



INTEGRATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND WORK EXPERIENCE INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Greetings from the WEXHE Consortuim **p. 4**

What is Our Goal? **p. 5**

WBL Landscape **pp. 6-11**

Learning at the Workplace: Overview of the UK Apprenticeship Programme

The Barometer of University Employability in Spain

Quality Assurance of Work-based Learning in the European Higher Education Sector

WBL Good Practices from WEXHE Regions **pp. 12-25**

Erasmus University of Rotterdam: Where Ideas Turn into Successful Artistic Productions

Utrecht's Co-create Program: Empowering Students to Tackle Social Challenges

MUAS Dual Study Programme in Mechanical Engineering: Study + Work = Graduate Success

Creative Management Program: Unleashing the Leadership Potential of Humanities and Social Sciences Graduates

“Theory-Practice-Success” or How the MBM Programme Fosters Knowledge Exchange in Poland

Work-Based Learning in Hard-Pure Disciplinary Sector: an Example from Slovenia

Domel Holding Traineeships Sets to Bridge the Skills Gap for Natural Science Graduates in Slovenia

pp. 26-29 **WBL Practices from Europe**
Education, Entrepreneurship and Innovation: the Tecnocampus Ecosystem

University of Zagreb Boosts Student Career Opportunities

pp. 30-33 **Insight into ongoing Erasmus+ Projects**
Fostering Entrepreneurship Education: The Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit Developed by Management Center Innsbruck

Project Partners / Contact Information

GREETINGS FROM WEXHE!

WEXHE CONSORTIUM WISHES ALL THE READERS A CLOUDLESS SUMMER BREAK!

The WEXHE Project consortium greets the long-awaited summer season with a new issue of its bi-annual journal, dedicated to showcase project outputs and further explore the work-based learning (WBL) landscape in Europe. Since our last publication in January, some great progress has been made from the finalization of national reports and good practice case studies to the development of replicable modules. In this issue, we share with you some of the selected best practices from our partner countries, and take you on a journey around the wider WBL scene in Europe, while illuminating other ERASMUS+ projects that contribute to the development of entrepreneurial spirit across the borders.

In the first section, you can take a peek into a UK apprenticeship programme that promotes learning at the workplace. Next you can learn about the Barometer of University Employability in Spain and some of the major findings from the WEXHE study as presented by the Spanish Chamber of Commerce. Finally, don't miss the WEXHE ENQA report on the quality assurance of WBL in European higher education.

This issue also features some of the best practice examples of WBL in several EU countries. Our selection from Germany, Poland, Slovenia, and the Netherlands includes the Applied Cultur-

al Entrepreneurship seminar offered at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam, the dual-degree programme in Mechanical Engineering at Münster University of Applied Sciences, Domel Holding traineeships in Slovenia and the Modern Business Management Initiative offered by the Polish Bank Association ZBP.

To complement the WBL practices in the WEXHE landscape, we invite you to gain insights through several examples from the largest University-Business Cooperation Study in Europe. Read how Technocampus located in Mataro, Spain, promotes innovative teaching and attempts to bridge the gap between businesses and students, or how the University of Zagreb ensures their students' transition from higher education to the labour market through their Student Support and Career Development Center.

Additionally, we introduce you to another Erasmus+ Project "Embedding Entrepreneurship Education" and its major outcome – the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit that aims to provide you with practical materials to educate future entrepreneurs, embedded within the higher education curriculum.

We trust that this edition of the journal will keep you updated about the current state-of-the-art of the WBL practices in Europe and motivate you to promote good practices in your region.

WE WISH YOU A PLEASANT READING!

OUR 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.



LEARNING AT THE WORKPLACE:

OVERVIEW OF THE UK APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

Apprenticeships are an example of work-based learning – genuine jobs with an accompanying assessment and skills development programme. The apprentice learns in the workplace, practicing and gathering new skills in a real work environment. Apprenticeships can be beneficial to both employers and apprentices, elevating skills levels in the workforce and promoting economic success.

In the UK apprenticeships are designed for individuals over the age of 16. To cater for different educational achievement, there are various different levels of apprenticeship available, ranging from Intermediate level (level 2) to Degree level (level 6 and 7).

Apprentices require at least 20% of their time on off-the job training although it is up to the employer and training provider how the training is delivered. Standards are regulated according to an apprenticeship framework. Training can occur in many forms but can cover practical training such as:

Shadowing
Mentoring
Industry visits
Attending competitions
Apprenticeship Reforms in the UK

With the ambition to increase the number of high quality apprenticeships, the UK Government has reformed the way apprenticeships are delivered and funded in England. Apprenticeships are now more rigorous, better organised and more clearly honed to the needs of employers.

