



# STRONGHOUSE

Sustainable housing for strong communities

## Instructions for creating online training courses

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## Content

1	Introduction .....	3
2	Guiding principles for creating input for the e-learning courses.....	3
	2.1 Didactic background .....	3
	2.2 Focus on target groups.....	4
3	Structure of the courses .....	5
4	Workflow .....	6
	4.1 Deciding on a topic.....	6
	4.2 Creating the course .....	6

## 1 Introduction

This document serves as a guideline for the development of training materials in the Stronghouse project. Stronghouse aims at bridging the gap between abstract knowledge about energy-efficient homes and information material on the topic, which is already available and creating the right incentives and fostering motivation for homeowners and neighbourhoods to transfer of this into practice by homeowners and neighbourhoods.

As promised in the application, online tools for homeowners and neighborhoods will be produced and disseminated. This includes training materials, which will be made available to the public in the form of e-learning courses. These will have a web-doc format and consist of text, pictures, infographics and (optionally) videos/audios. The courses will be accessible on the Stronghouse website. Each course will provide information on a specific topic so that they complement each other while still standing each on their own. Consequently, different target audiences can select those topics, in which they are interested and which will fill in their individual knowledge gaps. The training courses will be short and concise to allow the target groups to follow them in their own timeframe.

The software for creating the online training material is Articulate 360. This software enables the media author to create interactive online learning experiences that correspond to the didactical goals of both transfer of knowledge and putting that knowledge into practice. The visual identity of Stronghouse can be realized for the courses, whose html-output can be embedded onto websites.

## 2 Guiding principles for creating input for the e-learning courses

### 2.1 Didactic background

The development of the e-learning training material in Stronghouse will be based mostly on the cognitive learning theory but also rely on the constructivist learning theory. The combination of these two models of learning will ensure that the courses will raise awareness for certain topics, foster the understanding of how topics are (inter)related and provide stimulus for taking actions with the newly acquired knowledge.

The **cognitive learning model** promotes using thinking to learn. The underlying assumption is that learners process information autonomously and at their own pace. Therefore, it is the e-learning material's responsibility to initiate learning through creating an environment that encourages the development of problem-solving skills. When learners face a problem, the material provides all the information needed for them to solve it. The choice of learning environment and media is based on the individual patterns of perception, understanding and processing of the target group as well as their assumed previous knowledge.

The **constructivist learning model** supports active, self-organized learning in a problem-oriented, practical, situational context. As opposed to the cognitive model, knowledge is not transported but learners construct the knowledge themselves. Additionally the approach demands the ability to create and apply new knowledge in multiple contexts and from diverse perspectives. The concept is based on the assumption that learning is an individual process in which learners build an individual knowledge network.<sup>1</sup> This form of self-organized knowledge acquisition transfers control of the learning process to the learners and enables them to accumulate applicable knowledge. While the work mode of the cognitive model is developmental, the constructivist mode can be described as explorative.

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<sup>1</sup> Heinz Mandl/Gabi Reinmann-Rothmeier/Cornelia Gräsel, Gutachten zur Vorbereitung des Programms ‚Systematische Einbeziehung von Medien, Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologien in Lehr- und Lernprozesse, Bonn 1998, p. 106.

## 2.2 Focus on target groups

The Stronghouse project aims at changing the attitude of homeowners and neighbourhoods as end-users in order to achieve more renovation to improve the energy performance of houses. The target group for the e-learning courses in Stronghouse are the intermediaries for energy renovation to the end-users, e.g. public housing providers, housing companies, urban and district developers and SMEs.

Since the target group of Stronghouse will use the training material voluntarily, e-learning produces learning motivation through creating intrinsic conviction rather than through outside persuasion. Depending on the topic, the target audience might differ from one course to the next. As the courses will be made available on the Stronghouse website, there is no possibility to analyze in detail the target group, their motivation and learning outcomes before creating the courses, the aim is to make the content of the course easy to understand for a broad audience without much expert knowledge. Therefore, the content should always include and point to the context in which this content is relevant for the target audience. This will be assured by using the following methods:

- The communication of clear learning objectives
- The creation of a sense of relevance and relation between learners and learning objectives
- The creation of non-linear learning paths with options and choices and the ability to skip or focus on content depending on the learners individual needs and interests
- The possibility of repetition
- The implementing of interactivity, regular instant feedback, open questions
- A course structure that alternates between providing information to be explored and illustrated by examples with a practical orientation
- Creating opportunities for learners for discovery and surprise
- Providing links and resources for further reading

### 3 Structure of the courses

Each course should be structured as follows:

Teaser	Describe the learning objective and target audience, ex.: <i>By taking this course, (target group) will see how and why (topic) is relevant and will enable them to put (action) into practice.</i>
Introduction	Provide context to the topic of the course: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does the learner already know and how does this relate to the course?</li> <li>• Describe dimensions and facets of the topic</li> <li>• Give an overview of the learning goals of each chapter</li> </ul>
Chapters (number of chapters depending on the topic)	Provide context to the topic of the chapter, give examples and action points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the <b>challenge</b> concerning the topic of the chapter? → Illustrated by examples, data, graphics, pictures</li> <li>• <b>Guiding measures</b> for the end users with <b>action points</b> for the target group → What can the target group do with this knowledge, how can this be achieved/implemented → Provide interesting documents, papers, information as “further reading”</li> </ul> <p>Include a concise overview of the main points of the chapter.</p>
Summary	Start with a reminder of what the learning goals of the course are and list the key points, which learners should take away from the course.

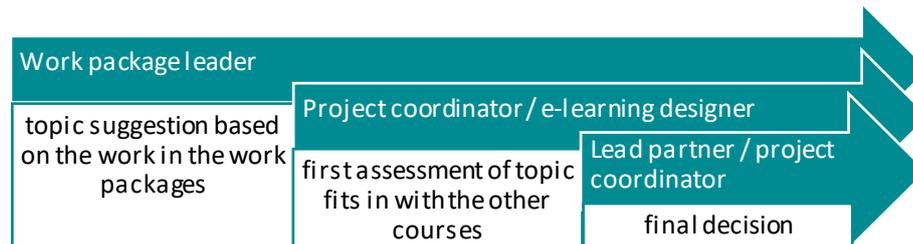
Please make sure that the content provided follows this structure. The following rules apply while working on the course material:

- Please provide sources and copyright information
- Please explain any abbreviations and/or technical terms
- Please use active and engaging language and short sentences
- Please include descriptive and informative headings and sub-headings

## 4 Workflow

### 4.1 Deciding on a topic

The topics for the e-learning courses will be identified during the project implementation phase. Based on the work in the work packages, work package leaders will suggest relevant topics to the lead partner and the project coordinator.



### 4.2 Creating the course

In order to create attractive e-learning courses, the subject-matter expert and the e-learning designer have to work in close collaboration. The subject-matter expert provides both content for the course in the form of texts (or PowerPoint presentations, if they already exist), pictures, graphics, statistics, video or audio files. Any additional information such as links to websites, papers, databases or the like, are appreciated.

