AD VENTURE
adventuretourism.eu

ADVENTURE TOURISM INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP PLAN FOR IRELAND

Erasmus+

Table of Contents

Useful Main Website Links

Official AVIP Website	www.adventuretourism.eu
Adventure Tourism Regional Innovation Partnership Plans	Adventure Tourism Regional Partnership Plans
Online Course 1 **Online Course 2**	1. Immersion in Digital Technologies 2. Innovating New Products
Open Online Collaborative Learning and Knowledge Exchange Platform	• Digital Technologies Open Educational Resources • Open Online Collaborative Learning • Special Interest Groups • Virtual Talks
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/adventuretourism.eu/

1. About Our Adventure Tourism Innovation Partnerships Project

The AVIP project commenced in September 2017 and is delivered by a partnership of six organisations from the UK, Ireland, Bulgaria, Estonia and Denmark. Adventure tourism is widely recognised as a powerful tool that can promote sustainable development in rural and economically marginal areas, generating smart employment and jobs growth, as well as providing strong incentives for conserving the natural environment. Adventure tourism has transformative potential, particularly for those economies constrained by structural weaknesses and disadvantage by their remote locations, including AVIP partners in Scotland, Estonia, Ireland and Bulgaria.

The Adventure Tourism Innovation Partnerships (AVIP) Erasmus + project 2017 – 2019 (www.adventuretourism.eu.) sought to to deliver high quality, highly relevant high-level education and skills that supports retention of high calibre staff in peripheral/rural regions. It set out to support the growth of SMART jobs to stimulate regional adventure tourism economies and business performance.

The Need	The AVIP Response
Adventure tourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry and has been recognized as a powerful tool to support economic growth. There is • an awareness that the current education and training is failing to keep up with the rapidly changing consumer needs and technological advances within the adventure tourism industry. • a need to develop skills in a range of areas to support the industry's ambitions for growth, including: management and leadership; enabling high quality customer experiences; and ensuring the availability of appropriate training. *"We must not slip into the false divide between vocational and academic pathways".*	AVIP tackled these needs head on; developing innovative partnerships and new models of education based around highly flexible learning pathways, tailored to meet digital and innovation skills, empowering businesses to respond to growth opportunities within the adventure tourism economy. The AVIP main focus was to develop education and training programmes to strengthen the skill base of young people and adults working in the adventure tourism sector.

The specific project outputs scoped:-

• The development of Adventure Tourism Innovation Partnerships in Scotland, UK; Ireland; Bulgaria and Estonia as part of the Intellectual Output 1. This entailed bringing together at least 60 (total – 15 per region) high level representatives of all key stakeholder organisations, including Higher Education Institutions; VET institutions from the public, private and not-for-profit sector; local government authorities; and adventure tourism businesses in each region to form a strategic action plan that guides HE institutions, VET bodies, SMEs and wider stakeholders as to how to effectively implement flexible learning adventure tourism pathways

in their region.

- Innovative study modules aimed at practitioners and employees, as well as students.   The project will help SMEs to upskill in marketing and digital technologies. Learners will acquire the technical skills required to implement effective digital marketing, as well as the product innovation skills that are critical to entrepreneurship and businesses growth. Two complimentary courses have been developed :-

    - **Course 1 Immersion in Digital Technologies Open Educational Resource**

        Partners introduce innovative training to transform graduate and SME capacity to digitise their business experience.

    - **Course 2 Innovating New Products: Open Educational Resources**

        Learners will unleash their creative capacity through acquisition of commercialisation skills and competencies.

- Promote collaboration and knowledge exchange through an open online training course.

This document outlines the objectives, activities and structure of the **Adventure Tourism Innovation Partnerships in Ireland**.

2. Setting The Scene In Ireland - The Context for Adventure Tourism Innovation Partnerships in Ireland

The Activity Tourism and Adventure Tourism in Ireland was last quantified in 2011. Based on Failte Ireland* data, activity tourism was worth some €1.2 billion a year to the economy. This category of tourism ranged from coasteering, remote mountain bike trails and a growing number of adventure centres in places as diverse as Kenmare, Carlingford and Castlecomer. Other more generic activities include: Hiking, Walking, Cycling, Angling, Equestrian, Water based (Failte Ireland) and was by 2017 included activities such as Nature & Wildlife Tours, Horseback Riding, Kayaking & Canoeing, Hiking, Bike Tours, Surfing, Windsurfing, Kitesurfing, Hiking & Camping, Dolphin & Whale Watching *(TripAdvisor).* The identified customer profile segments are; Social Energisers, Culturally Curious, Great Escapers. (Failte Ireland)

The key markets for activity tourism included; UK 32%, North. America 19%, Mainland Europe 45%, Other Areas 4% (Failte Ireland). Most travel agents reported the strongest growth has come from Germany and North America. They also mentioned growth from the Netherlands, France, Spain, Belgium, Switzerland and Australia.

