



# wexhe

Integrating Entrepreneurship  
and Work Experience into  
Higher Education

## CASE STUDY COLLECTION

This publication is a result of the project that is funded by the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme, Key Action 2, Knowledge Alliance Projects (Grant agreement: 575683-EPP-1-2016-1-NL-EPPKA2-KA). The views expressed in this publication are the sole responsibility of the author(s), and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

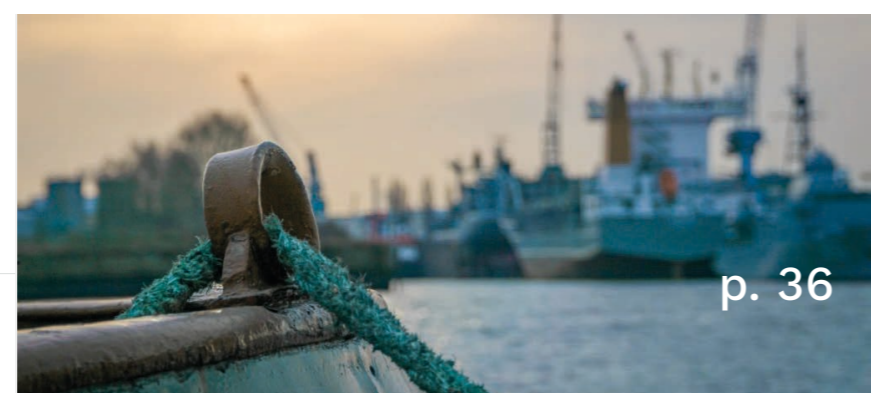
## Traineeships

- p. 10** Creative Management Program: unleashing the leadership potential of humanities and social sciences graduates
- p. 12** Hollands Kroon Municipality traineeship for daring and enthusiastic graduates
- p. 14** Domel Holding traineeships: setting to bridge the skills gap for natural science graduates in Slovenia
- p. 16** Cyprus Human Resource Development Authority works towards the WBL skills development of its youth
- p. 18** Midlands ICURe programme aims to tackle barriers to commercialisation of research
- p. 20** ORANGE is the New Smart: a postgrad study programme initiated by a PolishTelecom Giant with Kozminski University
- p. 22** University Carlos III of Madrid bridging the gap between academia and industry

- p. 6** Greetings from WEXHE

## Work Placements

- p. 26** Warwick students go creative: a study module that unlocks entrepreneurial potential
- p. 28** “Theory-Practice-Success” or how the MBM programme fosters knowledge exchange in Poland
- p. 30** Kolector as a good practice example in work-based learning
- p. 32** Aligning science with its social context through SPB master track at the University of Groningen
- p. 34** “Study + Work = Graduate success” MUAS dual study programme in mechanical engineering
- p. 36** “All Aboard!” - Maritime Studies Internship Program at Frederick University
- p. 38** Start Programme successfully links university students with Spanish businesses



## Entrepreneurship

- p. 42** BSEEN – a kick-off platform for young British entrepreneurs
- p. 44** The Centre for Medical Simulation honing students' professional skills free of life cost
- p. 46** Cyprus Entrepreneurship Competition: when everyone is a winner in so many ways
- p. 48** “Chair of Entrepreneurs” - how the University of Cadiz fosters entrepreneurship in Andalucía Region
- p. 50** Erasmus University of Rotterdam: where ideas turn into successful artistic production
- p. 52** For students by students: how the Venture Club Münster is instilling entrepreneurial values across the region
- p. 54** Bringing good ideas to life: how LUI is boosting staff and student entrepreneurship

## WEXHE PROJECT GOAL:

The goal WEXHE aims to achieve is two-fold: to help bridge the gap between practical and theoretical learning in HE, and skills set of graduates and the skills they require in their early careers. The WEXHE project aims to create an impact on a wide range of different stakeholder groups in the educational and business ecosystem:



### Higher Education Leadership & Staff:

HEIs will benefit from better aligning their curriculum to the demands of practice. HEI lecturers will benefit from getting access to validated work experience models, which can be adapted to their HEI environments.



### Students & Graduates:

Students will benefit from greater access to high quality work experience, and graduates to high quality internships that will support their careers.



### Industry:

Enterprises will gain guidance and quality tools designed to support their role in providing work experience for students and graduates.



### Policy Makers:

Policymakers will benefit from a better understanding how work experience can contribute to the modernisation of HE, and its contribution to employment, economic growth and social goals.

## WELCOME TO WEXHE CASE STUDY COLLECTION!

Over three years of its activity, the WEXHE project has successfully identified and elaborated three modes of Work Based Learning (WBL), namely Traineeships, Work Placements and Entrepreneurship, through an in-depth literature review and analysis of 80+ case studies mapping the WBL landscape in Europe. In order to highlight the diversity of applications in different European countries and inspire those who are planning to introduce WBL schemes in their institutions, the consortium decided to work on a publication that will allow sharing of a selection of good practices with the HEIs, businesses, and relevant public organisations.

The WEXHE Case Study Collection Booklet provides an overview of 21 case studies developed by the project teams from seven partner countries - Netherlands, Germany, Slovenia, UK, Spain, Poland, and Cyprus, categorised in three chapters according to the

mode of WBL they are representing. Each chapter starts with a short description of the WBL mode in focus, along with further sub-categories of the mode that might help the readers to match with the case studies that follow. The articles selected for the overview have been prepared for online publication in the form of blog articles, and do not have a direct link to the case study templates themselves. The original reports are currently in the status of work in progress.

Thus, if you would like to have further information on any of our case studies, please do not hesitate to contact us, through the UIIN or the University of Groningen teams.

We wish you a pleasant read!

*WEXHE Consortium*



## TRAINEESHIPS

Traineeship is a type of WBL that is aimed at students who have finished their educational training (graduated students) but have not yet entered the labour market. It includes not just structured trainee programmes aimed to attract new talents and prepare them for leadership roles - normally offered by larger organizations, but also schemes for the reinsertion into the workforce, such as the ones found in Spain and Cyprus.

SMEs and their associations can use traineeship programmes as a means to increase the potential of their human resources. In a knowledge-based economy, such as in the EU, the development of new technologies, products and services highly depends on the talents an employer is able to attract and develop. Graduated students may bring a lot of new knowledge and energy to an organisation and can initiate change if the trainees are properly chosen, trained and included in the organisation.

Universities can use traineeship as a means to

raise the employability of their graduates, their inclusion into the labour market and/or retention of graduates in the region. Graduated students represent an important public investment and development potential. Their inclusion into the labour market and retention in the region means that their knowledge, skills and competences are being used to everyone's advantage, and can enhance (regional) economic development. Finally, governments, governmental agencies and NGOs can use traineeship as a means to raise the employability of graduates, ensure their inclusion into the labour market and / or to retain graduates in the region or country to provide employers with high quality human resources.

Our selection of case studies within the traineeship category of the WBL represent examples from seven project partner countries, from the perspective of the SMEs, HEIs and the governmental organisations.



# CREATIVE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

## UNLEASHING THE LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES GRADUATES

Headquartered in Gutersloh, Germany, Bertelsmann is one of the largest conglomerates in the Germany employing over 115,000 workers. Apart from its global presence in media, services and education Bertelsmann is becoming increasingly famous for its unique corporate-level training program which is specifically tailored to graduates of humanities and social sciences. Unlike most management trainee programs that aim to attract business and engineering graduates, Bertelsmann tries to unlock the leadership potential of humanities students through its Creative Management Program (CMP). According to the founder and current coordinator of the CMP, Dr.

Nico Rose, it is the first program of its kind, at least in Germany. The idea is to improve the dynamism of the organization and boost its creative potential by bringing a diversity of perspectives into the decision making process.

The design of the CMP is an outcome of a number of interrelated factors. First and foremost, the recruitment of humanities and social science graduates has been a long standing practice of Bertelsmann. This is clearly reflected in the skill portfolio of the current leadership. What's more, humanities scholars and their story telling competence is greatly valued by an organization such as Bertelsmann that

operates in the media sector. Lastly, Bertelsmann aims to revitalize its global presence by recruiting young and passionate graduates that have a holistic understanding of its operations.

### The program

CMP is a comprehensive program that lasts for 20 months, divided into four 5-month periods. Trainees spend each period in different sections of Bertelsmann's core operations. The idea is to give trainees a broader understanding of Bertelsmann's operations. The coordinator of CMP Dr. Rose describes this "helicopter view" very essential for a decentralized conglomerate such as Bertelsmann that has diversified but interconnected operations.

In addition to their stay in the different divisions of the organization and their possible participation in ongoing projects, the trainees get involved in structured learning sessions such as boot camps, seminars, enablement courses and career coaching opportunities. They can also make use of the very rich online learning content provided by Bertelsmann. In some instances, it is also possible for trainees to request specific trainings in areas they need improvement.

Entry to the program is extremely competitive. In that only 5 trainees are selected from an applicant pool of 700 graduates. Applicants go through a rigorous process that includes online tests, online interviews and finally face to face interviews. This ensures only high-caliber applicants are selected.

### Challenges and opportunities

As often is the case with large conglomerates

such as Bertelsmann, the existence of excessive procedures was mentioned as a challenge by Dr. Rose. This is in fact reflected in the very limited (i.e. 5 trainees) accepted in to the traineeship.

In terms of opportunity, the fact that the design of the program resonates with the global brand of Bertelsmann as a very attractive place for graduates of humanities and social sciences can be mentioned. Secondly, since the program is attracting a large number of applications among women, it has a potential to promote female leadership. Lastly, yet another remarkable feature of CMP refers to the fact that trainees have to navigate the many divisions of the company, having a more strategic view of the business. According to Dr. Rose, this is rare in Bertelsmann, where in the past most employees stay practically their whole career within their own divisions or business units.

