

the Business Innovator

jobs and growth through innovation

Acing acceleration
Internationalisation of
European businesses

The open road
The innovation strategy
that works

Sailing the startup
seas

Portugal's voyage into
entrepreneurship support

Commissioning growth

Carlos Moedas, Commissioner
for Research, Science and
Innovation, on the steps
being taken to commercialise
academic output in Europe



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Issue 2 - Summer 2016

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EUROSTARS Annual Event 2016

12/10/16 - Amsterdam Arena

13/10/16 - Steigenberger Wiltcher's, Brussels

Confirmed panellists in Brussels:

- **Robert Jan Smits**, Director General, DG RTD
- **Christian Ehler**, MEP
- **Philippe Vanrie**, CEO, EBN innovation network



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Opening up

The more I think about business, economy, welfare, innovation, knowledge, intelligence...the more I believe in the concept of openness: open minds, open innovation, open collaboration, open consultation, open universities, open spaces, open ecosystems, open source, open access, open data, open office, open education, open markets, open calls, open finance, open opportunities, open societies, open borders and open networking!

It's not only about thinking open, it's also about being globally aware, systemic, design-conscious, serious, furious, fast, pragmatic, smart, quality-driven, partnership-focussed, collaborative, connected, etc. It's about believing in policies and the possible structuring role of the public sector, and about trusting others who bring you contradictions, evidence, benchmarks, self-confidence, unexpected solutions, unconventional and often entrepreneurial discoveries.

Yes, discovery and rediscovery. Yes, observing, analysing, comparing, creating, modelling, testing, scaling, adapting. Together with others. Cultivating an acute sense and an intensive practice of community-based entrepreneurial and innovation discovery.

Join us for a magazine-based open tour across these matters. The journey starts with the discovery of the art of inventing new industrial innovations with EUREKA; paving the way to the future of European research and innovation with HORIZON 2020. We see the transformation of universities into ENTREPRENEURIAL ones and we are inspired by new collaboration patterns between small and big businesses using OPEN INNOVATION and choosing smart and specialised



Philippe Vanrie
CEO, EBN

routes like RIS3. We learn how to better enable EU|BICs' graduated entrepreneurs in THE RESULT and how they reach new frontiers faster with ACCELERATION that combines various policy support mechanisms. Look at the SEAL of EXCELLENCE and the EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL and the benefits of vibrant and conducive ECOSYSTEMS thinking. We consider sector-specific approaches like BIOECONOMY this time, and we learn about benchmarking outside the EU with an update on RUSSIAN INNOVATION, and across Europe, as we zoom in on PORTUGAL.

OPEN Networking, that's EBN!

Enjoy the read, the people, the ideas, and let's meet, in PORTUGAL, 28 to 30 September 2016, in Guimarães, an open city!

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BRIDGING BIOECONOMY RESEARCH TO BUSINESS

A snapshot on CommBeBiz Project!

CommBeBiz provides a bridge from bioeconomy research to business and works with FP7 and H2020 project partners at all stages of their ideas development to enable more effective and speedier transfer of knowledge to the marketplace, public good and policy-makers. CommBeBiz targets five specialist bioeconomy segments: Food, Agriculture, Marine, Forestry, and Biotechnology.

A range of supports are available depending on the needs and preferences of individual project partners. These include **networking, visibility, training in research & business communication, assessment of the market and social innovation potential, business coaching and meet/match with industry.**

The CommBeBiz Awards: Excellence in Bioeconomy to Business and Social Innovation

Once a year, Bioeconomy research projects are invited to apply for the **CommBeBiz Awards** to support their development towards innovation. CommBeBiz partners are pleased to announce the opening of the second edition of the CommBeBiz Awards. We are looking for ambitious ideas with the potential to address major challenges in the bioeconomy sector with clear business or social innovation potential.

Himanshu, a 32-years-old energy researcher working in Ireland and one of our winners from the 1st edition in 2015 says: *'The CommBeBiz coaching will be very important for my personal development. It offers know-how and will enable me to realise my business ideas step by step. And I have plenty of new ideas.'*

All the practical info about the application and selection procedures and the application form for downloading are available here www.commbebiz.eu/awards or you can contact Laura Lecci (laura.lecci@ebn.eu) CommBeBiz partner responsible for managing the awards competition.

Do you want to know more? Would you like to join
CommBeBiz community?

Register on www.commbebiz.eu or get in contact via
Twitter [@CommBeBiz](https://twitter.com/CommBeBiz)

Celebrating the 1st anniversary with the CommBeBiz first Annual Event: Bioeconomy Impact 2016 Conference

It's an issue faced by all publicly-funded researchers: how best to demonstrate the benefit of their work, its value to society, and its relevant, long-term impact. To support this aim, CommBeBiz held its first annual event, **Bioeconomy Impact 2016**, in Dublin on the 11th-12th February 2016. This event provided opportunities for researchers to think critically about their work and consider how they can effectively utilise it to deliver greater impact. The programme included expert keynote speakers and workshops designed to build and enhance the capacity and skill of researchers, particularly in identifying opportunities for translating research to policy, product and practice. All sectors including research, industry and policy were well represented at the event, which was attended by 100+ people over the two days.

How to convey complex ideas clearly and with impact?

Where technical descriptions and graphics can be hard to decipher, a photograph can be an effective way of capturing 'the story' of a project and sharing key messages with a broad audience at a single glance. In 2015, CommBeBiz launched a photography competition to help scientists across Europe communicate more effectively with their target stakeholders giving an exciting insight into current bioeconomy research and innovation. The overall winner was announced on February 11th: Matthew Wilkinson's image '**Alice Holt Forest Phenology**' reflects how we can monitor changes in forests and woodlands in response to climate change, research which helps inform the development of forestry policy in Great Britain. Full descriptions for each of the images are available on the CommBeBiz website and stay tuned for next Annual Event and Photo Competition!