Key Industry Facts
- Activity tourism visitors stay longer (10 days) than the average overseas holiday maker (7 days) in Ireland.
- The spend of activity tourism visitors is 45% higher than the average overseas visitor.
- Travel agents revealed more and more customers were looking for Adventure Experiences in 2017.
    - 83% of travel agents experienced increase in bookings comparing 2016 – 2017 (Jan- Mar).
    - 75% of travel agents experiences an increase in bookings for first 3 months of

2017 (ITAA).
  - o Campaigns launching the Wild Atlantic through Virtual Reality (VR) videos of unmissable 360-degree views had huge marketing impact.
- Adventure Tourism trends indicate mobile devise are on the Rise;
  - o US Smartphone ownership 2015; 67% & 2018 79%.
  - o 1 in 4 GB post photos on social media were made via Smartphones (Failte Ireland).

Currently there are over 1283 Adventure Tourism Businesses in Ireland; Activity Operators, Angling, Bike Rental, Cruising, Equestrian, Fisheries, Golf, Guides, Pitch and Putt, Sea Angling, Sport and Walking. There are over 1041 walks, trails, golf ranges, cycle/walk loops, parklands and forest parks, coastal walks, hill walks, historic town walks, linear cycle/walk routes, links, long distance way marked ways, mountain bike trails, nature and wildlife areas and passes.

The growth of the sector is also reflected by the establishment of the Irish Adventure Tourism Association in 2017. The IAAT (https://iaat.ie/) is an independent representative association for the adventure tourism sector on the island of Ireland and aims to work with adventure tourism operators to develop the sector in a sustainable and responsible manner. It was founded by eleven Irish adventure tourism based companies to establish a representative professional association for the adventure tourism sector in Ireland. Partners include
- Wild Atlantic Way
- Failte Ireland
- Ireland's Anicent East
- Ireland's Hidden Heartlands
- AIRE (Association of Irish Riding Establishments)

3. Engaging Stakeholders & Forming A Regional Partnership

The overall aim of the Adventure Tourism Innovative Partnerships (AVIP) project Ireland is to help adventure tourism businesses and educational organisations to understand how they can take advantage of the new dimensions of technology but particularly interactive and immersive technology. The project
- arms industry and education with free online resources to upskill in marketing and digital technologies
- demonstrates how they can unlock creative capacity and develop product innovation skills to grow a tourism business.
- shares expertise and resources leading to a broader tourism innovation and dynamic.

Committing to Action; Action Plan for AVIP Ireland – what can we achieve?

Momentum is the founding member of the AVIP Regional Partnership Ireland. While each AVIP partner area was expected to attract a membership of 12-15 stakeholders, Momentum were keen to engage as wide an audience as possible and a deliberate approach was adopted to ensure all potential Irish Adventure Tourism stakeholders and educators were invited at key milestones throughout the process.

Our partnership worked to create a detailed Regional Action Plan of implementable actions that

would fulfil the mission and overall aims of the project. We divided the process into six steps that determined each component of the plan:

1. Action step(s): What will happen?
2. Person(s): Who will do what?
3. Date to be completed: Timing of each action step
4. Resources required: Resources and support (both what is needed and what is available?)
5. Barriers or resistance, and a plan to overcome them
6. Collaborators: Who else should know about this action?

It is also important to highlight that the AVIP Regional Partnership Ireland sought to initiate achievable actions/projects aligned with partners own priorities which also assist the members to fulfill their own organisation's missions. It was important the project aligns with partner needs and priorities. The members of the AVIP Partnership committed resources to both developing and implementing actions in order to deliver on the key project priorities identified in the Regional Innovative Partnerships Action Plan.