The early success of the program has prompted its possible expansion in other HEIs in Germany. According to the coordinator of the program, several institutions have expressed their interest to learn about it. The program has also achieved great media coverage by some of Germany's major media outlets such as Süddeutsche Zeitung and Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. ■

*Image Credit: Steffen Krinke, Bertelsmann  
Unternehmenskommunikation*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by  
Andre Perusso (Münster University of Applied Sciences).*



# HOLLANDS KROON MUNICIPALITY

## TRAINEESHIP FOR DARING AND ENTHUSIASTIC GRADUATES

The call for change was waiting around the corner in the province of North-Holland when four of its municipalities merged into one in 2012. The newly established municipality Hollands Kroon (HK) completely innovated local government by decreasing bureaucracy, promoting self-managing teams, implementing flexible working hours, and stimulating its employees to have more contact with local citizens. However, to successfully implement these changes in an organization with employees that are used to work in a traditional way, Hollands Kroon needed a fresh outlook, creative approaches and enthusiasm. Who has more of the above than the talented graduates, who are eager to face the real-life challenges? With this in mind, Hollands Kroon initiated a two-year traineeship programme open to recent graduates from all disciplinary areas, who would like to support the municipality in undertaking change whilst developing their professional skills.

### The five fundamental values of HK

Hollands Kroon is responsible for 48.000 people in the third largest region in the Netherlands, and employs around 350 people that are working in 30-40 self-managing teams. As the municipality of Hollands Kroon has undergone many changes in recent years, the needs of the organization changed over time as well. The content of the HK traineeship has been adjusted to what the organization Hollands Kroon needed. The first generation of trainees were 'daring communicators', the second 'service providers' followed by a generation of 'connectors'. To make sure HK selects the right applicant, Hollands Kroon developed an unusual selection procedure. In order to find the daring communicators, for example, the

first selection round was based on the format of the talent show 'The Voice'. Applicants had to pitch and convince the executive board to turn their chair. In the search for service providers, however, HK hired actors who played help requesting passers-by at unexpected moments during the selection procedure. Although the set-up of each election procedure varied, the final round always consisted of a conversation between the executive board and the last remaining applicants.

### Daring communicators, service providers and connectors

The HK traineeship programme is team and project-based in nature. In total, four to six trainees are selected, who together, form a self-managing team. Next to three individual assignments, trainees also execute four to six team assignments during the programme. The coordinator presents available assignments at the start of the traineeship. The trainee-team distributes these assignments among each other and formulates an action plan in which the trainees outline what they are going to do, what their goals are, and how they are going to share their activities. The executive board has to approve this plan. After approval, the trainees can work on their group and individual assignments. However, over the course of the traineeship trainees are expected to come up with new assignments themselves – identify the problem, see the potential and generate the solution. The progress of the trainee is supervised by the programme coordinator during each assignment. Additionally, trainees are supervised by stake holding HK employees and provided with personal mentorship for further advice.

Former trainees, for example, worked on the transition to self-managing teams, innovating the planning and control cycle and exploring the future of information technology and its security in HK. The current trainees are already working on process optimization in the municipality and have shifted their focus towards the extremal issues in the area – employability in the north of the North-Holland province.

### Opportunities for non-stop learning

The traineeship at Holland Kroon distinguishes itself in various ways. First, it has a creative selection process and focusses on personality traits rather than on academic background. Second, HK trainees become the engines of organizational and cultural change within the organization. Third, operating in self-managing teams inspires independence and strengthens the leadership qualities of the trainees, while working on multiple projects in a multidisciplinary surrounding fosters the ability to think outside the box and therefore changes one's perspective. The experience also allows the recent graduates to develop transversal skills such as time management, teamwork, and multitasking.

The majority of the trainees who completed the traineeship stayed to work in Hollands Kroon as civil servants. Many have mentioned that the traineeship helped them to better understand their own strengths and weaknesses and perhaps more importantly has helped them to identify the path they want to follow in their future career. ■

*Image Credit: Municipality Hollands Kroon*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Anna Silvius (University of Groningen).*



# DOMEL HOLDING TRAINEESHIPS

SETTING TO BRIDGE  
THE SKILLS GAP FOR  
NATURAL SCIENCE  
GRADUATES IN SLOVENIA

Domel Holding Public Limited Company is a conglomerate of companies in the field of electro engineering and related sub-fields based in the city of Železniki. Domel LLC, the cornerstone of the Domel Holding was established back in the 1946, rendering the company the title of one of the oldest and longstanding companies in the country.

Domel Holding offers traineeships that target specifically the graduates of natural sciences, e.g. the fields of physics and electro engineering. The traineeships last for a year, during which the participants are employees of the company. They get a handbook as well as being assigned a mentor who is responsible for their professional growth and preparation for independent work.

Depending on their previous work experience within or outside the company, trainees need several months to master specific competencies. Development of the competencies is supervised by the mentor, who must help the trainees work efficiently and grow independent as soon as possible. With the quality mentorship support, the trainees are capable of shifting from classroom to organisational learning fast. Moreover, they are also expected to mobilise various segments of theory for completing particular professional tasks. In addition to professional expertise, the traineeship enables the development of various generic competencies.

The main goal of the traineeship is identification of graduates' abilities and matching them with appropriate jobs. Traineeship also offer graduates the opportunity to decide about future career prospects in the company. Most trainees hold a schol-

# DOMEL®



arship (approximately 90%), with very few "external" trainees. Human resources office supports the traineeship process with additional educational courses, mainly concerning "soft" skills, such as foreign languages, teamwork, and communication skills. On average, a trainee participates and completes 3-4 courses during a one-year traineeship.

The most remarkable impact of the traineeship is the flow of new and fresh ideas. The company believes that young people are innovative and they bring in new ideas. Trainees get in touch with real-life work process: for majority of them, this is the first real hands-on experience they had in their field of studies. ■

*Image Credits: p.14 rawpixel.com via www.pexels.com, p. 15 Domel Holding, d.d.*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Samo Pavlin and Miha Zimšek (University of Ljubljana).*



# CYPRUS HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

## WORKS TOWARDS THE WBL SKILLS OF ITS YOUTH



Cyprus Universities do not have a “tradition” related to WBL learning, thus, the government is trying to fill in this gap by various schemes through the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA). The scheme that is the subject of our attention gives the opportunity for new graduates (less than 8 months experience) and under 30 years old to be placed in the private sector for a period of 6 months. This helps the participants gain a full understanding on the work environment, an inside view of the industry they are involved/interested, and also gain professional knowledge of the subject. Furthermore, the trainees get the chance to brush up their hard skills by facing real-time problems that need immediate solutions, expand to the real work environment, and fine-tune their soft skills.

### Work and Structure of the HRDA

The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) is a semi-government organisation, which commenced its operations in 1979 under the

initial name of Industrial Training Authority of Cyprus. Its mission is to create the necessary prerequisites for the planned and systematic training and development of Cyprus human resources, at all levels and all sectors, for meeting the economy’s needs, within the overall national socio-economic policies. The HRDA is governed by a 13-strong Board of Governors, comprised of 5 Government, 4 Employer and 4 Trade Union representatives.

### Investment on the human and & financial resources

The HRDA has put a lot of effort into making the scheme work, by dedicating an adequate number of its personnel to the scheme itself. Their performance and presence are evaluated by real-time visits by an HRDA supervisor. Companies file a request form and in around 8 weeks period, they are granted (or not) the permission to proceed with the employment of a young graduate. Companies usually set a supervisor for the new staff, and where is needed, mentorship

is offered as well.

Regarding the financing of the programme, the Cyprus Government provides under the De Minimis Funds is responsible for the payment of the young graduates under this specific scheme. De Minimis offers the opportunity for a company to be benefited 200,000 euros for a three-year period, where certain projects/actions can be implemented.

Both the business and graduates receive a monetary incentive. There is a lower income set by HRDA at 950 euros/month set by the HRDA. The company pays the trainee directly on a monthly basis – and claims the total cost of the placement after the successful completion.

### What are the impacts?

Numerous positive impacts have been recorded since the commencement of this particular scheme. There have been recorded lower levels of youth unemployment – Cyprus has fairly high levels of youth unemployment since the economic crisis of 2013.

There have been many cases where participants get the chance to be employed by the company, and additionally advance in their field of interest.

Participating companies benefit from the programme by (i) improving their organization and management through appropriate staffing with people with specific academic background according to their individual needs, (ii) allocating tasks / responsibilities to executives more efficiently to disarm the general management, (iii) reducing employment and training costs until the graduate becomes efficient through the HRDA grant for the period of participation in the Plan, (iv) and providing a systematic training and specialization to the graduate in close cooperation with the HRDA. ■

*Image Credit: Fox via www.pexels.com*

*This article is based on a case study originally prepared by Novatex Solutions Ltd.*



# MIDLANDS ICURE PROGRAMME

## AIMS TO TACKLE BARRIERS TO COMMERCIALISATION OF RESEARCH

ICURE is a collaboration of the SETsquared Partnership, Innovate UK and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), which aims to support the commercialisation of university innovation and ideas. The SETsquared pilot of the past three years has supported over 160 university teams with their projects, leading to 50 new spinouts, including six from University of Warwick.

ICURE aims to tackle barriers including levels of commercial awareness and entrepreneurial skills amongst academic personnel, weak networking between academic and industrial communities, and cultural conventions and reward systems, through the delivery of a programme of commercialisation support for teams of academic researchers wishing to explore the commercial potential of research originating in universities.

### Design and Delivery of the Programme

The design of the programme contains the following components:

**Application:** Each cohort required project teams made up of an early career researcher that had completed their PhD, Principal Investigator, and a Technology Transfer Officer make an online application. Places on the programme were awarded based on a scored assessment.

**Phase 1: Bootcamp and pitch:** This stage includes (i) Orientation and start-up training, and (ii) Three-month market validation. Validation exercise includes (i) Business mentorship (ii) Teleconference updates, and (iii) Options Roundabout presentations.

