities.

Advice option 3: Malaga Hub

It is advised that the project team should engage more stakeholders and use each stakeholder's advantages and resources to innovate the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. For this advice option, the innovative version of the ecosystem in Malaga will be a combination of both offline activities and online activities. The name of the new ecosystem is 'Malaga Hub'. There are three reasons for this option. Firstly, according to the research results, it was found out that each stakeholder owns the resources that fit with the ecosystem function. For example, Promalaga has full knowledge of the public administrative procedures and owns 12 capacity buildings. These buildings can provide space for meetings and co-working space. For business research and innovation, Andalucia Lab was mentioned by the interviewees with the high training and research quality for the entrepreneurs in Malaga with both online and offline services. Another example is the university. This is the stakeholder with the rich resources of knowledge and high-quality human resources and infrastructure for research and training. Unfortunately, currently, according to the research results, this stakeholder seems to be excluded from the ecosystem. From these examples, it can be seen that the potential of these stakeholders should be maximised by putting them in the right place with the right function during the process of innovation. Secondly, based on Stam & Spigel (2016), the basis of stakeholder engagement in an entrepreneurial ecosystem is opening a chance to grow not only for entrepreneurs but also for other stakeholders. Hence, the motivation from other stakeholders will be higher, and the work efficiency will be higher. Thirdly, according to the research results, a small part of the stakeholders in the ecosystem is not familiar with new technology. Therefore, keeping the activity in the hybrid of online and offline activities is a smooth transition that can satisfy multiple stakeholders. Also, it will avoid the fact that some stakeholders will feel excluded when joining the ecosystem. Moreover, based on the research results, Spanish people prefer personal meetings and contact. However, due to the current situation of the Coronavirus pandemic and social distancing policy, it is reasonable to provide the activities and services partly online and partly offline.

The main roles of the project team are to pursue and to manage stakeholders to participate in the ecosystem and to prepare for the online networking platform. Both the online and offline activities will be managed and organised by a management team that will be recruited by the project team. In order to let all stakeholders grow and maximise their talents, Stam & Spigel (2017) suggested that the style of coach-style leadership is suitable, and their suggestion also fits with the idea of this advice option. Coach-style leadership is the style that allows stakeholders to show their strengths, and when stakeholders have difficulties, the management team can guide them through with the position of a partner. The length of this advice option is approximately ten months. The main types of costs to implement this advice option are personnel costs, infrastructure costs, travel expenses, and marketing costs.

Once the Malaga Hub starts running, the online and offline activities will be operated, and each stakeholder will respond to a certain part of the ecosystem. The offline activities will include the meetings, workshops, networking events, and training sessions for the stakeholders in the ecosystem. The online activities will consist of establishing an official website of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism and providing an internal online platform for knowledge sharing and communication. Entrepreneurs, municipality, NGO(s), and universities are the stakeholders who will involve with Malaga Hub.

3.2 Evaluation of advice options

In this section, three advice options will be elaborated with four criteria. Then, by the analysis of the assessment matrix, the final advice option will be chosen.

3.2.1 Assessment criteria and matrix

To evaluate three advice options, the multi-criteria analysis method will be applied. The multi-criteria analysis method is popular in appraising the options in the decision-making process (Communities and Local Government, 2009). This analysis will reveal the strengths and weaknesses of each option by evaluating a combination of conflict criteria. There are four criteria chosen to evaluate three advice options. They are problem-solving, stakeholder involvement, money, and time. The reasons for coming up with these four criteria is due to the research results and the project team's current capability to execute each advice option. A short description of the four criteria is given below.

- Problem-solving is the degree of how the advice option can solve the key weaknesses of the current ecosystem
- Stakeholder involvement is the number of the included stakeholders and the degree of stakeholder participation and cooperation in the desired outcome of the advice option.
- Money is the amount of money to implement the advice option.
- Time is if the advice option's length of the implementation plan fits with the time in the advice objective.

Four criteria are divided into two groups, which are positive effects and negative effects. Two first criteria belong to the group of positive effects because these criteria are analysed based on how the advice option contributes to the current situation of the ecosystem. Money and time belong to the group of negative effects because these criteria are analysed according to how the advice option fits with the project team's current capability to execute. To measure these four criteria, a scale with scores 1, 2, and 3 will be used. One is the lowest score and means negative, two means medium, and three is the highest score and means positive. The advice option which scores the highest in total is the best. The three advice options are elaborated in the matrix below.

	Problem-solving	Stakeholder involvement	Money	Time	Total
<i>Advice option 1: Famala Centre</i>	3	2	1	1	7
<i>Advice option 2: Malanet</i>	3	1	3	3	10
<i>Advice option 3: Malaga Hub</i>	3	3	3	3	12

Table 3.1 - Assessment matrix of advice options

3.2.2 Criteria analysis and the choice of final advice option

Four criteria will be explained about the scores, and three advice options will be compared under each criterion. Then, in the conclusion paragraph, the decision about the final advice option for the project team to implement will be made.

Problem-solving

In general, all of the three advice options solve the key weaknesses of the current ecosystem, such as knowledge sharing and stakeholder engagement. Upon closer observation, all of the three advice options can provide a space or a platform for the stakeholders in the ecosystem to increase the level of interaction between them. All of the three advice options can provide access to the advisory services and knowledge resources, whether via an online or offline platform. Therefore, all of the three options score 3 points.

Stakeholder involvement

The scores of the first advice option and the third advice option are higher than the second advice option because the number of stakeholders involving in the core activities of those two options is higher. Moreover, all the core activities of the second option will be via an online platform, so some stakeholders are not familiar with new technology will feel left out. Comparing the first option to the third option about the degree of participation and cooperation between the stakeholders in the ecosystem, the third option has a few outstanding points than the first option. First, with the third option, all the stakeholders can work and cooperate within the ecosystem with all of their advantages, not only a part of their resources as the first advice option. Secondly, if the third option is chosen, the stakeholders do not change much in the core activities of their business when being a part of the ecosystem compared to the first option. The only thing that needs to change is the way of cooperation between the stakeholders in the ecosystem. Meanwhile, with the first option, they have to take some extra actions, such as placing a representative or some employees to work in the Famala Centre for the advisory services. Therefore, it can be seen that if the project team chooses the first option, they have to take more effort in pursuing these stakeholders to join the platform of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism.

Money

The first advice option scores the lowest because it requires huge investment to complete the plan. Although some investors will finance a part of this advice option, the amount of money for personnel costs to implement this option will be higher than the second and the third options. It is because more activities are required to implement the first advice option than the second and the third options, so it requires the project team to recruit a huge team to assist them with this project. Looking at the second and the third options, the amount of spending on both options is quite equivalent. Hence, the total amount of costs is not much different. Hence, in terms of money, the second and third options are better than the first option.

Time

The first advice option scores the lowest because five years are longer than the time in the advice objective. The advice option's length of the implementation plan should be no more than one year and a half from the moment of completing this advisory report because the mentioned deadline in advice objective is by the end of 2021. Besides, the project team will work from now until February 2022, and the future is uncertain. Therefore, the first option is not feasible regarding time criteria. Meanwhile, the second and the third advice options fulfil these criteria since the length of the second advice option is less than one year, and the length of the third advice option is ten months. Therefore, regarding time criteria, the second option and the third option are better than the first option.

Conclusion

Looking at the matrix, it can be seen that the third advice option is better than the first and the second advice options because the total score of the third advice option is higher than the first and the second advice options. Therefore, the recommended final advice option to be implemented by the project team is the third advice option.

3.3 Implementation plan

According to the results of the assessment matrix above, the third advice option was selected. In this section, the recommended implementation plan will be presented using the plan-do-check-act (PDCA) cycle. According to Laley et al. (2009), Deming made this cycle popular with his research on modern quality control in the late 1950s. In his later research, it was shown that the PDCA cycle is also applicable to help in product or concept creation or improvement, project management, organisational change management,

and the implementation plan of a project. There are four main stages in the cycle. The first phase is the 'plan' stage. Within this stage, the objectives are established, and the tasks which help to achieve the project's goals are described. The next stage is the 'do' stage. The second stage deals with implementing the set of activities listed in the previous stage, and the execution process will be recorded. In this stage, some changes or trial versions can be tested, and the data will be gathered to analyse in the next stage. The third stage is the 'check' stage. During this stage, the data previously gathered from the 'do' stage is analysed to check if the previous phase went well. After the analysis process, the pros and cons will be weighed, and the emerging problems will be improved in the final stage. The final phase is the 'act' stage. Within this stage, the issue will be fixed or improved to reach the goals set in the first stage. In some cases, the do-check-act cycle or check-act cycle will be repeated until the final result satisfies everybody and achieve the objectives. This process can help resolve the remaining issues thoroughly.

As mentioned in the content of the third advice option above, to innovate the entrepreneurial ecosystem, two advised key activities for the project team are engaging stakeholders and establishing an online platform for the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. These are two sub-projects of the third advice option. The desired outcome from these sub-projects is to successfully establish Malaga Hub, the innovative version of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga compared to the current situation. The innovative version is expected to have two lines of conducting. On the one hand, the ecosystem provides some offline activities for networking and learning, such as the stakeholder meetings, networking events, workshops, and training sessions within the ecosystem. On the other hand, with the purpose of knowledge sharing and online networking, an online platform will be established. There will be two sites of the platform. One site will be an internal forum, where the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem can easily access to the advisory services and knowledge resources which are provided by the stakeholders in the ecosystem, such as the advisory service from Promalaga or the online coaching lessons from Andalucia Lab. Besides, there will be a communication room for the entrepreneurs in the ecosystem in Malaga. They can come to ask for help when having some problems with their business activities or to share their business experience. This communication room is a form of human library, which is suggested by Boutillier et al. (2016). This is a good way to develop the relationship between the stakeholders within an ecosystem. Another site is suggested to be a marketing website, where can introduce the ecosystem and stimulate more stakeholders to join the ecosystem. A visualisation of Malaga Hub is presented below.

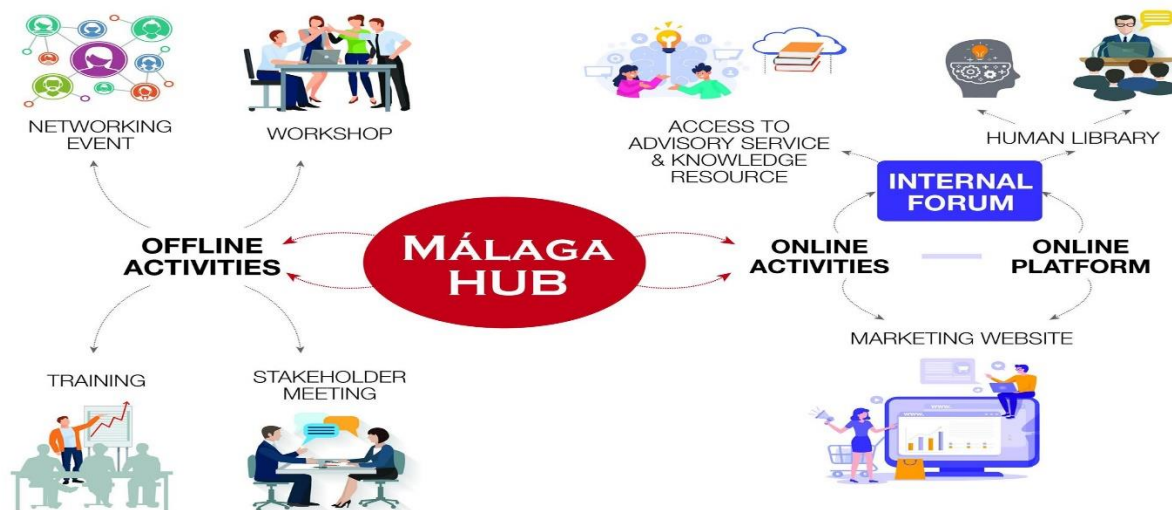


Figure 3.1 - Visualisation of Malaga Hub

To finalise the desired outcome of the advice option 3, an implementation plan is made to help the project team learn how to innovate the current entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. The implementation will be divided into three parts. The first part is the list of advised human resources for the implementation plan and the list of stakeholders that the project team should approach. The second part is the implementation plan of the first sub-project, which is stakeholder engagement. Finally, the implementation plan of the online platform will be presented.

3.3.1 Human resources and advised stakeholders list

The human resources of the implementation plan will include three main parts. Firstly, the project team 'Flavours of Malaga' is advised to be in the lead of the innovation process. This is because the project team had experience in working or contacting with many stakeholders in the ecosystem of Malaga. Moreover, in the first phase, the project also conducted a stakeholder management plan. Therefore, in addition to the experience in the tourism industry in Malaga from the time working with the project 'Flavours of Malaga' in the first phase, the project team is suitable to be in the lead of the innovation process. However, since the office of the project team is located in Deventer, the Netherlands, it requires to hire a local assistant manager to process the actions which need to be done in Malaga, especially with the first sub-project. The assistant manager should be a Spanish who lives in Malaga, and he or she understands the tourism industry here. The assistant manager should have a degree in tourism management or business administration, and he or she can speak and write fluently in English. Moreover, he or she experienced in dealing with the stakeholders within the tourism industry and the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. The current business coach of the project 'Flavours of Malaga', Carlos, is advised to be hired for this position because he fulfils all the listed requirements. He has also worked with the project since the beginning of February 2020 so he can cooperate well with the project team in Deventer. However, if Carlos rejected the advised offer, the project team should hire another person for this position. Lastly, to develop the online platform, it is advised that the project team should let the HBS students of the Smart Solution semester of Saxion University of Applied Sciences do this part. It is because they have the knowledge and understand the business in the tourism industry. Moreover, with the technological part, they have the support and collaboration with the technological students in Saxion Enschede, so the online platform's quality is guaranteed. Moreover, because the project team and the students of the Smart Solution semester are both under Saxion University of Applied Sciences, the project team can easily communicate with the students and supervise their product's quality. In addition, this choice will be cost-saving for the project team. However, the online platform's language has to be Spanish, and it would be a high chance that the Spanish level of the Smart Solution semester's students is low. Thus, to fix this issue, the assistant manager can help in translating the content of the website into Spanish.