3.1 Who is involved?

Gaining membership and traction was the starting point and this entailed 3 key steps…

Step One Momentum's first step was to develop an industry specific database which included a listing of all the priority Irish Adventure Tourism representative organisations and associations in Ireland. In all, a list of over 300 Adventure Tourism businesses, SMEs, support agencies, business representatives, regional and county tourism bodies, educational organisations and VET organisations was constructed. This initial database was used throughout the project as a key dissemination tool for all project communications.

Step Two Over a period of approx. 2 months,Momentum made a series of initial introductory and information phone calls ensuring contact information could be shared on a one to one level.

Step Three This was followed by a formal email invite to the All those contacted were encouraged to share the information and invite other partners who may also be interested to participate and attend. Through this process we also engaged closely with IAAT (Ireland Association for Adventure Tourism) .

It is useful to provide a complete overview of the engagement process in the realisation of the AVIP Regional Partnership Ireland, specifically,who are the key stakeholders and a description of how they have been involved in the project.

Stakeholders	Description of Activity
• 154 SME's Directly • 6 Chamber of Commerce • 21 VETS Educational Organisations • 15 local/regional economic development agencies • 11 Enterprise and tourism networks	• Phone calls to SMEs 78 • Survey sent to all 217 • Invite to AVIP Introductory Partnership Meeting & Workshop. Reminder sent 1 week prior. • **Partnership Meeting & Workshop 1** (23 attended including Irish Adventure

• 8 National/regional and local authorities • 2 Adventure Tourism Destinations	Tourism Association of Ireland) • **Partnership Meeting & Workshop 2** • **Partnership Meeting & Workshop 3** • **Partnership Meeting & Workshop 4** • Partnership Meeting Newsletter– Thanking attendees, feedback received from industry, next steps, how to get engaged, what's next • Attended IAAT launch event and disseminated AVIP Project

3.2   How has this partnership developed?

Date	Main Items progressed
Meeting No 1 26 January 2018	**Venue:- Sligo IT, Ireland** (leading regional education institute) **Attendees** IAAT, Adventure Tourism Businesses, Reprentatives of LEO's, local Tourism Networks, Colleges and tourism industry representatives - Member Introductions and project explained. - Overview of the Adventure Tourism project concept, implementation, aims and overall objectives of the project and the expected outcomes of the AVIP Innovative Partnerships Project. - Commitment required including an outline of roles and responsibilities were discussed and adopted. - The project branding and communication strategy was explained. - The focal point for this meeting was to discuss the Existing and Emerging AVIP initiatives in our region: Remit, Gaps and Opportunities.The opportunity to develop a Partnership Plan and Courses tailored to regions needs was also discussed. - Members provided information via discussion while AVIP partner took notes - Proposed outline of the Regional Action plans was presented and agreed - The region and additional AVIP members were identified, all members agreed to provide information and represent a AVIP Innovaitve Partnership - The Regions was defined to include representatives from counties Tralee, Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal, Dublin

Meeting No 2 Wednesday 3rd October 2018	- Welcome new members & review of progress since last meeting - Collaborative development of a SWOT analysis, Adventure Tourism Lifelong Learning Regional Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats – see next section for results. - Update on course curriculum development and input from members in terms of proposed content - The second meeting also undertook a powerful exercise which AVIP Innovaitve Partnership members actively contributed to in advance of the meeting which was the compilation of best practice case studies and provision of information in relation to Irish Adventure Tourism supports on offer. These contributions were included in the AVIP Courses. - The draft programme content of the Multiplier event was discussed. - Further in-depth analysis and discussion took place in relation to the best practice case studies which were fed back by the European partners. - The emerging plan for AVIP Innovaitve Partnership Ireland working together by integrating SMEs with colleges and students was discussed - Contribution to the AVIP Courses to be pilot tested by a mix of partners with maximum participation was committed to at the meeting.
Meeting No 3 Monday 26 November 2018	- Welcome new members & review of progress since last meeting - Pilot testing of new courses and resources for a duration of 2 hours - Guidance provided to test and review AVIP Courses in Immersion in Technology and Product Innovation. Discussion and feedback provided.

