

PRO BONO PILOTS IN SPAIN IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE BEESE PROJECT



This Project is co-funded by Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.
ID Number 2018-1-HU01-KA203-047732

Authors

Maria Sonia Arenas, Work for Social (Spain)

Andrea Sánchez Angulo, Work for Social (Spain)

Contributors

Inês Neves (University of Porto)

Edward May (Proofreader)

INDEX

1. Introduction
2. Short-Term Pro Bono Pilot
 - a. Selection of the nonprofit beneficiary
 - b. Recruitment process and number of participants
 - c. Pro Bono Meeting(s)
 - d. Evaluation
 - e. Testimonies and Learnings
3. Mid-Term Pro Bono Pilot
 - a. Selection of the nonprofit beneficiary
 - b. Recruitment process and number of participants
 - c. Pro Bono Meeting(s)
 - d. Evaluation
 - e. Testimonies and Learnings
4. Long-Term Pro Bono Pilot
 - a. Selection of the nonprofit beneficiary
 - b. Recruitment process and number of participants
 - c. Pro Bono Meeting(s)
 - d. Evaluation
 - e. Testimonies and Learnings
5. Conclusions

1. Introduction

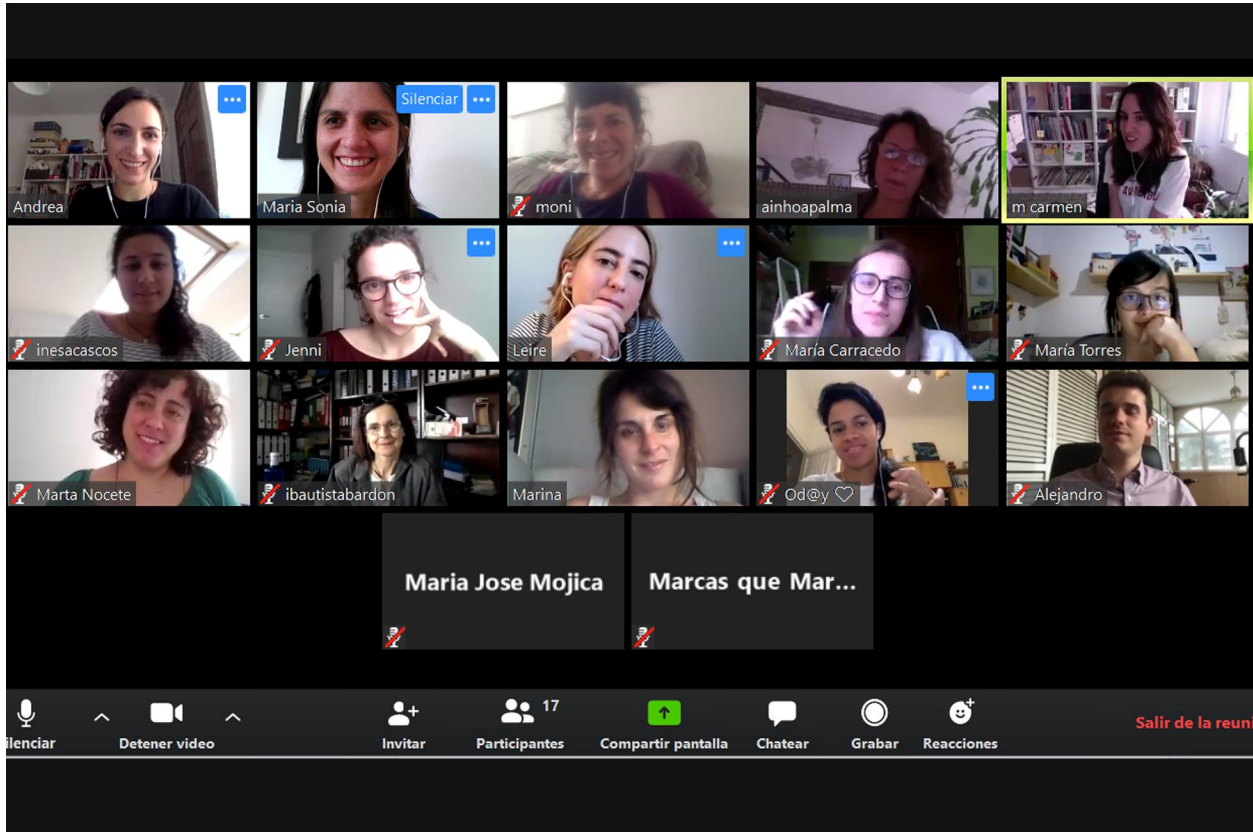
A pro bono project is a project where students learn how to run a consultancy for a nonprofit organisation with the guidance of a corporate volunteer who works as a mentor and consultant. In this sense, students use the knowledge acquired through their university studies and have real-life experience.