There are four types of stakeholders that the project team should approach and invite them to join the ecosystem. These four types of stakeholders are based on a network's requirement from the theory by Stam & Spigel (2017). Firstly, the tourism entrepreneurs in Malaga are essential because they are at the centre of the ecosystem. They can be the entrepreneurs who are already in the list of the project 'Flavours of Malaga' or any tourism entrepreneurs in Malaga. To fit the core values of the project, it will be a small priority for female tourism entrepreneurs. However, the chosen tourism entrepreneurs should promote community-based tourism or value the cultural heritage of Malaga. These things fit with the type of tourism the project team would like to promote. According to Stam & Spigel (2016), sharing the same core values or value proposition will keep the activities within the ecosystem consistently, so there will be higher work efficiency. Secondly, in the category of the municipality, based on the research results, Promalaga and Andalucia Lab can provide the support within the ecosystem in the part of the venue for meetings, advisory services, and online training lessons. It is because, based on the research results, they have the advantages of infrastructure, human resources, partner systems, and experience in working with entrepreneurs. Thirdly, the universities in Malaga are important to knowledge sharing because, according

to the theoretical framework, they own a huge system of theoretical and practical knowledge. Also, based on the research results, despite the potential for knowledge sharing and research capacity; currently, the universities seem to be excluded from the network of the ecosystem. Therefore, the project team should engage them to strengthen the ecosystem. Lastly, non-governmental organisations should be included in the ecosystem because Stam & Spigel (2016) stated that this type of stakeholder could contribute to the cultural attributes of the ecosystem. In the core content of the advice, the positive trend of women's empowerment was mentioned as the emerging support culture within the ecosystem, and this is also one of the core values of the project team. For instance, people from TUI Care Foundation, who have worked with the project team, would be a potential choice because TUI Care Foundation is the co-founder of the project 'Flavours of Malaga' and capable of thoroughly understanding the value of women's empowerment.

3.3.2 Stakeholder engagement

The stakeholder engagement is the first sub-project. The project team will try to approach the potential stakeholders and connect as many potential stakeholders to the network of the ecosystem as possible. The detailed plan will be elaborated in the table below with the structure of the PDCA cycle. In the table below, in the 'involved' column, PJ stands for the project team, AM stands for the assistant manager, and PS stands for the potential stakeholders.

Stage	Time frame	Activities	Involved	Location
<i>Plan</i>	September 2020	Recruit an assistant manager	PJ	Deventer
		List out the potential stakeholders	PJ and AM	Deventer/Malaga
	October 2020	Develop a list of the suggested potential stakeholders' role and contribution	AM	Malaga
		Discuss the suggestions	PJ and AM	Deventer/Malaga
<i>Do</i>	December 2020	Schedule a meeting with the potential stakeholders in the list	AM	Deventer/Malaga
		Send out the invitation to the potential stakeholders	AM	Malaga
	January 2021	Business trip to Malaga	PJ	Malaga
		Discuss the various opportunities which the potential stakeholders can contribute to the ecosystem	PJ, AM, and PS	Malaga
<i>Check</i>	February 2021	Check if the suggestions after the first meeting are in line with the core values of the Malaga Hub.	PJ and AM	Deventer/Malaga
	March 2021	Schedule a meeting to discuss various possibilities	PJ (Skype), AM, and PS	Deventer/Malaga
<i>Act</i>	May 2021	Divide the task to potential stakeholders	AM	Deventer/Malaga
	June 2021	Plan the next meeting	AM	Deventer/Malaga

Table 3.2 – PDCA cycle of sub-project 1

Plan stage

In the first stage of this sub-project, the project team will recruit an assistant manager. The assistant manager will list out the potential stakeholders that the project team can approach to engage more in the ecosystem. It is advised that all the four stakeholder groups mentioned in 3.3.1 should all be included in the list. After having a draft list, the assistant manager should consult the list with the project team. Then,

the assistant manager can develop a list of the suggested potential stakeholders' roles and contributions based on the general recommendation in the table below. When finishing with the list, the assistant manager will discuss it with the project team.

Stakeholder group	Role and contribution
<i>Entrepreneurs</i>	Offline activities: joining the workshops and training sessions, being the study cases for the research of the university Online activities: sharing business experience, helping with other stakeholders' concerns
<i>Municipality</i>	Offline activities: offering the venues for networking events, meetings and training sessions Online activities: providing accessibility to advisory services and online courses, helping with other stakeholders' concerns
<i>Universities</i>	Offline activities: offering the venues for training Online activities: providing accessibility to the university's online library, helping with other stakeholders' concerns
<i>NGOs</i>	Offline activities: being guest speakers during workshops or networking events Online activities: helping with other stakeholders' concerns

Table 3.3 – General recommended role and contribution of different stakeholder groups

Do stage

The project team and assistant manager will schedule the first meeting with the potential stakeholders and send them an official invitation to this meeting. Because this is the first meeting, it is advised that the project team should travel to Malaga to meet the potential stakeholders directly. The reason is that the first meeting will contain a lot of information. Hence if the project team joins the meeting individually, the team will avoid the misunderstanding and miscommunication due to the internet connection. Moreover, showing up in the first meeting will increase the interactive level between the project team and potential stakeholders, so the first impression will be better. During the meeting, the project team, together with the assistant manager, will discuss the various opportunities which the potential stakeholders can contribute to the ecosystem and the expected benefit which the potential stakeholders will have. The content of the meeting will be recorded.

Check stage

After the first meeting, the project team and assistant manager will check if the suggestions and opinions from the potential stakeholders fit with the core values of the Malaga Hub or not. Then, the project team and assistant manager will discuss and decide the options which are in line with the innovation's direction, and the aspirations of the potential stakeholders. Afterwards, the second meeting will be scheduled by the project team and assistant manager to discuss the new various possibilities with the potential stakeholders and decide the final division.

Act stage

Based on the results of the second meeting, the project team and assistant manager will divide the tasks for each stakeholder and plan for the upcoming meeting after starting the network within the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism Malaga. In case there are still emerged problems, the 'check' stage will be repeated.

3.3.3 Online platform establishment

The online platform is where the project team can stimulate interaction and knowledge sharing between stakeholders in the ecosystem. Moreover, the marketing website is a tool to do business-to-business (B2B) promotion for the ecosystem and attract more stakeholders to join the ecosystem. The detailed plan will be

elaborated in the table below with the structure of the PDCA cycle. In the table, in the “involved” column, PJ stands for the project team, SS stands for the Smart Solution’s students, AM stands for the assistant manager, and PS stands for the potential stakeholders.

Stage	Time frame	Activities	Involved	Location
<i>Plan</i>	October 2020	Write a project proposal	PJ	Deventer
		Propose the content to the head of Smart Solution semester	PJ	Deventer
	January 2021	Develop a list of website and internal forum’s requirements	PJ	Deventer
<i>Do</i>	February 2021	Have a meeting with the Smart Solution semester’s students	PJ and SS	Deventer
	March 2021	Design the content of the online platform	SS	Deventer
	April 2021	Design the layout of the online platform	SS	Deventer
		Decide the final design	PJ and SS	Deventer
		Develop the trial version of the online platform	SS and AM	Deventer
	May 2021	Execute an experiment for a trial version	SS	Deventer/Malaga
<i>Check</i>	June 2021	Check the feedback from the experiment	PJ and SS	Deventer
<i>Act</i>	June 2021	Improve the platform based on the feedback	SS and AM	Deventer
	July 2020	Establish the online platform	PJ	Malaga

Table 3.4 – PDCA cycle of sub-project 2

Plan stage

In the first stage, the project will prepare the project proposal and schedule a meeting to propose the project to the head of the Smart Solution semester. Afterwards, the project team will develop a list of the online platform’s requirements. The online platform will include two sites. One site is the internal forum where the stakeholders in the ecosystem can communicate and share knowledge. Another site is the official website of the ecosystem.

Do stage

The project team will organise the first meeting with the students from the Smart Solution semester to introduce the project and talk about their needs and wants. Then, the group of students will design the content and the layout of the website. After finishing the design, the students will discuss with the project team for feedback. After having the final design, the students will send the content to the assistant manager to translate it into Spanish. Then, the students with help from the technological program’s students will develop the trial version of the online platform. The last activity in this stage is executing an experiment to test the online trial platform. The Smart Solution semester’s students will conduct the test-run. The experiment results will be recorded.

Check stage

After running the trial test for the online platform, the students will analyse the results. Then, the students will discuss with the project team and decide the final version of the platform.

Act stage

After receiving feedback from the project team, the group of students will improve the emerged errors from the experiment and send the new content (if any) to the assistant manager to translate into Spanish. Then, the student will complete the final version of the online platform. Afterwards, the project team will promote the website on the search engine of Google. The website will be on the top search, with three key search words. Also, the website's establishment will be notified to the stakeholders of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga.

3.4 Financial implications

The project team does not have a specific budget to implement the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. However, the estimated cost should be reasonable and cost-saving for the project team to implement. In this section, the estimated costs and expected benefit will be described.

3.4.1 Estimated costs

According to Stam & Spigel (2016), there are five types of costs when implementing the innovation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. They are personnel costs, infrastructure costs, mentoring (training) costs, taxation, and marketing costs. However, taxation is not relevant to this case. Besides, a training session for the website users will be implemented in the next phase of the project, so it does not include in the main activities of these ten months of the implementation plan. Therefore, the training costs are not applicable here. The main cost structure of this implementation plan includes personnel costs, infrastructure cost, marketing cost, and travel expenses. A calculation of the relevant costs has been done. The costs are based on the research which is conducted at this moment (June 2020). The real costs of the implementation plan might be different from these estimated costs due to several factors, such as the difference in the actual hours spending on the activities, seasonality, or unexpected events. The calculation is for all the types of costs from the activities of two sub-projects. The main types of costs will be elaborated in the table below. In the table below, P1 stands for the first sub-project, and P2 stands for the second sub-project.

Cost name	Unit	Cost per one unit	Time (Hours)/Amount	Total
<i>Personnel costs</i>				
Assistant manager				
+ Plan stage (P1)	0.5 FTE	€11.5	20 hours/1 person	€230
+ Do stage (P1)	0.25 FTE	€11.5	10 hours/ 1 person	€115
+Check stage (P1)	0.2 FTE	€11.5	8 hours /1 person	€92
+ Act stage (P1)	0.2 FTE	€11.5	8 hours/1 person	€92
+ Do stage and act stage (P2)	0.1FTE	€11.5	4 hours/1 person	€46
Project team				
+The first sub-project	0.375FTE	€75.0	15 hours/1 person	€1,125
+The first sub-project (extra – do stage)	0.1 FTE	€75.0	4 hours/1person	€300
+The second sub-project	0.25 FTE	€75.0	10 hours/1 person	€750
<i>Travel expenses</i>				
Business trip to Malaga (3 days)				
+ Airplane ticket	Ticket	€175	2 people/2 return tickets	€350
+ Transportation	Package	€60	2 people/2 packages	€120

+ Accommodation	Night	€50	2 people/2 nights	€200
+ Meal	Meal	€30	2 people/9 meals	€540
<i>Infrastructure cost</i>				
Meeting room	Room/Day	€150	2 rooms/2 meeting days	€300
<i>Marketing cost</i>				
Google ad running gold package	Package	€100	1 month/1 package	€100
Total (without meeting room)				€4,060
Total (included meeting room)				€4,360

Table 3.5 – The estimated costs for the implementation plan

Personnel costs

There are two groups of the personnel costs, which are the assistant manager and project team. All the personnel costs are calculated by the hours a person dedicates to several activities or the two sub-projects. Also, FTE (full-time equivalent) is used to calculate the costs as well as showing the workload of an employee. One FTE is equal to 40 hours of working. The assistant manager will work as a part-time employee for the project. His/her salary will be paid by the hours he/she works for the project. According to Expatica (2020), the average salary for a part-time worker who has a bachelor's diploma in Spain is €11.5. It will take most of his time in the planning phase because he has to find the potential stakeholders and develop the list of suggestions. Because it combines doing research, meeting with the project team, and reporting, the workload of the assistant manager in the planning stage is 0.5FTE. The second stage of the first sub-project will take less time because the assistant manager only has to send the invitation, schedule the first meeting, and support the project team during the meeting with the potential stakeholders. So in this phase, the workload of the assistant manager in this stage is 0.25FTE. The next two stages of the first sub-project will be less workload for the assistant manager because he/she only have to assist the second meeting, check the suggestions from stakeholders, divide the task, and plan for the upcoming meeting. Therefore, the workload of these two stages of the assistant manager is equal to 0.2FTE per stage. For the second sub-project, the assistant manager's main job is only translating the content of the online platform into Spanish. Thus, the workload of the assistant manager in this sub-project is 0.1FTE.

The jobs of the project team involve many management tasks that require a person with a high level of experience and skills. Therefore, to meet the job requirement, only the lecturer team of the project can handle the tasks of the two sub-projects. All lecturers of the project team have a high level of education and rich working experience. Therefore, their amount of salary per hour should be €75. For the first sub-project, the workload is 0.375FTE because their main activities mostly are deciding the final suggestions and meeting with the potential stakeholders twice. There is 0.1FTE extra for the second stage of the first sub-project because, during the Malaga trip, two members of the project team will go to meet the potential stakeholders for the first time. The second sub-project workload is 0.25FTE because it only takes the time of the project team, mostly on the first stage and the final stage. Although the second stage and the third stage contain most of the activities, those activities are mostly done by the students of the Smart Solution semester. Regarding the student of the Smart Solution semester, there will be no salary for them because the product of the second sub-project is also an assignment for a module at school. Besides, they work for the project at the position of students, not as the employees under the project team.

