



**young
equine
innovators**

MODULE 2

Finding Your Equine Innovation Idea

www.youngequineinnovators.eu



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Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:



- Understand how ideas are come to life
- Understand the need of a structured approach
- Understand the different parts of the NABC framework and how they connect
- Apply the NABC framework in order to develop ideas from real identified problems

Your learner workbook – take what's yours

This module shares a Learner Workbook with Module 1. It's yours to mark up, write in, and share with a mentor.

One rule: there is no rule.

You don't have to complete every activity. Some won't apply to your idea, your stage, or your country. The point is to pick the ones that move **YOUR** venture forward and skip the rest without guilt.

A workbook half-finished but acted on beats a workbook fully completed and filed away.

YOUNG EQUINE INNOVATORS

MODULES 1 AND 2 WORKBOOK

01
02
MODULES

 **young equine innovators**

**YOUR EQUINE FUTURE
AND YOUR FIRST INNOVATION
IDEA**

Combined Learner Workbook

Explore equine careers, understand the forces shaping the sector, build evidence of your strengths, identify real problems and shape one promising idea using NABC.

Name: _____
Date: _____
Facilitator (if any): _____

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What you will build
A clearer career direction, a personal evidence plan, an understanding of future equine opportunities, a validated problem, a complete NABC concept and a practical next step into Module 3.

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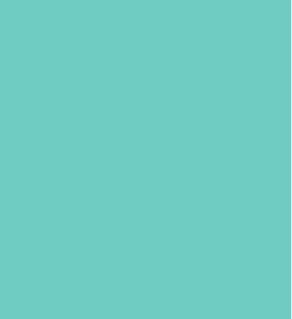
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www.younequineinnovators.eu Your Equine Future and Innovation Idea Page 1



01

Introduction

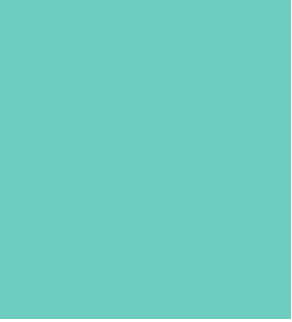


In this Module, we focus on helping learners to find a real problem in the equine world and shape it into a practical new business idea.

We know the equine world is full of tradition, skill, care and passion. People who work with horses often learn by watching, doing and listening to those with experience. That practical knowledge is powerful. It is also where many new ideas begin.

Innovation in the equine sector can start with noticing something that is difficult, unfair, wasteful, unsafe, expensive or outdated, then asking: Could this be done better?

You will learn how to spot real problems in the equine world and turn them into early innovation ideas. These ideas may become a service, a product, a digital tool, a community project, a social enterprise or a future business.



You may already know some of the problems. They might come from your own riding experience, stable work, horse ownership, volunteering, training, competition, tourism, breeding, farriery, animal care or simply being around people who love horses.

The best ideas usually begin close to real life. They come from watching what people do, listening to what frustrates them, and noticing where time, money, energy or opportunity is being lost.

This module will help you move from a loose idea to a clearer concept. You will begin with observation and problem spotting.

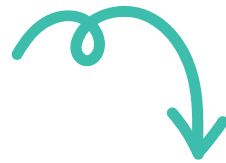
A photograph of a brown horse being groomed by two people in a stable. The horse is on the left, facing left, with a white blaze on its face. Two people are on the right, one with long dark hair and one with a long blonde ponytail, both wearing grey hoodies. They are grooming the horse's neck and head. The background is a brick wall with wooden stall bars.

02

From a "Wild Idea" to a Business Concept



From a "Wild Idea" to a Business Concept



A business idea is a clear, practical concept for creating value for users or customers in a way that you can get paid for.

Many believe an idea is like a flash of lightning from a clear sky, but most often, it's about seeing what others miss. In the following pages we describe some ways ideas come to life for a new generation of equine entrepreneurs.

What is an equine innovation idea ?

An equine innovation idea is a new or improved way to create value in the horse world.