The reforms are intended to address the skills shortages reported by many industries and help keep the UK internationally competitive. Furthermore, the concern is to raise the opportunities for people to develop their talents and progress their careers.

Funding: The Apprenticeship Levy

The government has significantly increased the annual spending on apprenticeships. In April 2017, a new funding system, the 'apprenticeship levy' was introduced (a 0.5% tax on an employer's paybill above £3 million a year). This is estimated to raise £2.8 billion in 2019-20. At the same time it is introducing

more generous subsidies for employers training apprentices in England

Target

With this extra financing the government is committed to 3 million apprenticeships starting between 2015 and 2020.

Accessibility

Recent legislation has changed the minimum English and maths requirement for people with a learning difficulty or disability. The intention is to make more achievable the completion of an apprenticeship for those who are able to meet all the requirements to be fully competent in their role, but who may struggle to achieve the qualifications normally required in English and maths.

National Apprenticeship Week

National Apprenticeship Week ran from 5 to 9 March 2018 in which employers and apprentices came together from across England to celebrate apprenticeships and encourage more people to choose apprenticeships as a pathway to a future career. ■

Content provided by: University of Warwick

THE BAROMETER OF UNIVERSITY EMPLOYABILITY IN SPAIN

The Observatory of Employability and University Employment is a network of researchers and professionals, whose objective is to analyse which objective is to analyse the employability of Spanish university graduates. The Observatory of Employability and University Employment is the initiative by the UNESCO Chair of University Management and Policy, CRUE Spanish Universities and the “Obra Social la Caixa”. The observatory of Employability and University Employment have developed the Barometer of University Employability.

The Barometer has two editions: the first edition (2016) studied the employability of university students of the first and the second educational cycles; and the second edition (published in March 2018) focuses on the employability of the graduates of Master’s degree programmes in Spain. The Barometer analyses the relationship between the universities and the companies, based on the information extracted from the administrative records of the uni-

versities and from a survey of the graduates about their work trajectory and the assessment of the role that the university education.

In particular, the latest edition of the Barometer analyses the employability of the master’s degree graduates who finished their studies during the 2013/2014 academic years. 6,738 graduates of 50 Spanish universities, both public and private were surveyed in this study. It studies, among others, the following aspects: the usefulness of the master’s degree for employability, the use and knowledge of the practices in the incorporation to the labour market, the most important or necessary competences for obtaining a job, or how it has been useful for students to manage the job.

Results show that 41.13% of graduates ultimately engaged with the work positions related to their fields of study at the master’s level. This is what the barometer calls “horizontal adjustment – the relationship between the contents / theme of the studies carried out and the functions performed in the company. Moreover, 24.20% of the graduates consider that there is close relationship between the subject of their master’s degree and the functions they perform in their current job. Only 34.67% consider that there is no relationship or that the connection is very low.

Some positive data on the employability of students who have completed a master’s degree are the following:

- 49.51% state that they have never been unemployed since the master’s degree ended.
- Among those who have been newly employed after

finishing their master’s degree, more than 50% got it within the first six months, and 26.75% within the first three months of degree completion.

- 44.84% of the graduates continued working at the same organisations.

Surprisingly, the majority of graduates (56.59%) do not know about the existence of an internship and employment service at their university. In the same way, most of the graduates who know these services have used it (56.66%). The availability of practical experience gained during the internship period is seen as highly important for the students, rated the second after the opportunity to participate in research projects.

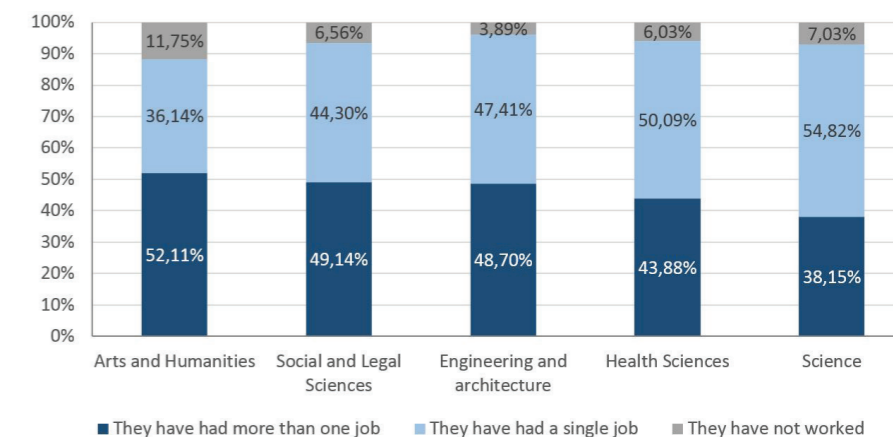
Finally, based on all the results, and the contribution from the experts, the Barometer, proposes a series of recommendations to improve the relationship between universities and business sector for developing the labour-market relevant skills of the students. The Barometer stresses out the importance to study the university-business relationship for improving graduates’ employability and skills development through internships further. ■