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One of the biggest challenges in creating and 'putting to bed' a business magazine is the design. Unlike lifestyle and art magazines, business concepts are extremely hard to visualise in a creative way. How on earth does one graphically represent a 'business angel' or a 'smart specialisation strategy' or summarise in a picture the notion of an ecosystem....? How would you present in pictures, across a few pages, all a country is doing to promote startups and SME growth...?

While the content is of paramount importance - it is, at the end of the day, a walk through the landscape of an industry that has, at its heart, ideas that make graphic representation next to impossible. But, at EBN, we don't really believe in that word, and when we set out to do something, we do it... and we do it well. And since presentation is key to delivering any sort of information, design therefore often becomes the biggest part of what we do at The Business Innovator. We therefore find ourselves innovating constantly to come up with issues that are visually pleasing and intellectually agile.

It's especially pleasing therefore that the theme for this year's EBN Congress in Guimarães, Portugal is 'Design for Innovation'.

Simply because design is at the heart of everything we do. From arranging our desktops to putting together a case study, to getting a business up and running... Design is perhaps one of the least-acknowledged elements of our daily life, especially in the world of innovation and entrepreneurship support. It both subtly and overtly drives the functioning of organisations and communities and as that consummate innovator Steve Jobs famously stated, "Design is not just what it looks like and feels like, design is how it works."

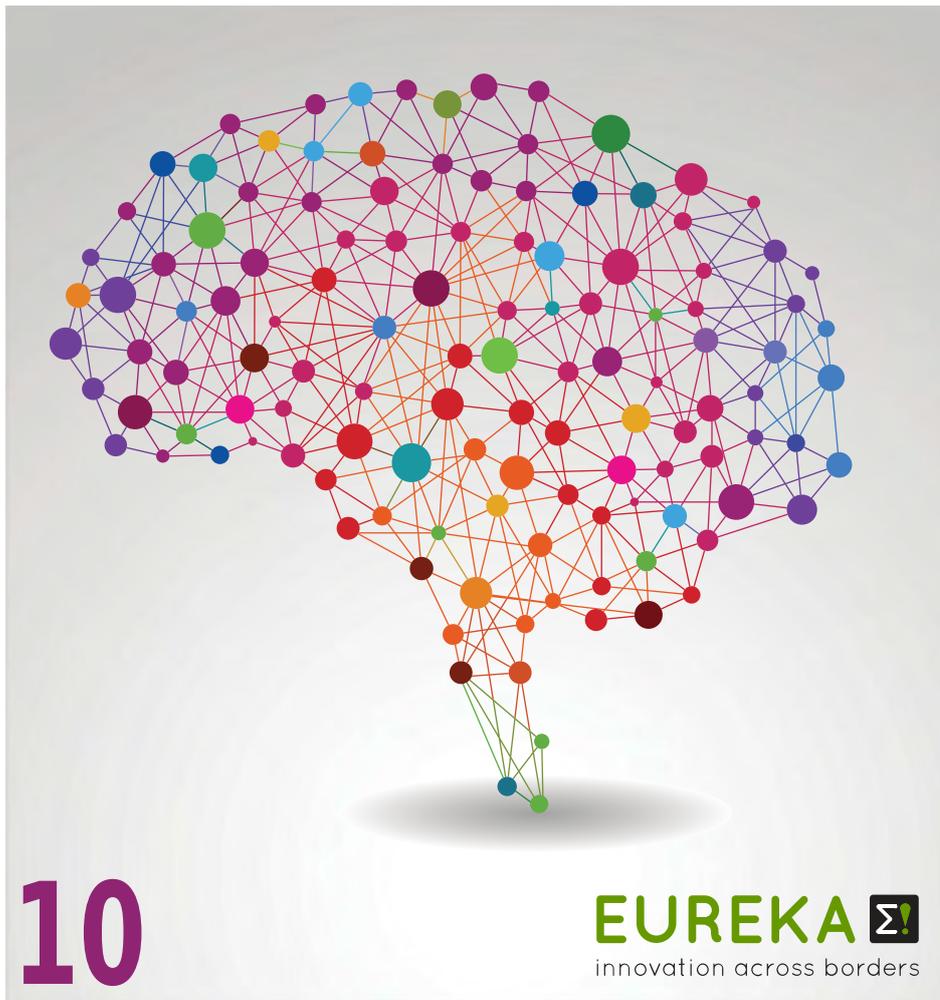
Design for innovation deserves real attention, and we are hopefully giving it that attention through the pages of the magazine and at the EBN Congress this year. In the meantime please take your time to go through The Business Innovator. We put a lot of thought and effort into the content - and design - and we hope it is an enjoyable and informative and graphically stimulating read.

Sangeetha Shinde
Managing Editor



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Commissioning growth



Patrizio Martorana/Shutterstock

Meet *Carlos Moedas*, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, the man who means business when it comes to research in Europe

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation – more commonly known as DG Research & Innovation – is the body responsible for defining and implementing European Research and Innovation policy. Its focus is on achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy, specifically its key initiative, the Innovation Union, and ensuring the research funding programmes contribute to the Commission's jobs, growth and investment package.