	- Feedback also provided via online and written survey, total of 23 surveys returned. AVIP partners were very happy overall with the courses and content and quality of work - The AVIP Innovaitve Partnership was the conduit for building a new connection between Irish Adventure Tourism Association of Ireland (IAAT) and Sligh Insitute of Technology (SIT) Tralee IT (TIT) and adventure tourism businesses nationally. All were interested in collaboration on the theme of AVIP Innovaitve Partnerships and course development which were discussed.
Meeting No 4 **Wednesday 16** **January 2019**	- Welcome new members & review of progress since last meeting - Discussion around the launch of the AVIP Courses and who to circulate the Press launch for the Multiplier event - Collation of existing and additional dissemination channels - Presentation of final AVIP courses and modules with final remarks and approvals - Confirmation of the AVIP multiplier proposed dates to launch the AVIP Project officially both regionally and nationally - Content and angle for marketing collateral pitch confirmed - End remarks included the distribution of ME collateral and information for distribution via partner channels

It is clear that partnership members were highly engaged in the process. The project was unfolding at an exciting time in the sector in Ireland and AVIP was recognised as providing important sectotal learning advancements and updates. Members also benefitted from connection with other similar businesses and industry stakeholders both in Ireland and Europe, acting as a new industry platform to get together to share, talk and exchange their experiences and SME knowledge.

The close relationship with IAAT (Irish Association Adventure Tourism) was a key feature in developing the partnership plan, working together to promote each other's benefits and how we assist and can beneficially impact industry as a support and member network support for Adventure Tourism. Their members are genuinely excited to see their case studies and contribution integrated into the AVIP modules.

With a target of 12 – 15 particiants, AVIP Regional Partnership Ireland attracted 53 people to be involved in the partnership across 4 meetings.

4. Adventure Tourism Lifelong Learning SWOT

Findings of Partnership review of Regional Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in Ireland

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal	- Currently no existing Adventure Tourism SME specific training modules available to Ireland - Existing College Courses do exist which reach BA Level specializing in areas e.g. Outdoor Adventure Management, Education & Environmental studies - As part of these courses students get to go on placement to AT businesses as part of their courses, supporting and building industry - Ireland has a very broad range of Adventure Tourism providers who have an Adventure Tourism qualification who work in Educational Organisations as lecturers - A significant proportion of the AT Providers have a degree or qualification in another area e.g. finance, computers, languages, marketing - Ireland has recently just set up its own dedicated member-based association for Adventure Tourism businesses Irish Adventure Association of Ireland (IAAT). Launching April 2018.	- Very little AT specific data recorded to support industry decision making are out of date nearly 7 years - Conferences and industry support learning materials are also significantly out of date - Currently supported by Failte Ireland who is a broader Tourism support organization very little industry specific support available - Organisations are not fully informed and manned with smart data to drive and support industry policies, strategies, marketing and promotional campaigns - Most of the courses available do not offer a higher-level BA or Masters Qualification - The number of new AT SMEs dominates the market i.e. set up in the last 5-10 years. For these businesses there is no strategic support and experience driven industry to learn example from - There is a lack of conclusively understanding AT from an Irish perspective this is particularly relevant to new, emerging and potential business development

Opportunities	Threats
• There is a huge variance of AT businesses, activities and destinations giving Ireland a fantastic platform and potential to further to build as an attractive, high quality AT Destination	• The influx of technology and how quick it is advancing and how to take advantage in a proactive way
• The launch of AVIP Modules into industry particularly given the topics will be highly beneficial to industry	• The courses offered are geared more around setting up one-man businesses rather than an SME
• Dedicated industry specific training, entrepreneurship, business support agencies need to be put in place locally, nationally and regionally	• The industry is lead by part time business entrepreneurs due to the seasonality. Working part time jobs during the week when in peak season and not working in the industry when off peak
• The AT Irish industry needs AT conferences, events, networking opportunities, SME specific courses and festivals	• Staff turnover is a huge problem when hired during peak periods and let go during off peak periods. The costs associated with re-training is draining SMEs
• Collaboration opportunities between experienced AT SMEs and new, emerging and potential SMEs	• There is lack of understanding how partnering and collaborating can assist business needs. How putting the destination first is to AT SMEs advantage
• Partnering and visiting other international best practice destinations as a collective to exchange best practice knowledge and experience such AT activities and destinations	• Businesses are passionate and open to ideas but still don't know the 'how' and 'who to talk to', 'who does what', 'where do I go for this or if this happens'
• The launch of the new Wild Atlantic Way and using it as a prime learning example of a new AT destination working well across European markets	• Businesses are still having difficulty reaching markets and focusing on the local market. They are not armed with the training needed to reach more markets particularly international markets
• Businesses can strategically develop, train and plan their businesses in a proactive way during the shoulder seasons	• Brexit, currency, oil prices, accessibility, weather are all prevalent ongoing examples of threats

