

## 2019 EUA Annual Conference

Driving innovation in Europe's universities

11-12 April 2019, hosted by Sorbonne University

### Breakout session abstracts

Breakout Sessions, Round I: 11 April, 16.00-16.45

Each breakout session will feature one paper

#### **The role of universities in regional innovation ecosystems**

*Sybille Reichert (Reichert Consulting)*

Universities are moving away from linear concepts of innovation to dense iterative co-creative approaches with external partners, which help them establish a new centrality in their innovation eco-systems.

This session presents EUA's most recent study about the role of universities in European innovation ecosystems. The report analyses the nature and changing quality of the interactions between universities, companies, governmental agencies and other public organisations. It focuses on the role that universities and university leadership play in multi-actor orchestration of innovation. Looking at innovation processes in nine European regions, the study finds universities developing a more pervasive and transformative sense of their role in innovation which permeates its core missions in education and research as much as its approach to its knowledge transfer.

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#### **Fostering entrepreneurship among students at the University of Cagliari**

*Maria Chiara di Guardo and Alessandra Carucci (University of Cagliari)*

Established in 2013 as an experiment supported by the Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR), the CLab UniCa is a University of Cagliari (Italy) action-oriented entrepreneurship training programme for university students. During training, students join entrepreneurial teams of four members with different backgrounds and start a real business tapping into the technological know-how available at the university. CLab UniCa's approach differs from that of other entrepreneurship programmes in its breadth and operating model fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration between students. By illuminating stronger forms of interplay between the university and society, CLab UniCa is a driver of regional development in terms of innovation, knowledge production and knowledge transfer.

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#### **A university-wide approach to innovation by Coventry University**

*Clive Winters and Gregg Jones (Coventry University)*

Driving innovation in the student experience, engagement with business, communities and the wider innovation ecosystem is at the heart of Coventry University's values and strategic priorities. In this workshop five short case studies will be presented to illustrate Coventry's university-wide approach and commitment to innovation, identifying key transferables that other universities can use in addressing their own innovation challenges. The case studies will cover strategic partnerships with businesses, widening access to education, the introduction of new technologies and capital investments to transform the student learning experience, and support for student entrepreneurship and business creation.

## Breakout Sessions, Round II: 12 April, 09.30-11.00

Three out of the four breakout sessions will feature two papers each; the fourth will be a workshop.

### **Institutional approaches to enhancing sustainability**

A whole-institution approach to embedding sustainable development at University College Cork, Europe's first STARS® Gold University

*Maria Kirrane, John O'Halloran, Ger Mullally and Mark Poland (University College Cork)*

University College Cork was the first higher education institution in the world to be awarded a Green Flag from the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) and the only institution outside of North America to achieve a STARS Gold rating. The UCC case study is an example of the integration of top-down and bottom-up approaches to drive institutional change across operations, learning and teaching, research and outreach. UCC's sustainability programme is "student-led, research-informed, and practice-focused". This session will explore the governance structure, strategic alignment and reporting processes that have contributed to the university's success. It will highlight novel approaches to embedding sustainability within the formal and informal learning environments.

A university's experience in linking innovation and international collaboration to facilitate change in the healthcare eco-system

*Baiba Pētersone (Rīga Stradiņš University)*

This presentation aims to analyse the role of a Latvian public university, supported by an EU-funded programme entitled *EIT Health Regional Innovation Scheme*, in addressing healthcare challenges through the engagement of an innovation-oriented healthcare eco-system on the national level. Two aspects of modern universities – innovation and international collaboration – are linked in this presentation. Some of the covered topics include setting up an innovation-oriented organisational structure, identifying and engaging key national stakeholders to create partnerships for innovation, introducing the international perspective in innovation, creating opportunities for new idea generation and development, and so forth. This presentation will address both successes and challenges, as well as provide recommendations to other institutions that promote innovation.