Led by Commissioner Carlos Moedas, the directorate is responsible for many activities, all geared towards creating jobs and growth within the EU. DG Research & Innovation flagship programmes include the €86 billion Horizon 2020 funding stream, the European Innovation Council and the European Research Area. A cornerstone of Moedas' approach is developing stronger links between the scientific research community and business. As he states "Europe has excellent science, but we lack disruptive market-creating innovation. This is what is needed to turn our best ideas into new jobs, businesses and opportunities."

Intermediaries, such as the EU|BICs, are the perfect vehicle for making these connections. Many have strong relationships with the research community and are deeply involved in commercialising scientific output. They have also adopted open collaboration with other players: STPs, TTOs RTOs etc. The Business Innovator had the opportunity to interview the Commissioner and ask how he plans to ensure Europe becomes more competitive in the global market, how to increase SME participation in H2020 funded projects and use intermediaries more effectively to achieve the EC's ambitious goals.

The EU is the world's highest producer of scientific output, but we are still not successfully competing with top innovation leaders, the US, Japan and South Korea. These countries consistently beat the EU in the key indicators capturing business activity as measured by R&D expenditures in the business sector, public-private co-

publications and PCT patents. Given that you are responsible for both research and innovation, how are you prioritising the investment between pure research, applied research and innovation? The success of the US is often attributed to the Bayh-Dole Act. Could the EU benefit from similar legislation?

CM: While Europe has been relatively successful in the area of science and knowledge production (eg publications, patents etc) it has been less successful turning this strong knowledge base into market-creating innovations. It is important that our support for innovation meets the real needs of the Europe's top innovators. Europe can definitely do more for market-creating innovation and this is why I launched a call for ideas to design a European Innovation Council. Our ambition is for a European Innovation Council to improve the visibility and accessibility of EU innovation support.

“ Intermediaries, such as the EU|BICs, are the perfect vehicle for making these connections

Supporting innovators and creating a better environment for open innovation will only work if there are sufficient resources in place to get ideas to the market. Therefore, attracting private funding to European research and innovation is vital to further encourage experimentation and market deployment. We should not forget that our regulatory framework also plays a big role in innovation. In light of the copyright review, it is important to stress the need to pursue both an ambitious and balanced strategy that promotes innovation and creativity across the Digital Single Market. Well-designed copyright is an important enabler for innovation – a stimulus for research of all kinds and one that needs to be future proof for things like text and data mining, which helps to extract new insights and knowledge from the exponentially growing store of 'big data' and plays a key role in the use of the knowledge for innovation.

Our members have expressed concerns about the distribution and SME participation rates of H2020 innovation funding. Despite the great efforts of the SME Instrument, and the target of 20 percent of funds going to private industry, the low success rates may be demotivating smaller companies with less resources to invest in applying. The success rates are even lower in peripheral regions where many of our members are active, and where other instruments, such as FTI, Interreg or Structural Funds are more largely available - but in which SME participation is lower. What advice can you give our members - the intermediaries working with the SMEs - to help them keep the SMEs motivated and applying to the SME Instrument? How does the Seal of Excellence help address this issue?

CM: Funding for the SME instrument will increase by more than 50 percent in 2016-2017, compared to the first two years of implementation, and will further increase for 2018-2020. The Commission is also strengthening the SME innovation support networks to improve the assistance provided by intermediaries such as the relevant National Contact Points (NCP) and the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN). The latter, in particular, caters for the peripheral regions you mention. The message that I would like to pass on is that we are creating more opportunities and improving assistance. However, we need to be realistic and intermediaries must provide the right advice to SMEs. The scheme is intended to select and support innovation champions and the competition for funding is of course intense.

We definitely need to maximise the impact of every euro invested in R&D, including in the evaluation of R&D proposals, to the benefit of both companies and knowledge-based regions, which is why the Seal of Excellence was created. Passing the evaluation thresholds is a real achievement and the Seal recognises the excellence of promising proposals that simply could not be funded within the budget available. It is, therefore,



proof of an independent assessment of the quality of the proposals that can be used to attract funding from other sources, including the European Structural and Investment Funds.

EU|BICs are quality-based intermediaries who work within territories to help startups and SMEs make the best use of locally available funding. Would it not make sense to ensure that all recipients of Seals of Excellence are paired with a local EU|BIC to maximise their chances of securing appropriate funding for their innovation?

CM: For us, it is very important that we bring on board funding bodies that are interested in supporting the Seal of Excellence initiative. This is why we set up a Community of Practice, which now includes over 100 funding organisations at regional and national level. These organisations are already exchanging their experience of how best to offer support to 'Seal proposals' and how to make the process effective and efficient. I am pleased to note that a number of regions and countries are preparing to launch funding calls for 'Seal proposals'.

As I mentioned earlier, the NCPs and the EEN are expected to play a key role as intermediaries in highlighting these additional funding opportunities. But this does not, of course, mean that other intermediaries and stakeholders such as EU|BICs should not also play a part. This is why we endeavour to make sure that organisations such as EBN are kept regularly up to date.

“ So, European innovation policy should enhance the role of design in innovation and innovation support

While the number of startups created in Europe is on a par with competitors such as the United States, Europe lags behind in disruptive innovation and in scaling startups into world-beating businesses. How do you envisage the European Innovation Council could contribute to solving this?

“ But this does not, of course, mean that other intermediaries and stakeholders such as EU|BICs should not also play a part

Julius Kleitatis/Shutterstock

And what would be the role of the business support intermediaries within the Council?

CM: Rolling out disruptive or breakthrough innovations and turning our science, engineering and technological successes into global brands is indeed one of the challenges the European Innovation Council could tackle. Scaling up businesses that pioneer new, market-oriented innovations is another area where Europe would need to do better.