The leftmost column spans both rows and reads: **External**

5. Deeper Assessment Of Regional SME's Lifelong Learning Needs

At each of the four partnership meetings, participants were asked to reflect both on the adventure toruism industry and their own businesses to highlight business challenges, issues and training needs they face that could be addressed by the AVIP Modules. As a result of this ongoing assessment of learning needs by the informed partnership members, the AVIP content creators were able to incorporate the following key measures:-

• **Strategic Varied Digital Marketing Channels:** That providers requested there is a need to come up with innovative digital technology practices and strategic marketing that doesn't heavily rely on Facebook as Facebook is enforcing restrictions on reach, where a payment is required to attain the reach which was previously free.

• **Funding, Training & Enterprise Support:** Industry doesn't know what help is out there in terms of funding, training and enterprise supports and don't know where to find these supports. It was recommended to set up an AVIP Closed Facebook Group where industry could share among themselves the support sources and types that are out there and further discuss the

benefits and how to take advantage of such supports.

- **Flexible Training Resources:** Currently there are very little training resources for Adventure Tourism and particularly for rural SME Adventure Tourism initiatives. It was seen as highly beneficial to have practical, step by step, flexible training resources available.
- **Technology:** Operators expressed an interest in Drone Technology, Augmented Reality, Immersive Technologies so they could inevitably stand out from the crowd and have a compelling platform to communicate their unique product offering. These aspects were included in the training content
- **Networking & Partnerships:** Industry isn't working together as well as it could, the respondents saw AVIP as a vehicle to initiate and build strong partnerships within the Adventure Tourism sector.
- **Keeping up with Trends:** Operators at a minimum want to be informed about technology and the future trends of technology and consumer behavior but also want the opportunity available to them when they wish to execute in such technology and consumer strategies and trends.
- **Partner in Training:** The respondents said they would like to try and give the training resources a go and maybe work as a group with other businesses e.g. invest the time, energy and resources in a drone video on the destination that can be used by those operators within that destination.
- **Consumer Behavior Management** was high on popularity in conversation. Understanding Adventure Tourism Consumer Behaviour in particular, how it is changing and developing and how to meet their expectations.
- **Email Management** can be difficult to come up with a simple to use effective email strategy or software would be highly beneficial
- **Website Optimisation:** How to incorporate different interactive elements into their websites was another area. How to include comment sections, a blog, booking option etc.
- **Marketing to Target Markets:** Understanding how to increase awareness and communicate to target markets effectively with minimum cost and how to do this digitally.

6. AVIP Partnership Plan Ireland Actions

Action 1   Contribution to Curriculum
Based on the feedback from the Irish AVIP Partnership, modules were amended to reflect their precise learning needs and now include
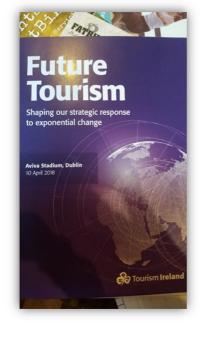
- **Future consumer behaviour in Adventure Tourism:** Particularly tailoring products to suit different target markets
- **Marketing:** Selling your product, booking conversions, getting to the customer before they arrive, strategically engaging and reaching potential customers
- **Digital Marketing:** Focusing on Facebook reach, Instagram and Twitter
- **Digital Marketing, website/blog:** Developing video content for website and social media, SEO, photography, Google Analytics, AdWords campaigns. How to blog?
- **Technology:** Want to learn more, how do we get engaged and involved in apps and technology, how can we use technology to market our business. Drone technology training
- **Funding:** How to write an application, where funding can be found, the funding criteria
- **Staff training:** All areas particularly during low season
- **Developing Partnerships** With other businesses was a predominant suggestion and who to partner with.

- **Innovating New Products -** plan Your Adventure Initiative, Business Planning and Marketing planning.

Action 2   Series of Exploitation Actions at regional and national level.

- **National Engagement by the AVIP Irleand partnership at a key major conference, the Future Of Tourism,** held on 10th April 2018 at Aviva Stadium, Dublin. Hosted by Tourism Ireland, AVIP Ireland partnership was strongly represented at this conference, networking and learning more about the emerging trends that needed to be corporated into the AVIP training modules.