Content provided by: Spanish Chamber of Commerce

Graph nº2. Assessment of the degree of importance of the different teaching-learning methods during the completion of the master's degree.



Graph nº1. Percentage distribution of graduates according to their employment status after completing the master's degree, by branch of knowledge



QUALITY ASSURANCE OF WORK-BASED LEARNING

IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

The result of ENQA's (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) large-scale survey on the status of quality assurance (QA) of work-based learning (WBL) within the context of the European higher education (HE) sector is out. The report shows that there is no single unified approach across Europe as practices vary significantly from country to country depending on national legislation, development of QA agencies, and the field of study. The report also revealed that the concept of WBL is still being predominantly used in the vocational education and training (VET) sector and that its conceptualization as well as application within HE is largely lacking.

The study in brief

The study was undertaken by ENQA as part of the Erasmus+ funded Knowledge Alliance project Integrating Entrepreneurship and Work Experience into Higher Education (WEXHE). The aim was to identify

the role external QA agencies are playing, if any, in terms of guiding and assessing the integration of WBL into educational programs of HEIs in Europe. WBL is conceptualized as internships/work placements, apprenticeships, and courses/programs designed to encourage entrepreneurship. Survey responses were collected from 40 QA agencies operating in 26 European and Asian countries.

Major findings

Results show that there is no European-wide approach followed by QA agencies when it comes to WBL in HE, variations prevailing at different levels. To begin with, while QA agencies in some countries, such as Bulgaria and Norway, do not incorporate WBL in their external quality assurance procedures, in the case of the others, e.g. the UK and Croatia, WBL is part of the quality evaluation criteria. Then there is the unique case of Finland where HEIs can choose optional assessment areas depending on

the profile they want to build. This means that some institutions can request some aspects of WBL, such as entrepreneurial education, to be evaluated as part of the external quality assurance procedure.

Secondly, there appears to be a difference in terminology as well. For instance, countries such as Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and to some extent Switzerland, do not use "apprenticeships" in the HE context, with the terminology being used only in the VET sector. In addition, QA was also found to be subject dependent. For instance, in the chiropractic profession, clinical internships appear to be mandatory. As such QA agencies tend to follow a more thorough evaluation including site visits, whereas in other fields, assuring the quality of WBL is assumed to be the ultimate responsibility of the degree-awarding institution, and QA agencies merely check that internal quality assurance procedures are in place. Moreover, the results indicate that institutions tend to give more attention to QA of WBL when it is a mandatory, credit-bearing part of the curricula.

Finally, through the literature review and the opinion of the respondents, the report showed that the attention given to WBL within HE is underdeveloped, with attention significantly skewed to the VET sector.

Reflection from the project consortium

In the light of the above-mentioned findings, the WEXHE consortium believes that the further development and refining of a conceptual tool to measure and analyse WBL within the context of higher education is essential. Including WBL as a component of the educational programs increases the likelihood that it will be covered by the internal quality assur-

ance process of HEIs. In instances where it is not possible and/or desirable to carry out on-site evaluation of WBL, the WEXHE consortium believes that QA agencies may resort to examining proxy measures, such as learning outcomes, placement procedures, the nature of support provided, and the qualifications of mentors. ■

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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, launching 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 though 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. ■

This article is based on a case study originally written by Anna Silvius (University of Groningen) developed as part of the WEXHE project. This and other 80 + case studies from across Europe will be made available in the project website soon. For more information, please visit www.wexhe.eu

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According to a recent health assessment, one out of ten residents in Utrecht experience extreme loneliness [1]. Alarming figures for Utrecht, and reason to take immediate action for the local communities. How to help decrease the feeling of loneliness and promote the feeling of belonging among the inhabitants of the city? In the spring of 2018, this was the exact question to be understood and solved by multidisciplinary teams taking the two weeks elective course “Co-create: life’s professional challenges” or “Co-Challenge” jointly designed and delivered by the University Medical Centre Utrecht (UMCU), the Municipality of Utrecht, and the Career Services of Utrecht University (UU).