After all, Horizon 2020 and other EU and national funding programmes already provide considerable support to innovators (SMEs in particular) and

research. But the complex and broad range of publicly funded instruments available is sometimes confusing and could be better tailored to innovators. An ambition of the European Innovation Council would be to improve the overall innovation ecosystem by filling in gaps in support, simplifying access to finance and providing strategic advice.

The Business Innovation Observatory has flagged “Design for innovation & innovative business models” as one of its five trend reports. It refers to the overall trend of user involvement as well as incorporation of design into the innovation process. Our upcoming EBN Congress will have the focus of ‘Design for Innovation’ where we will discuss design within the context of policy making, manufacturing, creative industries, developing talent and social innovation. What impact do you see design having within the innovation and business model development process?

CM: Design-thinking is more and more recognised as one of the most important tools to drive innovation. Design tools are an efficient way of capturing user needs, developing practical solutions and thereby driving the innovation process. Design methodologies are also very important for policy development and can help to reduce the time from research to market and reduce the risk in the commercialisation process. They help to find practical applications horizontally across sectors, commercialise research, identify market needs and make new concepts viable and appealing. So, European innovation policy should enhance the role of design in innovation and innovation support. Therefore, in Horizon 2020 we have made efforts to step up our support for social innovation and user-centric innovation, in particular, to further promote the understanding of design's impact on innovation, to support design-driven innovation in businesses and to drive renewal in the public sector.

When good ideas happen



Thomas Ehritz shows us how the EUREKA Network has helped foster many important advancements shaping the new R&D scene in Europe

EUREKA is an intergovernmental organisation focused on mobilising funds and fostering collaboration for the benefit of close-to-market projects across all fields of civilian technology. Over the last three decades, EUREKA has been responsible for bringing together SMEs, large companies, research institutes and universities to advance the state of technology in Europe for economic benefit. More than 40 countries now hold EUREKA membership, and a number of nations outside of the continent – South Korea, Canada and South Africa – are also included as associate countries.

The political and technological context that gave rise to the creation of EUREKA in 1985 was complex. Preceding decades had seen a number of failed or modestly successful intergovernmental R&D collaborations between European countries, and in the face of intense competition from the US and Japan, the need for Europe to work together effectively became abundantly clear.

Although it was France that first proposed the idea of the EUREKA network, support from what was then West Germany, as well as other influential governments and industry partners, helped to cement the beginnings of what has since become a pan-European network. Since then, the history of EUREKA has been closely intertwined with the history of Europe – and landmarks such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the global economic downturn have shaped the course of both.

THE THREE INSTRUMENTS...

In this context, EUREKA's development, over the years, from an organisation supporting few very big projects to supporting many small ones has naturally reflected a change of 'innovation style' in the 1980s. During its lifetime EUREKA has supported thousands of projects; of these, the vast majority have been successfully finished and resulted in fresh market opportunities, as well as scientific advances that are an inspiration to other researchers in the field. Those that are still ongoing, on

the other hand, are influential in their own right – they bring together like-minded researchers and innovators from all over Europe to capitalise on opportunities and solve research challenges in a wide array of fields.

“ Thanks to EUREKA, we can listen to our favourite music wherever we are

EUREKA's most traditional instrument, **Network Projects**, has supported the development of innovative and rapidly marketable products, processes and services, while their commercialisation has added billions of euros to national economies, creating global success stories such as, for example, the Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) project. The DAB project started in 1987 and ran for 13 years. 17 partners and public authorities invested €89.2 million in research and development to bring radio broadcasting in line with the most recent advances in digital recording technology.

Nevertheless, technologies are not the same today as 30 years ago. EUREKA's adaptation to changing conditions within the countries that it serves has been the driving force behind its more recent innovations: **Clusters**, the large strategic initiatives it uses to tackle vital technological areas; and **Eurostars**, an instrument designed specifically to support those drivers of innovation – research-performing SMEs.

The credibility of these instruments has already been proven by several impact reports but as well by the latest initiative of the EUREKA Swedish Chairmanship: the EUREKA Innovation Award 2016. This initiative awarded three projects in the categories of: Competitiveness, Added Value and Innovators of Tomorrow. All winners came from projects developed within the Clusters and Eurostars instruments (see box on page 12).

Network Projects: Market-driven, transnational innovative research and development projects, labelled by EUREKA and supported by the national funding bodies that represent EUREKA in each of its 40+ member countries.

Clusters: Initiated by European industry, EUREKA Clusters are long-term and strategically significant initiatives that develop technologies of key importance for European competitiveness. Addressing the needs of both large companies and SMEs, they are the engine for industrial innovation and economic growth. There are currently eight EUREKA Clusters: ACQUEAU, CATRENE, Celtic-Plus, EUROGIA2020, EURIPIDES², ITEA 3, Metallurgy Europe, PENTA.

Eurostars: Eurostars supports international innovative projects led by research and development performing small- and medium-sized enterprises (R&D-performing SMEs). Eurostars is a joint programme between EUREKA and the European Commission, co-funded from the national budgets of 36 Eurostars Participating States and Partner Countries and by the European Union through Horizon 2020. In the 2014-2020 period it has a total public budget of €1.14 billion.

EUROSTARS-2: AIM HIGHER

After two years of preparation and with three times the budget of the previous programme, Eurostars-2 was launched in 2014. The joint programme between the EU and EUREKA will run continuously until 2020.