**Phase 2: Business plan:** Participants that were recommended to apply for 'Aid for Start Ups' were given additional financial support of up to 35k to further develop their findings into a concrete business plan. Project teams at SETsquared institutions were given an opportunity to make use of incubator facili-

ties at a reduced cost

**Phase 3: Aid for Start Ups:** Projects identified as potentially scalable businesses, but needing public funding to help them move at the pace required to capture the opportunity, were recommended to apply for Aid for Start Ups funding. Thirteen grants of up to £0.5m were made available to support the development of spinouts.

### The delivery of the programme includes:

1. **Business Model Generation:** ICURE kicks off with a 3-day residential bootcamp for the teams (4 days for the Entrepreneurial Leads) during which they are helped in forming a hypothetical business model for the commercialisation of their research.

2. **Market Validation:** The next step is for the ECR Entrepreneurial Lead to spend approximately three months intensively testing the business model by having meaningful conversations with at least 100 prospective customers, regulators, suppliers, partners and competitors to validate the commercial potential of their research.

3. **Options Roundabout:** On completion of this first-hand market research, the team presents to a panel of experts and investors on the results of the Market Validation stage and what the ECR learned about the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for the business model. Those teams that are assessed as having demonstrated evidence of significant market demand that could lead to a license or the creation of a spinout will proceed to the next stage.

4. **Business Planning:** Teams with the potential for licensing or spin-out gets up to £15k of additional

funding to take part in a business planning bootcamp and then three months of preparing a business plan they can use with investors and to apply for translational grant funding.

### Impacts of the initiative

Evidence from an Ipsos MORI study published in 2018 that analyzed the first six cohorts of ICURE highlighted the initiative is both an effective and economical instrument for accelerating the commercialisation of academic research and producing a range of wider benefits.

- 124 teams (10 cohorts) have now successfully completed the initiative with 37 companies having been created.

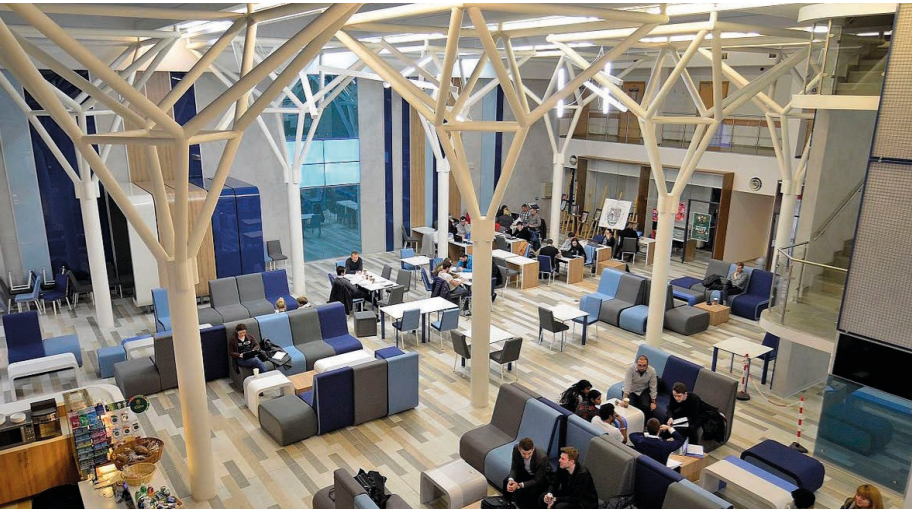
- Participation in the programme increased and deepened links between participating academics and industry, accelerating the commercialisation and the technology development process.

- An estimated 24 additional spin-outs were created, with an average age of one year at the time of this evaluation, raising a total of £6.9m in private equity finance.

- Spin-outs employed an average of three workers and were generating an average of £86,000 in revenues by January 2017. Spin-outs taken forward with Aid for Start Ups funding grew more rapidly, reporting an average of six FTEs employed and an average turnover of £45,000. The total present value of licensing agreements signed as a result of the programme was £8.7m. ■

*Image Credit: Chokniti Khongchum via www.pexels.com*

*This article is based on a case study originally prepared by University of Warwick.*



# ORANGE IS THE NEW SMART

## A POSTGRAD STUDY PROGRAMME INITIATED BY A POLISHTELECOM GIANT WITH KOZMINSKI UNIVERSITY

Orange Polska, a leading telecommunication company in Poland, recognizes that being a fledgling in a professional field can hinder the employment opportunities of fresh or soon-to-be graduates. To help them out, as well as to get some fresh business solutions, in 2013 the company together with Kozminski University launched a postgraduate program in Internet Marketing with strong practical orientation. More recently, the partnership has found its continuation in the traineeship opportunities offered by Orange.

### What is it about?

Orange has been actively engaged into educational initiatives at different levels, starting from elementary schools and reaching higher education institutions. One of such initiatives became the cooperation with Kozminski University. Together they developed a program that carries unique pragmatic features. The program includes 200+ hours of practical classes held in computer labs and conducted by well-renowned lecturers with outstanding professional credentials in e-marketing and e-business. The invited speakers come from such companies like GoldenSubmarine, VML Poland, Ideo, Freshmail, Socjomania, T-Mobile, IQS, Deloitte Digital, FutureMind, PBI, etc. Due to the program launch, students are given access to a wider range of databases, e.g. EBSCO, Emerald and ProQuest. The program also provides some flexibility in learning by allowing students to

take selective modules individually.

To encourage academic and professional growth, Orange awarded scholarships to the high-achieving students in the program. Today, to broaden their professional knowledge and skills for entering the labour-market the company provides them with another attractive opportunity, paid internships. By switching into the “try-before-you-buy” mode, students gain invaluable practical experience, thus increasing their competitiveness on the labour market.

### What are the gains?

The benefits of Orange involvement into the educational process at Kozminski University are manifold. Students develop numerous competences that allow them to manage online start-ups, conduct e-marketing activities, analyze consumers’ behavior, plan and handle finances, as well as stimulate and commercialize innovation in the online environment. Eventually, program graduates set up their own business in e-commerce or hold executive positions in the sphere of electronic distribution.

The gains for Orange itself spread in several directions as well. Close interaction with students and scientists at the university has brought Orange a number of new business solutions in the sphere of direct marketing. Company employees, engaged into lecturing, are reported to have increased their interpersonal competences. Apart from that, Orange participation in such initiatives helps the company build a positive brand image in the country among its immediate consumers as an innovative firm with entrepreneurial spirit.

Though the program is no longer a collaborative effort of Orange and Kozminski University, it has not seized its existence, and continues to function, yet with other business partners. Orange, in their turn, demonstrate their commitment to the original cause by hosting talented students as their interns. ■

*Image credit p.19: Orange TM, open access via Wikimedia Commons.*

*Image credit p.18: Leona Koźmińskiego w Warszawie, open access via Wikipedia.*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Przemysław Ruchlicki (Polish Chamber of Commerce), developed as a part of the WEXHE Project.*





# UNIVERSITY CARLOS III OF MADRID

BRIDGING THE GAP  
BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND  
INDUSTRY

Although young, University Carlos III of Madrid is quickly asserting itself as one of the most successful universities in Spain. Among other things, the university is well known for a solid graduate employability, which is greatly facilitated by its educational programs that integrate “curricular practices in companies”. STEP is one of such programs at the university that aims to boost graduate employability by providing a mix of classroom and work based learning opportunities for recent graduates. The program specifically targets the generic competency of graduates, i.e. interpersonal relations and teamwork that are so essential to become successful in the world of work. The program is undertaken in collaboration with national and international organizations in the region who are willing to host and systematically follow up the professional developments of attendees of the program. The program is designed as an open program to every graduate of the university, for all bachelor and master’s graduates regardless of their fields of study, because the university believes that the professional competencies targeted are universally applicable to all groups.

#### The structure of the program

STEP is designed as a 36 credits specialist degree program with two mutually reinforcing components: Academic training and company placements.

The academic trainings are conducted face to face with a frequency of around one mandatory session in a month. University Carlos III

of Madrid takes full responsibility of the academic course offerings. Four blocks are designed as part of the academic training sessions: development of communication skills and interpersonal relationship, leadership, negotiation, and teamwork. The idea is that these four transversal competences would put graduates in a better position to enact their field specific knowledge and skills and hence, will lead to greater specialization.

The academic trainings are provided in conjunction with an internship in a company that lasts for a maximum of one year. The internships are also structured in a way that maximize the professional development of participants. As such, the host company is expected to provide a plan outlining the learning outcomes and support mechanisms. The plan needs to be approved by University Carlos III of Madrid before the enrollment of the graduate in the program. Additionally, the company is expected to assign a tutor that guide and follow up the graduate.

At the end of the internship program participants are expected to produce a report detailing the knowledge, skill, and experience that they have acquired during their stay at the company. This personal reflection of participants is complemented by the evaluation report provided by the tutor from the host company.

#### Growing interest among graduates

The positive feedback of the participating companies who indicate the program is responsive to their specific needs is one of the encouraging results of STEP. The program is also growing in popularity amongst graduates of the university with over 140

participants already enrolled into the current cycle of the program. To put this in context, the first cycle had only attracted interest from 14 participants. ■

More information about the program in: <http://portal.uc3m.es/portal/page/portal/sopp/programaSTEP>

*Image credit: p.23 University Carlos III of Madrid, p.23 rawpixels.com via www.pexels.com*

*This article is based on a case study originally prepared by Spanish Chamber of Commerce.*





## WORK PLACEMENTS

This chapter of the WEXHE case study collection booklet is composed of content representing three work placement approaches - integrated approach, clearinghouse/ intermediary approach, and corporate approach - identified through the analysis of around 80 WEXHE case studies of good practice. The cases identified by WEXHE covering a range of different countries have shown a great variety of work placement modes, even though the description of a work placement is kept limited to learning and training of university students in real work environments, i.e., at the workplaces carrying out meaningful workloads and assignments.

