Call for contributions

All across the globe, countries face big challenges in their learning and working systems, both *qualitatively* (reducing poverty and illiteracy, the need for lifelong learning and the upskilling and updating of competences) as well as *quantitatively* (division of labour, demographic challenges, drop-outs, (im)migration, retention). Much research has been done (and is going on) on the added value of the learning outcomes approach in National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs), the effectiveness of Human Resources Management systems (HRM) and on the methods for Validation of Prior Learning (VPL).

Mission

The mission of *The 1st VPL Biennale* is to share information, knowledge, ideas and visions on VPL ánd about the creative process of learning from each other's successes, problems and solutions in 'the VPL-world'. This entails a focus on the systematics of Validation of Prior Learning as the motor of more effective learning and working processes; all-inclusive for all citizens, regardless of status, gender, age, philosophy, special need, heritage or any other personal feature.

The central theme of the 1st VPL Biennale concentrates on '*The promise of VPL as the motor of social ánd economic change*'. The crucial question for *The 1st VPL Biennale* in this respect is how to further develop and implement VPL as an effective method in lifelong learning perspectives, being able to integrate all citizens effectively and quality-assured into lifelong learning strategies at all levels and in all environments and contexts?
This question relates to priority areas in policy and practices, related to enhancing lifelong learning perspectives and to fostering social and economic progress by:
   a. further developing and implementing existing national legislation on VPL-enhanced lifelong learning;
   b. moving on towards integrating VPL in all learning levels and environments;
   c. strengthening the levels of professionalism in VPL-functions to be able to cope with customer-steered and competence-based lifelong learning, like functions of guidance, individualised and flexible teaching/learning, managing flexibilized programmes;
   d. opening up learning opportunities for all citizens with a special focus on underrepresented groups and non-traditional learners.

Themes

The mission of the 1st VPL Biennale brings the following themes to the fore:
1. **The power of VPL**: piloting VPL in structured environments can strengthen the impact in VPL and the dissemination to other contexts. Case studies, especially good practices offer a window to this promise. Or not? What are the critical success factors for implementing VPL?
2. **The roadmap of VPL**: who developed a roadmap for integral implementation of VPL-systematics? What are the building blocks? Is it an integral approach with strongly interlinked steps in the process?
3. **Linkages of VPL**: VPL matches many standards, from personal and group-standards to sector or national standards. Which linkages are the best to focus on: linkages aiming at personal enrichment, career-steps, certification or other?
4. **Personalization of learning** as an outcome of VPL-processes: the portfolio is the life changer of individuals that can express personal learning needs and requirements. What are the pillars of this personalization: the portfolio, ownership of learning, learning independence, or other factors? Where do top-down strategies for VPL-systematics meet up with the bottom-up approach of portfolio-steered, personal development that is enhanced by VPL too?
5. **Quality-assurance** of VPL: trust or control? The quality of VPL-systematics has to be safeguarded. It concerns the offer of reliable and understandable instruments ánd the availability of professionals to support and maintain these instruments (guiders, assessors, trainers, managers, etc.). But how to quality-assure these instruments and professionals best?
6. **Open and flexible learning** – supported by e-tools – is vital for making sure the impact of VPL in lifelong learning strategies lasts longer. But in who's interest and how to realize this? Are there successful examples? How to link e-tools such as e-portfolios to the learner's motivation?

Call for contributions

The 1st VPL Biennale is organized by the ALLinHE-partners (www.allinhe.eu) and hosted by Inholland University in Rotterdam, the Netherlands on April 9-11, 2014.
ALLinHE aims at linking the methods of Validation of Prior Learning to practical strategies for social inclusion of all social groups. The ALLinHE-project is supported by the Lifelong Learning Program of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), under supervision of the European Commission.

There are many ways to contribute to the Biennale, by means of a workshop, a round table, poster, master class, the market-place or the VPL-café. In all cases, sending us a proposal or a paper on your topic, theme or belief concerning VPL and its link to one of the themes of the seminar and/or the conference, is your ticket to a contribution to The 1st VPL Biennale.

All contributions should first be send in as an abstract so that 'the theme-tutor' can advise you on the next step: the full proposal. The abstract is a maximum of 500 words, accompanied by registration as a participant and your personal details.
Every accepted abstract should be followed up by your explicit wish to contribute by a full proposal for a …
a. … **workshop**: a paper of minimum 3.000 words and maximum 10.000 words, including an abstract of 150 words. Please mention the theme(s) addressed by your workshop.
b. … **master class**: a paper of minimum 1.000 words and maximum 5.000 words, including an abstract of 100 words. Please mention the theme(s), the learning objectives and the target group(s) addressed by your masterclass.
c. … **round table**: an abstract of 1.000-1.500 words for setting the scene for your round table, referring to the theme(s) you address and which target group(s) you need to be present.
d. … **poster**: describe briefly in maximum 500 words what your poster is about and which requirements you need for presenting the poster in the VPL-café or the market-place.
e. … **table at the market-place**: inform us on your line of research and/or business. Information on the kind of material you will offer and special (necessary arrangements needed, like wifi, etc.).
f. … **time-slot at the VPL-café**: provide information on (topic, form, need for and objective of) a public debate in the VPL-café on the theme of [*for you to fill in*].

The board of the 1st VPL Biennale – the six 'theme-tutors'- will review and select all contributions for the 1st VPL Biennale. Positioning accepted contributions in the program will be done according to the date of arrival of the proposals. All accepted contributions will be given attention on the website, e-publications and reports during and after the Biennale.
The board will notify all contributors on acceptance and programming within 3 weeks of submission. Selection for the publication(s) will be addressed too in this communication.

N.B.
Papers submitted are after a peer-reviewed selection eligible for publication in the official proceedings of The 1st VPL Biennale. Selected papers will be printed and published as well in the forthcoming book: "The power of VPL. Missions, practices and strategies concerning VPL as the motor of social and economic change".

Important dates

Online submission of contributions opens	**October 1, 2013**
Deadline for submission of abstracts	From October 1, 2013 till **February 28, 2014**
Deadline for submission of full proposals	From October 2013 till **March 11, 2014**
Deadline for revised versions of full proposals	**March 26, 2014** (if needed)