  Discussions were advanced with the key policy bodies Irish Tourism Industry, Tourism Ireland, Failte Ireland and other partnership representatives.

  https://www.ireland.com/articles/campaign/future-tourism/

- **AVIP Partner representation at the Official Launch Of Irish Association Of Adventure Tourism (IAAT),** held on 11th April 2018 at Docklands, Dublin

- **National Engagement by the AVIP Irleand partnership at a key major conference, the National Agri-Tourism Conference 2018,** held on 15 October 2018 at Shearwater Hotel, Ballinsloe. Hosted by Teagasc and Failte Ireland. AVIP Ireland partnership was strongly represented at this conference, presenting the AVIP project, networking and learning more about the emerging trends in particular the agri sector diversifying into agritourism and particularly combining agri and adventure tourism. We had the opportunity to present ways how Agri businesses could diversify into Adventure Tourism understanding it better, how it is represented and supported from an Irish perspective but the main bulk of the presentation concentrating on the AVIP Project and how it can be used as a training resource to develop such agritourism adventure businesses.
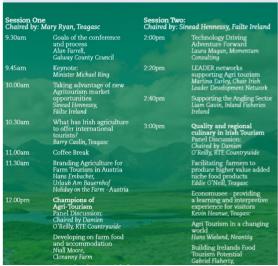
  There were numerous discussion with key industry partners and policy bodies, Galway County Council, RTE Countrywide, Adventure Tourism businesses, LEADER Networks, Inland Fisheries Ireland, Agri Media, Teagasc, Failte Ireland and Tourism Ireland and other partnership representatives.

  https://www.teagasc.ie/news--events/national-events/events/agri-tourism-conference-.php

- **Higher Educational Organisation engagement by the AVIP Irleand partnership at key guest lectures at Institute of Technology, Sligo to students from;**

1. **Bachelor of Business in Tourism with Event Management** (43 first year students) https://www.itsligo.ie/courses/bb-in-tourism-with-event-management/

2. **Bachelor of Business (Hons) (add-on) for Marketing, Tourism & Sport** (28 degree year students)

https://www.itsligo.ie/courses/bachelor-business-honours-addon/

Held in March and September 2018 at IT Sligo. The guest lectures focused on the AVIP Project and how the students could use the modules to further their research and understanding looking at existing adventure tourism initiatives and case studies at both Ireland and abroad. Looking at future trends, existing suggested best practice, how businesses and the industry can evolve to accommodate such trends and technology advancements particularly around VR, 360-degree video, apps and the use of drones. We then looked into how initiatives can incorporate innovative product development to cater for future adventure tourism and tourist needs.

https://www.itsligo.ie/courses/bb-in-tourism-with-event-management/
https://www.itsligo.ie/courses/bachelor-business-honours-addon/

- **Higher Educational Organisation engagement by the AVIP Irleand partnership at key Adventure Tourism Lecturers, Kinsale College;**

Ongoing conversations, pilot testing and distribution of the resources with Kinsale College lecturers so they could use the AVIP Project as a potential add on curriculum or project. The lecturers discussed how they intende to share the project with their students for research, learning and further understanding particularly in the topics surrounding the u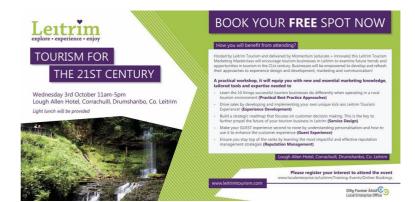se of immersive technology and innovative product development. Kinsale College also enagage with industry as do their students and are generating awareness to their industry partners.

https://www.kinsalecollege.ie/0utdoor-adventure-education-5.html

- **Leitrim Tourism Network engagement by the AVIP Irleand partnership at Destination Marketing Masterclass, Lough Allen Hotel, 3 October 2018;**

Where we had over 25 tourism businesses attend to learn about how to further develop and improve Destination Marketing in County Leitrim. The AVIP Project content was used as part of the presentation content. The focus around the AVIP topics and modules were very well received with great interest. A lot of the attendees said they would use the AVIP Project as a training and learning portal for both themselves and their staff. They particularly found the topics useful as Leitrim is a typical rural economically developing tourism destination. They found the tasks and realistic European case studies and potential connections particularly useful and educational.

