


Academic Entrepreneurship

AT THE UNIVERSITY
OF BOLOGNA



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

ENGAGEMENT in Academic Entrepreneurship

 has become over the years a priority for universities worldwide. In a broad sense academic entrepreneurship refers to the interaction between university, industry, markets and society at large and encompasses different channels through which the output of academic research can be conveyed to the market. These channels include patents, licenses, university-industry collaborations, academic consulting and new venture creation. This latter, among the various mechanisms in support of the commercial exploitation of research, has received increasing attention. As a consequence, universities have put in place policies, strategies

and actions to support the creation of new companies, both to exploit research results, including IP and non IP-based technologies (academic spin-offs), and to leverage on successful business ideas on students' side (student start-ups).

The University of Bologna is



▶ one of the largest and most active Italian universities in research and technology transfer in Italy. It stands among the most important institutions of higher education in EU with more than 85,000 enrolled students, 2,781 Academic staff, 3,100 administrative staff units. Based in five campuses (Bologna, Cesena, Forlì, Ravenna, Rimini), with a branch in Buenos Aires, it offers a diversified teaching catalogue that is tailored to the needs of the present-day society: over 200 degree programmes among its 33 Departments and 11 Schools are offered. 5000 graduates are enrolled in PhDs and 3rd cycle programmes. As a comprehensive research, the University of Bologna invests in the multidisciplinary cross-

cultural approach and in the inseparable connection between research and teaching. One of the most active universities leading and participating in European research and academic cooperation projects, Bologna has formed knowledge alliances with industry and public/private organizations. It is a hub of international networks.

▶ **IN THE PAST
THE UNIVERSITY
OF BOLOGNA HAS BEEN
ACTIVE IN ACADEMIC
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

through the implementation of several internal mechanisms to support the exploitation of research results (including the Knowledge Transfer Office, the incubator, internal regulations for spin-off and patents), which

have led to an active portfolio of more than 200 patents and 15 spin-off companies set up between 2013 and 2015. BBS-Bologna Business School has been very active so far in raising awareness of entrepreneurship, through the organization of events and networking initiatives, on top of post-graduate education programs. Many other initiatives have been implemented, most of which have been generated through bottom-up processes, thanks to the pro-activeness of highly "motivated" faculty members and students. Such a context has created the ideal conditions and a fertile ground for a more deliberate and new strategy in support of entrepreneurship to emerge.

the new strategy supporting ACADEMIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP



“ Vision

Alma Mater as a leading university in Italy in academic entrepreneurship, fostering the diffusion of entrepreneurial culture, the valorization of research results and student-based entrepreneurship.

➔ Mission

To promote the commercial exploitation of university research results through the creation of spin-offs;

To favour the engagement of students in the creation of start-ups;

To have an impact on society.

➔ Objectives

To improve the initiatives in support of academic entrepreneurship already at place;

To organize new internal initiatives to address unmet needs;

To create connections between prior initiatives and the new ones through bridging faculty members with students and favour interdisciplinarity;

To promote synergies (formal relations, joint activities) between the University of Bologna initiatives and those at place within the local community (ecosystem);

To improve communication and dissemination activities and perform regular impact's assessment.

strategic actions ↑

The actions to be implemented at the University of Bologna to support academic entrepreneurship can be grouped according to five main conceptual dimensions, representing five pillars on which the strategy builds.



inspiring AND RAISING awareness



* The actions within this area are intended to spread the entrepreneurial culture within the university and raise awareness, among students and faculty members, that entrepreneurship is desirable and feasible.

The main activities within this sphere include: AlmaEClub and Entrepreneurship education.

AlmaEClub

The club is an open community of the University of Bologna faculty members and scholars from all of the disciplines aimed at spreading entrepreneurial culture within the Alma Mater. The club gathers on a bimonthly basis and provides participants the chance to: learn about entrepreneurship (basic courses are offered to those who are not familiar with entrepreneurship and are willing to know more);

be inspired by speakers (entrepreneurs, outstanding scholars, managers, etc.) sharing their stories, passions and interests in entrepreneurship; join a think tank and contribute with ideas and competences to the development of specific projects/actions to support entrepreneurship within Alma Mater. AlmaEClub has been launched early in 2017.

Entrepreneurship education

Ad-hoc courses for undergraduate and postgraduate curricula in all of the disciplines/fields offering the basic notions of entrepreneurship (feasibility analysis, business planning, etc.). The first courses will be offered in spring 2017. More advanced courses are available only in specific disciplines (management and engineering) and Master programs are offered by BBS-Bologna Business School.