Travel expenses

To travel from the Netherlands to Malaga, Spain, the project team has to travel by plane. The average price of a return ticket at the time of January 2021 is €175, with one checked luggage (Sky Scanner, 2020). The average of the transportation costs for a person is €60 (Trip Advisor, 2020). During the three days of this

business trip, two project team's members have to go between the hotel and the airport on the first day and last day. Moreover, they have to travel from the hotel to the meeting venue as well. Comparing Airbnb with Booking.com, with the same price, the offer from Airbnb is better than from Booking.com in terms of location, room cleanliness, and room facilities. Therefore, the accommodation is suggested to book via Airbnb. The average price rate of a BnB with two single rooms in January 2021 is €50 per person per night. Furthermore, the average cost of one meal per person is €30.

Infrastructure cost

A stakeholder meeting often requires a physical meeting venue. The project team can ask for a meeting room for free from their partners in Malaga. However, the worst-case scenario is that the team has to rent a meeting room because their partners cannot offer them one. In this case, the infrastructure cost for the meeting space will be taken into account. There are two planned meetings, both of which require a medium-sized meeting room with a maximum capacity of 50 people. The average fee for renting a medium-sized meeting room in Malaga is €150 (Spacebase, 2020). In-room facilities include chairs, tables, a screen and a projector, a whiteboard, and a flip chart. Some types of amenities such as complimentary beverages (e.g., coffee, tea, or water) are also included in the room rental fees.

Marketing cost

With the description outcome of the marketing on Google platform, it fits with the gold package of Google Ads. The cost of the gold pack is €100 for one month (Ad Espresso, 2019). Calculating the Google Ads service for only one month is because the website is expected to be established in July 2020, which is the last month of the project. Hence, even booking the service from Google Ads after July 2020, the time of using it will not be included in the time of this project. In that case, the cost of later time does not count into this cost estimations.

3.4.2 Expected benefit

Because there is no action during the innovation plan that directly profits the project team 'Flavours of Malaga', no expected benefit can be estimated in number or terms of revenue. However, according to Boutillier, et al. (2016), when an entrepreneurial ecosystem works more efficiently, the entrepreneurs will have more business activities. Then, it will enhance the economic benefit of the entrepreneurs. This means a lot for the entrepreneurs in Malaga, especially the female entrepreneurs, because it can motivate them to keep going. Moreover, according to UNWTO (2015), the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism can strengthen the partnership and contribute to the economic system's sustainability. Besides, these benefits are in line with an objective of the project 'Flavours of Malaga', which was mentioned in the introduction of this advisory report.

3.5 Conclusion

When looking at the management question "How can the project team 'Flavours of Malaga' facilitate the innovation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?", the key aspects of solving the management issue are engaging stakeholders and providing a platform to increase the interaction and knowledge sharing between the stakeholders in the ecosystem in Malaga. These key aspects are transferred into two sub-projects which are suggested to the project team to implement. The results of two sub-projects are expected to fix the existing issues from the current situation of the ecosystem, such as the loose relationship between the stakeholders in the ecosystem or the low level of awareness of the ecosystem. Therefore, the results will create a favourable condition for the innovation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. In conclusion, the answer to the management question is engaging

stakeholders and establishing an online platform with close communication, strong collaboration, and opportunities to grow.

4. Afterword

Within this chapter, a reflection on the working process of the thesis, and a reflection on the value of the thesis for the tourism industry will be elaborated.

4.1 Reflection on the working process

Before working on this thesis, the entrepreneurial ecosystem was a novel term to me. It took me one week to do a literature review on this topic, but the definition of the entrepreneurial ecosystem was still vague. However, everything was clear after a meeting with Doctor Michiel Flooren, an expert in economics and business cluster. He clarified the concept of the entrepreneurial ecosystem for me and suggested some directions that I could research more about this topic. In the end, I understood the concept of the entrepreneurial ecosystem well, and I could deliver a complete concept in the theoretical framework chapter of my thesis proposal report. At that moment, I realised that I should contact the expert before researching by myself. Therefore, I learnt a lesson that when dealing with a new topic in the future, I should try to plan a meeting with an expert first if it is possible to save time and outline the research more efficiently.

The process had gone well until the Coronavirus outbreak started in the Netherlands one week before my thesis proposal defence. Because my parents were worried so much about my health condition and the situation of the Coronavirus outbreak in the Netherlands turned bad, I decided to fly back to Vietnam. I flew back to Vietnam three days before the deadline of my thesis proposal report, but I still managed to deliver a quality report at my best. After arriving in Hanoi, I was not allowed to go home and was kept in quarantine in a military barrack for 14 days following the Vietnamese government's policy. In the quarantine area, for safety reasons, I always had to wear a medical mask. Hence, I defended my thesis proposal with a mask on my face. Even though the internet connection during the defence was not stable sometimes and wearing a mask made me feel stuffy, I managed to do my oral exam well, and I passed with a 7. After the experience, I noticed that I could overcome adversity as long as I have a strong determination. Also, I learnt how to deal with unexpected events from this experience.

Another remarkable moment during the thesis writing process was the decision to change my advice. After finishing my research part, I moved on to write my advice. At the end of week 4.4, when I almost finish the implementation plan, I decided to delete everything that I wrote in the advice chapter and started all over again. I made this decision after checking my advice, I realised that all three options that I previously provided focused too much on the short-time improvement. Besides, I misunderstood the second stage in the PDCA cycle. Since I am a perfectionist, I always want to deliver the best product within my capability. Hence, I took the risky decision to rewrite my advice chapter in ten days. In those ten days, I got stressed out many times when rewriting my advice because the deadline was close, and I was always afraid that my second advice would not be good enough. However, in the end, I manage to complete my advice in ten days with all of my efforts. I learnt that it is important to take a step back and check my work again during the process, so I can see the mistakes I made. Then, I can improve and deliver a good end product or advice. At the same time, I realised being a perfectionist is my weakness because it made me stressed and overthink things. In the future, I have to try to find a way to stop putting too much pressure on myself in order to decrease unnecessary thoughts and to improve my mental health.

The cooperation and communication between my first examiner and me went extremely well. Even though I had to work from a distance due to the Coronavirus pandemic, we managed to communicate smoothly. He was approachable via email and phone to answer my questions and give me feedback. Every week, we scheduled a meeting with four other students who also have him as a thesis supervisor. During each meeting, we updated our work progress and asked if we had any problems with the thesis writing process. I prefer this meeting set-up because by looking at other students' progress, I had more motivation to write my thesis and to finish it on time. Moreover, other students helped me a lot during the thesis writing process.

by giving me tips and feedback, and I did the same when they had difficulties. Therefore, we supported each other to overcome challenges and cooperate efficiently. Regarding the communication with my client, in the first period, it was easy to contact my client because he was always present at the office of the project. However, when the Corona pandemic started, we had to meet online and contact via email or phone instead of the face-to-face meeting. He was supportive and provided me with assistance when I struggled with the advisory report. Sometimes, he was not approachable via email or phone. However, I understand because he was very busy.

In conclusion, I recognised my strong points and weaknesses through the thesis writing process. During the thesis writing process, I believe my strengths are strong determination and a self-critical mindset. However, I should have a better research plan when dealing with a new topic and try to find a way to reduce stress.

4.2 Reflection on the value of the thesis for the industry

The project team 'Flavours of Malaga' belongs to the tourism industry. This thesis is believed to contribute a small share to the tourism industry. The knowledge mentioned in this thesis, such as the theoretical framework, and the analysis of the best practice cases of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism, is important to the industry. It is because the knowledge can be useful to the stakeholders in the tourism industry, such as destination management organisations or educational institutions, who are interested in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. However, because this case study only involves six interviews, the research of this thesis is not representative.

The main topic of this thesis is the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism. This has been a hot topic in the tourism industry because the need for entrepreneurial clusters and cooperation has risen in recent years. Many educational institutions and destination management organisations conducted similar research with this thesis, and the research regarding the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism is being conducted within the industry. Given the said need, the thesis could be a suggested guideline on how an organisation can facilitate the innovation of a tourism entrepreneurial. However, the thesis is specifically tailored to the project team 'Flavours of Malaga', so the level of generalisation is low. Hence, it is quite hard for other organisations to refer to this thesis. That is the reason why the level of contribution is considered small.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the tourism industry has been struck heavily. Therefore, the urgent needs of this moment within the industry are plans for tourism economic recovery post Coronavirus pandemic and guidelines for safe travel after easing the travel restrictions. Therefore, the pandemic can be a great opportunity to implement the advice. The advice of this thesis can help recover part of the tourism industry in Spain by letting the stakeholders in the ecosystem cooperate and support each other. To conclude, the thesis has a small value for the tourism industry at this moment, and the thesis is extremely valuable to the project team 'Flavours of Malaga'.

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Appendix

Appendix I: Search term and AAOCC

Search term	Search engine	Genre	Book/Article name – Author(s) – year
'Tourism Entrepreneur' with 'Definition'	ScienceDirect	Journal Article	The nature of ethical entrepreneurship in tourism – Susann Power; Maria Laura Di Domenico & Graham Miller – 2017
'Entrepreneurial Ecosystem'	Saxion Library	Academic book	Volume 2 : Entrepreneurial Ecosystem – Sophie Boutillier, Denis Carre & Nadine Levratto – 2016
'Entrepreneurial Ecosystem'	Google Scholar	Journal Article	Entrepreneurial Ecosystem – Erik Stam & Ben Spigel – 2016
'Entrepreneurial Ecosystem'	Google Scholar	Journal Article	Measuring Entrepreneurial Ecosystem – Erik Stam & Ben Spigel – 2017
'Community-based Tourism' with 'Definition'	Research Gate	Journal Article	A critical look at community based tourism – Kirsty Blackstock – 2005
'Community-based Tourism' with 'Stakeholder'	Academia	Journal Article	Community-based tourism in rich and poor countries: towards a framework for comparison – Andrea Giampiccoli; Oliver Mtapuri & Sean Jugmohan – 2015
'Community-based Tourism' with 'Urban'	Academia	Journal Article	Community-based tourism development model and community participant – Andrea Giampiccoli & Melville Saayman – 2018
'Entrepreneurship innovation' with 'Tourism'	Google Scholar	Scientific Article	Incremental innovation and implementation of concept industry 4.0 – Adam Sorokac & Ben Misota – 2017
'Entrepreneurship innovation' with 'Tourism'	Research Gate	Journal Article	Entrepreneurship innovations in tourism – Suzana Stojanovic – 2018
'Entrepreneurship innovation' with 'Tourism'	Academia	PhD Thesis	Innovation, Space and Diversity – Marte C.W. Solheim – 2017

AAOCC with two example literature sources

Source 1: A critical look at community based tourism – Kirsty Blackstock – 2005

Accuracy: The author of this article is Kirsty Blackstock, who is a PhD in Sociology and a qualitative social scientist under the James Hutton Institute. The purpose of the article is to investigate three edges of community-based tourism, including functions, community involvement and structure in order to contribute to more sustainable and equitable tourism industry. The author provides her contact on the search engine and on the article.

Authority: The Webmasters which published this article is Research Gate (researchgate.net) – a well-known and reliable search engine. The publisher of this article is Oxford University Press and they publish this article on Community Development Journal. This is a press under a famous research university in the world. The domain of this article is available on the first page: 10.1093/cdj/bsi005

Objective: The target audience of this article is the tourism destination manager. In the article, the opinions of the author show in the conclusion part but they are all based on facts, figure, and research data. The author wrote this article with a non-bias position because there is no commerce or private interest shown. Also, this is an article which is published under the university press, so the purpose is mostly about research and advisory.

Currency: There is no dead link in the article. The article is still relevant until today because the latest article which is cited to this journal article is in 2018.

Coverage: There are 281 citations for this article, and the information in the article was cited in the correct APA guideline.

Source 2: Entrepreneurial Ecosystem – Erik Stam & Ben Spigel – 2016

Accuracy: The main author of this article is Professor Erik Stam from the School of Economics at Utrecht University, and he collaborates with Professor Ben Spigel from the University of Edinburgh. The purpose of this article is reviewing and discussing the emergent approach of entrepreneurial ecosystem. The value of this article is providing the theory and knowledge of the entrepreneurial ecosystem based on research data and literature review. Both authors provide their contact on the article

Authority: The publisher of this article is Utrecht School of Economics under Economic Journal Sections. The publisher is a well-known research university in the Netherlands. The domain of the article is available on the title page.