In the BEESE Pro Bono Project (2018-2021), the second output in Spain consisted of implementing three pilot pro bono projects. This output aims to test and iterate improvements on each kind of pilot carried out in the university. After each pilot, partners from the countries involved (Portugal, Spain, France, Hungary, and Bulgaria) exchanged their knowledge to improve their projects.

These improvements are related to the students' participation, as well as to challenges such as how to improve the mentors' role, how to better scope the need of the nonprofit in the university context, etc.

In this publication we want to share Spain's experience, which comprised the participation of Autonoma University of Madrid (UAM) and the social entity Work for Social (a pro bono intermediary organisation). Additionally, this publication, together with those created by the other partners of the BEESE Pro Bono Project, is the base for the third output: a Study Guide on how to implement pro bono projects and an online course available for those interested in learning how to carry out these projects. All documents are available on the website of the project.

2. Short-Term Pro Bono Pilot



Participants during one of the on-line sessions

The short-term pro bono pilot consisted of a one-day event of 4-5 hours of pro bono work. In this chapter, we share how the different phases of its implementation took place in Madrid. Due to the COVID-19 situation, all the work had to be carried out virtually, with some methodology changes.

a. Selection of the nonprofit beneficiary

The nonprofit selected by Work for Social was "**Viajes Tumaini**" ("Tumaini trips"). It is a social entrepreneurship founded in 2013. They have been working for several years, offering solidarity trips to those who want to help out during their vacations. They offer volunteer opportunities in local nonprofits in eight countries of Asia,

Africa, and LATAM. They also run seminars in Madrid and Barcelona about how to volunteer in developing countries which positively impact their communities.

The diagnosis to find out the pro bono consultancy scope, was held online in two sessions (1,5 hours each), which took place in April 2020 (during the COVID-19). The identified need was the consultancy on an emergency fundraising campaign.

Work for Social carried out one additional online session with Tumaini to prepare content for the volunteers' sessions.

b. Recruitment process and number of participants

Work for Social prepared a briefing explaining what a short-term pro bono is, which nonprofit they were going to help (Tumaini), and this nonprofit's challenge/need. Also, it described the role of the volunteers and the type of skills they needed to have. Likewise, it stressed the benefits of participating in this kind of project (also mentioned the BEESE Pro Bono Project).

Work for Social sent the briefing to a teacher of the Economics Faculty at the UAM. However, due to the COVID-19 crisis, she could not ask their students to volunteer, since they were pretty busy trying to figure out how to cope with their studies. Another teacher of the Psychology Faculty responded with the same feedback. So, the project was subsequently opened to students of other universities. Work for Social made the call through social media and personal contacts, and students (undergraduate and master's degree) started to sign up very soon.

In the end, seven students registered from seven different universities (Complutense University of Madrid, Rey Juan Carlos University, ICADE, ESADE, EOI, Mondragón University Autonoma University of Madrid), of which 5 from Grado and 2 from master. Given that ten students registered, and that some of them did not have the skills for the pro bono project, a selection procedure was conducted.

The working team was composed of a small marketing agency (from Alicante, Spain, "Hoy es el día") - a designer and CEO (from Buenos Aires, Argentina, "Marcas que Marcan"); a professional (freelancer) with a professional background in sales, marketing and as an event organiser; and a freelancer with experience in marketing and fundraising for nonprofits.

The team had four mentors and seven students.

Before the pro bono meeting, all volunteers received the diagnosis document. In the first session, which was a mix between training and presentation of the nonprofit with an explanation about how the process was going to be provided, students could ask any question they had. Additionally, one of the mentors validated the scope of the project in two different virtual meetings.

c. Pro bono meeting(s)

Due to the Covid-19 crisis, Work for Social held the whole short-term pro bono pilot online. Instead of resorting to the intensive model of five hours in one day, the project was conducted or split in several online sessions via Zoom (three sessions of two hours each, plus a final session of one hour, which amounts to seven hours in total). In each session, volunteers could also work in groups thanks to the platform (Zoom). Also, there were two facilitators.