Co-Challenge course

In recent years, UMCU experimented with educational methods in order to innovate its curricula. The UMCU employees who have become the creators of the Co-Challenge program held the belief that there was a gap in the educational system: students do not learn about concept development. After several pilots the Co-Challenge was

UTRECHT’S CO-CREATE PROGRAM:

EMPOWERING
STUDENTS TO
TACKLE
SOCIAL
CHALLENGES

created, an elective course that gives Bachelor, Master, PhD students as well as recent graduates of the University of Utrecht the opportunity to develop entrepreneurial and professional skills by tackling social challenges in multi-disciplinary teams.

The course has a duration of two weeks, is full-time and all about finding conceptual solutions for real-life challenges of the Municipality of Utrecht. Students form teams, work on their concept and attend short inspirational sessions and workshops. The solutions are not necessarily implementable, yet the process of generating a concept puts the students “on the spot”, challenges their critical and entrepreneurial thinking, as well as providing the municipality and other stakeholders with creative ideas upon which actual solutions can be built.

Innovative solutions for aging and transportation

The challenges proposed during the course normally address the social needs of the city, with the municipality providing the input. For example, the theme of last year’s Co-Challenge course was focusing on pollution and transportation issues in Utrecht, inspired by the concern of the municipality. It has become a habit to go as far as possible by public transport or

car, and walk or cycle the last bit. As Utrecht is expanding very rapidly, this is becoming less and less feasible. The winning concept of the 2017 edition was the “Skyover”, a bicycle bridge that connects the industrial district Lage Weide and the remote district of Overvecht with high unemployment rates (15%). The goal of the Skyover is twofold: not only would the bicycle bridge increase employability rates by connecting a remote district to a lively industrial hub of the city, but it would also reduce pollution levels and the pressure on the infrastructure of Utrecht.

In the 2018 edition of the Co-Challenge, teams addressed the problem highlighted in the introduction of this article: loneliness in the city of Utrecht. The winning team, called +Pack, came up with the concept “Wise Words”, aiming to connect the elderly and primary school pupils by bringing them together for school presentations or artwork. By connecting the two groups, the team addressed the feeling of loneliness that many elderly are facing in Utrecht.

Co-creating with impact

Despite the fact that the students’ ideas may remain conceptual and not implemented straightaway, or at all, they inspire the UMCU and the mu-

nicipality of Utrecht to innovate their solution-generating processes. Notably, close communication between the stakeholders raises awareness among students of the current social issues that the city of Utrecht is facing. Additionally, it promotes the visibility of the municipality as an employer – it has been reported that the municipality of Utrecht has received more placement applications since the start of the Co-Challenge.

Undoubtedly, participation in the Co-Challenge program has had a great impact on the students themselves. Not only do students further develop their critical, creative and entrepreneurial thinking, but they also broaden their horizons by working in multidisciplinary teams and expand their professional networks by participating in the events linked with the course. Moreover, the students are able to exercise their citizenship by thinking the box and proposing innovative conceptual solutions to real-life problems. ■

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1. Information taken from www.co-challenge.nl*

MUAS DUAL STUDY PROGRAMME IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING:

STUDY + WORK = GRADUATE SUCCESS



Image Credit: FH Münster, Robert Rieger

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 provid-

ed 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 following 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 associated 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. ■

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Image Credit: Steffen Krinke, Bertelsmann Unternehmenskommunikation



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. ■

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“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 busi-

ness 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 programmes 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 train-

er 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 employees 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. ■

This article is based on a case study originally written by Przemysław Ruchlicki (Polish Chamber of Commerce), developed as part of the WEXHE Project. This and other 80 + case studies from across Europe will be made available in the project website soon. For more information on WEXHE, please visit www.wexhe.eu

WORK-BASED LEARNING IN HARD-PURE DISCIPLINARY SECTOR:

AN EXAMPLE FROM SLOVENIA

Obtaining practical experience while studying is obligatory in all types of vocational education programmes as well as some higher education programmes in Slovenian educational institutions [1]. Students are encouraged to apply their theoretical training in real-life settings, while the companies are motivated to host the trainees and interns to participate in knowledge exchange and prepare the new generation and talents for the challenges relevant to the needs of the actual labour market.