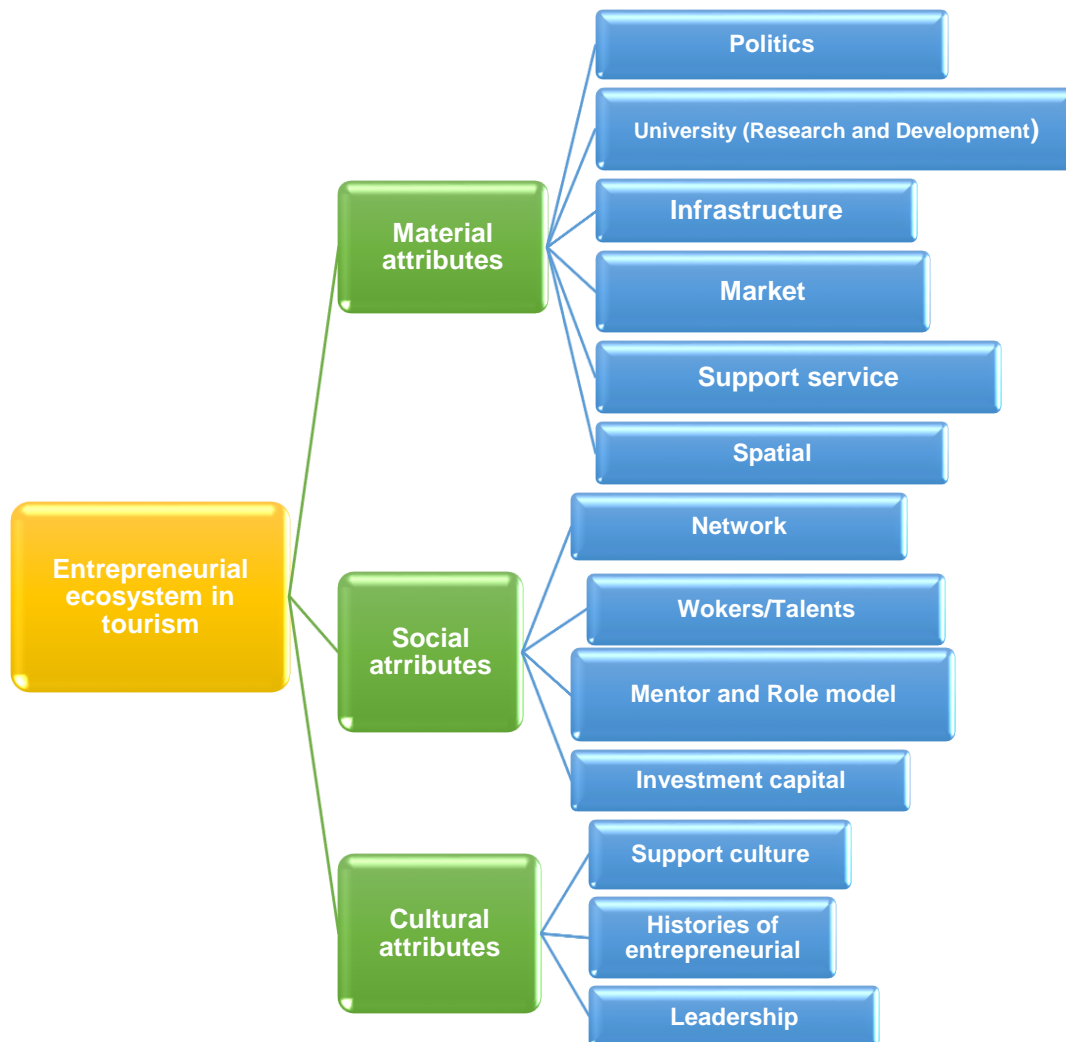
Objective: The target audience of this article are other researchers in the social science field. This is an academic article which provides theory and knowledge based on fact, sourced information and data. Moreover, there is no advertisement information involved in this article.

Currency: There is no dead link in the article. The article is still up-to-date and since it is written from the beginning of the existence of this theoretical term (entrepreneurial ecosystem), so this is a good foundation of core theory when investigating the concept.

Coverage: There are some articles which were cited to this article, however, there is no specific data of how many citations to this article. The article balances between text and image. The used sources were cited correctly according to APA guideline.

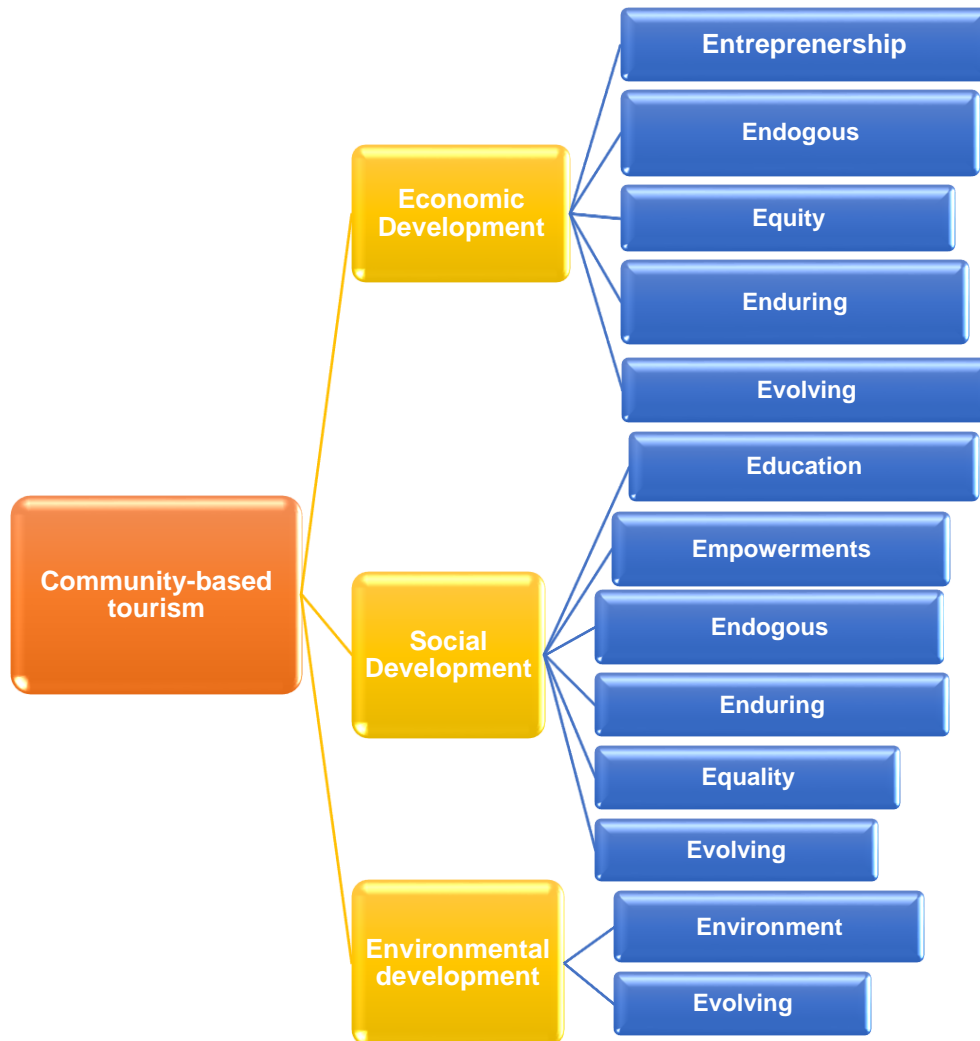
Appendix II: Operationalisation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism

Sources : Stam & Spiegel (2017) ; Boutillier, Carre, & Levratto (2016)



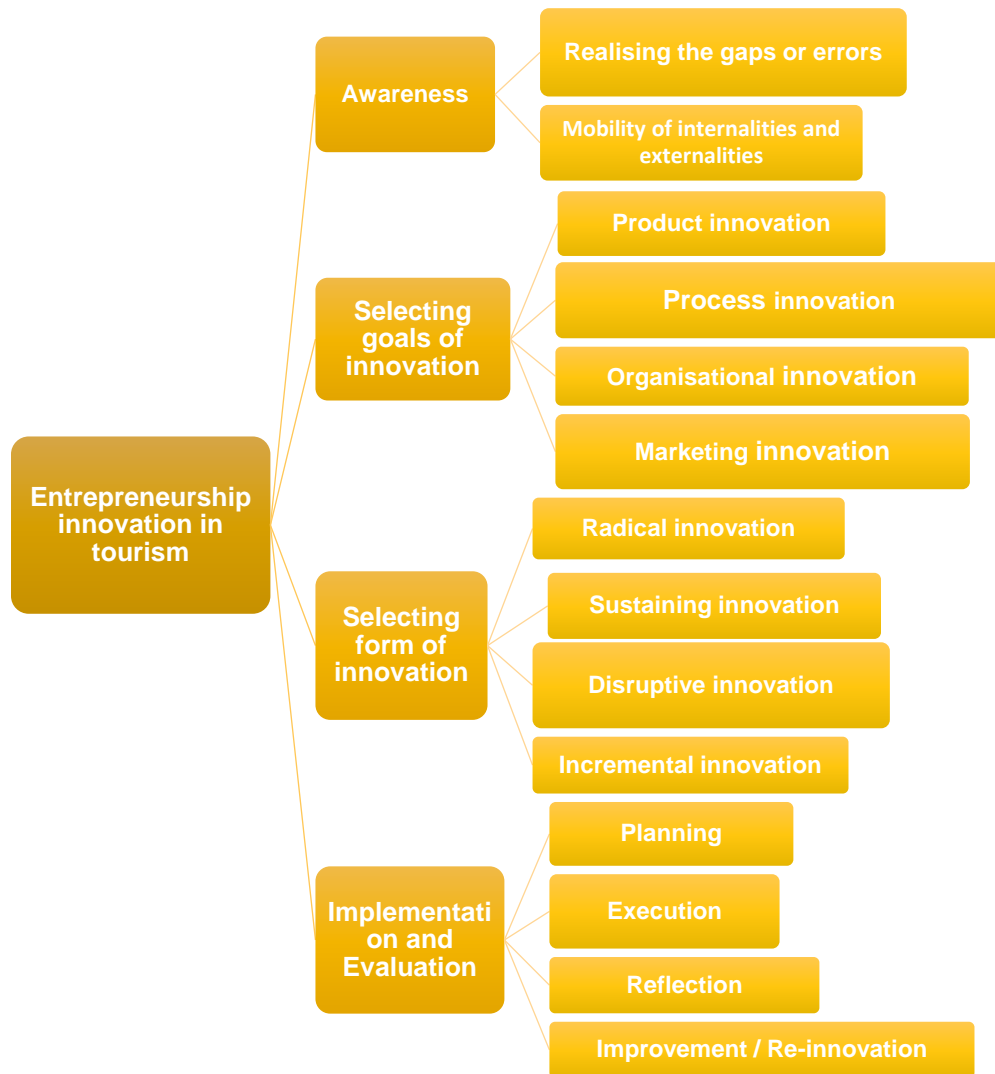
Appendix III: Operationalisation of community-based tourism

Sources: Giampiccoli, Mtapuri, & Jugmohan (2015); Giampiccoli & Saayman (2018)



Appendix IV: Operationalisation of the entrepreneurship innovation in tourism

Sources: Solhiem (2017); Giampiccoli & Sorokac & Misota (2017); Stojanovic (2018)



Appendix V: Research overview

Research questions	Research sub questions	Strategy	Data Collection Method	Sampling	Analysis
<i>What is the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?</i>	What is the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga regarding material attributes?	Qualitative	Interview	Non probability (Quota sampling)	Coding
	What is the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga regarding social attributes?	Qualitative	Interview	Non probability (Quota sampling)	Coding
	What is the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga regarding cultural attributes?	Qualitative	Interview	Non probability (Quota sampling)	Coding
<i>What are the experience lessons from the best practice cases to the innovation of entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?</i>	What are the experience lessons regarding material attributes from the best practice cases to the innovation of entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?	Qualitative	Desk research	Non probability (Snowball sampling)	Tree diagram
	What are the experience lessons regarding material attributes from the best practice cases to the innovation of entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?	Qualitative	Desk research	Non probability (Snowball sampling)	Tree diagram
	What are the experience lessons regarding material attributes from the best practice cases to the innovation of entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga?	Qualitative	Desk research	Non probability (Snowball sampling)	Tree diagram

Appendix VI: Interview guide

Introduction: Good morning/afternoon. First of all, I would like to thank you for your time and participation in this study. My name is Thanh Duong, I study Tourism Management at Saxion University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands. I am currently doing my graduation research at project 'Flavours of Malaga'. In which I research the current situation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga. By 'entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism', I mean: a format which combines all the stakeholders in the tourism environment within a region (Stam & Spigel, 2016). The aim of this research is to facilitate the innovation the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in Malaga.

The interview will be recorded by a voice recorder. Do you object to this? By recording it, I can listen back and work it out. The data will be treated confidentially and elaborated in an advisory report. The interview will take approximately thirty to forty-five minutes.

Do you have any questions before we start?

I would like to ask you to tell me something about you and your position.

Topic introduction: I would like to know about how the current situation affects the operational activities. By current situation, I mean: the emerged events in tourism industry and in the city in general which affect business or organisation Sorokac & Misota (2017)

Description: The questions will be asked about the remarkable events that happened recently in the tourism industry and have impacted on a specific business or organisation. By mapping the general situation, the current context of the current tourism entrepreneurial will be showed

Topic	(Possible) Sub-topics	(Possible) Follow up questions
Trends and Developments (Sorokac & Misota, 2017; Stam & Spigel, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal trend?• External trend?• Development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why these trends were picked up?• Most impactful trend(s)?• Other stakeholders contributed to the development(s)?

Topic introduction: The next subject is market. Market means 'target tourists that the organisation aims to as well as target business partners' (Stam & Spigel, 2016)

Description: The questions will be asked about the chosen group(s) of tourist to promote the product to and the chosen partners of tourism entrepreneurs. It could be the real target group(s) or strategic/tendency target group(s) on paper depending on the position of the interviewee. By the result of this topic's questions, it can check if all stakeholders share similar objectives. Also, it will map the business relationship between the stakeholders in Malaga. According to Stam & Spigel (2016), having same target(s) is easier to create or innovate an entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Topic	(Possible) Sub-topics	(Possible) Follow up questions
Market (Stam & Spigel, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Target groups of tourism in Malaga?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why this/these target group(s)?• Source(s) to base on when making decision?

Topic introduction: The following topic is spatial. By spatial, I mean: regional tourism and cultural resource. These terms mean the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively in a local area (Boutillier, Carre, & Levratto, 2016)

Description: The questions will be asked about the representative cultural identities and heritages of Malaga which are currently promoted. The aim of this topic is to find out whether all stakeholders choose the same type of resources to promote and the level of diversity of tourism resources. The used tourism resources is important for selecting innovative direction (Boutillier, Carre, & Levratto, 2016)

Topic	(Possible) Sub-topics	(Possible) Follow up questions
Spatial (Boutillier, Carre, & Levratto, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural identities? • Specific heritage for tourism? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why choosing these identities/heritage? • Matched target group? Why?