The Eurostars programme supports international innovative projects led by research and development-performing small and medium-sized enterprises (R&D-performing SMEs). With its bottom-up approach, Eurostars

EUREKA INNOVATION AWARD 2016

Winner Competitiveness: Celtic HFCC/G-fast

The project brought together some of Europe's most important players - including rivals - to develop a way to use old copper networks to deliver speeds some previously thought only possible through fibre optics. *Jury comment:* "New standard could become a key enabler for the 5G standard". More information: <http://www.eurekanetwork.org/content/turning-copper-gold>

Winner Added Value: ITEA DIAMONDS

The new security testing paradigm developed in the DIAMONDS project resulted in several European SMEs bringing new products and services into this fast-growing market, and continues to influence international standards. *Jury comment:* "Societal benefits are significant: security is an emergence topic for today and future societies". More information: <http://www.eurekanetwork.org/content/boosting-software-security-connected-world>

Winner Innovators of tomorrow: Opto-Brain

The project helped to develop and patent two ground-breaking sensors to help doctors save the lives of patients threatened by strokes and other brain injuries. With commercialisation negotiations now underway, NeMoDevices and project partner Creaholic are exploring new applications for their technology. *Jury comment:* "Results can have a significant benefit for patients at risk of brain damage". More information: <https://www.eurostars-eureka.eu/content/preventing-brain-damage-innovative-sensors>

supports the development of rapidly marketable innovative products that help improve the daily lives of people around the world. This programme has been carefully developed to meet the specific needs of SMEs. It is an ideal first step in international cooperation, enabling small businesses to combine and share expertise and benefit from working beyond national borders.

So far the Eurostars programme has had a very high success rate, both in terms of the number of projects above the required quality threshold and the overall success of the projects implementation. Since 2015, and for the first time in the history of this programme, the success rate for projects above quality threshold is 100 percent: this means that all positively evaluated projects will be funded.

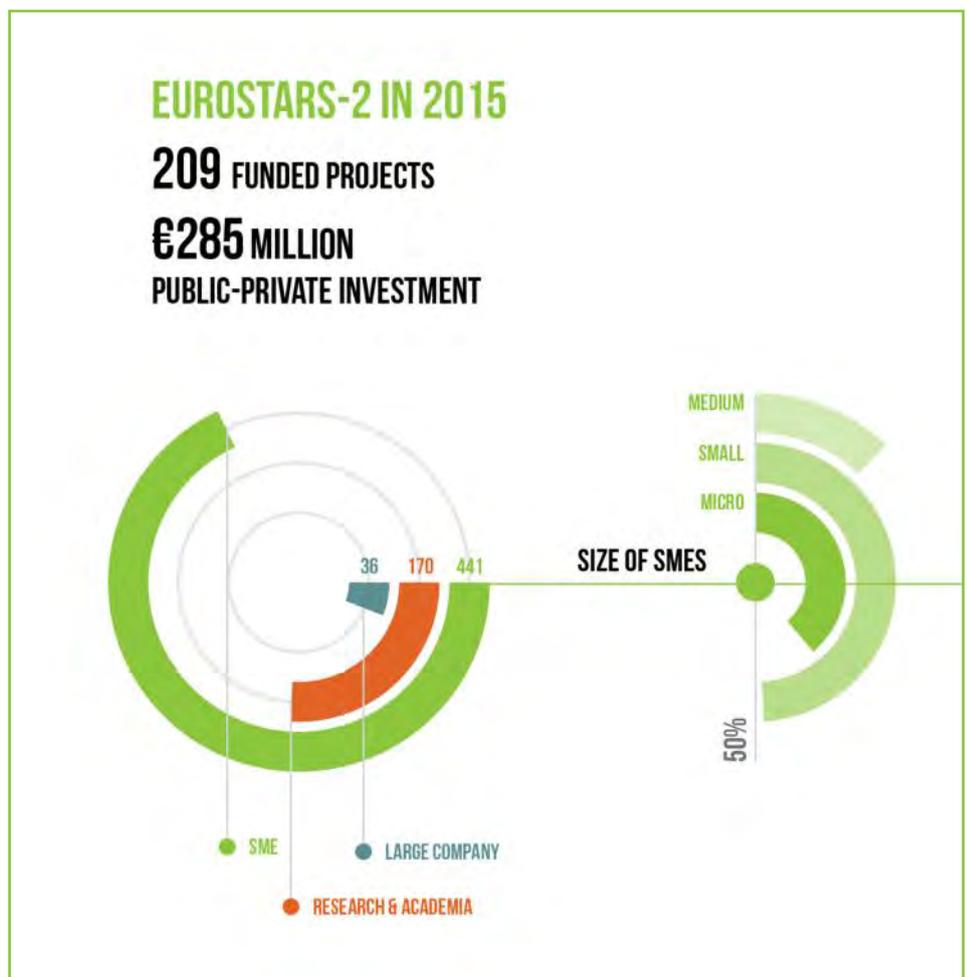
The aim of the Eurostars programme is to bring increased value to the economy, higher growth and more job opportunities. Once Eurostars funded projects are over, the outcomes

usually generate small companies with great potential. Nevertheless, in order to use this potential to its full extent, these small companies need bigger - and better - financing, probably out of scope of the current public funding available.

E!NNOVEST: IMPROVING THE INVESTMENT READINESS OF EUREKA PROJECTS

It is a paradox that, despite basic scientific strengths, Europe performs poorly in capitalising on its discoveries. One of the reasons is that on this side of the Atlantic, there is often a huge gap between innovative SMEs and investors. Just at the time when they would need it most (i.e. after a successfully funded innovation project), companies lack capital, and investors are out of sight.