Care idea

Improves horse health, comfort, safety or welfare

People idea

Helps riders, owners, workers, volunteers or visitors.

Business idea

Creates value that someone may pay for or support

Community idea

Improves access, inclusion, rural life or youth participation.

Where good ideas hide

Small irritations

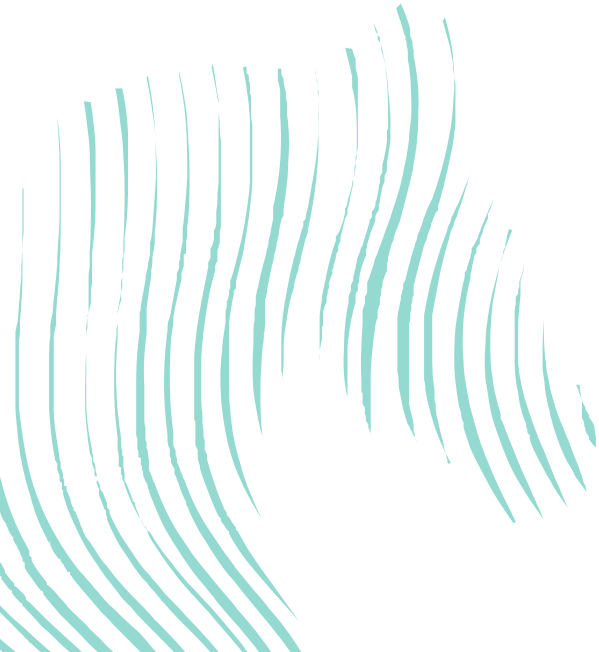
- The same job takes too long every day.
- People forget information or repeat mistakes.
- Costs feel out of control.
- A horse or person is placed at avoidable risk.

Hidden opportunities

- An underused arena, paddock, tool or skill.
- A service people ask for but cannot find.
- A better way to connect people around horses.
- A green practice that could also save money.



The Irritation (The Spark):



You get bothered by something. You notice something small in your own horse life that keeps irritating you. "Your riding boots rub badly after twenty minutes, and instead of focusing on your position, you are thinking about your sore ankle" or "You cannot hear the instructor clearly in a windy arena, so you miss corrections and feel behind the group". Irritation is the entrepreneur's best friend.

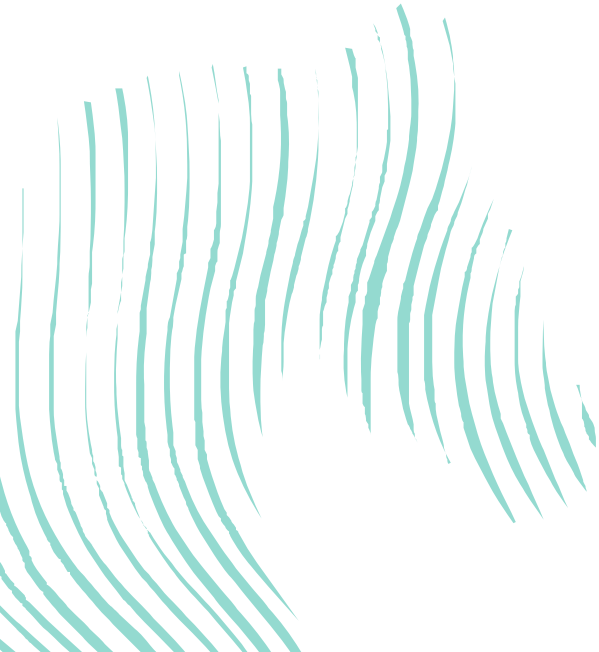
Task

Write down things in the equine world that have irritated you due to lack of solutions





The Daydream:



You may start thinking: *"What if you could do it this way instead..."* or *"What if you could improve how this is done."*. There are no rules here. You build castles in the air, and that's good!

Task

Try to come up with things you think could be done in another way or improved way. Write them below:



The Reality Check:

You start talking to equine friends or checking online equine about problems you see. Do you notice that more people have the same problem or frustrations? If so you may have idea can start to transform into a possible business.