Topic introduction: The next topic is infrastructure and support service. By infrastructure and support service, I mean: the physical asset of the business and sub-aspects to the core business. The sub-aspects could be marketing, working/meeting space, and R&D service and facilities (Stam & Spigel, 2016).

Description: The questions will be asked about the current use of physical infrastructure of the business/organisation and the subsidiary service to support the core business. The aim of this topic is to check the current situation of business organization of each business and organisation. This would help to figure out the organization of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in the future. Also, it can be said where the missing lies.

Topic	(Possible) Sub-topics	(Possible) Follow up questions
Infrastructure and supporting service (Stam & Spigel, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing channel(s)? • Working space? • Meeting space with partner(s)? • R&D? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why this/these channel(s)? • How to approach? • Pros and cons of current used location? • Importance to core business?

Topic introduction: Next, I would like to know more about network/cluster. By network/cluster, I mean: the connectedness of business/organisation for additional or new value creation (Stam & Spigel, 2016).

Description: The questions will be asked about internal and external business connection between stakeholders. The aim of this topic is to find out the level of engagement and interaction between different groups of stakeholders. Then, by mapping out their relationship, it can reveal the issues regarding awareness of connection and communication (Stam & Spigel, 2016).

Topic	(Possible) Sub-topics	(Possible) Follow up questions
Network/Cluster (Stam & Spigel, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who –External stakeholders? • Why? • How to connect? • When / how long has it lasted? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you approach? • Direct connection or having mediation? • Why this communication method?

Topic introduction: Next topic is finance. By finance, I mean the supply and accessibility of investment money from investors, and the current business profit and cost (Stam & Spigel, 2016).

Description: The aim of this topic is to find out the available source of investment and the way to access. For entrepreneur, the business cost and profit will be asked in depth. The result will support the financial plan in the advisory part.

Topic	(Possible) Sub-topics	(Possible) Follow up questions
Finance (Stam & Spigel, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment capital? Profit and re-investment plan? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why? How to access? Short-term financial plan?

Topic introduction: The following topic is coaching and mentor. By coaching and mentor, I mean: teaching and guidance the knowledge and essential skills (Stam & Spigel, 2016).

Description: The aim of this topic to investigate the current situation of teaching and mentor in the area. Then, from the result of this topic, it can contribute to the training plan in the advice.

Topic	(Possible) Sub-topics	(Possible) Follow up questions
Coaching and mentor (Stam & Spigel, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequency of training sessions Training facility Personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why? Difficulties? Demand in the future?

Topic introduction: The next topic is support culture. By support culture, I mean: the degree to which entrepreneurship is valued to a region. (Stam & Spigel, 2016).

Description: The aim of this topic is to find out the value of entrepreneur in the value chain of tourism industry in Malaga. It can collect various points of view from different stakeholders (interviewee)

Topic	(Possible) Sub-topics	(Possible) Follow up questions
Support culture (Stam & Spigel, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of entrepreneur in tourism industry Role of women and women entrepreneur in tourism industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why? Limitation? Factors affected?

Topic introduction: The following topic is leadership. Leadership is 'guidance and direction of collective action' and how regional/national culture does impact on entrepreneur(s) community (Boutillier, Carre, & Levratto, 2016).

Description: The aim of this topic is to find out the current applicable leadership style per each individual business/56rganization. Also, the importance of Spanish culture to entrepreneur and relevant 56rganization will be shown. The result of this topic will contribute to the chosen leadership style of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism in the future.

Topic	(Possible) Sub-topics	(Possible) Follow up questions
Leadership (Boutillier, Carre, & Levratto, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working culture Impact of Spanish culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who take the lead? Why?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room to criticise and discuss? • Pros and cons?
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Topic introduction: Then, I would like to know more about policy. By rule and regulation, I mean: the rule by law (focus on entrepreneur law) and impact from the government and political context.

Description: The aim of this topic is to find out the level of government support to tourism partnership and collaboration. Also, it will reveal the role of the government in the area and to the ecosystem in the future.

Topic	(Possible) Sub-topics	(Possible) Follow up questions
Policy (Stam & Spigel, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxation • Entrepreneur register procedure • Entrepreneurial support from municipality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much? Why? • Differences of policy for start-up and long-term company? • Difficulties?

Summary the entire conversation

Are there any additions or comments?

Wrap up

- Thanking the interviewee for their participation
- Review any further appointments or contact
- Say goodbye

Appendix VII: The criteria for the potential interviewees

General requirements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live or lived in Malaga (if already left Malaga, the gap between the departure time until interview time is not further than 6 months) • Have study or working experience within tourism industry of Malaga • Understand the context of Malaga tourism and the city of Malaga in general 	
Entrepreneur	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a business or plan to launch a business within tourism industry of Malaga • Have knowledge and interest with tourism sustainable development • Be a local entrepreneur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have experience in working with entrepreneurs (in tourism) • Understand the governmental procedure and policy for entrepreneurs
University/Educational institution	Mentor/NGO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study or have background in tourism and hospitality management • Study or work in tourism faculty of an university or an educational institution • Have knowledge about tourism sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have experience in working or coaching tourism entrepreneurs • Have knowledge about tourism sustainable development

Appendix VIII: List of the potential interviewees

Number	Name	Brief description	Population group	Response
1	Phong Nguyen	Phong Nguyen is an entrepreneur in Malaga and he has a plan of launching a tour company who works directly with locals	Entrepreneur	Yes
2	Phuong Dao	Phuong Dao is alumni student of University of Malaga and she studied tourism at the university.	University/Educational institution	Yes
3	Enrique Navarro Jurado	Enrique Navarro Jurado is a professor and vice-dean (research and students) at University of Malaga	University/Educational institution	No
4	Raquel Caba Cabrera	Phong Nguyen is an entrepreneur in Malaga and he has a plan of launching platform in tourism	Entrepreneur	Yes
5	Carlos Garcia Martinez	Carlos Garcia Martinez is a freelance business coach for project 'Flavours of Malaga' and work close with La Alacena del Corralon. A part from that job position, he also plans to launch his own business in Malaga.	Mentor/NGO and Entrepreneur	Yes
6	Catalina Cruz	Catalina Cruz is senior year student at University of Malaga	University/Educational institution	Yes
7	Ayuntamiento de Malaga (mail to official email address)	Ayuntamiento de Malaga is official city hall in Malaga and this governmental organisation has a strong relationship and connect with entrepreneurs in general and tourism entrepreneurs	Municipality	No
8	Ángel Morales Baños	Ángel Morales Baños is a professor and vice-dean (facilities, infrastructure and sustainability) at University of Malaga	University/Educational institution	No

9	Luz Molina	Luz Molina works at Promalaga, an governmental organisation which supports entrepreneurs (including entrepreneurs in tourism sector)	Municipality	Yes
10	Ricardo Fernandez	Ricardo Fernandez works at Department of Social Affairs, Culture and Tourism	Municipality	No

Appendix IX: Assessment matrix of the best practice cases

List of criteria to assess the best practices of entrepreneurial ecosystem in tourism

- Criteria 1: Based in urban area and associated with tourism in urban area
- Criteria 2: Involvement of a full quadruple helix model (entrepreneur, government, educational institution, and mentor/NGO)
- Criteria 3: Recognition of researcher (via journal article) or high-reputation journalist/newspaper (via printed newspaper or online newspaper)

Note: O (fulfil) and X (not fulfil)

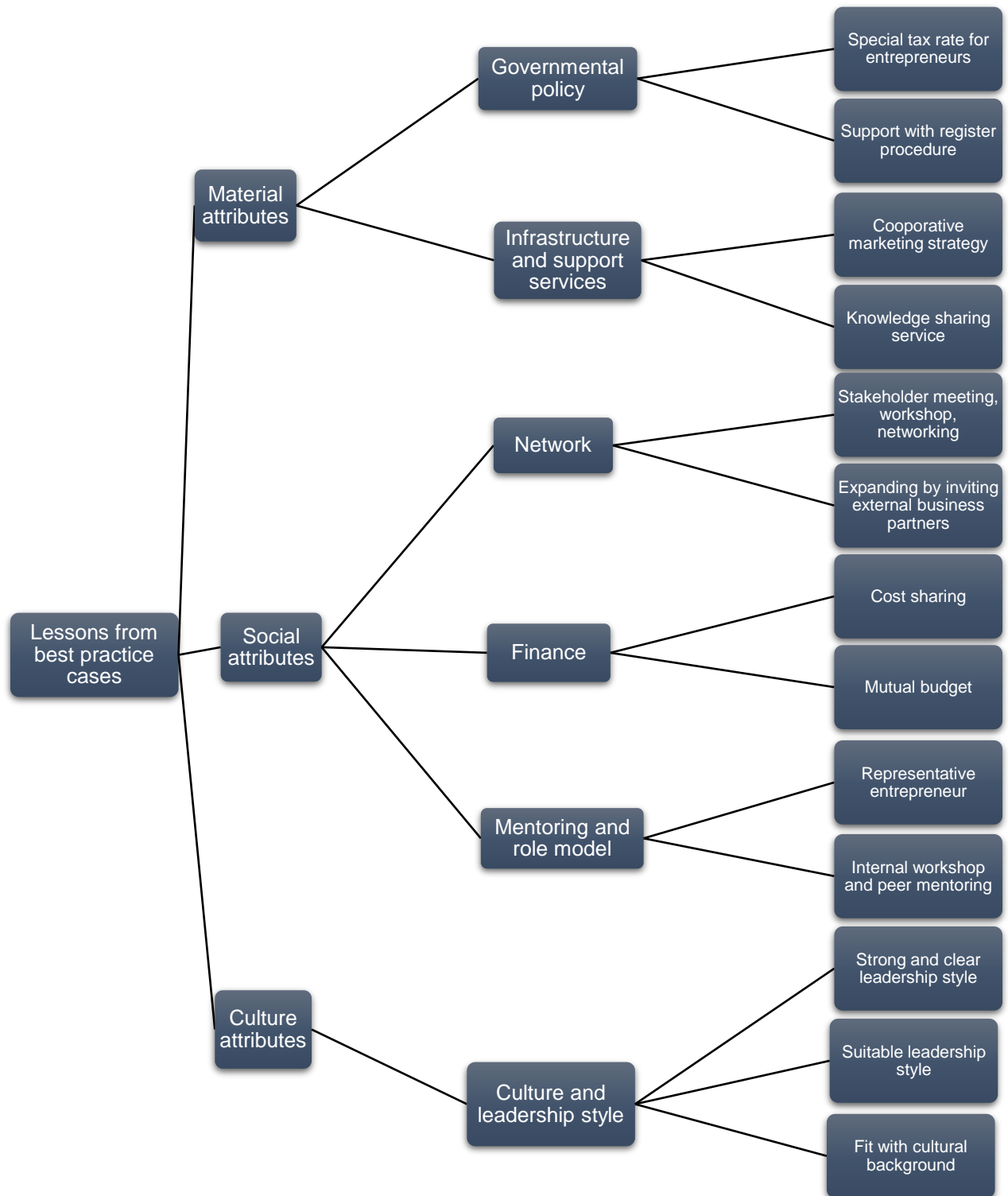
Best practice cases (location)	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3
Brisbane, Australia	X	O	O
Da Nang, Vietnam	O	X	X
Jeju, South Korea	X	O	X
Ljubljana, Slovenia	O	O	O
North Carolina, USA	O	O	O
Cape Town, South Africa	X	O	O
Napa Valley (San Fransico), USA	X	O	O
Singapore, Singapore	O	O	O
Hokkaido, Japan	X	O	O
Hasatt, Austria	O	X	X

Appendix X: Overview of interview coding

Note: Transcript line: x.y (x = interview number; y = transcript line)

Axial coding	Open coding	Transcript lines
<i>Material attributes</i>		
Market	Culture lovers	1.9-1.11, 2.25, 3.52, 3.53, 4.43, 4.44, 5.19, 5.20, 6.61, 6.62
	Target group reason	1.9, 2.26, 2.27, 3.54, 4.44, 4.45, 5.20, 5.21
Spatial	Culture heritage	1.7, 1.8, 1.12, 1.13, 2.21, 2.22, 2.26, 2.27, 3.10, 3.11, 3.31, 4.42, 4.43, 4.47, 4.48, 4.79
Infrastructure and support services	Online marketing	1.29 – 1.31, 2.43, 3.49, 3.50, 4.39, 5.27 – 5.29, 6.134
	Offline marketing	6.134, 6.135
	Marketing plan	1.31 – 1.35, 3.46-3.50, 4.36 – 4.40, 6.83-6.86
	Marketing support	1.35 – 1.37, 2.45, 5.46, 5.47, 6.50 – 6.55
	Online working space	1.27, 3.61-3.64, 4.32
	Offline working space	2.34, 5.31, 6.88 – 6.98
	Research and development	1.62 – 1.66, 2.31 – 2.33, 3.84-3.88, 4.66, 5.43 – 5.46, 6.57 – 6.59
Policy	Special tax policy	1.47, 2.39, 3.40-3.41, 4.65, 5.59, 6.35
	Register procedure	6.60 – 6.62
<i>Social attributes</i>		
Network	Entrepreneur and government	1.64, 3.38, 3.31-3.43, 6.20, 6.21
	Entrepreneur to supply chain	1.55-1.57, 3.33, 3.34, 3.71-3.75, 4.16, 4.17, 6.123-6.140
	University and government	2.35, 2.36, 2.49, 5.40, 5.41
Finance	Investment capital	1.45, 2.41, 3.35, 6.47, 5.61, 4.57, 6.31-6.34
	Business costs	1.38, 1.39, 3.45, 3.51, 4.40, 4.58, 6.56
Coaching and mentoring	Governmental training	3.80-3.82, 6.66-6.82, 4.66, 1.63, 1.64
	Difficult with new technology	4.75-4.77, 5.68
<i>Culture attributes</i>		
Current situation	Coronavirus pandemic	1.4, 1.5, 2.10-2.15, 3.13-3.15, 3.59, 4.13, 4.22-4.28, 5.6-5.14, 6.7-6.16
Leadership	Non-leadership	1.26, 3.60
	Top-down leadership	6.69, 2.35, 2.36, 5.48, 5.49
	Spanish culture's impact	3.67, 6.22, 6.23
Support culture	Role of entrepreneurs	3.21-3.27, 4.79, 6.143, 1.69, 1.70, 2.57-2.61, 5.73
	Role of female entrepreneurs	3.91-3.96, 4.79-4.86, 6.145, 6.146, 1.71-1.74, 2.62-2.72, 5.74-5.78

Appendix XI: Operationalisation of desk research



Appendix XII: Introductions of the three best practice cases

Best practice cases	Introduction
Singapore (Singapore)	The entrepreneurial ecosystem in Singapore is called “new Silicon Valley” of tourism due to the high working efficient and the diverse in entrepreneurs as well as stakeholders. All elements, which a good ecosystem should have, can be seen in the ecosystem of Singapore.
North Carolina (USA)	With the efforts of having stronger partnership for change and heading to sustainable development in tourism and entrepreneurship, the entrepreneurial ecosystem in North Carolina was established. Having a strong network is the objective of this ecosystem as well as a value and proud of them.
Ljubljana (Slovenia)	Recent years, Ljubljana (or Slovenia in general) has become remarkable sustainable tourism destination because the effective working and cooperation between stakeholders in the entrepreneurial ecosystem here. A good example to look at of how an entrepreneurial ecosystem can work efficiently together towards sustainable development.

