



## THE UNI-GRAZ ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUB

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## THE TRICKY PATH FROM AWARENESS TO STARTUP REALITY

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# GRAZ



- **Graz (Austria)**
  - 275,000 inhabitants
  - 60,000 students at eight universities or colleges of higher education
- **University of Graz**
  - 32,000 students
  - 4,000 employees
  - 6 faculties and 76 departments
  - 120 study programs
- **Low affinity to entrepreneurship, conservative mindset about a traditional career, fear of failure**
- **Complex study regulations, different cultures /socialisations**

# Background



- What is the role of universities with regard to entrepreneurship education?
- Who are the key stakeholders in an ecosystem that fosters entrepreneurship education at a university?
- What issues can be identified (and how can they be solved) in order to develop such entrepreneurial potential?
- How can we integrate into existing curricula? What contents do we need to offer?
- How can we reduce access barriers and raise awareness?



# Magic Ideas or Nonsense?



- An entrepreneurial university can mean three things:
  1. The university itself, as an organization, becomes entrepreneurial.
  2. The members of the university - faculty, students, employees - are turning themselves somehow into entrepreneurs.
  3. The interaction of the university with the environment, the "structural coupling" between university and region follows entrepreneurial patterns (Röpke, 1998, p. 3).
  
- An entrepreneurial university is an engine of innovation. It „is not an enterprise designed to train students how to start or run a commercial activity.“ (Thorp/Goldstein,2010).

# What does theory imply?

- Importance and influence of entrepreneurship education
  - Entrepreneurship can be taught (Gorman et al., 1997)
  - Awareness towards alternative career paths can be influenced (Slavtchev et al., 2012)
- Four areas that need to be addressed by entrepreneurship education (Rybníček et al., 2015)
  - Professional skills  
(Jones and English, 2004; Plaschka and Welsch, 1990)
  - Behavioural and attitudinal competencies  
(Morris et al., 2013; Solomon et al., 2008)
  - Practice  
(Clouse, 1990; Vesper and McMullan, 1988; Neck and Greene, 2011)
  - Awareness and self-assessment  
(Graevenitz et al., 2010)



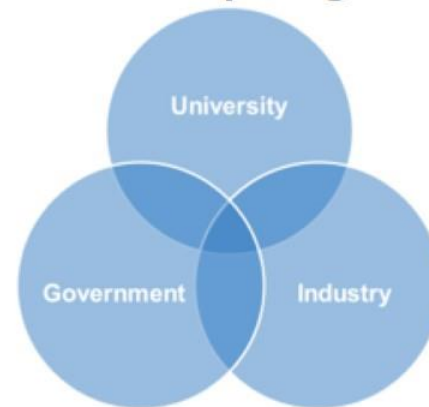
# What are the key findings?

- **A successful setting**

- allows students to participate irrespective of their discipline or study progress,
- offers students the possibility to tailor the program to their individual needs, and
- emphasises the importance of flexible integration into regular academic studies.

- **“Triple A” of entrepreneurship education programs**

- Awareness
- Attitude
- Action





# Best practice



- International Startup Bootcamp
- Montclair and Graz
- 20 students from each University
- Design Thinking, 3D-Printing, Customer Validation, Business Model, etc.



## Gründungs garage

- Academic Startup Accelerator
- Since 2013
- 10 teams per Semester
- 300+ hours of coaching
- 50.000€ worth of input
- 30+ founded companies

# Best Practice: TIMEGATE



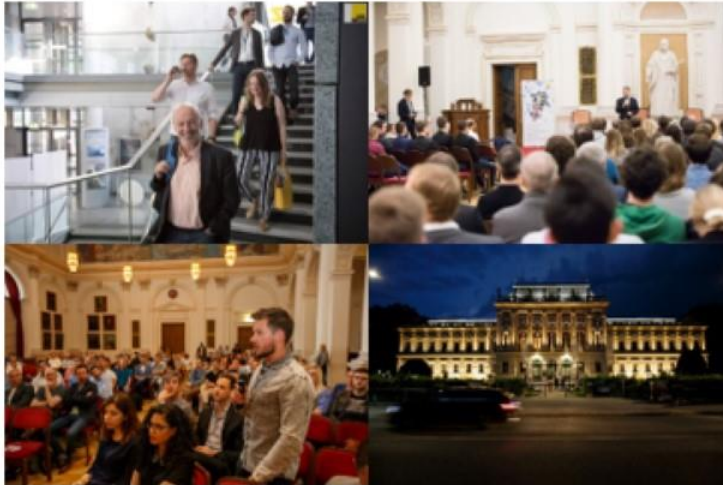
- Objective of the program
  1. Establish an inter-university program for all curricula
  2. Position entrepreneurship for students of all disciplines
  3. Integrate entrepreneurship in all relevant networks on site
  4. Promote entrepreneurial thinking and acting
  5. Offer practically oriented content through external experts
  
- Structure
  1. Funded by the universities and ministry
  2. Free of charge for students
  3. Available and open to all students
  4. Integration into curricula through elective courses
  5. Certification for target groups, e.g. medical science, natural sciences, humanities, law.



# Best practice



- Venturepreneurship Aula
- 2 times a year
- Focus theme
- 350+ guests
- Open platform for practical and academic entrepreneurship



- Idea garden
- National Startup Bootcamp
- Startup Roadtrip through Austria
- Innsbruck – Salzburg – Linz – Vienna – Graz
- Idea generation, business model canvas, marketing, financing, etc.



# Best practice



- Hub for Innovators
- 3000 m<sup>2</sup> space
- Connecting science with economy



- Female academics meet executives
- 20+ woman each semester
- High quality talks
- Speaker: Top woman from economics, science and politics