Task

Write down problems you have discussed with equine friends or checked online:



Idea source 1: Stable frustrations

The yard is full of clues

Morning chaos

Could feeding, turnout or medication records be clearer?

Shared equipment

Could tack, rugs or tools be tracked and cared for better?

Communication gaps

Could owners, staff and riders share updates more safely?

Time pressure

Could routine jobs be made simpler for small yards?

Idea source 2: Horse welfare Start with the horse experience

Comfort

Can the horse rest, move, eat and socialise well?

Early signals

Can changes in behaviour or movement be spotted sooner?

Recovery

Can horses returning from injury be managed more consistently?

Trust

Can handling, training or travel reduce stress?

Idea source 3: People, access and inclusion

Innovation can open doors

New riders

Can beginners understand cost, safety and expectations sooner?

Parents

Can families find trusted information without feeling lost?

Young workers

Can yard staff learn, record skills and progress?

Access

Can riding, volunteering or equine contact reach more people?

Idea source 4: Sustainability and cost

Green ideas work best when they solve a real pain

Manure

Collection, composting, bioenergy, farm links or local gardens.

Water

Leaks, wash bays, rainwater, field trough checks.

Waste

Rug repair, tack reuse, feed bags, bedding choices.

Transport

Shared journeys, event travel, local deliveries.

Idea source 5: Digital and data

Technology is useful when it solves a horse world problem

Simple app

Bookings, reminders, yard updates or shared care.

Sensor idea

Temperature, water, movement, saddle fit or security.

AI helper

Drafting care notes, event posts or customer replies.

Marketplace

Trusted services, part riding, tack, transport or lessons.

Activity: Equine problem hunt

Choose one equine setting you know: a yard, riding club, racing yard, trekking centre, stud farm, event or community project.

Observe or imagine one normal day. Write down ten problems using this format:

I noticed that [person or horse] struggles with [problem] when [situation].

Examples:

- I noticed that new owners struggle with choosing suitable rugs when the weather changes.
- I noticed that yard staff struggle with checking water troughs across distant fields.
- I noticed that young riders struggle to find safe transport to training or events.

A photograph of a person in a dark jacket and pants grooming a brown horse in a stable. The person is holding a grooming tool, and the horse is standing in a stall with white walls. A black bucket is on the floor. The scene is lit by a warm light source. A large green circle and a teal rectangle are overlaid on the right side of the image.

03

NABC - Framework

NABC Framework

How it can help you

NABC is a simple way to test and explain an innovation idea. It helps you move from: “I have an idea” to “I understand the problem, I know who it affects, and I can explain why my idea has value.”

For equine ideas, this is especially useful because a good idea must work for people, horses and the real routines of the equine sector.

NABC helps you check four things:

N: Need: What is the real problem, and who experiences it?

A: Approach: What is your idea for solving it?

B: Benefits: What value does your idea create for the rider, horse owner, yard, business, community or horse?

C: Competition: How is this problem being solved now, and what could your idea do better?

NABC does not make your idea perfect. It helps you make your idea clearer, more practical and easier to improve.

Introducing NABC

A simple way to turn an idea into a clear concept

N: Need

What real problem exists and who experiences it?

A: Approach

What is your first practical way to solve it?

B: Benefits

What improves for the horse, person or business?

C: Competition

How is this problem solved today and why are you better?

NABC in one equine example

Example idea: YardFlow

Need

Small yards lose time and make errors when feed, turnout and medication notes are spread across whiteboards, WhatsApp and memory.

Approach

A very simple shared yard board on phones, with daily horse cards, owner notes and staff sign off.

Benefits

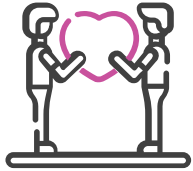
Fewer missed updates, clearer responsibility, calmer routines and better care continuity.

Competition

WhatsApp groups, paper boards, notebooks and paid yard management systems.