The integrated approach to work placement refers to work-integrated learning that comprises a range of programmes and activities in which the theory of the learning is intentionally integrated with the practice of work through specifically designed curriculum, pedagogic practices and student engagement. In other words, this means that a work placement is an obligatory element within

a degree programme.

The clearinghouse/ intermediary approach refers to the model where universities and employers establish special foundations or non-profit institutions, such as career centres, and authorise them to make the necessary arrangements for a work placement. These foundations/institutions step in between universities and employers and take up a clearinghouse role in terms that they provide students interested in a work placement with all information necessary and provide work placement posts offered by employers. Finally, the corporate approach focuses on the autonomous initiative of various types of organisations to offer work placements to students.

Our selection of seven case studies of work placement from the WEXHE partner countries represent the abovementioned approaches, that will serve as an inspiration to the public and private employers as well as universities dealing with work placements to find the best fitting ways to their particular circumstances.



# WARWICK STUDENTS GO CREATIVE

## A STUDY MODULE THAT UNLOCKS ENTREPRENEURIAL POTENTIAL

Creative Business Project is an optional module introduced as a part of a Master program at the Centre for Culture and Media Studies of University of Warwick. The module allows students to apply their knowledge and gain experience by working directly with the staff of a creative or media organization. Though rooted in the sphere of creativity and arts, the module is primarily related to business planning, product design, marketing and strategy development.

### The structure of the module

The Creative Business Project is a 10-week mod-

ule. The work on the module is carried out in a student team that helps a 'client' company to find a strategic solution to a challenge they face. The module has 3 parts:

### Part 1: Preparation

Preparation is carried out both at the university and a client company. First, students are introduced with an idea of a project brief and what to expect of it. They are also encouraged to do a detailed company background check, what will help them to respond adequately to the requirements

of a briefing session. Next, students learn how to develop basic skills to become reflective practitioners. Such skills are perceived as crucial for self-assessment and prepare students for group work. After visiting the 'client' company premises, meeting their staff and receiving the project briefs, students are introduced with the concept of group dynamics through a series of practical exercises. The exercises are designed in the way to let students explore an impact they can make on their team and the final outcome of the project. The preparation phase is rounded up with team tutorials when students make the strategy for the final assignment.

### Part 2: Implementation

Within the next 5 weeks, students work on their project focusing on its content and their role as a team member. They maintain close contact with their 'client' company and receive tutorial support.

### Part 3: Delivery and reflection

The module is wrapped up with a presentation, delivered to the 'client' company, that accounts for 60% of the module assessment. Student teams receive the feedback from the company representatives, which is later on incorporated into the individual written assignment. The final assignment is a reflection paper in which students trace back their practical learning experience and management issues to theories and concepts that had been studied before. The reflection paper constitutes the remaining 40% of the module assessment.

### The impact of the module

The impact of the module satisfies the needs of

all involved stakeholders, namely Centre for Culture and Media Studies, their students, and participated 'client' companies.

For the Center, constant active search for the 'client' companies that would host their students results in a broader network of external partners. For now, these partners include BBC Worldwide, GfK NOP Media, Momentum Pictures, Warwick Arts Centre, the BBC Technology Direction team, Maverick TV, All3 Media International, and the Association of Independent Music, etc. For students, such a module adds to their CVs, but most importantly, to their confidence, competitiveness and entrepreneurial attitude. And, finally, for the 'client' companies, student recommendations have served as a starting point for change within these organisations. ■

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Scott Revers (University of Warwick).*



## “THEORY- PRACTICE- SUCCESS”

OR HOW THE MBM  
PROGRAMME FOSTERS  
KNOWLEDGE  
EXCHANGE IN POLAND

One of the barriers that can often discourage practitioners from cooperating with universities is the formalistic approach of the latter. What the business is used to do ad hoc often takes months at the higher education institutions (HEIs). There, the decision making process might take a while and the HEIs employees are accustomed to planning the activities well in advance. From the other side, the need to participate in curriculum co-creation and navigate through the bureaucratic procedures inherent to HEIs might discourage the practitioners to invest their time and effort as well. Similarly, the need for well-defined supervision and quality assurance in academia at times can collide with a more flexible approach in the practical world.

One Polish example that answers the aforementioned challenges and offers solutions to allow smooth cooperation of practitioners with the university stakeholders through a strong combination of didactic and academic experience with hands-on knowledge is the Modern Business Management Initiative, or the MBM Programme.

### The MBM Programme

The MBM Programme was initiated by the Polish Bank Association ZBP, and is now supported by Biuro Informacji Kredytowej (Credit Information Bureau) and Biuro Informacji Gospodarczej InfoMonitor (Economic Information Bureau InfoMonitor). With its mission to raise the level of practical knowledge of the financial market, entrepreneurship and business

management, the programme targets the faculty and the students – the future managers and company owners. So far, it has been implemented in 122 Polish universities and academies, covering entire Poland.

MBM assumes formal duties related to curriculum co-design, knowledge exchange between the practitioners and academics through bi-lateral lecture series, participation in business and academic conferences, training courses and e-learning programmes, and the evaluation of the courses. The knowledge transfer between the experts from the two fields is closely related to the curriculum; selection of the subject depends on the interest of students, professional orientation of the academics involved, and the universities' priorities.

### How does it work?

The programme's orientation is business management, entrepreneurship and financial education. Up-to-date, the thematic modules that the programme is built around are “Financial Risk Management”, “Long-Term Saving and Investments”, “E-Economy Tools”, “E-Economy and Cybersecurity”, “New Dimensions of Cooperative Banking”.

The programme is implemented in the following way: the lectures are prepared in cooperation with the trainer and coordinator of the programme in the HEIs. That allows to meet the formal requirements of the university and relieve the coach from formal duties. The university reports to the MBM and the parties set the date of the lecture and its subject matter.

Important to note, that the MBM trainers are people in practice working with the financial market, who can provide student with valuable practical input during regular classes. Those are mostly em-

ployees of banks, business information offices, and Polish Social Insurance Institution. The programme is monitored by Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

### Cui bono?

The aim of the program is to popularize economic knowledge and entrepreneurship among students. MBM is not limited to the universities with business orientation, it is also open to HEIs with a social sciences or technical profiles, where entrepreneurship education is at times missing, yet is not less needed. Starting a business can be a way for the students and graduates to increase their employment opportunities upon completion of their studies, and respond to the market need. In that respect, MBM has created a useful tool for teaching the students' about the practical aspects financial market and the peculiarities of establishing and running a business. So far, more than 140 000 have benefitted from the programme.

Similarly, the universities benefit from participating in MBM by expanding their access to a tested product and an experienced trainer – a qualified and experienced practitioner. For those universities, that do not specialise in management and entrepreneurship education, it is a vital solution to the potential lack of academic staff specialising in the topic. Over 1300 lectures and 200 conferences have been organised since the commencement of the programme. ■

*Image credit: rawpixel.com via www.pexels.com*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Przemysław Ruchlicki (Polish Chamber of Commerce).*



## KOLEKTOR

### AS A GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE IN WORK-BASED LEARNING

Kolektor boasts tradition in highly specialised industrial production. It cooperates with the faculties of mechanical and electrical engineering of the two largest Slovenian universities. In the group, much focus is placed to employees and their professional growth. Training & education process in the Kolektor group operates by two basic principles, as follows:

- training & education of future employees, divided into two parts: granting of scholarships and additional education prior to concluding of an employment contract;
- training and educating of the already employed people: training of new workers, schooling with work to acquire adequate formal education grade, and functional training.

Kolektor cooperates with the Inštitut Jožef Stefan of Ljubljana. Every year the group grants scholarships for schooling in secondary schools and in faculties of technical and social science branch of study. Pupils and students can complete their practice, elaborate term papers and final theses.

**Can this case be considered an example of 'good' WBL practice?**

The company places great emphasis on the professional development of students – some of them as future employees – via scholarship schemes and through work-based learning. All students who are granted a company scholarship are employed for at least one year. Within this year, the company assesses whether the potential employee fits the needs of the company. If

students show considerable potential, a job position may be offered.

Building relationships with students and supporting their education is considered as an important aspect of Kolektor. This is also evidenced through their mentorship programme through which employees with excellent competencies transfer knowledge and provide guidance to students. Kolektor has also set-up a student group at the UL in 2001 that employs between eight and ten students from mechanical and electrical engineering. This group is part of the company's research unit. It serves as a recruitment tool for future engineers, especially students of the third and fourth year of their study programmes, through including them in projects. ■



*Image credit: p. 28 Kolektor Group*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Miha Žimšek (University of Ljubljana).*





# ALIGNING SCIENCE WITH ITS SOCIAL CONTEXT

THROUGH SBP MASTER TRACK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN

The progress in science fundamentally alters the development of the modern world. Yet, for their complex nature, the latest scientific breakthroughs are frequently accessible only to a narrow pool of associated audience. If not well translated to the key drivers of societal and economic growth, e.g. entrepreneurs and policymakers, expensive forefront research and its novel findings might not be utilized to their full potential. To address this challenge, the University of Groningen and its Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE) give their masters students the opportunity to select the Science, Business & Policy master track (SBP) as a study path, and thus bridge the dialogue between science, business and policy in a bottom up manner.

**What are the prominent features of the track?**

SPB track is coordinated by The Science and Society Group from FSE, whose main goal is to align science with social context. The track programme is built around three course components: Acquisitions Tools & Career Management (ACTM), Introduction in to Science, Business & Policy and a full-time work placement. The ACTM course provides employability and career-path design workshops. In the introduction course, students learn about economics, business, management and policy design, solve real business cases and design and implement innovative policies. Upon the completion of the Business and Policy introduction course, students are required to put their newly acquired skills in practice and

undertake a six month placement as a scientific advisor at a company or a governmental agency. They are encouraged to analyse business or policy problems that need scientific expertise to be resolved.