In between sessions, participants could plan and prepare for the following sessions. The facilitators presented the sessions' agenda, co-led the conversations, encouraged every volunteer to participate in the sessions, and compiled all the volunteers' ideas in one document (deliverable). At the beginning of the first session, some 'ice breaking' dynamics helped to start the session which some students later said that they appreciated.

Five of the students said they had invested a total of between 8 and 10 hours in the project. Two students said they supported between 10 and 15 hours.

With respect to mentors, three of them said they invested between 10 and 15 hours. Only one said he invested between 8 and 10 hours.

The deliverable was the «Plan of Fundraising Campaign due to the COVID-19 crisis for Viajes Tumaini» (43 pages). It contained: 1) objectives; 2) target groups; 3) suggested activities for the campaign; 4) suggested activities for the long term of the nonprofit and 5) team. It was delivered one week after the last session of the project.

d. Evaluation

Work for Social and the UAM finished the evaluation 15 days after the last session.

Regarding the students' evaluation, they were satisfied by the degree of information they received before the pro bono project and were very happy about their participation in general. They considered they had gained professional experience and had increased their network possibilities. They felt that being able to work with mentors had supported them in developing their professional skills. They would have liked to have had more days to better carry out the nonprofit's goals and challenges (a short-term pro bono project or a long-term pro bono project).

They believe that they have gained personal confidence and are better equipped to take initiative and propose new ideas. Additionally, they have developed soft skills (teamwork, listening, empathy). Besides, they considered to have learned more than what they have given - in terms of knowledge - to the nonprofit.

Regarding the mentors' evaluation, they have invested more time in the preparation of the sessions (10-15 hours). The participants were very involved and committed in all of the sessions, except for one mentor.

Overall, they were pleased about participation. Some of the mentors would like a more active involvement from the students and have recommended that the mentors should have a more passive role.

They also signalled the need to have additional days so as to more properly address the challenge of the nonprofit. Some of them considered that they had gained professional experience and had increased their network. The most enriching part in terms of professional experience was being able to work with the students.

They have developed soft skills (teamwork, listening, empathy) and hard skills (strategy vision, knowledge about fundraising and digital marketing, etc.).

Finally, regarding the nonprofit's evaluation, its director is said to have invested in the project's preparation more than 20 hours, and all of the team (five people) was involved. They were pleased about the diagnosis phase and how that step helped them to identify their primary needs and prepare for the pro bono sessions. They consider this will have a significant impact on their campaign.

They also mentioned that more time invested in the consultancy could have helped volunteers to work deeper in different areas. They were very pleased with their participation in general.

Participants received their certification once they had answered the questionnaire. Some of them also shared the accreditation on their LinkedIn page, mentioning the BEESE Pro Bono Project.

e. Testimonies and learnings

What was learned

- Regarding recruitment:

To have a closer relationship with those teachers committed to the pro bono project, so that, at the moment of recruitment, you can have their full support. Also, it is essential to know the exams' calendar to fix the dates of the sessions.

- Regarding logistics:

It is essential to share a doodle or an excel document to know the availability of all participants to select the dates of all the sessions.

- Regarding the facilitation:

To select a suitable video call: zoom premium or any other similar allows to split the session into small groups. Try to prepare dynamic tools that allow students to put their ideas down (jam board, miro, etc.).

Testimonies

From the nonprofit: *"We are very grateful, it has been beneficial and very enriching. When you are a small team, you lose your objectivity".*

"I liked the format. It has been robust, and it has paid off. You have given us a lot."

From the students: *"Very enriching, especially for learning about projects as beautiful as this one. I have learned a lot from the organisation about how to meet other people. Thank you for the opportunity."*

"I loved the experience; I really liked Work for Social and Tumaini. I have learned more than I have been able to contribute. Excellent organisation. Very enriching people from different cities."

From the mentors: *"For me, it was the first time using an online format. It was not very clear how it was going to unfold. However, it has been phenomenal - time management, logistics worked perfectly, and everything is good at the organisational level. At the Tumaini level, you have a significant project with a local community".*

'inclusive shirts', since they offer different sizes (apart from the typical ones of small-medium and large size).

After several sessions of diagnosis of their needs, the challenge identified was the definition of a marketing strategic plan with a focus on e-commerce.

b. Recruitment process and number of participants

The mid-term campus pro bono pilot was conducted in June 2019, so the recruitment process started in March 2019.