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### **Collaboration in interdisciplinary programmes**

Developing inter-disciplinary master's programmes with inspiration from strategic partners: A challenging innovative education perspective

*Ann-Charlotte Larsson and Niklas Ammert (Linnaeus University)*

In a changing society, education must align with societal challenges and technological development. This will be important in areas of fast development, such as technical professions and sectors like education and healthcare.

Education programmes may demand the involvement of more than one discipline and universities are not always organised to handle this.

In Linnaeus University's experience, strategic partners have been of great support and an inspiration. The joint development has seen challenges that are addressed in the presentation.

Linnaeus University sees the development of inter-disciplinary programmes as good practice for cooperation, but also for inter-disciplinary research collaborations.

Educational innovation examples from the LIFE Projects at Tallinn University

*Priit Reiska, Aet Möllits and Merily Heinalo (Tallinn University)*

Learning and teaching in universities must adjust to 21st century needs, including the changing labour market, the rapidly renewing information environment and society. At Tallinn University, the team-supervised LIFE (Learning in Interdisciplinary Focused Environment) projects are a first

attempt to innovate teaching at the university level. The purpose of the LIFE projects is to integrate knowledge from various fields and to teach issues or topics from different perspectives.

With the LIFE projects the university has involved already more than 30% of the academic staff members and more than 2 000 students in the projects within last two years. LIFE is a very successful example of institution-wide innovation to co-create new solutions and to face the educational challenges of the 21st century.

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### **Promoting entrepreneurship**

Building a value-creating ecosystem on campus: The METU case

*Mustafa Verşan Kök (Middle East Technical University)*

Middle East Technical University is a key reputable driver of innovation in the region. Turkey's first technology park was founded with the ultimate goal of creating the much-needed synergy between industry, university and public institutions. METU Design Factory functions as a catalyst for interdisciplinary interactions among researchers and students. Z-Garage was established to create awareness among students. New Ideas - New Businesses evolved into a comprehensive integrated acceleration programme according to the demands of the entrepreneurship ecosystem. Growth Circuit contributes to the development of the enterprise ecosystem in three areas: international acceleration and incubation, investment and co-working.

The UZH Innovation Hub – a case study of the University of Zurich

*Michael Hengartner (University of Zurich)*

The University of Zurich launched the UZH Innovation Hub in 2018 ([www.innovation.uzh.ch](http://www.innovation.uzh.ch)), which acts as a catalyst for the further development of new inventions and ideas and strengthens the transfer of innovative research and teaching to business and society. The core idea of the UZH Innovation Hub is a dynamic network of thematic clusters (verticals) and support in the four segments skills & knowledge, infrastructure, networks & advice and capital & funding (horizontal). Currently, three thematic clusters with intensive innovation activities have been identified at UZH: Biomedicine & Life Sciences, Space & Aviation and Digitalisation. Individual innovation measures are bundled within the clusters and linked with the network. The presentation will give an insight into how the network is designed and works.

The horizontals focus on the empowerment of young entrepreneurs. To give two examples: 1) With the UZH Entrepreneur-Fellowship in BioTech and MedTech, the University of Zurich provides funding, advice, and support to young researchers in life sciences and related fields who intend to start up a company based on their own research carried out at UZH. 2) The UZH Innovators Camp is an in-class one-week programme that promotes entrepreneurial activities at the University of Zurich with varying thematic focuses. The presentation will elaborate best practices and discuss challenges in promoting innovation.

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### **Interactive workshop: Developing universities' role in regional innovation ecosystems**

*Sybille Reichert (Reichert Consulting)*

In this interactive session participants will exchange experiences on the success factors of their university's role in its regional innovation system. Using the outcomes of the EUA study *The Role of Universities in Innovation Ecosystems*, participants will discuss how to envision the innovation role of universities in a peer learning setting with smaller groups and a common discussion to define recommendations and good practice. This will be an opportunity to exchange practices and visions and build networks between peers.