The programme has established long-term cooperation patterns with the partners from the world of practice. As an example, the participating students have a possibility to undertake their internships in a consultancy agency ASC Academics BV, which makes cost and benefit analysis for innovations in pharmaceutical field. At this internship provider, the students are able to test their analytical skills, learn how to connect the scientific expertise with the real world of innovation, and how to function in the dynamic world of business. Along with gaining invaluable experience from the workplace and supervision by both academics and practitioners, the students are expected to demonstrate tangible results at the end of their internship, which are to be further evaluated.

**What are the programme accomplishments?**

SBP is a unique complimentary programme in the Netherlands. The future scientists, policy makers, and entrepreneurs discover how they can effectively connect with wider audience and more thoughtfully apply their expertise for the greater good during this unique study track. Intensive business and policy courses enriched with real-life examples, multidisciplinary learning community experience, and extensive “science-to-society” internship all contribute to the achievement of the goals of the SBP. Not surprisingly, the track has demonstrated a significant impact on the employability of its graduates: 98% of

the alumni find a job within a year of the completion of the programme, almost half of whom are invited by their internship provider to become regular employees. With its work-based learning approach, the track yearly delivers 65 broadly schooled scientific advisors with relevant work experience, who will further ensure the right communication among science, business and policy. ■

*Image credits: the Science and Society Group, Faculty of Science and Engineering, University of Groningen  
This article is based on a case study originally written by Anna Silvius (University of Groningen).*





# STUDY + WORK =GRADUATE SUCCESS

## MUAS DUAL STUDY PROGRAMME IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

The past century's discussion on the ultimate purpose of higher education institutions has resolved in the adoption of three missions of the university, commonly known now as excellence in education, excellence in research and active social engagement. Nonetheless, the question on the implementation of the paths the universities should follow, especially with its first mission – education, remains a topic for a heated debate among academics, higher education practitioners, and policy makers. How to measure excellence and relevance of education at the university nowadays? How to ensure that the skills provided by the university match the ones needed locally and globally? To effectively translate theoretical “excellence in teaching” into more practical “graduate

success”, “better employability opportunities” and “relevant knowledge and skills”, the theoretical education should be enhanced by the practical experience. Commonly, such strategies to connect theory and practice in order to improve students' success and relevance of higher education are referred as work-based learning (WBL).

One mode of WBL delivery, mostly practiced in Germany, is a dual study programme design. It combines in-company work experience with theoretical education at the higher education institution in the form of a coordinated curriculum. Münster University of Applied Sciences (MUAS), one of the largest universities of applied sciences in Germany, offers 10 bachelor programmes follow-

ing such study model. They cover various disciplinary areas such as engineering, business, informatics, and health sciences. A fine example of such practice is MUAS Dual Study Programme in Mechanical Engineering.

### The organization of the Dual Study Programme in Mechanical Engineering

Dual study programmes resemble prolonged internships, except being better coordinated with the curricula than typical seasonal bachelor placements. Instead of a shorter period of time spent in-company, the students enrolled in dual study programmes study and work simultaneously for the whole duration of the programme, which is 4,5 years in case of MUAS bachelor Programme in Mechanical Engineering. In addition to the academic learning component, this specific programme also includes a vocational training (VET) phase, leading to a professional certificate. In other words, at the end of the program, the students receive both a bachelor degree in engineering and a professional certificate in industrial mechanics.

For 9 semesters, the students spend 3 days a week in the company, 2 days at the MUAS and 1 at a VET academy. Importantly, a remarkable feature of all dual study programs at MUAS is the requirement for the students to have a working contract with a company prior joining the program. Although it is ultimately the student's responsibility to secure the placement, MUAS supports this process by offering the students a list of partner companies and, in some cases, advertising open positions. The programme is concluded with a bachelor thesis, normally associ-

ated with a problem faced by the partner company.

### Drivers to engage in a Dual Study Programme

Although aligned, the motivations to engage in this mode of WBL delivery for students, companies and the universities might vary. Students see the opportunities for improved skills through practical learning, financial gain at their work placement, better chances to get employed, and more professional prospects. Companies, on the other hand, perceive the dual study programs as an invaluable channel to attract and retain talented young professionals at a very early stage. According to the recent statistics, around 90% of students who finish their dual studies remain employed at their partner company. For the universities, dual study programmes diversify the range of educational offerings for students, provide them the opportunity to work in closer cooperation with industry – thus better attend to more practice-oriented curriculum, and equip their graduates with relevant skills for the modern world. Well-organized WBL schemes can lay the grounds for the development of further co-operation practices between academia and industry in forms of innovative joint educational and research projects, and promote the visibility of the involved partners. ■

*Image Credit: FH Münster, Robert Rieger*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Andre Perusso (Münster University of Applied Sciences).*



# ALL ABOARD!

## MARITIME STUDIES INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AT FREDERICK UNIVERSITY

Having some practical experience in the portfolio of a freshly graduate student is a must for many hiring employers nowadays. Knowing that, many universities include various work-based learning practices into their programs, e.g. placements, apprenticeships or internships. Frederick University in Cyprus recognizes the importance of hands-on training and offers their maritime students a chance to try themselves both onshore and onboard doing Maritime Studies Internship. The internship is designed for soon-to-be graduates finalizing their 3d year at Frederick University, and is paid by a hosting company.

### What are the objectives?

Like in any internship, the main objective of Maritime Studies Internship is to give students a taste of what the real work experience in maritime is. Students gain practical understanding of the procedures and sharpen the skills required in various functions of shipping companies, such as: crew management, liner shipping operations, shipping accounting, port agency, purchasing, logistics and warehouse distribution as well as time and voyage chartering. Learning the procedures in shipping management cannot be visualized or learned via theory, thus the internship can be an opportune environment to observe professionals in action.

Additionally, the internship helps students build and work on their soft skills such as patience, endurance, working under pressure and team work. It is also believed, that the internship

offers students an opportunity to show their best so they have a valuable point in their resume upon the internship completion. There is also a chance to be hired by a hosting organization.

### How does it work?

The internship takes place in summer and lasts 14 weeks. First, students are placed in a shipping company ashore for two weeks, and then onboard – for approximately 12 weeks.

During the two weeks ashore, students get acquainted with the complexities of managerial duties in the shipping company offices. This includes learning about business administration, financial analysis, exploring maritime regulations and other maritime related issues. During the 12-week onboard, interns dive headful into the procedures that cannot be visualized or learned through theory in business administration.

Each intern must produce evidence of his/her learning experience by completing the Training Record Book whilst onboard. The Training Record Book is generally a reflection paper with the detailed information on the daily activities interns carried out, and what learning gains each task brought to them. The Book is reviewed and signed by the Master, or a designated Training Officer who acts as an onboard supervisor.

Prior the start of the internship, top performing companies of the maritime industry offer internship positions by applying through the career office at Frederick University (all the main Ship Management and Ship Owning companies, like Interorient, Columbia, Bernhard Schulte, Marlow, V Ships Internship,

etc.).

### What are the gains?

The gains of the Maritime Studies Internship are threefold. First, aspiring students get the chance to be exposed to real projects and master their skills. There is a strong increase in the awareness of business-oriented way of thinking that brings an added value to students' career paths. Additionally, the fact that there is a proven track record of nearly complete employment provides some young managers with a good kick-start on their way to very promising careers in international trade in shipping companies. Second, for the shipping companies, the internship is a way to spot and hire talented students who have proved themselves reliable and competent to take over a full-time contract. And third, Frederick University maintains and expands the partnership base with the maritime industry what allows it to upgrade its Maritime Studies program according to the requirements of the potential employers of their students. ■

*Image credits: Mali Maeder via www.pexels.com*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Novatex Solutions Ltd.*

# START PROGRAMME

## SUCCESSFULLY LINKS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WITH SPANISH BUSINESSES



The University and Enterprise Foundation (FUE) that manages the internship programmes in Spain, has developed the Start Programme to provide enterprises and institutions with a service of intermediation with universities for the incorporation of students in internships in enterprises.

The participants in the Start Program get involved in a training project. It is a training itinerary of professional development, designed by the business tutor and validated by the academic tutor, which indicates the objectives and activities to be developed during the course of the practice, as well as the basic, generic and specific competences that the student in practice must acquire through its realization. The duration of the practices is established in the curriculum; however when the practices are extracurricular the duration is normally around 12 months.

### Design and delivery of the training

The goal of the Start program is for university students to apply and complement the knowledge acquired during their degree in their academic training, through a business activity. Because companies feel a lack of crosscutting skills in students, the Start program also incorporates training in these skills through workshops and coaching.

Regarding its design, the duration of student internships organized by the Start program is determined by the university academic plan. In the case of extracurricular practices, it is usually 900 hours per academic year. In any case, this period will be extendable at the request of the receiving company and with prior authorization from the university. The department of human resources of the company carries out the Management of the practices in the

company. In the universities there is a department that manages and advises the students in the search of practices.

The FUE puts universities and companies in contact with each other, that is to say, the supply and demand of practices. In addition, it is responsible for the tasks, e.g. management, administrative processing, and monitoring of practices. The FUE has signed agreements with more than 100 Spanish universities distributed throughout Spain, as well as collaborating with the companies in which the students practice.

### Impact of the efforts

Since its commence, the Start programme team managed internships for more than 19,700 students coming from more than 80 universities and centres affiliated nationally and internationally in more than

600 companies.

### About the FUE

University and Enterprise Foundation was created in 1973, linked to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Madrid, the 17 universities with campus in Madrid and CEIM (Business Confederation of Madrid). The FUE is a private non-profit organization that designs and manages internship programs. It develops actions in the areas of professional initiation, employability, entrepreneurship, and innovation consultancy. ■

*Image credit: Visual Tg Mx via [www.pexels.com](http://www.pexels.com)*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Spanish Chamber of Commerce.*



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

This chapter of our booklet highlights examples of Entrepreneurship programme delivery from across Europe. What differentiates entrepreneurship from the other modes of delivery is that it is innovation-driven and/or project-driven. That definition comprises not only new venture planning but also activities aimed to raise entrepreneurship awareness and related competences such as speeches, courses, workshops, etc. In other words, if the tasks include creative problem solving and taking autonomous initiative in dynamic settings WEXHE classifies this as entrepreneurship, which is distinguished from a placement or traineeship. If entrepreneurial activities are developed in the setting of an already established entity, one can speak of intrapreneurship instead of entrepreneurship.