Regarding student recruitment, Work for Social prepared a briefing with the pro bono project's details (date, skills needed, name of the nonprofit, etc.). A teacher of the Economics Faculty at the UAM invited some of their students to participate in the project. Shortly afterwards, students started to apply.

Work for Social invited two small marketing agencies to participate as mentors.

Training

Both students and mentors received the same training. All participants received the diagnosis document as well as the business plan of Roots and Sisters, which they had previously provided. Work for Social called each of them to ensure they understood the whole project.

Additionally, Work for Social trained one student to help with the pro bono meeting's facilitation. This training was conducted virtually by Work for Social.

Participants

Even though we had eight students registered, only five of them could participate during the pro bono meeting: three of which from Grado and two from Master (Economics and Marketing).

We had three corporate mentors with digital marketing skills, from the two small enterprises mentioned above.

c. Pro bono meeting(s)

The pro bono meeting took place in the beginning of June 2019, during one single day (eight hours). One week before the event, all logistical aspects were carried out. We have chosen a small classroom at the faculty of psychology of the UAM to conduct the project. The facilities had one computer, a projector as well as a group of easy to move desks.

Two persons of Work for Social facilitated the session: they presented the agenda of the session, co-led the conversation, encouraged every volunteer to participate in the session, and harvested all the ideas of the volunteers in one document (deliverable). They used different facilitation techniques (icebreakers, brainstorming, design thinking) and materials, such as sticky notes, long papers, and markers.

The student facilitator helped Work for Social present the agenda of the pro bono meeting and to present some of the tasks volunteers had to do during the pro bono event.

The deliverable was the «Marketing Strategy plan for e-commerce for Roots and Sisters» (24 pages). It contained: 1) objectives; 2) buyer's personal identification; 3) suggested activities for each "buyer persona"; and 4) action plan. It was delivered one week after the pro bono meeting.

During the event, the costs resulted mainly from the food (participants' coffee break and lunch) and the materials used (sticky notes, markers, and others).

d. Evaluation

All participants received a survey, as well as the deliverable.

Regarding the students' feedback, they were satisfied by the quality of information they received before the pro bono event, and were pleased about their participation in general. They considered that they had gained professional experience and increased their network and commented that they liked working as a team. Students believed that they had achieved increased personal confidence and that they could now take the initiative and propose new ideas. They have developed soft skills (teamwork, listening, empathy).

Regarding the mentors' feedback, they have invested more time preparing the pro bono meeting (10-15 hours). Some mentors had difficulties "disconnecting" from their regular job (calls, emails) during the event. They were pleased about their participation in general and indicated that they have enjoyed having more than one day to better meet the nonprofit's challenge. They considered that they had gained professional experience and had increased network opportunities. They assumed that the event had given them knowledge and a social purpose. In addition, they have developed soft skills (teamwork, listening, empathy).

With regards to the nonprofit's feedback, they were pleased about the diagnosis phase and how it helped them to identify their primary needs. They too felt that they have acquired new skills and specific knowledge; they believed this would have a significant positive impact on their project. However, they thought that more time invested in the consultancy could help the volunteers to work in a more concentrated way in the deliverable action plan. They were pleased about their participation in general.

e. Testimonies and learnings

What was learned

- Regarding recruitment:

It is advisable to have a waiting list if some participants cannot attend the pro bono meeting. You can have cancellations at the last minute, so it is crucial to replace those students quickly.

- Regarding logistics:

It is critical to ensure that everything is adequate for the pro bono project: a room with natural light, enough space, and well set for creating a lovely environment.

- Regarding facilitation:

Try to create spaces where students feel comfortable sharing their ideas in front of the mentors: ice-breakers and pauses during which participants can get to know each other are very important to create this atmosphere.

Testimonies

From the nonprofit: *"The most valuable thing has been the exchange of knowledge, teamwork, valid and practical advice from experts and students, and the new contacts we made."*

"What has been enriching to me is the different contributions of each of the participants involved in the pro bono event, their different points of view, and the possibility of discussing, sharing, and drawing different strategies to address our needs."

From the students: *"The most enriching part has been to learn from both entrepreneurs and professionals. Additionally, to be able to help with the knowledge that I have acquired as a student".*

"Learn from others and listen to different points of view."