NABC - Framework

Before we go on let's look at the whole framework.



Needs

Describe the validated pain points in the market. What's the actual problem your're solving?



Approach

Describe your unique value – how do you actually solve the customer's needs?



Benefits

Show us the value!
Explain what the customer gets compared to what they pay. Remember:
 $\text{Value} = \text{Benefit} / \text{Cost}$



Competition

Who else is out there?
List your competitors or other ways customers are trying to solve this today.

NABC Framework

Got a great idea?

You're buzzing with energy, but when you try to explain it to others, things often get a bit messy. You end up talking about the small details instead of why the idea is actually great.

That's where **NABC** comes in. Don't look at it as a boring assignment - think of it as a **compass for your business idea**.

NABC is a tool that cuts through the noise. It helps you move from "believing" people want something to actually **knowing** what they need. I

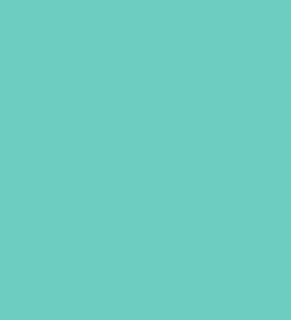
Instead of writing long plans that nobody reads, this method forces you to boil your idea down to what actually matters.

Why should you use it?



Many projects fail because people spend time and energy on things nobody actually wants. Your time is your biggest asset—don't waste it.

NABC acts as a "reality check" that shows if your idea holds water before you risk your money or your pride. If you can't answer the four parts of the model, your idea just isn't ready yet and it's good to know that early on



NABC-Framework

What's the value?

It gives you **confidence**. When you know your NABC, people see right away that you know your stuff. You won't sound like just a dreamer; you'll sound like a pro. That makes adults, investors, or partners feel confident about backing you. You'll save time, find the holes in your plan, and quickly spot the real "gold" in your idea.



In Short

NABC turns your thought into a sharp tool. It gives you the language you need to talk to people with money or contact - whether you finished school or not

Tips

Take Your Time

Developing ideas takes some time and thinking so be patience and take the time you need.

Print the NABC canvas

If possible print the NABC canvas so you have a good overview
Preferably you print in A3 so you have plenty of room to sketch and jot. ([link to download here](#))

Involve other people

1+1 brain often equals more than 2 brains so involve other people as bouncing boards. Preferably people with other views, competences or experiences.

Now; Let's go develop!



NABC

The framework consists of four building blocks, each representing one important aspect of your idea/concept.

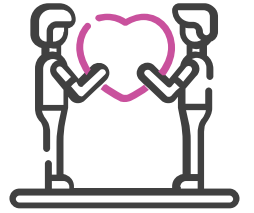
On the following pages we will go through one at a time, show you a real example as reference and then you will get the chance to try it out with one of the problems you wrote down earlier. You may pick the one you think will be the most fun to work with or one that potentially will bring most valuable to customers.

My Problem:

Now write down one problem, a problem you want to work on:



N NEEDS



What is it?

This is the absolute most important part. Can you validate that there is a problem that actually needs to be solved? If no one has a problem, no one will buy your solution. There is no Need

Tip:

At this stage be in love with the problem and listen to people. Once you start talking about a solution you may lose important information.

Types of questions to ask:

- “What is the hardest part about x?”
- “How often does this problem happen?”
- “How much does it cost you in time or money?”

Who should you ask/talk to?

The people who actually experience the problem (your future customers). Go out on the street, DM on Insta, or talk to people in the area.

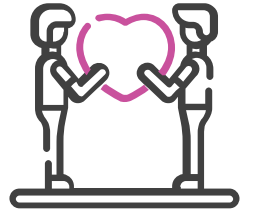
N: Your field questions

Ask, listen and record exact words

Key points

- What is the hardest part of this situation?
- When did it happen last?
- How do you solve it today?
- What would make you trust a new solution?
- What would make you refuse to use it?
- What would a better day with your horse look like?