The analysis of the 80 WEXHE case studies allowed identification of three approaches to Entrepreneurship delivery. Entrepreneurship promotion refers to the identification of students with an entrepreneurial mind-set, the support provided to them in acquiring the knowledge, competences and skills that an entrepreneur needs and the en-

couragement given to pursue an entrepreneurial career. The business creation approach deals with business creation taking place at universities and their foundations, career centres, incubators, technological parks, accelerators and similar supportive institutions. This approach focuses on e.g. further elaborating and fine tuning business ideas and business plans, registering new businesses, providing space, material and human resources to start the production, creating prototypes and setting up production processes, and marketing and sales activities. Finally, the innovation enhancement approach refers to intrapreneurial culture and the development of students' intrapreneurial skills and competences. Students should be encouraged to call upon their risk taking abilities and innovative spirit and to face challenges in which they need to find solutions for technical, organisational and social problems.

Our selection of seven case studies of entrepreneurship from seven WEXHE partner countries aims to inspire public and private employers and universities dealing with entrepreneurship in their activities.



# BSEEN

## A KICK-OFF PLATFORM FOR YOUNG BRITISH ENTREPRENEURS

Birmingham Skills for Enterprise and Employability Network, or simply BSEEN, is an intensive five-day boot camp for students and graduates who are willing to acquire or hone their business skills. It is a collaborative initiative between Aston University, Birmingham City University, University College Birmingham and Newman University (UK), partly funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The boot camp offers a comprehensive package of start-up support for new ventures in the form of various workshops, networking opportunities, tailored mentoring, business grants, and office space.

Like any initiative, BSEEN existence is underpinned with a reasonable idea to promote innovation and create networks with regional businesses for advancing local economy. As explained by Professor Helen Higson, Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor at Aston University, 'entrepreneurship and innovation are key

drivers for the region's economy, and it is important that we encourage young people to consider setting up their own businesses.' Norman Price, Deputy Chair of the West Midlands ERDF Local Management Committee, chimed in by stating that 'supporting graduates to develop and start small businesses which in turn will create jobs and ensure we retain valuable skills, are key priorities for the programme.'

Since the programme is regionally oriented, the eligibility criteria limit the pool of applicants to those who study at participating universities and graduates within the last five years from any university in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull area (UK).

### Boot camp agenda

Initially, applicants submit their BSEEN initiatives online. In the application, they briefly explain their business idea, define start-up costs and its target

market, describe how they intend to raise money and what difficulties they anticipate. The authors of the selected initiatives are then invited to pitch their business ideas to a panel made up of two BSEEN representatives and an external assessor.

The boot camp itself lasts 5 days and includes the following stages:

- Day one*      *Business planning*
- Day two*      *Market research and Managing finances*
- Day three*    *Registering your business*
- Day four*      *Marketing – Customers & competitors, planning & implementation*
- Day five*      *Sales*

The boot camp is delivered by a range of start-up trainers, or mentors, who are entrepreneurs themselves, and who know the intricacies of the start-up environment. Apart from running numerous workshops, they contribute with their invaluable advice and guidance to inspire students to persist with their business ideas.

### Stats to be proud of

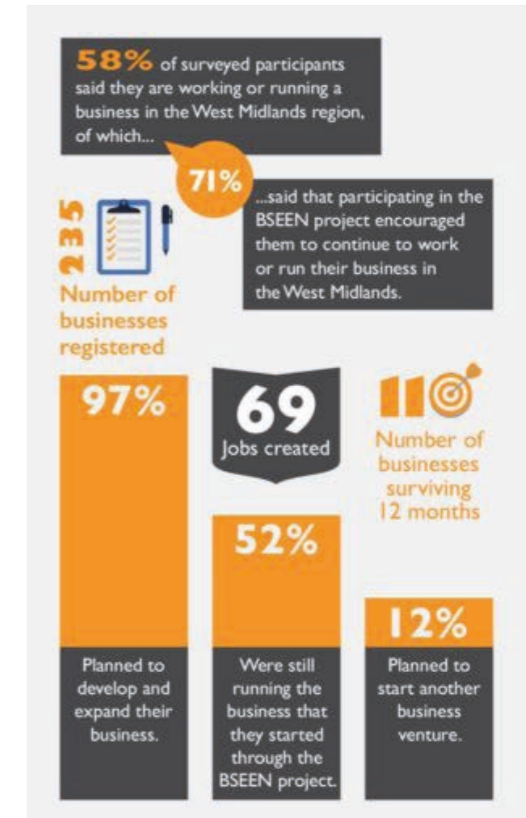
BSEEN project saw its launch as a pilot version in 2009, and since then it has gone through several stages of transformation. The impact, it has created, shows that the initiative has made a significant influence on the lives of boot camp attendees and the region where they live.

Participants see their experience in the boot camp as an 'excellent' opportunity to learn not only from

their mentors, but also from the boot camp alumni, as well as to broaden their network of like-minded people. As described by one of the boot camp graduates, '[BSEEN] is a creative sandbox. The level of creative engagement between people ... is just mind-blowing' ■

*Image credits: BSEEN*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Scott Revers (University of Warwick).*





# THE CENTRE FOR MEDICAL SIMULATION

## HONING STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FREE OF LIFE COST

*"It is in the nature of medicine, that you are gonna screw up. You are gonna kill someone. If you can't handle that reality, pick another profession or finish medical school and teach."*

— Dr. Gregory House (Hugh Laurie), *House MD*, Season 1: Three Stories

Though harsh, a candid remark by a very-well known and revered TV series character, Dr House, reflects a frightful truth about medical profession – malpractice can cost somebody his life. To limit the errors and mistakes of future medical professionals to a possible minimum, in 2014 Medical University in Lublin launched the Centre for Medical Simulation,

where, by trial and error, students practice their decision making in a low-risk environment.

### Simulation in Medical Education

Medical education based on simulation has revolutionized the way of teaching medicine. It allows students to make decisions in the circumstances close to a real work setting without putting their patients' lives under jeopardy. In medicine, training via simulation has become a safer alternative for traditional work-based learning practices, e.g. internships and apprenticeships, especially at the early stage of practical skills acquisition. Apart from eliminating the risks related to patients' safety, simulation has significant advantages in edu-

cation per se, i.e. it speeds up the learning process, fosters team work and advances students' capabilities in addressing critical conditions. The Centre for Medical Simulation in Lublin puts a special focus on developing communication skills among their students, as, according to dismal statistics, only a small proportion of the medical mistakes result from miscommunication.

### Simulation Practiced at the Centre in Lublin

How does simulation actually happen? Students assume the role of a medical doctor during a virtual meeting with a patient. The role of the patient is played by an actor, so students can observe specific behavioural patterns, e.g. his temper, mood and attitude. Also the Centre in Lublin uses a so-called 'hybrid patient', a real person hooked up to phantom equipment. In case of working with the 'hybrid patient', students interview a real patient about his medical history, but provide treatment to a phantom.

Students primarily work in groups assisted by a mentor, and pass all the stages of making a diagnosis and planning a therapeutic process. They apply theory into practice when learning about the most commonly performed clinical procedures, e.g. electrocardiography, ophthalmoscopy, otoscopic exam, digital rectal examination, urinary catheterization, medical history, preparation for surgical procedures, physical examination, medical communication as well as breaking unfortunate news. For the latter, students take a separate course on behavioural ethics in which they learn how to appropriately react to different patients' behaviour. Skills acquired in the simulation environment allow graduates to start their carriers in

medical institutions with greater confidence what is an indispensable asset in medical practice.

### Simulation Practice Support

The Centre for Simulation in Lublin and its rather costly practices are sponsored by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in Poland. The Centre has also received numerous EU grants for purchasing the medical equipment.

To keep training programs at the Centre updated, potential employers from stakeholder institutions participate in the University Program Board. The Program Board also provides information on how well graduates do in their professional carrier and what should be changed in the educational process of the Centre to meet the expectation of the employers.

The Centre cooperates with hospitals in Lublin and also other hospitals in the region. Centre' staff assist hospitals in solving specific medical problems, e.g. related to functioning of the rescue team or assisting hospitals in treating specific pathogens. In return, such cooperation gives the Centre an opportunity to gather information about the expected skills their students need to master. ■

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Mieczysław Bak (Polish Chamber of Commerce).*

# CYPRUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMPETITION

WHEN EVERYONE IS  
A WINNER IN SO MANY WAYS

Cyprus Entrepreneurship Competition (CyEC) is an annual contest that has been taking place since 2003. The competition aims at cultivating entrepreneurial attitude among young scientists, startup founders and high tech entrepreneurs in Cyprus. It challenges the participants to transform their ideas into real business opportunities and later lead forward-thinking companies. CyEC is sponsored by the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry of Cyprus and Powerstar, a British engineering market leader in smart energy solutions. The competition is held on the premises of the University of Cyprus.

## Competing vs. Learning

Though the event is manifested as a business plan competition, the overall idea is rooted in an educational initiative. The CyEC participants work under careful guidance of the assigned mentors, who are internationally accomplished entrepreneurs, to

transform innovative ideas into economically viable business projects. As the participants go along various stages of the event, they learn to apply entrepreneurial thinking into practice and sharpen such soft skills as being an effective presenter, working in a team, integrated problem-solving, etc. What is more, the business plans, developed and polished during the competition, get exposed to potential investors who may find them worthy of additional financial support.

Going in line with traditional standards of a competition, the first three CyEC finalists are given monetary rewards.