From the mentors: *"It has been exciting to work with students from the University: we have shared with them our knowledge, but also we have learned from them in different ways."*

"It is incredible to see how many ideas occurred to the team in such a short time."

4. Long-Term Pro Bono Pilot

The long-term pilot consisted approximately of six weeks of pro bono work. In this chapter we share how the different phases of its implementation took place in Madrid. Due to the COVID-19 situation, some of the final work had to be carried out virtually with some methodology changes. Finally, the extension of the project was longer than originally anticipated.



Participants during the last physical meeting, beginning of March 2020

a. Selection of the nonprofit beneficiary

Work for Social selected the nonprofit's program of the **REDOMI association**, "**DaLaNota**". DaLaNota is a music social education program created in 2015, delivered to children and young people. Its mission is to train people to actively

participate in society, building a balanced and inclusive community, through music as a critical element of social and cultural intervention and transformation.

The three hours diagnosis session took place in June 2019 and was led by two members of Work for Social and two members of DaLaNota. By the end of June 2019, the briefing was ready, including the pro bono project's scope (business plan with focus on the business model and communication), length of the project, volunteers' skills needed, etc. In September 2019, a second diagnosis took place to update the briefing before the pro bono project's kick-off.

The nonprofits' needs which were identified in this process concerned strategy and communication. The pro bono project had two works or challenges to address: the first one was to work on the business plan of DaLaNota, and the second one consisted in addressing communication issues and, mostly, the improvement of their website.

b. Recruitment process and number of participants

As in the previous pro bono projects, Work for Social prepared a briefing explaining what the pro bono project was about, which nonprofit they were going to help, and the challenges of this nonprofit. It contained the volunteers' role and the type of skills needed for the pro bono project, as well as the benefits of participating in this kind of project (a real professional experience and an impact on their CVs, among others).

Work for Social sent the briefing to the Business and Economics Faculty and the Computer Science Faculty of the UAM. Work for Social participated in two events, aimed at presenting the project and therefore recruiting students during September 2019.

Regarding the mentor's recruitment, Work for Social published the briefing on several social media networks (Voluntare, Impact Hub, and all Work for Social social media channels). The company Deloitte shared it internally, and two of its

employees registered. The recruitment was complemented by an informal "word of mouth" campaign.

Training

All participants received the same training. One week before the kick-off meeting (October 8th, 2019), all volunteers received a briefing. This diagnosis document included the work plan of the whole long-term pro bono pilot, the internal agreement (confidentially), Da La Nota's presentation, and a presentation of Work for Social. A second kick-off event was conducted, two weeks later, so as to ensure that all volunteers received the information.

Participants

Seven students started the long-term pro bono project. However, most of them had to quit and only two of them finalised it. All of them had the same role, except one of them, who participated in the Business Plan and the Communication groups.

With focus on corporate mentors, 16 volunteers signed up (they were corporate volunteers and freelancers). They were from companies such as Deloitte, L'Oréal, and Google. In the end, there were seven mentors (four corporate volunteers and three freelancers).

c. Pro bono meeting(s)

Work for Social facilitated the whole process, and ensured that the work plan was advancing and that all participants were actively involved in their pro bono work. They carried out different physical meetings at DaLaNota school, at Impact Hub Madrid, and Deloitte headquarters. These meetings took place from October 2019 until March 2020.

Later on, all meetings were held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the sessions were recorded via Zoom and shared with the rest of the team.

During the whole project, one corporate mentor took the role of coordinating the work plan. He distributed the tasks between students and corporate mentors.

Regarding the communication team, an expert in branding and a graphic designer took the lead to advance with the new branding for DaLaNota, together with one student. This team could not finalise the work, since DaLaNota realised they were not ready to change their branding. However, volunteers used some of the insights of this work for the later one on the new website (the architecture of the home structure). This latest work was started during the pandemic without any student's support since they could not continue with the project.

Both works (business plan and new website) were ready by the end of May 2020. The project had a total length of eight months. Most participants invested more than 100 hours of pro bono work (both students and mentors).

Regarding the deliverables, the long-term pro bono project produced the following ones:

- A business plan document;
- An image audit, a new image proposal (total branding), and a first version of the new logo;
- A new web page.

d. Evaluation

Regarding the students' feedback, they were satisfied by the degree of information they received before the project, and they were pleased about their participation in general. They felt appreciated during it and believe that their involvement had contributed to their professional growth. They considered they had gained professional experience and had increased their network; now, they believe that working with mentors has made them develop their professional skills and soft skills as well (listening).

