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# Challenge Based Learning Guide

In collaboration with C-4CE and Interreg Vlaanderen-Nederland



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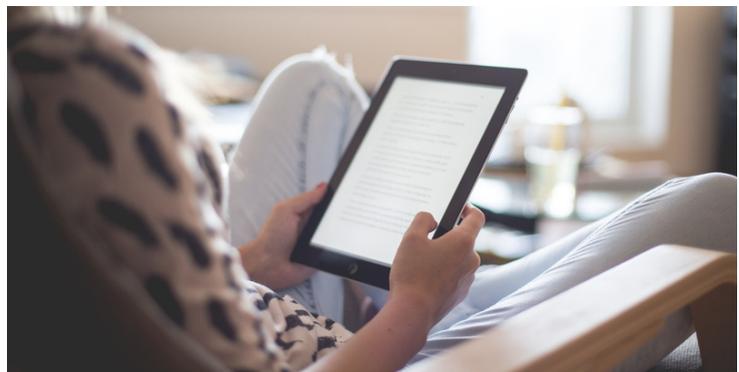
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# What is Challenge Based Learning (CBL) ?

It is a new and proven learning concept, particularly in the field of sustainability and circular economy, where organizations are confronted by complex challenges, requiring input and actions from outside the organisation.



**Learning by identifying, analysing and designing a solution to a problem at the intersection of people and organisations, where learning takes place in a multidisciplinary setting and focuses on jointly developing a solution that is ecologically, socially and economically sustainable.**

Unlike other learning methods, Challenge Based Learning focuses on practical problems where no solution is yet available at the start. The power lies precisely in finding solutions together.



## Why is CBL important for Circular Economy?

Research by the C-4CE project has shown that traditional training and courses are not the preferred way for organisations to learn about the circular economy. Often due to high entrance fees, little flexibility in terms of timing, and the fact that the content is often not in line with the needs of companies.

Yet there is a need for training and cooperation to tackle the very complex challenges involved in the circular economy. Problems that just require input from different companies and actors.

## The benefits of challenge-based learning

- The great advantage of CBL is the joint search for solutions to complex problems.
- For a circular economy, CBL can play a crucial role in shaping or accelerating a sustainability strategy or accelerating the realisation of the SDGs.

# 9 Steps

To realise the goal of CBL, you can use the following 9 steps as a guide in the learning process.

1

## **The Big Idea:**

What social issues are central?

2

## **Essential Questions:**

What key questions need to be answered to successfully 'tackle' these issues? How are these social issues connected to our daily practice?

3

## **Actionable Challenge:**

Which context-specific challenge do we want to tackle in this learning process, and how does it relate to 'The Big Idea'? How does taking up this challenge contribute to solving social issues?

4

## **Guiding Questions:**

What questions should we answer to take up this challenge and arrive at a concrete solution?

5

## **Essential resources and activities:**

What sources of information and activities to gather that information do we need to answer these questions?

6

### Synthesis:

An analysis of the answers to all the questions and how they relate to each other relationship.

7

### Solutions:

Based on all the information gathered, one or more solutions are identified or created (sometimes through prototyping) that contribute to taking up the Actionable Challenge and thereby solving societal issues.

8

### Implement and Evaluate:

Solutions are implemented (or tested) and evaluated.

9

### Reflect:

The learning process is concluded by consciously reflecting on all previous steps and their results.



# How to organize a CBL session yourself?

## Structure

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In practice, CBL starts with good preparation. That means making choices as an organisation about the following aspects:



Who can participate? Type of participants, degree of comparability with own organisation.



Number of participants?



Duration? One or multiple sessions?



Objectives of the learning process?



Structure: all together or in separate groups?



Location? Offline, online, hybrid?



Communication with participants? During and after.



Way insights are translated to your own organisation.

## Challenge

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A good way to put the challenge into context for other organisations is to provide them with information before the learning process. This could be a reference to the website or a brief description of the challenge and the reason for bringing it up for discussion.

One advantage of this is that it naturally broadens the learning process, which can enhance the scope and depth of insights.

## Roles

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For an effective challenge-based learning process, the following roles can be distinguished:

- Organisation presenting the challenge
- Organisations contributing to the challenge
- Moderators/facilitators
- Rapporteur



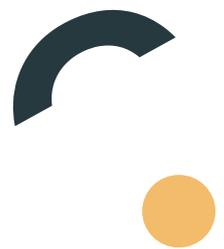
# The session

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After proper preparation, the challenge-based learning session can look like the following;

## ➤ Introduction

- Who is presenting the challenge?
- Who are the participants?



## ➤ Objective of the session

- Helping our organisation solve a challenge,
- By using your knowledge, experience, ideas, and network,
- Through a short but powerful learning process,
- In which we learn from each other.
- What do you hope to get out of this session?
- ...