Appendix XIII: Interview transcript 1

1 T – Thanh: Can you introduce about yourself please?

2 P – Phong: Hi, I'm Phong, 30 years old. I'm Vietnamese – Spanish. My parents are Vietnamese and I was
3 born and raised in Malaga, Spain. I'm currently managing a restaurant in Malaga. Actually I planned to
4 launch my own business in tourism this March, but you know, Covid19 outbreak. So plan changed, things
5 had to delay. Lockdown will keep continued in Spain so I use this time for preparation.

6 T: I'm so sorry for what Covid19 has impacted you. Can you tell me more about your business please?

7 P: Yes definitely. I love the culture, love the people here. Their lifestyle, their passion, and their identity
8 are so unique and beautiful. So I want to share them with the tourists. I did research before and I found
9 data from Department of Tourism in Malaga said that culture lovers group is the potential tourist group for
10 Malaga. For you to understand, culture lover group is a group of people who are interested cultural
11 heritage, local architecture, art and history. So, I came up with the idea of offering service to connect
12 families in Malaga with tourists. Tourists can experience Malaga lifestyle and culture with local people.
13 Stay in their house and live with them. For me, this is the best culture heritage. Nothing is better than the
14 people, right? I believe that's a good business idea. Some companies in other countries have that kind of
15 model and they can promote their culture through it.

16 T: I saw your passion with people in Malaga, and for you, people and their lifestyle, their home are culture
17 heritages of Malaga and it should promote more. Do I understand correctly?

18 P: Yes exactly. And I saw the business opportunities because I don't see many companies did the similar
19 things or had same idea in Malaga now.

20 T: Yes. I know that your plan to launch your business had to delay. But before or now, have you planned
21 marketing strategy for your company yet? If yes, what is your marketing plan?

22 P: Yes we have one, even it still going on at this moment. Definitely I have plan for marketing that is an
23 important part for business. Every business needs to have marketing to show their business to the market
24 and reach the target group. I plan marketing with my co-founder. Actually I plan everything with him
25 because the company only has two of us basically. We work together like friend so there is nothing clear
26 about who is boss or something about leadership here, small company you know. We mostly
27 communicate via online working platform because we are a small company and the rent is quite over
28 budget for us. So maybe later. Okay back to the marketing topic. Mostly now people think about
29 environment a lot so I think online marketing is a good strategy. Many others do that and now people look
30 for think online than going to agency so it is good for us when do think online. Tourists can find us easier
31 than making poster for example. And when talking about online and internet, we can reach more people,
32 more tourists, and more culture lovers from all around the world thanks to the internet development.
33 However, we are not sure about how the implementation plan will be. We think of some social media like
34 Facebook or Instagram. Maybe OTA like Trip Advisor. But to be honest, we want to find someone can
35 help us to figure it out because both of us do not study about marketing. However at the same time, I do
36 not know where to find someone or organization which provide supports in marketing plan for new
37 company. I'm clueless about this. And if it is possible, I want to find service that is free or with a cheap
38 fee, and also do not think about hiring another person at the beginning like this because cost would be
39 too high. You know, with a small business or new start up, cost for human resource and marketing is not
40 an easy thing to manage.

41 T: Yes I totally understand your point of view. So as you just mentioned, start might find hard about some
42 types of operational cost. So, about financing, have you received or asked for any supports or investment
43 to your company yet?

44 P: Actually at this moment no because we are still completing the business plan, but we will do later for
45 the source of investment. Now I have a thought of angel investor and it quite simple to find the information

46 about this thank to internet. About the government, I'm not so sure about them for financing but I do know
 47 that they have a special tax policy for start-up at the beginning phase. .

48 T: That sounds good. You can receive some support from the government when starting your own
 49 business.

50 P: Yes it is.

51 T: So talking about your external partner, do you have any connections within the tourism industry at this
 52 moment?

53 P: Yes, yes I have. So I have the connection with local where I think they can be our supplier of the
 54 service. We have some of their contacts already. Also, I have some connection with the tour companies
 55 because maybe they can be my partner. Maybe connecting to the NGO in the future can be a good idea
 56 because many of them doing about culture preservation. So maybe they may find us interesting and
 57 support us.

58 T: So as I understand correctly, your external partners currently are locals, tour companies, and in the
 59 future, maybe NGO.

60 P: Yes you are correct. That is our connections now.

61 T: So what do you think of when it comes to business research and innovation?

62 P: Uhm not think about that now. But actually, if you talking about research, we are currently doing that
 63 alone by ourselves some of the jobs. But in the close future, if I need to do research or innovate my
 64 business, I will come to Andalucia Lab because as far as I know, they are quite popular for providing
 65 service of innovation for tourism entrepreneurs and some training for entrepreneurs as well. So maybe,
 66 even R&D or training, I might go for Andalucia Lab.

67 T: Yes I can see your point. So in your opinion, what is the role of the entrepreneurs in general and
 68 specifically female entrepreneurs for the tourism industry?

69 P: Wow that is a good question. This topic is very interesting. First, I have to say that entrepreneurs are
 70 so important for the industry, such a brain for this industry I would say. They are creative and trend setter
 71 for the industry in my opinion. About the women, you know that Spanish culture is quite masculine so the
 72 opportunities are quite limited somehow. This also affect this industry like many other industries in Spain.
 73 However, now I see more women go to work and fight for their right compare to couple of years ago. I
 74 extremely appreciate these women and they can be the role model for others as well.

Appendix XIV: Interview transcript 2

1 T – Thanh: Can you please introduce about yourself please?

2 Ph – Phuong: Hi Thanh, I am Phuong and I am 27 years old, I am alumni of University of Malaga,
3 Tourism program. I graduated two years ago and I worked for a tour company in Malaga for one year and
4 I left the company in this January, 2020. Now I am in my gap year and plan to apply for the Master in
5 University of Malaga. The experience in Malaga was extremely valuable for me and I would like to come
6 back there to work if it is possible because the tourism industry there is great and I love culture of Malaga
7 and Spain in general.

8 T: Yes, I understand your point. So currently Coronavirus pandemic has impacted all around the world.
9 Then how is your situation during this time?

10 Ph: So yes it happened. It impacted on my working plan because due to the Coronavirus outbreak, I have
11 to take the sabbatical leave with only 50% pay check for two months for my small job now. If the situation
12 becomes better, I can go back to work in the late of May. Really hope for that. And definitely, the social
13 distance affects me like everybody. I cannot go out easily and actually everything is closed now. But
14 looking at Spain now, it is heart-breaking because the situation there is so bad right now. Malaga, my
15 second home. I read on the news said the city did not have that many confirmed cases but still. Tourism
16 industry was hit so hard, Spain in general and Malaga as well. That is sad.

17 T: Yes I also update the information as well and it is true that it is a bad situation now for you, here, Spain
18 and in the world. I hope the situation would become better for you. So you said that you studied and
19 worked in the tourism industry in Malaga before. Then, based on your knowledge, what type of tourism
20 resources that Malaga use to promote tourism?

21 Ph: First of all thank you. Well you know, talking about Malaga, it is all about culture heritages. You can
22 see them everywhere, from people, building, architecture, food, and many others. But actually, the
23 situation before of tourism was not good and definitely not sustainable for development. It was mass
24 tourism. But recently, culture receives more focus from government and entrepreneurs, and the main
25 target group now is group of people who value culture, especially culture of Malaga. And when I studied
26 at school, I read a brief report from Department of tourism and it was about the goal towards 2025 in the
27 Agenda of turning a cultural destination. Mostly I take all of this information Tourism Department, both
28 when I studied or worked there for market research or doing assignment for example.

29 T: Yes, I can see your point. You just mentioned word 'research' so I would like to ask you, what do you
30 think about the current research and development facilities of the university for entrepreneur in Malaga?

31 Ph: Well according to my knowledge, there are some options for them when it comes to R&D. But I would
32 consider the university because they have facilities in research and many good professors who can
33 provide knowledge and the overview of the industry. Those are good inputs for innovation. We have
34 physical building for research and I worked there when I was student under the university. And mostly, if
35 something in research provide for us, professor will assign. Not a lot of room for having a bottom-up
36 organization here because mostly, school use top-down management. I know that the university did
37 conduct research for government but not really for entrepreneurs. However, I understand that sometimes
38 it hard for entrepreneurs to find out about this because there is no 'marketing' for this like consultant firm
39 for example. Or maybe about something else like policy but I'm not sure about this.

40 T: Talking about government, what are the supports that government provides for entrepreneurs?

41 Ph: As far as I know, government provide a special tax rate for new entrepreneur and I think it support
42 them a lot during the first time. And about financing for instance, entrepreneurs now can find easily the
43 investors for their business because of the online information I think. Or maybe they can ask for help from
44 government. About other activities within business like marketing for example, most of them now use
45 online marketing. I do not make up this information, I took this from a research of the university about

46 tourism business operation. So, talking back about government, uhm, I do not know if they have some
47 organization to help the business about these things or not.

48 T: So if I understand correctly, there is a tax policy specialized for new business from government and
49 you are not sure about other services. And it is easy for entrepreneurs now to find investors easily.

50 Ph: Yes correct. And I think when talk about service for entrepreneur, I mostly see the connection
51 between entrepreneur and government. University seems not to have many connections then. For
52 example, talking about training, for example talking about my university, I have never heard of training or
53 workshop for entrepreneur. Maybe some workshop who have professor as guest speaker, but not
54 something direct from the university even as I mentioned, university has a big potential in this.

55 T: Yes I can see your point. We just discuss things around entrepreneur, so I would like to ask you, in
56 your view, what is the role of entrepreneur, especially female entrepreneur in tourism industry of Malaga?

57 Ph: Wow talking about this topic, I would have a long speech to talk about. So first the entrepreneur.
58 Entrepreneur is important to any industry, and definitely that tourism is not an exception from this. They
59 start and finalize many new ideas in the industry and I believe that is such a big contribution to the
60 industry and the industry cannot reach to this point of development without entrepreneur. When I studied
61 in the university, based on research, the impact of entrepreneur is huge to the industry.

62 Talking about women empowerment, for many years, Spanish culture was dominated by masculine
63 culture. That is so hard for the women because they did not receive the right they were supposed and
64 always deserved to have. Their opportunities for development was limited and I was sad at first when I
65 know how the situation being for women in Spain, also in Malaga. But you can look at the world right now,
66 there are many women empowerment movements are happening and I saw the wave has started in
67 Spain as well. In tourism, there are more and more female entrepreneurs starting in the field and this is a
68 good start. I think women entrepreneurs can be a role model for women empowerment for the industry,
69 and also for other industries as well. They have fought so hard for their right and for a better society, I
70 think having gender equality is important. This topic should be promoted more in this industry and this
71 country. Seeing the female entrepreneurs has started to develop their career, I have a strong belief in a
72 bright future for female entrepreneur in tourism industry.