Recognising that the investment and business readiness of innovative startups and SMEs seeking capital



needs to be improved in order to foster more investments, the EUREKA Network has set up a new pilot called EUREKA InnoVest Programme (E!nnoVest) which aims to increase the investment awareness and readiness of EUREKA innovative SMEs, promoting these companies towards the investment community and therefore actively facilitating investment matching with experienced investors.

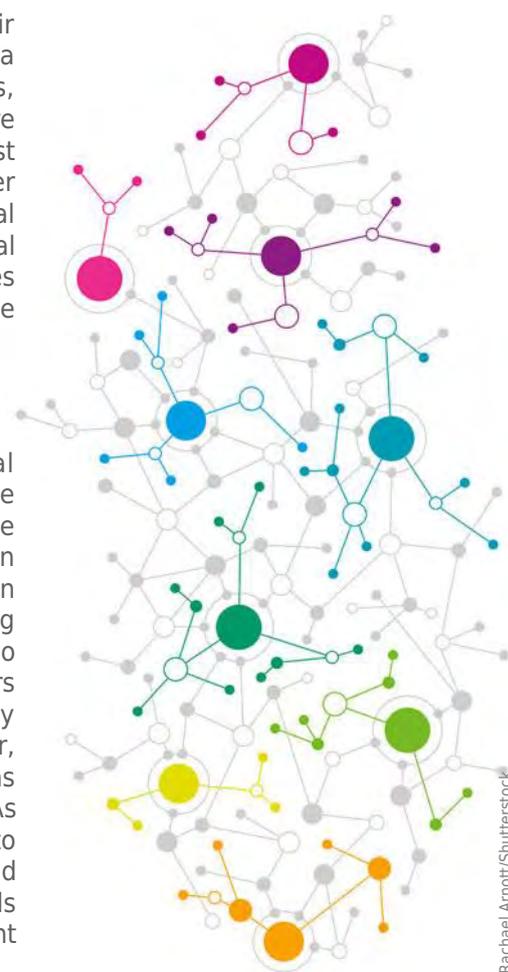
EUREKA initiated E!nnoVest as a new instrument in order to leverage one of its main assets – the incredibly rich reservoir of innovative companies. The programme is organised by EUREKA in cooperation with EBN, EBAN and Europe Unlimited, and is the second edition of the pilot programme of EUREKA High-tech Investment Programme (EUREKA HTIP), the original having run during 2015.

E!nnoVest was officially launched in January 2016 and will continue until December 2016. The programme supports innovative SMEs in seeking private investment and takes them through a tailor-made process

to systematically develop their investment readiness. It consists of a series of online and onsite trainings, such as five webinars and five venture academies, followed by the E!nnoVest Venture Forum and various other mechanisms to provide that vital link between the SMEs and potential investors. To date, 190 companies have registered to participate in the programme.

FINAL WORD

The next ten years will be a crucial period for innovation in Europe, as the continent approaches and passes the milestone of 2020. At every stage in its journey so far, EUREKA has been ready to adapt flexibly to changing conditions and offer new facilities to the researchers and industrial leaders that it supports; in an increasingly fast-paced global market, however, it takes more than quick reactions to stay ahead of the competition. As such, EUREKA has begun to look into the future, identifying key trends and indicators that may point towards new areas of interest and highlight new priorities.



Rachael Arnott/Shutterstock

“ So far the Eurostars programme has had a very high success rate, both in terms of the number of projects above the required quality threshold and the overall success of the projects implementation