One example of a Slovenian company that successfully engages in WBL practices with educational institutions is The Krka Group. The Krka Group consists of the controlling company, Krka d. d. Novo

mesto, and a number of subsidiaries in Slovenia and abroad. Krka's basic line of business is the production and sale of prescription pharmaceuticals, non-prescription products and animal health products. Krka's business performance is determined by the commitment and continuous knowledge development of its employees. At Krka, they are committed to recruiting, motivating and retaining dedicated and capable employees and building an international corporate culture.

Krka is open to a wide variety of educational profiles, although chemists and pharmacists represent the bulk of all staff. The company implements three types of work-based learning (WBL), depending on



the level of education – they implement WBL for upper secondary vocational education, short-cycle higher vocational education and higher education. The company places great emphasis on scholarships and work placements. New specialists are found via scholarship programmes. The company's website has an option that is always open to (university and school) student applications. The entry point for work placement is most often the "personnel scholarship" (kadrovska štipendija). The call is open throughout the year. The vast majority of those who prove themselves during work placement have great opportunity to be recruited after completing their study.

Traineeships are predominant type, systematically implemented and defined in the companies' corporate collective agreement. They see the traineeship as an opportunity for both Krka and trainees. For trainees, it is an opportunity to gain experience in their line of work, while they also get in touch with real-life work environment and gain meaningful insight on how things work in reality and in the company. On the other hand, Krka gains insight and overview of possible employees, which can be contacted later on, if they perform well at tasks. The learning outcomes are connected to capacity-building at workplace, tackling various challenges in the different fields, and offering practical understanding of dif-

ferent areas of the company. This is implicitly also the aim of the traineeship at Krka.

Krka believes that if the WBL practices are organised, implemented and completed accurately and with precision, it has great potential to impact their every day work and promote success further. The company can potentially gain an expert for a workplace, who is already suitable for the company's specific needs. The need to identify and direct the talents at the early stages in their career allows Krka to actively participate and impact their wider social surroundings as well.

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This article is based on a case study originally written by Miha Zimšek (University of Ljubljana), developed as part of the WEXHE Project. This and other 80 + case studies from across Europe will be made available in the project website soon. For more information on WEXHE, please visit www.wexhe.eu

DOMEL HOLDING TRAINEESHIPS SETS 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 long-standing 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.

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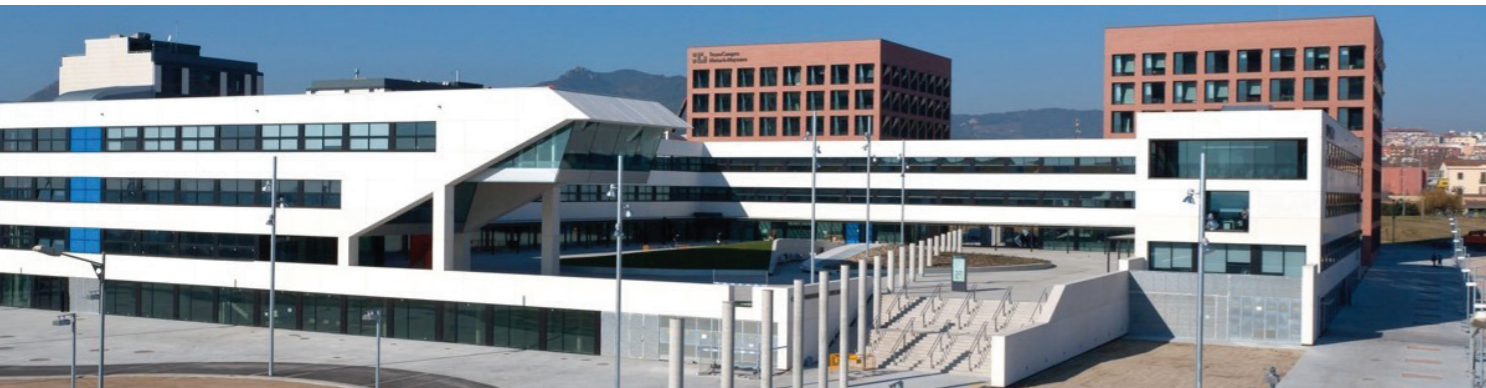
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The main goal of the traineeship is identification of graduates' abilities and matching them with appropriate jobs. Traineeship also offer graduates the opportunity to decide about future career prospects in the company. Most trainees hold a scholarship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

This article is based on a case study originally written by Samo Pavlin and Miha Zimšek (University of Ljubljana) developed as part of the WEXHE project. This and other 80 + case studies from across Europe will be made available in the project website soon. For more information, please visit www.wexhe.eu