## ➤ Introduction to Challenge-Based Learning

- Proven way of organisational learning
- Identifying, analyzing, and designing one or more concrete solutions to a practical problem (the challenge)
- Multidisciplinary setting leads to a diversity of insights
- Openness and trust



## ► Structure of the session

- Presentation of the challenge
- Clarifying questions
- Break-outs or open discussion
- Presentation of the results
- Reflection & conclusion



## ► The challenge

- Example: We have set up an internal sorting center and are exploring the possibility of starting second-hand sales. Should we do this ourselves or collaborate with an existing platform or partners? How do we deal with quality claims?
- Background of the challenge
  - How did this challenge emerge?
  - What solutions have we already tried?
  - How far along are we in solving the challenge?
  - What problems are we currently facing?
  - What do we want to achieve by solving the challenge?

## ► Claryfying questions from the audience

- Break-out in small groups or open discussion with moderator support



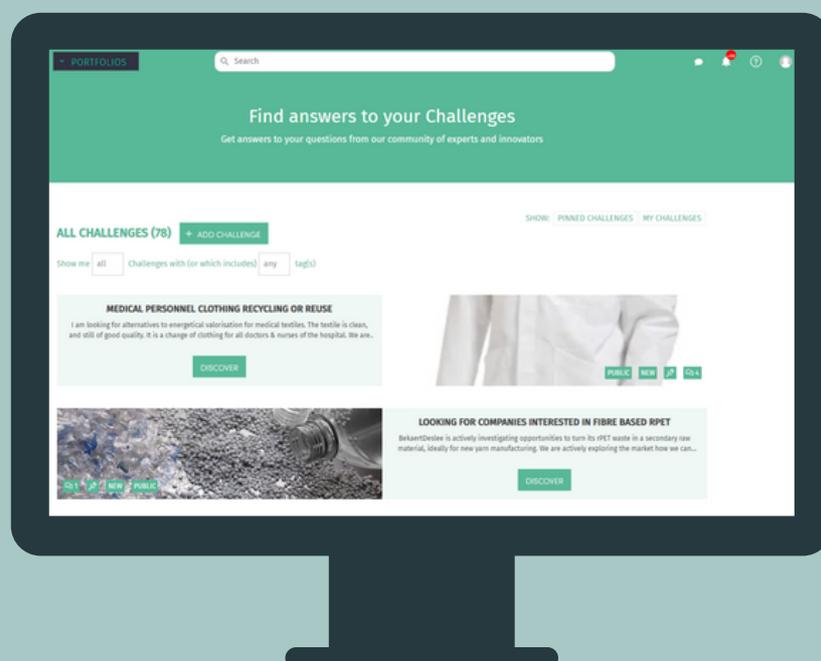


# Challenge Based Learning via Ellie.Connect

Based on this guide, you can proceed to put a CBL session into practice yourself.

## In addition, Ellie.Connect also offers a lot of opportunities for Challenge-Based Learning

1. You can post your challenge on the platform and share it with 500 individuals/organisations for direct feedback.
2. Every month, we organise an Ask.Ellie session based on the CBL method. In a short and powerful session, a company presents its challenge and gets instant feedback from participating organisations. Follow the event page on Ellie.Connect for the latest updates.
3. For more information, templates, and the full guide (in dutch) you can go to the Challenge Based Learning page on Ellie.Connect.



This guide is the result of collaboration with the Competences for Circular Economy (C-4CE) project, supported by Interreg Vlaanderen - Nederland.

## Follow Ellie.Talks on Spotify & Youtube

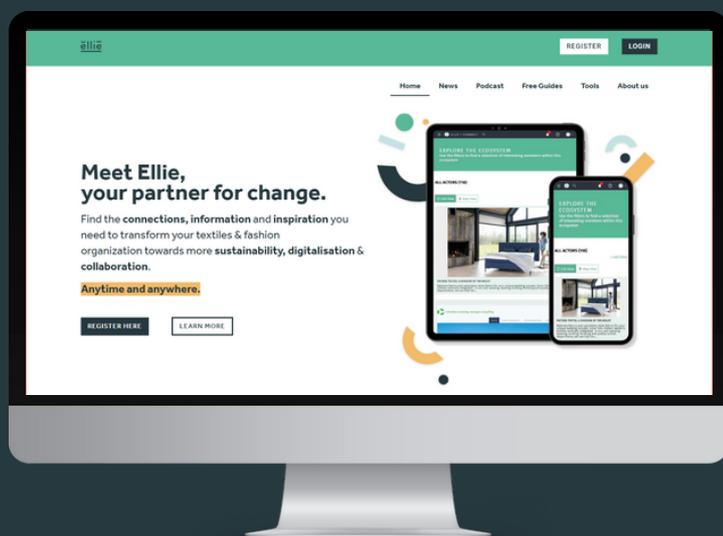


### Ellie.Talks

EP16: Fa Quix,  
The value of sustainability in times of a crisis

13 : 10

- 09 : 21



Go to [www.ellieconnect.com](http://www.ellieconnect.com) for more connections, inspiration & information !

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