
Open Innovation Training Course: Partnerships, Sourcing Ideas and Sharing Value

31 May – 4 June 2027
Milan





Open Innovation Training Course: Partnerships, Sourcing Ideas and Sharing Value

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Programme Summary

Open innovation is the subject of this one-week training course for directors and heads of innovation, research and partnerships, ending in an open innovation portfolio plan for one business area. Many organisations meet outside partners case by case, with no shared view of what to source externally, how to screen partners or how to divide the value that results. The programme links the make-partner-buy choice, partner screening, collaboration terms and intellectual property sharing in one method, applied to partnerships the participant already runs or plans. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on open innovation to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Where open innovation is left to individual contacts, promising start-ups are lost in slow approvals, ownership of results is argued after the work is done and partnerships run with no exit terms. Leaders who decide what to source outside, screen partners against stated criteria, agree terms early and review the whole portfolio together can commit resources to the collaborations that matter and stop those that do not.

- Partnership Cycle Time: Falls as screening criteria and term sheets are agreed in advance.
- Partner Dispute Exposure: Falls as ownership and value sharing are settled before work starts.
- Portfolio Return: Improves as weak collaborations are stopped at set review points.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Inbound and outbound innovation: Moving ideas into and out of the organisation through partners structures the source and exit choices in Sessions 1 and 3.
- Make-partner-buy analysis: Comparing internal development, collaboration and acquisition against capability gaps guides Session 1.
- Stage-gate review: Reviewing each collaboration at set points before further commitment shapes the portfolio work in Sessions 3 and 5.
- Value sharing models: Dividing costs, rights and returns between partners frames Session 4.

Intended Participants

- Directors who decide where the organisation seeks innovation from outside.
- Heads of innovation who build and manage a set of external collaborations.
- Research and development leaders who work with universities and technology partners.
- Partnership and business development leaders who negotiate collaboration terms.
- Procurement and supplier leaders who bring supplier ideas into product and service plans.

Typical sectors include manufacturing, healthcare, financial services and energy.



Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to evaluate innovation needs against internal capability using the make-partner-buy choice.
2. Participants will be able to construct a partner screening scorecard and apply it to a long-list.
3. Participants will be able to design a collaboration model with governance, stage gates and exit terms.
4. Participants will be able to compare intellectual property sharing options and their effect on value.
5. Participants will be able to prioritise collaborations in an external innovation portfolio.
6. Participants will be able to justify an open innovation portfolio plan to a leadership team.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Open Innovation and the Make-Partner-Buy Choice

Which innovation needs should be met from outside the organisation?

- Innovation Need Map
- Make-Partner-Buy Decision Grid
- Inbound and Outbound Innovation Canvas
- Capability Gap Assessment
- External Source Landscape

Day 2: Finding and Screening Partners

Which start-ups, universities and suppliers are worth a conversation?

- Partner Long-List Template
- Partner Screening Scorecard
- Strategic Fit Test
- Partner Due Diligence Checklist
- First Meeting Brief

Day 3: Structuring Innovation Partnerships

What form should each collaboration take, and what does each side commit?

- Collaboration Model Options
- Term Sheet Outline
- Governance and Decision Rights Sheet
- Stage Gate and Exit Terms
- Partner Risk Register



Day 4: Intellectual Property Sharing and Value

Who owns what is created, and how is the value shared?

- Background and Foreground Rights Map
- Intellectual Property Sharing Options
- Value Sharing Model
- Licensing Terms Comparison
- Confidentiality Protocol

Day 5: Running the External Innovation Portfolio

Does the portfolio of partnerships support one plan the leadership team can approve?

- Applying the Session 1 Make-Partner-Buy Decision Grid
- Using the Session 2 Partner Screening Scorecard
- Testing the Session 3 Term Sheet Outline
- Checking the Session 4 Value Sharing Model
- Completing the Open Innovation Portfolio Plan

Methodology

The programme uses a structured exercise method built on anonymised partnership briefs, term sheets, partner profiles and portfolio reviews from manufacturing, healthcare and financial services settings. Participants work in peer groups on a shared portfolio, challenge each other's screening scores and terms and receive written facilitator feedback on each exercise set, before turning to partnerships of their own.

- Suggested activity: Scoring six candidate partners against the same screening criteria and defending the ranking.
- Suggested activity: Drafting the key terms of a collaboration with a university and a start-up.
- Suggested activity: Reviewing a portfolio of ten collaborations and choosing which to continue.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes an open innovation portfolio plan for one business area. It holds a source decision for each innovation need, a screened partner shortlist, outline collaboration terms, an intellectual property and value sharing position and a review calendar. The plan is used at work to brief a leadership team, open partner talks and set the first review points.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is open innovation training suitable for leaders who have not run external partnerships before?

Yes. This open innovation programme assumes senior responsibility for innovation, research or partnerships, not prior partnership experience, and builds each decision step by step on sample cases.

Which methods does open innovation in this programme rest on?

Open innovation here rests on inbound and outbound innovation, make-partner-buy analysis, stage-gate review and value sharing models, applied to real partnerships.

How is the plan from open innovation training used at work?

You use the open innovation portfolio plan to brief a leadership team, open partner talks and set the first review points for each collaboration.

How does open innovation differ from internal innovation management?

Open innovation centres on sourcing, screening and sharing value with outside partners, while internal innovation management centres on ideas generated and developed inside the organisation.