## What's on agenda?

First, those wishing to participate have to submit a 3-page executive summary of their project in which they describe the essence of their business idea, its advantages, its target audience and the composition of a team. The CyEC Jury panel, consisting of aca-



demics and entrepreneurs, evaluates the summaries against the metrics in innovation and feasibility of the idea.

When successfully passing the evaluation stage, participants are invited to a Kickoff Weekend, which is an obligatory prerequisite for taking part in the actual competition. All in all, a Kickoff Weekend is a three-day action learning workshop that exposes participants to the most relevant entrepreneurship techniques and principles, such as Lean Startup, Effectuation, Business Model Canvas, etc.

The competition itself includes several phases, i.e. teaming, idea generation, prototyping, commercialisation and marketing. Participants are expected to develop a presentation with their business proposition and submit it to the CyEC Jury that considers proposed high tech ventures and selects the finalists. The finalists, in their turn, have to defend their business proposals in front of the CyEC Jury. The

competition is rounded up with the Award Ceremony at which the three winners are announced.

## What has CyEC given to Cyprus?

To Cyprus, CyEC was an opportune event to spot talented minds in the high tech domain, as well as to increase the awareness of business-oriented entrepreneurship in the country. Since the competition invited experts and entrepreneurs from various fields, it allowed local talents to explore different business sectors and create/co-create at the confluence of cognate or semi-cognate areas. ■

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Novatex Solutions Ltd.*





## “CHAIR OF ENTREPRENEURS”

HOW THE UNIVERSITY OF CADIZ FOSTERS ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN ANDALUCÍA REGION

The chair of Entrepreneurs is a unit within the University of Cadiz (UCA), in the Andalucía region of Spain. The unit’s aim is to nurture the development of entrepreneurial mind-set amongst the wider university community. The entrepreneurial strategy of the unit is underpinned by three pillars – proximity, co-creation, and academic rigor – that are geared towards the creation of a fertile ground for innovation. The idea is that proximity allows co-creation and joint problem solving with businesses and the community. In clear reflection of that the unit is striving to build a wider network i.e. UCA Network of Entrepreneurs. The ultimate objective is to contribute to the reduction of the highest unemployment rate that is affecting the Cadiz province and the Andalucía region in general.

### The Unit’s Line of Activities

The Chair of Entrepreneurs unit facilitates entrepreneurial socio-economic development of the region through three interrelated activities: Events, Trainings, and Advice. The events are often organized either in the form of workshops or seminars. The events target a range of entrepreneurial competencies such as creativity, problem solving and team work. The idea is that the events will familiarize and motivate the academic community to engage in entrepreneurial thinking and behaviour.

The trainings are offered either in the form of a course or as an integrated master’s pro-

gram. In terms of the first option, aspiring entrepreneurs could take the online course University Expert in Entrepreneurship and Innovation that lasts for about 200 hours. The online course consists of three modules divided into topics Ecosystem entrepreneur, Creativity, Opportunities and business models, and Business plan, feasibility analysis, procedures and support instruments. The second, option, i.e. the master’s program, is offered under the title of Creation of companies, New Businesses and Innovative Projects. The program consists of a number of courses worth a total of 60 credits. The primary competences targeted by the program include creativity, innovative problem solving, communication, team work, project management and business planning.

In addition to the events and trainings outlined above, the unit provides ongoing advice for prospective entrepreneurs who are in the process of setting up their business ventures. The advice and guidance include practical help in relation to business plan development, guidance in evaluating resources and capabilities relevant for the espoused business idea and advice on legal aspects of establishing an organization.

### What has the unit achieved so far?

Ever since its establishment in 2007, the Chair of Entrepreneurs has made some positive contributions to the region in terms of development of an entrepreneurial mindset and business launch initiation. Thus far, the unit has organized more than 620 workshops and seminars that promoted various competences relevant to entrepreneurship. Additionally, the Chair

of Entrepreneurs has provided personalized advice and guidance for over 856 entrepreneurs. Over 100 companies have been created as a direct result of the initiatives of the unit, leading to the employment of more around 250 people.

More information about the program at: [www.catedraemprendedores.uca.es](http://www.catedraemprendedores.uca.es). ■

*Image credits: University of Cadiz*

*This article is based on a case study originally prepared by Spanish Chamber of Commerce.*





# ERASMUS UNIVERSITY OF ROTTERDAM

WHERE IDEAS TURN  
INTO SUCCESSFUL  
ARTISTIC  
PRODUCTIONS

How to turn abstract ideas into an executable plan? How to fit academic learning into the intensive dynamics of creative industries? These questions are frequently asked by young cultural entrepreneurs, who find themselves in the world of arts without real life experience. The seminar Applied Cultural Entrepreneurship, offered as a part of the master programme in Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam (EUR), aims to equip students who might experience similar challenges in their future practice. It encourages them to recognize their entrepreneurial potential, apply their prior theoretical knowledge in practice, and learn from the real-life experiences.

#### What does the seminar entail?

During the seminar Cultural Entrepreneurship participants have the opportunity to work with their counterparts from two Universities of Applied Sciences based in the region: the Willem de Kooning Academy (WdKa) specialized in teaching media, art, design and leisure and Codarts Rotterdam which focuses on training dancers, musicians and circus performers to become dedicated and inspiring artists, leaders and facilitators in an international context. The partnering institutions can also vary depending on the initiatives of the students.

Although the theme of the seminar revolves around entrepreneurship, students do not start their own businesses as an outcome of this course. Instead, the seminar encourages students to take responsibility for designing, launch-

ing and running an actual production or an artistic event. Students are active in all steps of producing: performing as economists, planners, managers, marketers, accountants, consultants, fundraisers, etc. Since the seminar is a part of the master programme Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship, students will have to incorporate entrepreneurial theories within their project and critically reflect on these theories within an evaluation report.

#### What does the seminar bring to the community?

The seminar distinguishes itself with its contribution to the cultural life of the region. During the seminar, students might work on socially relevant events, projects or even write consultancy reports for local cultural organizations such as the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra or the Mauritshuis Museum. Groups of students pitch their project plans to lecturers who will act as ‘a board of trustees’. If ‘the board’ approves the plan, each group will receive €150,- to realize their project.

To illustrate, in 2017 three groups engaged in different types of activities. One group organized an event called ‘Club Culture’ with electronic music performances, an exhibition, visual arts and films. Another group delivered ‘Project Primavera’ in collaboration with students of Codarts and WdKa. During the event, the student-artists performed micro-performances and dynamic art pieces. The third group wrote a consultancy report for the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra on how they could adjust their programmes and strategies in order to meet the quality expectations of all stakeholders. This report proved to be

so successful that the orchestra employed the group for another round of consultations, while one of the group members received a permanent job offer. In 2018 the EUR students will get to work with the Mauritshuis Museum, the Dutch Culture Centre for International Cooperation and the Department of Culture of the Swedish Halland County.

#### What is the added value of the seminar for the students?

The seminar’s “ultimate goal” is to boost the students’ career prospects through the development of professional competences and skills needed for undertaking entrepreneurship activities in the cultural field. Participating students report to have improved their ability for creative and analytical thinking, leadership skills, project-based working, oral and written communication skills, networking, planning and teamwork and initiative to undertake new and complex activities. Moreover, the seminar allows the students to connect their theoretical academic background with the practice. ■

*Image credit: the Erasmus University Rotterdam  
This article is based on a case study originally written by Anna Silvius (University of Groningen).*



## FOR STUDENTS BY STUDENTS

HOW THE VENTURE CLUB MÜNSTER IS INSTILLING ENTREPRENEURIAL VALUES ACROSS THE REGION

Venture Club Münster (VCM) is a non-profit association devoted to the topic of entrepreneurship. What makes it unique is the fact that it is not only initiated but also run by a group of dedicated students who believed Münster universities alone were not sufficiently addressing the topic of entrepreneurship. The aim of the club is, therefore, to activate the entrepreneurial potential of students in the region by organizing a wide variety of events that bring together students, experts, accomplished entrepreneurs, and other relevant stakeholders.

### How does the VCM promote entrepreneurship?

VCM promotes the topic of entrepreneurship by organizing a number of events out of which two take place on a more regular basis: 'Let's Talk' speeches and Workshops.

Let's Talk speeches are organized as a 2-3 hours' event, where entrepreneurs from corporations or start-ups share their stories with an audience. At the end of the speech, the audience will be given a chance to ask questions. The events are normally open to anyone interested in participate. The objective is to inspire participants to embark on an entrepreneurial journey.

The workshops, on the other hand, address more specific aspects of entrepreneurship. Moreover, the number of participants is limited to a maximum of 30 people. The workshops are normally divided into two parts: mentoring and action. The mentoring phase familiarizes participants with the technical aspects of the topic

of interest, while the action phase gives them the chance to put what they have learned into practice.

In order to facilitate the smooth running of its events, VCM follows a standard procedure consisting of four steps. The first step is defining the general theme of its events. Here an attempt is made to develop a theme that is not only interesting but also broad enough to attract a diverse audience. Secondly, a suitable expert/entrepreneur is invited to speak at the event. Once the speaker has expressed his/her willingness and availability, the VCM teamwork on the practical details of the event, such as scheduling, advertising, sponsorships, and catering arrangement. Lastly, at the end of every event, feedback is collected from both the speakers and participants, and is used as an input to consistently improve the quality of subsequent events.

### How is the VCM organized?

The VCM does not receive any financial support, neither from the universities in Münster or from the government. Rather, it is funded by membership fees from its student-members and sponsorship from external organizations. Currently, VCM has around 150 active members who collaboratively work to handle the various tasks associated with hosting an event (from advertisement to arranging food and drinks). Once a student joins the VCM as a member, he is allocated to one of its six departments (HR, IT, Finance and Law, Sponsors & Relations, Marketing and Operations). Here, an attempt is made to find a good fit between the student's field of study and the department they work for.