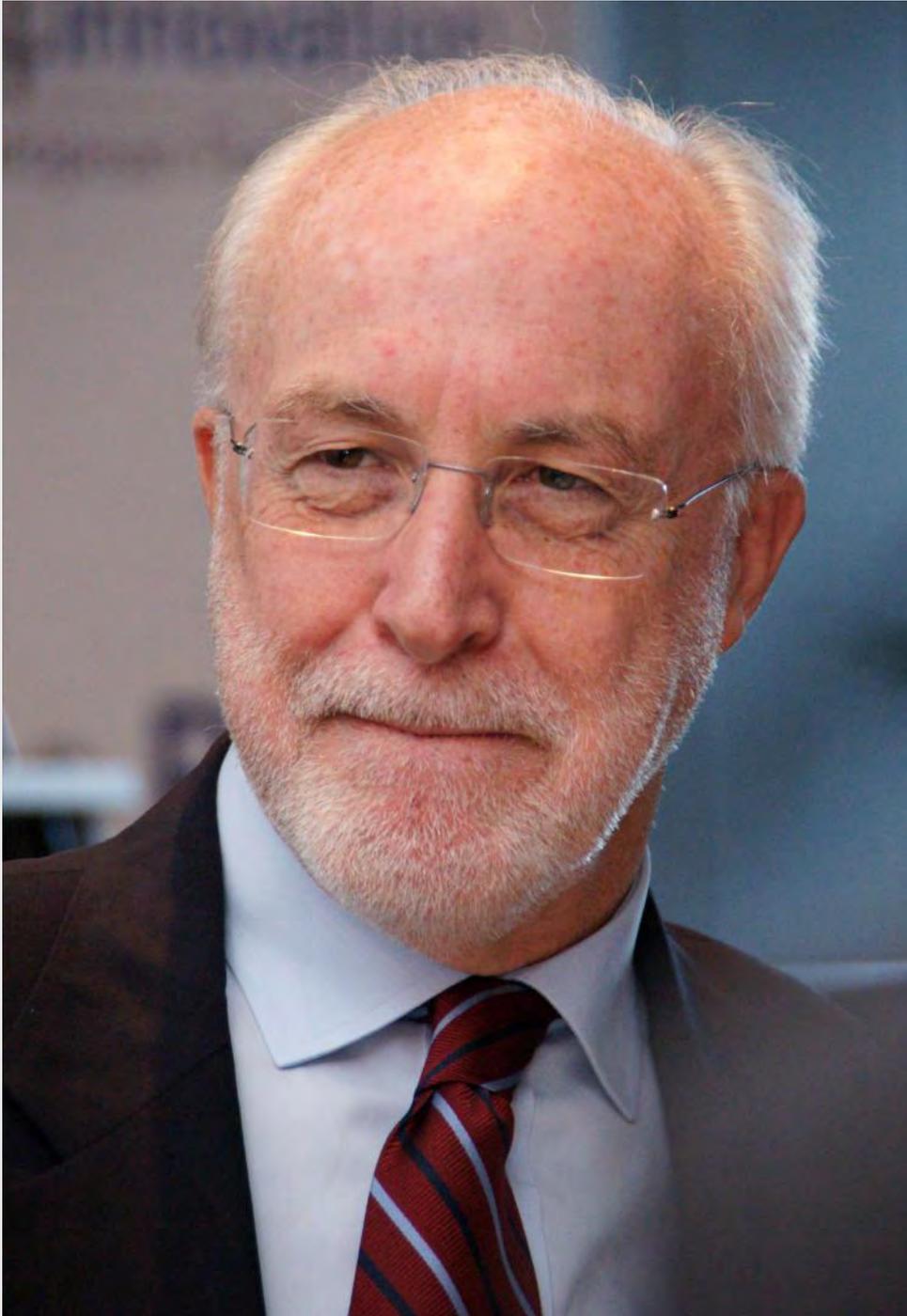
EXAMPLES OF COMPANIES SUCCESSFULLY FUNDED FOLLOWING THE HTIP PILOT PROJECT

Spanish company **Vilynx** have closed a \$460k seed round which will help them to better tune their products to their main potential clients. “The HTIP programme has been very effective in setting contacts with different VC’s we met during the Brussels and Alpine Venture sessions. We have extended our seed investment by \$400k leveraging from \$1.7m to \$2.1m in order to allow one of our customers (Publisher) to move from partner to strategic investor,” said Vilynx Co-Founder & EU Manager Oscar Chabrera.

The Swedish company **Ascatron AB** raised its first investment from international investors and the money will be used to bring their technology to the market. “We are very pleased to have Quadrivio and Como Venture taking lead on our current A-round fund raising”, said Christian Vieider, CEO of Ascatron. “The money will be used to bring the Buried Grid technology for next generation high performance SiC Power electronic devices to the market”.

Evonik Industries has invested in the startup company **SYNOSTE Oy** via its venture capital arm and currently holds a minority share in the medical technology company based in Düsseldorf in Germany and in Helsinki in Finland. The

investment was made as part of a series A round, together with High-Tech Gründerfonds that are two Finnish venture capital funds Finnvera and Lifeline Ventures, as well as some Finnish business angels. The overall volume of the financing round lies in the single-digit million euro range. “We are happy to have found a strategic partner in Evonik, who is supporting us in this important phase with its material competence,” explains Harri Hallila, CEO and co-founder of SYNOSTE. With the funds from the current financing round, SYNOSTE is primarily aiming to move forward to the clinical tests. The company intends to develop its Düsseldorf site into the European sales centre due to its good infrastructure and location.



AN INTERVIEW WITH PEDRO DE SAMPAIO NUNES, HEAD OF EUREKA SECRETARIAT

Compared to the US, Canada, Korea and Japan, it is clear that Europe needs to make a step change in the transfer of R&D into commercial success. How does EUREKA encourage this change?

PN: We believe that it is crucial that Europe positions itself as a global

research and innovation player to allow European industry to compete with the world's largest economies and its emerging ones and lead the race to produce the goods and services our future society will require. Thirty years ago member states were aware of the threat coming from the outside of Europe. For that reason, they pooled their resources and created EUREKA. With a network of over 40 member countries (including 6 members of the G8 group) and three

associated countries (South Korea, Canada and South Africa), EUREKA offers a unique R&D&I platform that connects European companies with the rest of the world, strengthening the international dimension of the ERA and helping European industry to increase its competitiveness in the global market with its instruments: EUREKA Network Projects, Eurostars, Clusters, Umbrellas and E!nnoVest.

What are the benefits and challenges of combining more than 40 countries into a single network supporting innovative market-oriented projects?

PN: From the EUREKA experience we are deeply convinced of the value of transnational cooperation for successful innovation in Europe. Even though it can be difficult to bring so many countries to consensus on a specific issue, new ideas are best fostered by bringing together the minds of talented innovators across European borders. EUREKA's successes of 30 years have proven that this approach is successful.

EUREKA's tagline is 'Innovation across borders'. Given the EU's H2020 programme is also encouraging and supporting innovation across borders, how do EUREKA's activities complement those of the H2020 and further national R&I and R&D programmes?

PN: The EC has created the second biggest R&D&I programme in the world. While H2020 is large, it is still dwarfed by the combined national budgets for R&D&I of its member states. 90 percent of R&D&I funds in Europe are still in the hands of the Member States, therefore the cross-border cooperation that is at the core of EUREKA is essential to avoid duplication and fragmentation of efforts among Member States and to optimise the European research and innovation system.

Eurostars is a unique example of the complementary aims of EUREKA and the EC. Since 2007, the programme has been jointly funded by the EUREKA member countries and the EC. This close cooperation and synergistic approach created a

strong leverage effect, optimising national and Commission efforts to support the most innovative SMEs. Also, EUREKA Clusters have experience of finding synergies with Joint Technology Initiatives (JTI) which ITEA and Artemis successfully demonstrated in the past.