- **Engagement by the AVIP Irleand partnership at Mastermind Event, Malmaison Hotel, Belfast, Tuesday 27 November**

Laura Magan from Momentum spoke about how the AVIP Project can assist responding to existing regional skills gaps focusing on mainly the two AVIP Couses Immersive Digital Technologies and Innovative Product Development. Laura also introduce the additional portal resources; virtual talks, blogs, expert interviews etc. There were a lot of key tourism players, industry partners and policy makers in attendance. This event proved to be aligned with the AVIP Project focusing on the application of technology in tourism to industry, education and policy makers.

Action 3 The Multiplier Effect

The Multiplier Event was a key event in the delivery of the AVIP project and played a very important role in raising awareness of the project. Our Partnership saw the opportunity to launch the AVIP Courses in the context of a regional forum bringing together decision makers, industry support bodies, educational organisations, adventure tourism and tourism entrepreneurs and SMEs to explore and commit to actions that could be taken in our Region to roll out the project. The Multiplier Event was held in W8 Centre, Manorhamilton, Co Leitrim Wednesday 12 June 2019. Over 50 people attended and discussed and networked adventure tourism and its future direction. Industry in particular were delighted to get the opportunity to talk to the tech experts, especially those recommended in their regions. Industry experts included Ciaran Stone, CEO & Project Coordinator from Square Root spoke about Application Development, Web Application Development, Virtual Media and existing funding. He also used the new Extreme Ireland Adventure App as an example App. Colin Farrell is an expert in Drone Footage Production providing footage for various tourism destinations. Colin spoke about Drone usage, requirements and provided key tips and tricks.

7 Communications

The AVIP project benefitted from the use of a strong branding strategy from the outset which we adopted in our region in terms of project implementation.   The brand was used by the Irish AVIP Partnership from the early engagementa right through the project.

The external role of communications was to ensure that the work of the Regional Partnership was visible, in order to organise support and indeed attract resources and commitment. Firstly, a communications strategy was developed and adopted by the Regional Partnership members which was linked to the Partnership's overall strategic plan and actions therein. Sufficient resources – both time and financial resources were applied in the project implementation to ensure the delivery of a successful communication and dissemination strategy locally in the region dedicated to communications. Designating a communications/press officer can facilitate this and help those outside the Partnership know where to turn for information. Nurturing good contacts with local media and having an active presence on social media channels are crucial. The Partnership's successes should be presented regularly to policy makers. Our target groups remain constant throughout the project and we purposely have actively nurtured their participation in the implementation phases, dissemination phase and to track the project's final impact.

Examples of AVIP Communications Collateral

Adventure Tourism Innovative Partnerships Flyer & Pull-up Banner

8 Sustainability Plan

The Adventure Tourism Innovative Patnerships served as a catalyst for change and capacity building in the defined regions of the adventure tourism sector. The Innovative Partnerships and Regional Partnership also thought about and planned for sustainability from its inception and they concentrated on developing sustainainable actions under the Regional Action plan from September 2017 onwards, the establishment of the network of AVIP partners being maintained and their continued collaboration is an example of this forward thinking and planning for sustainability by the Regional Partnership members. Since the inception of the project the AVIP partners and stakeholders have incorporated other universities, VET providers, training providers, business development organisations and other tourism agencies. The partnerships established are maintained on a regional and national level.

In delivering the series of Innovative Meetings we created a strong Regional Partnership which was stable, goal focused and had strong engagement through all members. We gained endorsement, support and commitment from the top of the organisations involved. The involvement and active participation of the target groups and the national support continues to develop. As a result of the Pilot Testing the AVIP Project has proven to adhere to the current and future needs of its target groups (Adventure Tourism entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs, HEI & VET organiations, students and graduates in the field). Based on the evaluations undertaken to determine the match between existing and future requirements he resources have proven to correspond to the specific needs and constraints of Ireland. The training modules, blogs, virtual talks and expert interviews are attractive and can be combined with a face to face format to include a trainer and training or educational fee can be applied.

The Regional Partnership Initiated achievable actions that were aligned with Adventure Tourism Innovative Partnerships project priorities and also helped partners fulfill their mission. Sustainability was enhanced as the Regional Partnership engaged in public relations from the outset which kept the project activities highly visible.

We built the capacity of adventure tourism in Ireland resulting from linkages made at the Multiplier event which was held in W8, Manorhamilton, June 12 2019 and who are continuing to build partnerships with other groups that have a similar mission.