### Positive impact for the region and for VCM team members

Although difficult to quantify, it is fair to say that the activities of VCM are positively contributing to increasing entrepreneurship awareness in the Münster region. Additionally, participants and other stakeholders not only get inspired to start their own business but also acquaint themselves with relevant principles of entrepreneurship. Also, the entrepreneurs giving speeches as well as the corporate sponsors use the events as a platform to promote their businesses.

Last but not least, according to VCM's CEO Friedrich Grimm, perhaps the main beneficiaries of this initiative are VCM members themselves, who get a chance to put the knowledge they acquired from their field of studies into practice as well as gain a range of relevant competences associated with organizing large events (teamwork, raising funds, and conforming to legal requirements). As Mr Grimm put, by being part of the VCM one is also an entrepreneur.

*Image credit: Venture Club Münster.*

*This article is based on a case study originally written by Andre Perusso (Münster University of Applied Sciences).*





# LJUBLJANA UNIVERSITY INCUBATOR

## BRINGING GOOD IDEAS TO LIFE

Ljubljana University Incubator (LUI) is an initiative of the University of Ljubljana (UL) that aims to transform the innovative business idea of staff and students into a viable start-up. Although LUI was more focused on merely creating entrepreneurial awareness and spirit amongst the academic community through workshops and other entrepreneurial events, it quickly became apparent that it is critical to marry the awareness creation events with an actual entrepreneurial support. As such, LUI expanded its scope to include activities of practical relevance such as matching of entrepreneurs with prospective partners, personal coaching, and targeted trainings. LUI currently stands as one of the most successful accelerator programs not only in Slovenia but also in

Central Europe.

### Personalised approach to incubation of ideas

Although an initiative of UL, LUI does not get any funding from the university, as it relies on competitive public tender and the fees it charges for its trainings and lectures. LUI is run by a team of five dedicated employees who serve in different roles. However, depending on the need, external employees are contracted.

LUI provides a 3-month incubation program for staff and students that have a promising business idea. The support includes a dedicated mentorship, workshops, lectures, courses, and networking & collaboration opportunities. Under each cycle, a total of

14 start-ups are selected, with the “quality” of their business project being the sole criterion. Once admitted into the program, groups get continuous guidance and mentorship for up to 50 hours. At the same time, they could participate in the events organized by the centre.

Support is provided in two phases. The first phase focuses on business model development i.e. identifying target customers, designing the appropriate service/product strategy, and market entry strategies. The second phase focuses on actually setting up the company, as such networking and building partnership along with a host of other free or subsidized services are provided to the start-ups.

What is unique about LUI is that attempt is made to personalize the support to the specific needs of the start-up, rather than following a generic approach.

### Results so far

The result achieved by LUI has been nothing short of remarkable. In order to have a good understanding of the actual impact of the centre, it is important to classify the results into two groups: intangible and tangible.

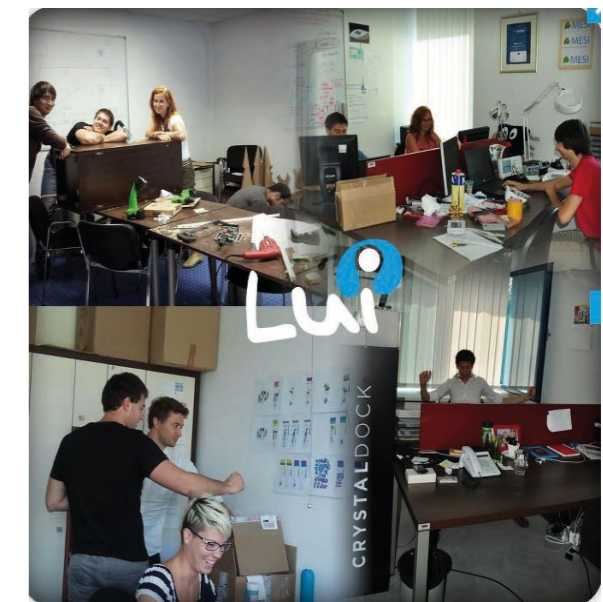
On the first category LUI is undoubtedly contributing to the creation of an entrepreneurial culture in Slovenia. This intangible impact is not only limited to staff and students who directly participate in the incubation program and other events but also to companies (over 150), investors, and regional authorities that collaborate with LUI. The incubator has also been successful in quantitative sense. Specifically, LUI has supported 139 start-ups, which managed to

raise a capital of around €20 million\*. The start-ups have contributed to the creation of over 400 jobs in the region. Lastly, LUI was also a runner up for Central European Start-up Award in 2016 in the category of best accelerator or incubator program.

### Going Forward

Going forward, LUI aspires to become a world-class incubator with a global reach. As it is espoused in its strategy document from 2017-2022, internationalization and networking are the key components of LUI's long-term vision. ■

*Image credit: p. 55 Ljubljana University Incubator.  
This article is based on a case study originally written by Miha Zimšek (University of Ljubljana).*

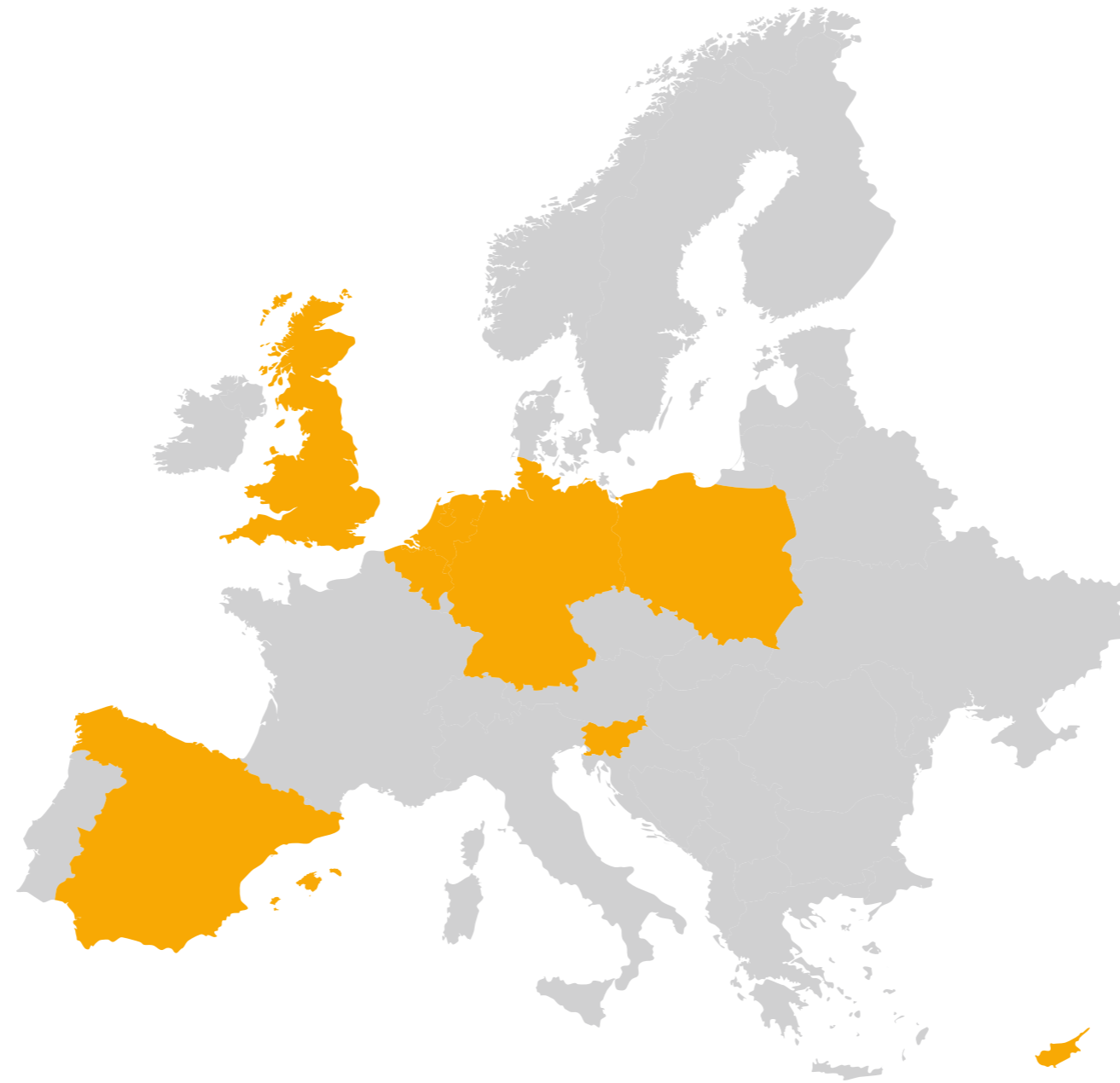




# PROJECT PARTNERS

The WEXHE Project brings together ten partners from enterprises, associations and HEIs based in eight countries in Europe.

Extensive knowledge and expertise of each partner ensures achievement of the project goals regarding WBL policy and practice development in a dedicated manner.



**University of Groningen**  
(Coordinating organisation)  
The Netherlands



**University of Warwick**  
The UK



**ENQA**  
Belgium



**EURASHE**  
Belgium



**Spanish Chamber of Commerce**  
Spain



**UIIN**  
The Netherlands



**Polish Chamber of Commerce**  
Poland



**Münster University of Applied Sciences**  
Germany



**University of Ljubljana**  
Slovenia



**Novatex Solutions**  
Cyprus



International Tuning Academy  
University of Groningen  
Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 26  
9712 EK Groningen  
The Netherlands

Prof. Robert Wagenaar  
r.wagenaar@rug.nl  
Tel: + 31 50 363 6059  
Fax: + 31 50 363 5704

For more information, visit: [www.wexhe.eu](http://www.wexhe.eu)

The information and views set out in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.



@WEXHE



Integrating Entrepreneurship and  
Work Experience in Higher Education



@ wexhe\_project