N NEEDS - Example



Who should you ask/talk to?

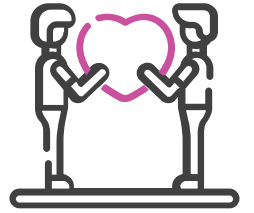
Stable Buddy

"Tinder for horse owners and part-riders"

You see your friend who has her own horse. She is at the stable seven days a week, never has time to study or meet friends, and is constantly broke because the horse costs a fortune.

At the same time, you know five others who love to ride but cannot afford their own horse. They don't find each other, and when they do, arguments often arise about money or how the horse should be cared for.

N NEEDS – Your Work



Is there a need for a solution to the problem?

Describe the real problem:



Needs

Describe the pain points in the market. What's the actual problem you're solving?

A Approach (Solution)



What is it?

This is your "thing." How do you plan to solve the problem? Is it an app, a service, a physical product, or an event

Tip:

Keep it simple in the beginning. Don't build the whole castle right away – build a door and see if people want to walk in.

Types of questions to ask:

"If I did X, would it help you?"

"Which features are most important for you to want to use this?"

Who should you ask/talk to?

People who know something about the craft (e.g., a rider, a trainer, or someone who has run a company before) to see if it's even feasible to implement.

A Approach (Solution) - Example



Approach

An app that matches the right rider with the right horse. Not only based on where you live, but on riding skill, personality, and what you want to get out of it. The app has ready-made digital contracts (so no one is tricked) and a payment system for insurance and stable rent.

Who do you ask?

For example, people who build simple apps, or someone who works with animal insurance.

Questions to ask:

"Would you feel safer if there was a ready-made contract and rating for the rider?" "Which features must be included for you to use the app?"

A Approach – Your Work



What is your approach to creating value and solving the identified need? Write it



Approach

Describe your unique value. How do you actually solve the customer's needs?

B Benefits (Value)



What is it?

What does the customer get out of it? It's not enough to say "my service is good". What is the result? Do they save time? Do they become prettier? Do they earn money? Do they become happy?

Tip:

Do not sell "a tack check".
Sell a more confident rider, a more comfortable horse, and a safer lesson.

Types of questions to ask:

What would your day look like if this problem disappeared?"

"What is it worth to you to avoid [the problem]?"

Who should you ask/talk to?

Again – the customer. You want to hear them say "Wow, that would save me a lot of time!"

Activity: Build your value stack

Activity

For your idea, list benefits for at least three groups.

Use this structure:

- The horse benefits because...
- The main user benefits because...
- The yard, club, business or community benefits because...

Then add one measurable benefit if you can:

minutes saved, euro saved, fewer errors, more bookings, better attendance, less waste, clearer safety record.

B Benefits (Value) - Example



Benefits

The horse owner gets their life back (leisure time) and might save 200 € a month. The part-rider gets to ride their dream horse without having to take out a bank loan. The horse feels better because it gets exercise even when the owner is sick or working.

Who do you ask?

The end-user (the horse owner) and the part-rider

Questions to ask:

"If you saved 200€ a month and got two evenings of, what would that mean for your everyday life?"

B Benefits (Value) – Your Work



What are the benefits
your product/service
will offer?

Write it.



Benefits

Show us the value! Explain what the customer
gets compared to what they pay.
Remember: $\text{Value} = \text{Benefit} / \text{Cost}$

C Competition



What is it?

Who is already doing this today?
And remember: the biggest competitor is often the customer doing nothing at all (status quo).

Tip:

Be honest! If you say "I have no competition," you haven't looked closely enough. Your strength is that you do it better, cheaper, or fairer.

Types of questions to ask:

"How are you solving this today?"

"Which other apps/services do you use for this?"

"What do you dislike about the solutions that are available now?"

Who should you ask/talk to?

Google, YouTube, TikTok, and the customer. See what they are using today and find the holes in those services.

C Competition - Example



How / where is it being solved today?

Facebook groups: Chaotic, no order, difficult to search.