Appendix XV: Interview transcript 3

- 1 T – Thanh: Can you introduce yourself and what is your business about?
- 2 R - Raquel: My name is Raquel and I was born and raised here in Malaga. I decided to study History of
3 Art by the age of 18 in order to understand more about my city. After my study, I decided to work as a
4 freelancer tour guide at a tour company, which provides free tour in the important city in Europe (such as
5 London, Milan, and so on). At the end of the tour, people can pay based on their interesting level with the
6 service. I worked there for a year and that was an interesting experience.
- 7 Currently, I partner up with Carlos to develop a website about Malaga tourism. I decided to start-up
8 because Malaga is a beautiful city with millions tourists every year. Now is not because of Corona virus. I
9 want to introduce Malaga to tourists and create a new way of travelling. I would like to connect local
10 people with tourist to promote all the beauty and culture heritage of the city. I want to focus on
11 architecture and art heritage of the city. That is my idea.
- 12 T: How is your situation now during the Covid19 Pandemic?
- 13 R: Currently everything stops because of the restrictions. Now, people from other countries cannot enter
14 Malaga to travel. However, I take advantages from this to prepare for my websites. I believe after
15 Pandemic, there will be a new way to operate tourism activities and tourist behaviour also changes.
16 People will make a wiser choice than just taking a cheap flight with Ryan Air to Malaga. Tourists would
17 like to know more about the place they travel to and people will need more technical supports. Then, the
18 website would be one of their new choice to start a new way to travel.
- 19 T: So you are an entrepreneur working in tourism industry. What is the role of entrepreneur in tourism
20 industry?
- 21 R: I believe if you want to work in tourism industry, you need to be an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs are
22 the fresh minds and creativities of the tourism industry when bringing many new ideas to the industry. It is
23 because it is important to create a new way of doing business and tourism is a fast growing industry. I
24 have experience in working in Malaga tourism industry, and I saw many interest ideas of business. It is
25 important to start something new because every day, there are many new ideas popping up and tourists
26 will get bored if you repeat one business model again and again. So, I believe, the role of entrepreneur is
27 very important.
- 28 T: What are your goals in the next coming year and how do you plan to achieve those goals?
- 29 R: I want to provide new way of information approach of the city when travelling. I want to give more local
30 insight to tourist through my website. Therefore, on my website, the content will be create based on local
31 opinions to promote the beauty and interesting things about the city.
- 32 T: I see your idea. Then, how do earn money from the business?
- 33 R: We earn money from the commissions of booking tours, transportation, and accommodation on the
34 website. The service providers are our business partners and supply chain. And for new business like us,
35 we can quite easy look for investor.
- 36 T: Have you ever thought about reaching governmental support?
- 37 R: No actually because when I started at first, I was too young. Now I know there are supports from
38 government to assist business idea to business model. So if I need something more, I will go to them. But
39 now, I use social media and personal relationship to looking for co-founder of my website.
- 40 T: Have you received any financial aids or tax reduction from the government or any other organization?
- 41 R: I will receive first-year tax reduction from the government when my company starts because Malaga
42 government offer tax reduction for start-up. About financial aids, I have also received an aid from
43 Promalaga, an organisation supporting new business in the city. Along with that, I received a training

44 package from Promalaga about business operation activities, such as financing, taxation, human
45 resource. Luckily, it is free of charge because things going with personnel cost would be heavy.

46 T: So back to your business, what are your marketing channels of your company?

47 R: We are doing the sales content through a promotion company and we choose Google as our search
48 engines to promote. We also plan to launch our own website instead of using big booking
49 database/website. However, now tourism is slow, so we delay our promotion campaign. Alongside with
50 that, we use social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram to promote. These website is friendly to
51 environment and better about cost than offline. Even though, marketing cost still being a concern for us.

52 T: Who is the target group of your business?

53 R: We plan to target people who are interesting in architecture and the age of the target group will be
54 around 40s to 60s. We call them as culture lovers. We choose our target group based on a research from
55 the municipality about the tourists coming to Malaga in the last two years, and we saw that this was the
56 biggest group of tourist. Therefore, we decided to target them, and we did agree that we would not
57 promote for mass tourism.

58 T: How many people working in your company currently?

59 R: We did have three people before Covid19 Pandemic, but now we have only two people since our
60 programmer left the company last month. So now we are kind of friend working together.

61 T: Do you have any meeting space or working offices?

62 R: We do not own any building or rent working space to be our office. We communicate only via a
63 platform called 'Trello'. We chose to working online instead of having a physical building because we can
64 save cost, and the function of 'Trello' platform is very convenient to manage the workload. And now, in
65 this situation, it is a wise choice. For other communication channels, we use texting apps like Whatsapp
66 for example. It is reasonable for us because we are Spanish and about time, we are flexible. Time set-up
67 in a day in Spain is different to other countries, and I think it affect our working way.

68 T: Who is your internal business stakeholders and external business partners? Why do you partner up
69 with them?

70 R: As I told you before, since our company is small, only two founders, then now we don't have any
71 internal business stakeholders. About the external partners, we have local tours company, transportation
72 renting and accommodation providers. They are our external business partners as well as our suppliers.
73 We promote their business on our websites and earn commission from them by each booking. We have
74 two kinds of external partners: big companies and local companies. Even with local companies, we earn
75 less commission then with big companies. However, we partner up with locals more because we want to
76 support them and create a local supply chain. Moreover, we partner up with big online booking agent, for
77 example Booking.com for brand recognition.

78 T: Have you ever received any training about business operations and management?

79 R: I do not but my co-founder, Carlos did. There is a tourism business's supporting organization called
80 Andalucia Labs, and on their website, they offer many mentoring courses about business management.
81 Same as Promalaga as we mentioned before, their courses are free of charge for new business during
82 their first time signing up.

83 T: Have you ever thought about having a R&D employee in your company or partner with an external
84 stakeholder for R&D purpose?

85 R: Now we do not need one but it is important in the near future when we need to innovate our business
86 model. We think about Andalucia Labs, where they offers professional R&D personnel for short time with

87 diverse field, such as marketing, business plan, financing.... We think about going to Andalusia Labs, not
88 university because they are more professional and personally, I don't even know that university provides
89 research or offer to entrepreneur.

90 T: What is the role of women entrepreneur in the tourism industry?

91 R: I chose my first company because there are more female than male in the company. You know male
92 have different working style than women, and in Spain, mostly there are more male workers than female
93 workers in the company. So I think having more female entrepreneurs in tourism industry or any other
94 industries is important to encourage and empower more women go to work because you know,
95 traditionally in Spain, women are used to stay at home. I think now the situation is better because of this
96 fact.

Appendix XVI: Interview transcript 4

1 T - Thanh Can you introduce yourself and your current occupation?

2 C - Carlos: I am Carlos and currently I work as business coach with project 'Flavours of Malaga' and a
3 freelancer with Saxion University of Applied Sciences, cooperated with Mr Jan Willem Meijerhof and Ms
4 Almudena Gonzalez. Basically my role is being a business coach to make easier the collaboration of the
5 project. There are two main jobs for the project: first is helping women from LAC and two is creating and
6 developing a communication platform for female entrepreneurs in Malaga. I offer the support about the
7 form of organization, finance, and other aspects of business, I together with Jan Willem and Almudena,
8 offer meeting with TUI and workshop for women. We work together to reach a future of the project by
9 reaching municipality. Currently, a part of the government think that the women are not prepared and they
10 would not make big impact on society. However, we, the project team think differently. So our strategy is
11 going to pursue them by training for the women and showing the proof of how women entrepreneur can
12 facilitate the development of the city and the neighbourhood. Unluckily, because of the Covid19
13 Pandemic, the process is slower than expected so I focus more now on the development of the
14 community platform. The platform is named as Hermalaga, which means in Spanish similarly to 'sister'.
15 We would like to develop the relationship and support between the female entrepreneurs that we have in
16 hand right now and we connect with some external partners like business associations, Malaga tourism
17 challenging. Along with that, I develop my own business, a website of tourism in Malaga with my friend.

18 About my experience in tourism, I actually study business administration and study Erasmus + in Prague,
19 Czech Republic, and I study Master focusing on marketing. Three years ago, I started up a renting
20 electrical bike, but the business was off a half year ago.

21 T: How does the current situation, Covid19 Pandemic, affect your business organization?

22 C: We hope that we can engage more women entrepreneurs through Hermalaga. We have meeting and
23 connections with them but with situation, we cannot meet face-to-face so it is sometimes hard to connect
24 with the others. We have had the business plan already so we hope that the situation now will be over
25 soon, then we can execute them. Also, we are waiting for some permissions from the government about
26 the usage of a public building for the project. If we can have this building, the women entrepreneur can
27 use this place for working space. We actually planned to have a meeting with Social Affair last week to
28 convince them but because of the situation, the plan was off.

29 T: How many people are working in the LAC? What are the current business facilities that you have?

30 C: There are five to six women are working currently. We are a small organization, actually will become
31 company soon. But we are a small group so not really something such a kind of leadership style exists.
32 We have meeting every week. Currently we meet online and in the past, we meet in the neighbourhood
33 where we do the tourism for business. Mostly, it is personal meeting. I want to create meeting on Trello,
34 but since the women are not familiar with new technology, I cannot facilitate this plan. The only digital
35 format we use is Microsoft Excel for financial calculation.

36 About the marketing, we use Google Analytics to make buyer profile to understand who will be interested
37 with our community platform. From that, we will attack them to come to our platform. We plan to use our
38 website, Google and email as key promotional channels. In addition to that, we will use social media as
39 well. So basically, we use online marketing for more efficiency. It would be consider carefully because the
40 cost for marketing is not an easy thing. But for a detail plan, we still need to figure it out more.

41 T: So what is the core business is about?

42 C: The core business is about providing a walking tour around the buildings in the neighbourhood. At the
43 end of walk, they will offer tapas (snack) and drink. Our target group is people who have interest with
44 culture of Malaga. As I know, the target group was picked following the research from government,
45 actually the annual investigation from tourism department of Malaga. There is a tour guide from TUI who
46 works with the women and helps in translation to English since the women do not speak English. The

47 important assets of the area that we use to promote along the tour are the buildings, their architectures,
48 and the local food. Especially, there is a kitchen that we would like to innovate into Andalucía kitchen, but
49 we still not sure who will pay for that, the women or the government. Moreover, we would like to develop
50 the kitchen to be a place that will cook for local people with low prices. So we can support local people in
51 one hand and promote to tourist in other hand. In the end, not only promoting tourism, we want to bring
52 positive impact to the community.

53 T: How is the financial situation now of the project? What is the future financial plan of the project in the
54 next two years (2020 – 2022)?

55 C: I am not sure about the investment information of the project since I am not the one who is responsible
56 for that. But as long as I know, the project is continuing in planning it. I know that new business can come
57 to angel investor but I do not know the future plan of the project. The things I notice during the time
58 working with the team is that personnel cost is quite heavy for the structure of cost. About the profit of the
59 project, every day, the women records their income and expenses. By that we can record the profit and
60 plan how to use that in the future. We use NPV and IRR to check if the project makes profit from the
61 investment or not.

62 T: What are the types of financial support that government offer to entrepreneurs?

63 C: The government will offer financial support for freelancers and new business in the first year. In the
64 current situation, they have extra offer the entrepreneurs who are bankrupt because a lot of them faced
65 economic difficulties. This is the support from national government. And they, new business, receive tax
66 supports from government. Other than finance, R&D and training also can have a hand from the
67 government for supports.

68 T: How many training sessions that you did give for women? What are difficulties that you faced when
69 mentoring the women?

70 C: To be honest, in the past I know that the women received the training offering in the workshop format.
71 In this year, we plan to have 15 workshops about the main content of community platform 'Hermalaga'.
72 The first workshop is planned in May 28, and the content will be about launching the platform. Each
73 workshop will be about different topic but they share the same goal of supporting and managing the
74 community platform 'Hermalaga'.

75 About the difficulties, they are not familiar with new technology. That is the only obstacles for the training
76 process. I hope in the future we can find a platform which is user-friendly and easy to use to apply for the
77 platform.

78 T: How do you think about the impact the impact of the women to the society and industry?

79 C: You know entrepreneur is important and I am happy to see the women now. The women is our culture
80 heritage and they are very representative for the culture. They are friendly and open when I work with
81 them. I believe that Spanish culture does impact on the project since the women have family to take care
82 at home so sometimes to find a balance point between project works and family is hard. For example, in
83 case of Yolanda, she has six children at home so it is hard for her to manage time to meet and have
84 enough energy for the project.

85 About the impact of the women, I believe LAC would a perfect role model for women entrepreneurs. They
86 would bring more and more positive impact to the society and tourism industry, especially about women
87 empowerment. You can see that they represent for the major women in Spain but they still manage time
88 for doing business. This makes me remember to the campaign 'He for She' of Emma Watson, which
89 encourages men support women to go to work and to find more opportunities in the society.

Appendix XVII: Interview transcript 5

- 1 T – Thanh: Can you introduce yourself please?
- 2 Ca – Catalina: Yes, I can. My name is Catalina and I study the last year in tourism in University of
3 Malaga. Currently I stayed in Malaga and this is a beautiful city. Because I study tourism so after
4 graduating from the university, I want to find a job in tourism but the situation is not ideal I guess.
- 5 T: Can you elaborate more on that point please?
- 6 Ca: Definitely yes. So you know Coronavirus pandemic made everything became bad suddenly in a short
7 amount time. Everything is closed, like shops, parks and my university. I am also writing my thesis like
8 you now but because of this pandemic, I met many struggles during the time. Social distance policy has
9 turned everyone to work from home mode so the communication sometimes is hard right now because
10 us, Spanish people used to communicate directly rather than online or at least we prefer being like that
11 more. And about finding job after graduating, that is an issue as well. Now tourism shut down in Spain
12 completely and many business and organizations, even wanting or not, have to shortage their human
13 resource. Seeing this situation, it is sad that the pandemic impacted us a lot and maybe I should look for
14 some other options for my close future.
- 15 T: I am so sorry for your situation now. I hope everything will be better soon. So talking about, what type
16 of tourism resource that is used for tourism product and promotion now?
- 17 Ca: Yes thank you. Definitely culture, nothing can replace the role of culture in Malaga. Culture heritages
18 are the parts of tourism resource that Malaga wants to promote right now. The Department of Tourism
19 data said that now the target tourist for Malaga would be people who are in love with culture, things like
20 art, history, or architecture for example. They are potential. And also, the department have an agenda to
21 develop Malaga becoming cultural destination instead of keeping mass tourism. That is a great idea
22 because based on what I studied, that helps tourism. That helps Malaga go further on the road to
23 sustainable development.
- 24 T: So as I understand you correctly, you said Malaga now chooses to promote culture heritages and
25 target people who love culture. Is that correct?
- 26 Ca: Yes it is. So to reach to reach the target group or can say that for tourism entrepreneur in general to
27 promote their product, mostly now people use online marketing. Even like my university, they do use
28 online marketing in many activities. I have checked about the last year about the research of marketing of
29 tourism entrepreneurs and it is true that people use online marketing a lot. Even with working, people now
30 are using online working platform like small business or start-up for example. But like us, research or
31 working are mostly in the physical building because we are under big organization and school can provide
32 the working place for us.
- 33 T: Yes I see it. You have just mention research. So talking about research and innovation, what does
34 University of Malaga offer for research and development?
- 35 Ca: Good question, I like this topic. So basically, we have research labs where we can use for study and
36 learn about things happen in tourism. And yes we talk about lab using for social sciences, not something
37 like what you see in the movie, scientists put something like two chemicals into each other, no, no, no.
38 You also study tourism so you know we don't do that here. Back to the topic, my university mostly does
39 research about theory, for example about tourism entrepreneurs' innovation or foundation for
40 development policy. But actually, university only contacts with government mainly for research purpose
41 and rarely with entrepreneurs. This also means that the connections with government from university are
42 so many more than with entrepreneurs. Maybe with NGO but I am not sure about this much because I did
43 not see that clearly. Personally I think it is such a pity because entrepreneurs are diverse and they can be
44 a good study case for example for us, student. But the popular of university labs is not that high because
45 not many promotion things about this from the university have done then. Even like us, for example, I
46 have full knowledge of marketing and other students in the course as well. But none entrepreneurs

47 approach us for marketing support. Again, back to research topic, mostly if we work on a research, the
 48 topic would be assigned by professor. You know in Spain we have quite strong of this top-down
 49 leadership culture in some kind of traditional organization like school for example. This impacts much on
 50 our working culture. And talking about working culture, maybe a small another that Spanish culture
 51 impacts on. It is time, we are quite flexible in this than other countries you know.