They liked the different professionals' who participated in the team, given the variety of backgrounds. They also considered that this project had given them purpose. Their personnel network has increased thanks to this project. Also, they mentioned having learned about how a nonprofit works internally.

Finally, they considered it was challenging to find a time slot for the meetings and that the pro bono project took much more time than expected.

With respect to mentors' feedback, they believe the business plan's goals were reached after the long-term pro bono project. In general, they were happy about their participation. They would like to see more active involvement from students and recommended that the mentors should not execute any tasks.

Regarding project management, the project leader highlighted that students were not sufficiently familiar with working on strategic consultancy. So, the allocation of jobs was not enough for students. It would have been good had the students received some training on the subject of strategy, so they could better understand the steps and the outcomes expected for the consultancy.

They have highlighted some positive aspects about their participation: teamwork, the mix of knowledge and the social vision of DaLaNota, getting to know the third sector, leading the project, using their expertise in something 'different' from usual, and project management (such as design thinking, strategy, and methodology of work), and learning from others.

Finally, they stressed it was difficult to combine their daily jobs and the pro bono work.

Regarding the nonprofit's feedback, they mentioned that they invested a lot of time in all the consultancies carried out during the long-term pro bono pilot. They were pleased about the diagnosis phase run by Work for Social and how it helped them identify needs that they did not have been able to list before. They felt satisfied with, among others: the diagnosis meeting, the relationship with Work for Social, and the deliverable. They recommend being very clear about the pro bono project's

scope and informing in advance about the documentation that the volunteers will need to do their pro bono work. They were delighted with the global experience and the facilitation of Work for Social.

They believe their participation as beneficiaries in the long-term pro bono pilot allowed them to gain new knowledge, which will have a positive and lasting impact on the nonprofit.

On the other hand, Da La Nota's coordinator would have liked to have known the exact number of hours they have to dedicate for the pro bono project and the necessary documentation that they had to prepare for the volunteers. They also highlighted the importance of having an intermediary organisation like Work for Social in charge of the project.

Finally, regarding the deliverables of the communication team, they considered that the brand analysis was fascinating. However, they were not prepared to change their logo but were, nonetheless, pleased about the final result of the new website development.

e. Testimonies and learnings

What was learned

One of the previous lessons from a long-term pro bono project is that you need to invest some hours training the students. All participants should receive training on project management, roles and tasks, and their responsibilities. For instance, in the Business Plan case, it would have been great to have trained students on how to do a strategic consultancy.

For a long-term project like this one, it is essential to manage the consultancy's length to avoid extending its period. Also, there must be a strategy to retain students, because they can easily quit and leave the project due to their exams and work.

It is crucial to validate the scope of the pro bono project with the nonprofit, as to avoid any misunderstandings. It is essential to check if the nonprofit is ready to implement the pro bono consultancy recommendations, since it would be extremely awful to tell corporate volunteers and students that all the time and effort they have put in the project has been for nothing.

Testimonies

From the mentors: *"As a mentor of the program, I enjoyed the experience. Da La Nota is doing a great job for the kids in our community, and I was happy to contribute with my skills and knowledge. I agree with the saying",*

"Only by giving are you able to receive more than you already have."

"Da la Nota is the perfect example of passion, resilience, and hard work. I was impressed with all the organisation's people and their ability to transform hard times into magic times. Since very little, I have had a connexion with the music world, and I do believe that music has the power to change lives."

5. Conclusions

The first pilot carried out in Spain was the mid-term pro bono. Some of the learnings regarding facilitation with students could be shared with the other partners involved in the BEESE Pro Bono Project. However, and due to the COVID-19 crisis, Work for Social had to test new ways of facilitating the short-term pro bono project virtually, with different tools and methodologies.

Even though in two of the pilots (long and short-term) some or all of the work had to be carried out virtually, all deliverables had a very high quality and were really useful for the nonprofits. Also, students and mentors acquired significant experience for their career and personal growth.

With some adjustments on the methodologies of the three pilots, and after some workshops carried out inside the BEESE Pro Bono Project consortium, all of the experiences with the pilots in the five countries involved had been vital for the final results of the project. Thanks to our guides, we hope that universities and other stakeholders have a great and solid starting point to implement their own pro bono projects.