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EDUCATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION:

THE TECNOCAMPUS ECOSYSTEM

When the textile industry of the city of Mataró, Spain started to decline during the 1990's, the city searched for a new socio-economic development strategy. Developed as a collaboration between key stakeholders, Technocampus was established as a hub of education, entrepreneurship and industry, growing to become a key element of a revitalising place-based approach to local challenges. Today, Technocampus offers three teaching schools, a business park, and an incubator centre situated on over 50,000 m² close to the city centre. The design of

the campus reflects the goals of this joint project, allowing for easy access and interactions between the different roles and sections of the campus. Technocampus has flourished in pursuing its mission is to create an environment of learning, experimentation and growth for both innovative businesses and educators.

Innovative Teaching

Technocampus uses innovative teaching methods and a focus on entrepreneurship to create an eco-

system that fosters creativity based in open social and business relationships. Technocampus is dedicated to incorporating and expanding interactive learning techniques. The schools train academic staff to teach in engaging and innovative ways while utilizing new technologies. The end result is not only beneficial for student performance but also for the teaching staff, inspiring more creativity.

Technocampus also fosters the development of entrepreneurship by encouraging every degree programme to incorporate entrepreneurship courses in their curricula. Students are encouraged to generate new ideas and to be imaginative. These entrepreneurial requirements help to keep the cycle of innovative design-thinking flowing.

Another pathway for the flourishing of innovation is the collaborative relationships established between different degree courses, which opens up opportunities to encourage interdisciplinary learning. An emphasis on collaboration is central to many of the entrepreneurship projects developed by students, working in interdisciplinary teams. Special events such as the Weekend Challenge, a hackathon where student teams compete to develop and present innovative solutions to real-world challenges, provide additional platforms for the emergence of

creativity and the fostering collaborative learning.

Bridging the gap between businesses and students

Technocampus is a hub of burgeoning relationships: between students from different schools, between students and the opportunities to design and create, and, most importantly, between students and businesses. Important factors in the success of the Technocampus are the interactions and collaborations it promotes between students and businesses. For instance, the pre-incubator, allows students to set up and develop a business idea next to the incubator space, providing opportunities to see how real businesses develop and grow. The students of this program can often be mentored by the CEOs of different companies, which gives them hands-on experience in starting a business. Technocampus thus seeks to foster continuous relationships between the schools, businesses and the incubator centre, based on an immersive ecosystem approach to learning, working and socializing. Students thus acquire competences that fuse classroom learning with industry experience, enhancing their job readiness.

Impact and moving forward

The creation of Technocampus has

generated over 500 university-business agreements, the creation of 61 start-ups, and increased the number of daily users and community members within the business park, including both business workers and students. The education approach of Technocampus has been very successful, with students winning the acclaimed UPF Emprèn prize for student entrepreneurship in four of the past six years, for example. Technocampus has also contributed to a learning and employment cycle for many students, who later establish start-ups or take jobs in the business park that allow them to contribute their experience to new waves of students coming through the schools. Overall, there is much to be learned from Technocampus, particularly for small or medium-sized cities or regions that are interested in place-based innovation and development founded on education, employability and entrepreneurship. ■

Written by: Nia Nesfield, Richard Woolley and Alexandra Zinovyeva

This article is based on the case study originally produced in University-Business Cooperation Study

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UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB BOOSTS STUDENT CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

At the doorstep of her alma mater—treasuring this long-awaited moment of true accomplishment – Anja has just graduated. Soon enough, along with the delight of receiving the degree certificate a sense of uneasiness arises. What awaits for Anja in the fast-evolving world of employment? Is she “career ready”? The Student Support and Career Development Center (CPSRK), an interactive employability platform, forestalls the concerns of Anja and many other University of Zagreb students well in advance, by assisting them at all stages of the preparation for their dream careers.

The success of students’ transitions from higher education to work lies at the heart of the work of CPSRK in the Faculty of Organization and Informatics (FOI) at the University of Zagreb, Croatia. Initially established as a response to a student body request for more integration of practical curriculum and internship support, CPSRK has moved beyond its initial purpose. It now sets its sights on a greater aim, to serve as an “ice-breaker” between the student body and the human resource needs of the local/regional business community through an open model of faculty-business interaction and a set of supporting activities.

Increased student and business visibility

CPSRK has much to offer to foster UBC, principally by involving students and business in a variety of different modes of interaction. The Centre organises company visits, invites professional external lecturers, seeks financial support for the incubation of student start-

ups, holds employer pitch and networking events, and much more. This carefully designed combination of activities effectively helps the platform to increase the visibility of FOI and develop quality formal and informal personal interactions between students and the companies, while catering for the needs of both.