52 T: So as I understand correctly, you said that university do research and development in tourism but they
 53 do mostly only for the government. And in your organization, university, top-down leadership is still
 54 applied. Is that correct?

55 Ca: Yes it is.

56 T: So talking about government, do government provide any support for university?

57 Ca: I think yes but I am not very sure about, maybe my professors would know more about this than me
 58 because they work close with municipality more than me. I only do know about the supports from
 59 government to entrepreneurs like supportive policy for new entrepreneurs about tax for example. If we
 60 talk about financing support from the government for entrepreneur, I do think maybe some organizations
 61 like Promalaga can help them with budget. However, nowadays, entrepreneurs can find angel investor
 62 easily via online information for example so I do not know if they need to have much supports from
 63 governmental organization about this or not.

64 T: That are great information. Back to university, I wonder if university provides any training or coaching
 65 for entrepreneurs.

66 Ca: No I think maybe a chance that guest speakers are university professors for outside coaching or
 67 workshop but a service by university as far as I know only for us, students now. Maybe via online, but it is
 68 hard because a part of entrepreneurs are not familiar with online meeting and such new technology.

69 T: Yes I see your point. So maybe last question about role of entrepreneurs and specifically female
 70 entrepreneurs. How do you think about the role of entrepreneurs and female entrepreneurs in tourism
 71 industry?

72 Ca: Both of them are essential. Even entrepreneurs in general or female entrepreneurs. I think they are
 73 wonderful. Entrepreneurs bring new ideas and new ways in doing business to the industry and the role of
 74 them is important for the industry. With female entrepreneurs, they are the best role model of women
 75 empowerment in this industry. For the background if you do not know, women in Spain in general have
 76 not received the deserved socio-economic in the society. And now, they has started to fight for their rights
 77 in the industry, economic system and in society in general. Hence, I see that what they doing is so
 78 important and show out their role clearly in this industry.

Appendix XVIII: Interview transcript 6

1 T - Thanh: Can you introduce yourself and your organization?

2 L - Luz: I am Luz and I work for Promalaga. Our main task is supporting start up and small business in the
3 city of Malaga. We have experience working close with many business in tourism sector as well. We have
4 different tools to support them. We try to connect with similar organization in European level and to attract
5 more investment for the business.

6 T: How does Covid19 Pandemic affect Promalaga?

7 L: Well, this is a very special situation that we have never been before. The tourism has been stopped
8 and the future is uncertainty. The social distance policy, people tend to work from home and have
9 meeting online. Promalaga works close to the tourist area in the city hall. We did last week a small
10 campaign to push citizens to come up with the ideas of how to bring Malaga rising back after this
11 situation. In the recent years, we have worked really hard to put Promalaga on the map of the world. We
12 will keep working on that line. We try to reactivate the tourism back as soon as possible. We will work
13 hard to have security stamp for hotel and other public spaces. Also, we will process on the administration
14 process. We expect that it is not the same as the situation before and but we will try the best for this
15 sector. We plan to work out our plan after the lockdown is over. We plan to give a clear instructions about
16 the supports for business and try to keep as many businesses alive as possible.

17 T: How does Promalaga connect with entrepreneurs when they need help?

18 L: Mostly we do the meeting in the office of Promalaga. However, in this situation, entrepreneurs contact
19 us online and ask for help. We will arrange an online meeting to keep in touch and support them. We
20 support them in any situation, can be legal aspect or asking more money in the bank. They can keep in
21 touch in anyway as long as it is helpful for entrepreneurs.

22 After the lockdown, we will try to have face-to-face meeting because in Spanish culture, we prefer to meet
23 the others and the atmosphere is totally different. Then I think online meeting cannot become a totally
24 new way of meeting. However, it is definitely becoming an alternative option because it is good for
25 environment and saving travel cost, especially with international partner and investor. Last week we have
26 a meeting via Zoom with other colleagues from other part of Europe. The experience is different but it
27 helps us learn a lesson that we can cover basic communication through technology and we can consider
28 the necessary of travelling for meeting. I think that this is not only a way to deal with the situation but also
29 an innovative way planned in our agenda already.

30 T: What are the types of financial subsidy for entrepreneurs?

31 L: We want to develop the investment ecosystem in Malaga. We offer the loans for innovative and
32 technological start-ups without guarantee and with three years of postpone of the loan for the company if
33 the company would not go well. We try to attract more private investors to Malaga. They can pay back
34 based on the agreement and if the business does well, they can pay back everything at once. The profit
35 from the project will go to the public or can invest for other projects. For new business, they receive tax
36 supports.

37 There are certain requirements for business to access the money because we are talking about public
38 money. Yes, it is understandable that when it comes to public money, there will be requirements. A
39 business need to be located in Malaga and they need to work with us in a certain amount of time. You
40 have describe your project, what you will use the money for, and you have to convince that you use the
41 money for good purpose. For one of our programme, you would do the purchase in advance and we will
42 resemble later.

43 The investors are mostly from angel investors. Most of them are professional investor because we can
44 guarantee they understand the project and they support the project from the private money. They
45 understand how to invest than we do and how to do well with the business. They have knowledge with

46 the market and money. There are three ways to process the investment. First, the entrepreneurs can
47 bring their angel investors with them. Second way, entrepreneurs can choose one investor from the list of
48 Promalaga. And the third way, they can ask us to connect them with an investor that suits them and their
49 business.

50 T: How does Promalaga offer marketing and promotion support service?

51 L: We decide to offer marketing service to the company because in fact, in the first year, even you have a
52 wonderful idea, legal stuff would take them a lot of time and they have other things to focus. And the way
53 to sell your product it is very important because even you have a great product but in the end, you cannot
54 find a good way to sell your product, your business is insufficient. So we provide the marketing tool where
55 you can put all information of your business on and we will help to make your business successful. But
56 the cost for people who will do the jobs depending on each company.

57 T: What are other services that Promalaga offer to entrepreneurs?

58 L: We offer them help for their business plan. We guide them through the steps to fill in the business plan
59 so they can have a clearer image of how the business will be. Sometimes with us, it is not a realistic idea
60 so when they put number on paper, they will see that. We help them to make their business less risky and
61 become successful. We also help them with the register procedure of business with fees. And mostly
62 now, the process more digitalize. Actually, we work with many entrepreneurs in tourism as well, and once
63 I noticed that major of them prefer to target people who love culture.

64 T: Do you have a training centre inside your organization or do you cooperate with other stakeholders to
65 offer the service?

66 L: Actually both. More like advisory department I think. In Promalaga, we have a department where we
67 have some colleagues who receive people have business in Malaga and help them with their business
68 plan, idea, and also networking. Mostly the tasks will be assign by senior to junior colleagues. We kind
69 process the work within us is a quiet of top-down style because we are in governmental organization. It is
70 kind of traditional way here. After the first year, we realized that we did not have enough people
71 compared to the demand. So, we hired consultants from outside companies. Currently, we cooperate with
72 four companies. Two years ago, we opened a selection of companies that we would like to work with. We
73 scored them and the ones who have the highest score would be chosen. In the end, we chose 4 of them.
74 After that, we sent the businesses who ask for help to one of the four companies. The companies will give
75 the advices on taxation, labours, and accounting. Those are basically the helps offering free supports for
76 the first year. In the second year, entrepreneurs can decide if they want to continue the service or not
77 because they have the relationship at that moment.

78 Actually this is a win-win situation. The companies can have clients because most of the time, the
79 company will have new client if the relationship between consultant and entrepreneur is good. Basically,
80 every year, each company will have around 200 new client, which is a lot. In the first year with
81 Promalaga, they have the service for free and in the second year, they receive a special price. This is
82 actually very nice, a good way to get new client.

83 T: Do you promote any companies or any other things on your channels or other platform?

84 L: We actually promotes using social media like Facebook, Youtube, Instagram. We also promote in our
85 own internal website. We make interviews and public it on our website. When a new company coming to
86 our co-working space, we can make a Twit saying "Please welcome this company". And we have a list of
87 company are currently joining the hub on our website, so they can easily find each other. Our biggest
88 purpose for this is open a chance for them to connect with the others.

89 Currently we have 12 different buildings around the city of Malaga to use for co-working space. The
90 building are divided by the types of the company. We have technological companies, innovative

91 companies, craft businesses, and there is one building for classic type of business and businesses based
92 on local neighbourhood. The purpose of this division is when you have the need for cooperation, you can
93 meet the other and say "Hey I have this idea..." easily. It is common that the companies cooperate with
94 the others. It is convenient that the company next to you providing the service that you want. It is more
95 efficient and useful for you. We also have common spaces in the co-working space. We provide a space
96 where they can connect together. We have cafeteria where people can have lunch together, we have
97 gym in one of our buildings. It is nice to make life easier, you can go there to work, meet people, eat
98 lunch, go to the gym and go home. Everything you need is in place. In the very beginning, we planned to
99 put a kindergarten inside one of our first and biggest building but since there weren't kids enough and the
100 process to open is complicated. So in the end, we did not do it.

101 T: What is the process to become a part of this network of Promalaga?

102 L: To be a part of this network, you need to pay a rent, but this not a flash rent. We call this a service
103 because not only providing a space, we offer you the advices from our team or from consultants of
104 companies, also some public administrations for you to start a company. Also, the rent covers electricity,
105 water, wifi. The idea is that you have an idea, you just need to bring you company and start your
106 business. You don't need to worry about anything like painting the walls, any instructions or permissions.
107 You want to start, you can start right tomorrow. If you need furniture, we can provide it for you. You have
108 to pay to obtain this service but the price is lower than the market price. And each building has a different
109 period of stay there but it increases the rent every year. In the end it is even higher than in the market so
110 it pushes you out of the building. Before the pandemic, our occupation is over 90%. Of course, while
111 staying here, they are in their comfort zone. They know the people and if they don't understand
112 something, they can ask for help from Promalaga. But at some points, we have new people, so we needs
113 to kick some old entrepreneurs out. Sometimes, we understand that it is hard because you feel to be a
114 part of it, you are familiar with things here. But we are not business centre so you cannot rent an office
115 and stay here forever.

116 T: So is there any person from Promalaga available in the building?

117 L: No actually. But the entrepreneurs can always contact people who are responsible with that building so
118 they can come to help. They can ask for anything. For example, sometimes, entrepreneurs as for
119 someone come to fix the air conditions, internet, lights, or some with more business service. We have
120 people to cover all the needs.

121 T: I see that. Do you have any policy to facilitate the connections between entrepreneurs under
122 Promalaga?

123 L: Yes we have but only for the parties involved in Promalaga. Mostly not with the outside connection with
124 Promalaga. We organize different networking event. The idea is for example, we can collect companies
125 from different sectors and together, we visit a museum so in the end we have the experience while
126 visiting museum, you have more network, contact with people while eating snack and having drinks
127 together. You can talk and exchange experience. It is always to know people and build a strong network
128 to collaborate.

129 The second option is that we can choose a big company that performs well and we select some other
130 companies to come to visit this companies. The CEO or chief can explain their experience. We definitely
131 organize Christmas or summer event. We combine with some companies, do some actions like exchange
132 contact but we make sure that it is fun.

133 Sometimes, we organize some seminars so people together can discuss about new things about legal
134 stuff or skills that people need. We usually have this and people happy with that. . For the workshop and
135 seminar, we use both offline and online marketing to promote the event. We keep doing offline because
136 we belong to government, then there are some procedure still keep in traditional way. Sometimes we
137 invite some professional people from the area to come but sometimes people from Promalaga will host

138 the workshop. Or sometimes we have some small event on social media with hashtag so people post that
139 and may receive basketball ticket. We try to make a more dynamic atmosphere and community, people
140 know each other. Basically, those are the things.

141 T: Last question will be about role of entrepreneurs and female entrepreneurs. What do you think about
142 their role in tourism industry?

143 L: So important I would say. They are energy of this industry and I believe they have important role in the
144 development of this industry. Also, I notice that women empowerment is a recent trend and development
145 in tourism, but also in other industries. They show their power and they will be the role model for the ones
146 in the industry and women out there in society.

Appendix XIX: Improvement points

Assessment aspect	Improvement content
<i>Quick scan</i>	Grammar and Spellings, APA (in text), extended content of summary (in red), all headings and their content on the same page
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	Six additional abbreviations (in red)
<i>Afterword – Value for the industry</i>	Two paragraphs (in red)