Notes at the stable: Old-fashioned, only reaches those who are already there.

Who do you ask?

People who have tried posting ads online but failed.

Questions to ask:

"Why haven't you found help via Facebook?" "What is the worst thing about looking for part-riders online today?"

Activity: Competitor scan

Activity

Search your idea area for 20 minutes. Include online searches, social media, local yards, clubs and informal solutions.

Create four columns:

- 1: Current solution
- 2: What works well
- 3: What frustrates users
- 4: What your idea could do better

Be honest. If people already have a trusted solution, your idea needs a stronger reason to exist.

C Competition – Your Work



What does the competition look like?
Who are the competitors?

Write it.



Competition

Who else is out there? List your competitors or other ways customers are trying to solve this today.

NABC - Summary

Remember NABC is about understanding people.

If you know what people need (**N - Need**), have a plan to fix it (**A - Approach**), can explain why it's good for them (**B - Benefit**) and know why your solution is better than the alternatives (**C - Competition**), then you don't just have an idea – you have the beginning of a business.



NABC for downloading

NABC Canvas



Click to type....



04

Test and improve your
equine idea

An idea becomes stronger when you test it.

It is easy to fall in love with your own idea. You might think:

- “This would definitely work.”
- “Everyone would use this.”
- “This would solve the problem.”

But in the equine world, ideas need to work in real situations.

- A rider may like the idea but be unwilling to pay for it.
- A yard owner may see the value but have no time to use it.
- A coach may support it but worry about safety or insurance.
- A horse owner may like the idea but need more trust before trying it.

Testing helps you find this out early. It saves time, reduces risk and helps you build an idea that is genuinely useful.

What should you test?

You do not need to test everything at once. Start with the most important questions:

- Is the problem real? Do other people experience it too?
- Who feels the problem most strongly?
- How are they dealing with it now?
- Would your idea make life easier, safer, cheaper or clearer?
- What worries would people have about using it?
- What would make them trust it?
- What would make it too difficult to use?

For equine ideas, always include one extra question: **Would this be good for the horse?**

A strong equine innovation should create value for people while respecting horse welfare, safety and good practice.

Innovation idea filters

Choose ideas with real promise

Real need

People can describe the problem without you explaining it.

Clear user

You know exactly who you are helping first.

Feasible test

You can test a small version with limited money.

Welfare safe

The horse is protected in the design.

Youth fit

Young people can shape, lead or use it.

Sector value

It fits a real equine setting and could grow.

Ask better questions

Good testing depends on good questions. Avoid questions that make people agree with you. Instead of asking:

“Would you use my saddle comfort app?”

Ask:

“When was the last time tack discomfort affected your ride?”

“What did you do about it?” “Who did you tell?”

“What would have helped in that moment?”

“What would stop you using a tool like this?”

“What would make you trust it?”

Better questions help you understand real behaviour. Listen for details. The best feedback often comes from stories, not yes or no answers.

Listen for patterns

After you talk to people, look for patterns.

- Did several people mention the same frustration?
Did they use similar words?
Did one group care more than another?
Did people understand your idea quickly?
Did they raise the same concern?
Did they already have a workaround?
Did anyone say they would pay, share, book, try or recommend it?

Patterns matter. One opinion is useful. Repeated feedback is stronger evidence.

- If three young riders say they feel awkward asking about saddle discomfort, that is a signal.
- If two coaches say they would use a simple comfort check at the start of lessons, that is another signal.

Improve the idea

Testing may show that your idea needs to change. That is a good thing. You might need to make it:

- Simpler
- Cheaper
- Safer
- More trusted
- More horse welfare focused
- Easier for a yard to use
- Clearer for beginners
- Better suited to coaches or instructors
- More realistic for a small equine business

Example: Your first idea: An app to check saddle comfort.

After testing: A simple pre ride comfort card for young riders, with three rider checks, three horse comfort signs and a prompt to speak to the instructor. That is progress. You have moved from a big idea to something more useful, realistic and testable.

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