What is less expected and very innovative on the part of such a platform is the provision of branding services for companies. CPSRK collaborates with interested companies to design customised advertising material, which is designed to increase student interest in potential internships and future job positions. To facilitate these relationships, CPSRK has introduced an online internship platform, where nearly 500 businesses make their information available to students. This effective connection platform has to date facilitated the hosting of more than 1,500 interns by registered companies.

The activities at CPSRK are not only customized for businesses and students. To ensure a well-rounded approach to student employability at FOI, CPSRK communicates with academics in order to connect them with companies for the development of joint curriculum projects. This focused strategy allowed the Centre for Application Development at FOI to launch

a website where academics and companies communicate to ensure the projects both fulfill business interests and course requirements.

Positive responses from all stakeholders

CPSRK plays an integral role in FOI student and alumni development processes, as the most recent evaluation demonstrated. Students’ improved perception of the connection between theory and practice is among the most cited impacts produced by CPSRK’s activities. Similarly, companies have pointed out that the branding services have helped them to communicate their needs better, which in turn has enhanced their recruitment processes. The results appear very promising: one in every three students receives a job offer from an internship host they encountered during their study. After graduation, 75-95% of students using CPSRK services report being able to find a job.

What lies behind these promising figures and positive endorsements from students and companies? Well-planned and targeted multi-partner communication mechanisms, a well-functioning information dissemination platform, and the ability to quickly respond and flexibly adjust to demands for skilled personnel from

the region’s business community all appear to contribute to the success of the CPSRK team. It seems the enthusiasm and commitment of all stakeholders to address one of the most challenging experiences a student must face is indeed what makes CPSRK truly special and a fine example to follow. ■

Written by: Alexandra Zinovyeva, Richard Wooley and Hacer Tercanli

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FOSTERING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP TEACHING TOOLKIT DEVELOPED BY MANAGEMENT CENTER INNSBRUCK

As in many other European regions also in Tyrol (Austria), the fostering of entrepreneurial skills and activities, especially among young people is seen as a way to drive economic growth. In order to support the success rate of start-ups education has become more prominent recently, particularly, but not exclusively, among higher education institutions. Yet, it seems that Europe still struggles to foster entrepreneurship in education and, to a certain degree, misses to unlock its students' entrepreneurial spirit. It seems that

even though entrepreneurial skills are considered important competences in to-day's society, they are still not promoted enough, especially from an educational point of view.

In the context of the EU project 'Embedding Entrepreneurship Education', MCI Management Center Innsbruck (Austria) took the opportunity to contribute, together with its partners Univeris (Germany), UIIN (Netherlands), University of Szeged (Hungary), Canice Consulting (Northern Ireland), and the associate partner the LaTrobe University (Australia), and made an attempt to develop innovative and interactive, practical-oriented teaching material for entrepreneurship education.

MCI developed an 'Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit' (<http://www.eee-platform.eu/entrepreneurship-teaching-toolkit/>) with the aim to provide material for educators to train and educate individuals independently of their already existing skills and previous knowledge base in management, business or entrepreneurship. Thus, the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit has been designed in such a form to serve educators from very different fields.

For this purpose two different aims are pursued with the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit. First, individuals as instructors, lecturers, scholars etc.

having different backgrounds should be able to use the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit. For them it should be easy to integrate entrepreneurship modules in their existing educational courses and programs or to develop new courses and programs. Second and indirectly, students and individuals interested in entrepreneurship should be trained and educated to acquire solid entrepreneurial competences and/or to further improve them.

The structure of the Toolkit has been inspired by the EntreComp Framework, initiated and developed by the European Commission (Bacigalupo, Kampylis, Punie, & Van den Brande, 2016). The initiative seeks to establish a shared understanding of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that characterize entrepreneurship. In turn, the EntreComp has been developed as a comprehensive, flexible and multi-purpose reference framework that sees and explains entrepreneurship as a key competence for life-long learning. EntreComp focuses on the following three main entrepreneurship competence areas: Ideas & Opportunities, Resources, and Into Action, whereby each area contains 5 further sub-competences (Bacigalupo et al., 2018, 2016).