Scouting of ideas ✓

Actions within this area are meant to create the conditions for identifying and creating (scouting) business opportunities. The main mechanisms include: PdA_phase1, Start-up Day, and Unibo Launch Pad.

PdA_phase1 ✓

Programma di Accensione (phase1) aims at offering students, on a continuous basis, the opportunity to disclose their ideas any time during the year. Students disclose their ideas to a team of experts who will help and assist them to find their way in the initial stages of the generation of an entrepreneurial opportunity and develop a preliminary assessment. PdA is organized in collaboration with StartYouUp. Phase 1 will be launched in 2017.

Start-up day ✓

a one day event addressing students and putting together startupper with players – i.e. those who have a business idea with those wishing to be involved in new businesses. This should help liaise ideas with students' skills, including opportunities to meet up with angels, financial investors and also with business people. The event is organized in collaboration with StartYouUp. The first edition of this event took place in 2015.

Unibo Launch Pad ✓

a program targeting PhD students, post-doc scholars and young researchers with a strong focus on science-based venturing ideas. Students whose entrepreneurial ideas are selected are introduced to a three months intensive acceleration experience. The program includes a conclusive demo day during which the most promising projects are selected by a panel of VCs and industry experts to participate in a fully funded three weeks immersion program in Silicon Valley and London. UNIBO Launch Pad was kicked off in 2015.

Pre-incubating SERVICES.

Through pre-incubation activities and internal support actions, would-be entrepreneurs are helped in assessing the feasibility of their ideas, creating a prototype, being in contact with experts, interacting with students and faculty members who might be interested, etc. The main support mechanisms include: KTO, PdA_phase2, FabLab, and E-Labs.

KTO

The Knowledge Transfer Office provides support on how to exploit university inventions, how to protect them and how to turn them into successful business models (or new companies). It provides information on technology transfer more generally.

PdA_phase2

Programma di Accensione (phase2) aims at pushing further those students' ideas showing potential for business development. Students whose ideas are selected in phase 1 are introduced to a training program up to 6/9 months aimed at developing their ideas until they are ready to be submitted to the most appropriate incubators/ accelerators. PdA is organized in collaboration with StartYouUp. Phase 2 has been launched in 2016 with some staruppers selected from the StartUp Day.

FabLab

A coworking space targeting University of Bologna students and equipped with tools for 'makers' to create their own prototypes and with an array of computer-controlled tools that cover several different length scales and various materials. This is a brand new project to be open early in 2018.

E-labs

Laboratories in proximity of departments with specialized tools and research equipment offering professors, scholars and students a *unique* maker spaces to develop technologies and prototypes.



Incubating ()

The incubation phase is meant to offer support to companies, once they are established, and help entrepreneurs run their business. Incubating programmes have a physical location through which logistic services and legal and accounting consultancies are offered to entrepreneurial teams. More traditional 'pre-incubating' services, including support in business plan development and team building are provided to aspirant entrepreneurs (both students and faculty members) as well as to inventors (owners of patents) looking for ways to exploit their intellectual property through the creation of a new company.



AlmaCube

is the incubator jointly founded in March 2013 by the University of Bologna together with Unindustria Bologna to support the generation of highly innovative companies. It serves both spin-offs and start-ups.

Networks of incubators (Innovation Square, CesenaLab and Basement)

other incubating facilities located within different campus of the University of Bologna offering incubation, pre-incubation and idea-scouting services, on top of spaces. Innovation Square is located in Rimini. CesenaLab is located in Cesena and Basement is located in Forlì.

Accelerating and enabling growth

The acceleration and growth of spin-off and start-up companies require connections to networks of players who can offer the capital and the expertise to turn these companies into potential high flyers. The connections that the University creates in the eco-system are extremely relevant to this regard. The University of Bologna leverages on formal and informal relations with regional, national and European players (foundations, business angels, venture capitalists, banks, regional schemes and initiatives, other private and public organizations supporting entrepreneurship) to create the conditions for successful companies to succeed. Some of the players include: BBS-Bologna Business School, Comune di Bologna, Fondazione Golinelli, Primo Miglio SGR, Invitalia Ventures, etc.).



Relevant websites

AlmaCube <https://www.almacube.com>

AlmaEClub www.almaclub.com

Basement www.ems.unibo.it/it/bacheca/basement-club-2013-student-startup-ideas-1

Bologna Business School www.bbs.unibo.it

CesenaLab www.cesenalab.it

InnovationSquare www.riminiinnovationsquare.com

KTO www.unibo.it/it/ateneo/organizzazione/amministrazione-generale/81009/2430/index.html

Launch Pad www.unibolaunchpad.it

StartUp Day e PdA www.startyouup.eu

Getting in contact

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