It is an explicit aim of the EntreComp initiative that the framework can

be refined and applied in more depth to address the particular needs of specific target groups. For this purpose, EntreComp has been developed as adaptable and flexible framework. Indeed, different institutions and organizations throughout Europe already applied EntreComp in practice to reach different goals, in particular in the ambits of education, informal learning, and employment, as summarized in the 'EntreComp into Action' collection by Bacigalupo et al. (2018). The government of Luxembourg for example made use of EntreComp to support the development of Entrepreneurial Schools and entrepreneurial learning activities throughout the country. In Finland, the University of Turku has used EntreComp to create a common understanding of entrepreneurship across all faculties. Also a very interesting project is SFEDI Awards in the UK. This program supports the rehabilitation of prisoners and seeks to reduce reoffending rates with entrepreneurial education using EntreComp. Besides, also the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit has been chosen to be part of the collection. It serves as an example on how to use EntreComp in the context of curriculum development, and describes how learning material can be developed and structured in line with EntreComp and with the goal to

foster entrepreneurship education in higher education.

Developing the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit MCI relied on the definition of Entrepreneurship based on the EntreComp Framework. According to this definition, Entrepreneurship is defined as a competence to act upon opportunities and ideas in order to create value for others (Bacigalupo et al., 2018, 2016). Furthermore, the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit has been structured according to the three main competence areas in the EntreComp Framework, namely 'Ideas & Opportunities', 'Re-sources', and 'Into Action'. In turn, specific modules (tools) have been developed to foster those core competences and the respective sub-competences. Table 1 provides an overview of the modules in the teaching toolkit and draws out which specific entrepreneurial competences in the EntreComp Framework are fostered in each respective module.

To fully exploit the rationales behind the EntreComp Framework, a modular approach for the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit has been employed. The modular structure provides a flexible and forth-coming way to introduce entrepreneurship education along the outlined competences in the Entre-Comp. This renders the structure of the Toolkit even more adapt-

able and enables an institution-wide application throughout different faculties. The modular approach of the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit offers a variety of possibilities to design curriculum and to improve entrepreneurial thinking through the combination of different modules and their implementation in many different, individual and eligible ways, allowing also for increased creativity in designing and transmitting knowledge, especially relevant for individuals (also instructors) with a non-business/management background. Hence, the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit may inspire instructors, lecturers, scholars etc. to develop new courses, programs, etc. on one hand or to enhance and extend existing courses and programs with specific tools and modules out of the toolkit.

For this purpose three different course recommendations have been developed that provide options on how to combine the single modules in order to establish:

- A basic entrepreneurship course (especially relevant for students with other backgrounds than business or management to get a solid overview and learn basics) with the goal to familiarise students with the topic of entrepreneurship.
- An advanced entrepreneur-

ship course (relevant e.g. for innovative thinkers or founders in the early stage and others to improve, enhance and deepen entrepreneurial skills and knowledge) with the goal to foster and strengthen entrepreneurial skills and activities.

- A social entrepreneurship course (relevant for individuals interested in the social purpose of entrepreneurial activities and others) with the goal to encourage students to foster a social purpose with entrepreneurial activities and to embed students with a social entrepreneurial mind-set.

As interactive learning material the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit also focuses on practice. The practical orientation of the toolkit is realized through a problem-based learning approach, including learning by doing, real-life examples, case studies, role-plays, simulations and interaction. To foster university-business collaboration, especially the possibility to involve external actors, as regional entrepreneurs, start-ups and experts in the ambit of entrepreneurship, has been pursued. In this way entrepreneurial skills can be fostered through interactions with real entrepreneurs, laying at the same time the foundation for the establishment of fruitful links between academia and the business world. Hence, we see the cooperation

between the business sector and the academic sector as crucial, and we believe in bundling forces to render entrepreneurship education more effective in order to foster the development of a sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem. Accordingly, every module designed for the toolkit includes suggestions how to efficiently involve external actors to enrich the entrepreneurship education experience. These suggestions include but are not limited to involving regional entrepreneurs, or experts etc. as discussants, mentors, jury, storytellers etc.

With the development of the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit, a base for further initiatives in entrepreneurship education at MCI Management Center Innsbruck has been laid with the goal to foster the diffusion and development of entrepreneurship education also in future. Follow-up activities include the development of an MCI Open Badge in Entrepreneurship that will be launched in winter 2018/19. The Badge will substantially build on the outcomes and contents of the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit, as well as on the EntreComp framework. Students will have the opportunity to acquire solid entrepreneurial skills in line with the competences drawn out in EntreComp (Ideas & Opportunities, Resources, Into Action) as they participate in the modules developed for the Entrepreneurship Teaching Toolkit. ■

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embedding entrepreneurship education

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