EUREKA has developed a number of support instruments that target different actors, activities and funding needs (Network Projects, Eurostars, Clusters, Umbrellas and E!nnoVest). How do you prioritise the areas you support and what are the areas of focus in the immediate future?

PN: EUREKA remains to this day the only initiative of its kind committed to the 'bottom-up' principle - ensuring that any R&D&I project with a good business plan receives the support it deserves, independent of its technological nature, or the type of organisations involved. Each of EUREKA's funding instruments has been designed and improved over many years to maximise the impact for the participating organisations. One of the immediate areas of focus has been in recognising that the investment and business readiness of innovative startups and SMEs seeking capital needs to be improved in order to foster more investments. For that reason, the EUREKA network launched a new programme to address this challenge: EUREKA InnoVest Programme (E!nnoVest).

“ A good business plan receives the support it deserves

EUREKA believes that innovation is a priority for Europe to be competitive in the world economy, however, to make it work a new market-oriented approach is fundamental. How does EUREKA ensure that this market-oriented approach is implemented within the projects it supports?

PN: Businesses and research organisations and higher education institutions work together in

transnational projects to bring innovative products, processes and services to the market. EUREKA facilitates interaction and strategic partnering between academia and industry and supports the development of joint collaborative research and innovation agendas. This enables a better uptake of research results in the market. Also, by removing thematic restrictions and creating a 'business knows best' philosophy, EUREKA promotes the development of solutions to real world problems.

EBN Members are connected to thousands of innovative SMEs across Europe, and elsewhere. How can we make better connections between EBN Members and EUREKA instruments to ensure that the best innovative ideas are supported?

PN: From EUREKA's experience, we emphasise the need to bring together technical know-how with business expertise and customer needs in order to create scalable innovative business opportunities. To bridge the funding gap experienced by many growing SMEs, EUREKA has set up a new pilot programme called E!nnoVest which aims to boost the investment awareness and readiness of innovative SMEs. E!nnoVest programme is organised in collaboration with EBN, in charge of organising and deploying coaching academies and one-to-one mentoring.

Open innovation and open collaboration between innovative startups and large technology corporations are considered as a 'golden route' for business development. Both EBN and EUREKA are experimenting initiatives in this field. Do you think further EUREKA/EBN collaboration on that subject might create more opportunities?

PN: EUREKA Clusters are unique partnerships between European-scale industrial ecosystems in a certain domain and national public authorities. With them being active within some of the most important technical and market domains,

the impact across multiple sectors is stronger than ever. I think that EUREKA Cluster collaboration with EBN has great potential for added value for all parties.

The European Commission has launched a call for ideas on the setting up of a European Innovation Council (EIC) to support Europe's most promising innovators. Did EUREKA respond to this call? What kind of role could EUREKA have in the EIC?

PN: EUREKA is greatly impressed and highly supportive of the priorities launched by Commissioner Moedas. For that reason, we strongly emphasised the importance of setting up a European Innovation Council (EIC) as an instrument to create cohesive and strong common actions to support the development of Europe's outstanding science into market-leading products and services. EUREKA's expertise in efficient and effective cooperation between industry, national governments and the EU is unique and we hope to support the EC and the EIC in the most effective way.



Thomas Ehritz' main interest is making sense out of complicated things - and the crossroads of intergovernmental politics and future technologies is the perfect place for that. As Publications Officer at the EUREKA Secretariat he coordinates online and print publications, including planning, researching, writing, editing and overseeing their design, print and circulation. He is also responsible for the long-running EUREKA success story campaign. Holding a Masters in Journalism, he previously worked in the European Parliament, an SME association and a communications agency; and lived in Austria, Australia, France, Spain and Belgium.

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Tap into the fastest growing market - ASEAN

About SEBSEAM - M

SEBSEAM-M (Support for European Business in South East Asia Markets – Malaysia Component) is a EU co-funded project committed to encourage Malaysia as cost-effective and easy gateway to the ASEAN market of 600 million consumers through local partnerships, Business Support Services and Advocacy efforts.

The project's mission aims to support European companies, in particular Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs), who are keen on expanding their businesses into the local market by either providing market intelligence, or finding reliable distribution partner and establishing a business in Malaysia.

Kickstart your business in Malaysia: This is how we help

Pooling expertise from 23 projects and associate partners on the ground in Indonesia, SEBSEAM offers hands-on **Business Support Services** tailor-made for your needs. From market analysis and market research to finding your most suitable local business partner in Malaysia, as well as IPR Consultation and an Enquiry Help Desk. We are well-equipped to make your market entry smooth and successful.

About Malaysia

A country of 30 million strong, this ASEAN economy tiger has displayed its resilience throughout the Asian Financial Crisis of 1998 and again in the 2008 taking-off Global Financial Crisis. The country has since diversified its portfolio from an export-driven economy in natural resources to a service-driven economy, offering great business opportunities for foreign companies in the following areas:



**Engineering and
Architectural Services**



**Energy, Utilities,
Environmental Service**



**Transport and
Infrastructure**



**Food and
Agribusiness**

Pro-business Government policies are in place to offer foreign companies a dynamic and competitive business environment with opportunities for growth and profits. Just recently, its policy makers have provided attractive tax incentives for investors.

Malaysia welcomes investors and trade partners by providing suitable technology, developed infrastructure, and a well educated, multi-lingual workforce with a strong command of English.

For more information, Please contact Johannes Kotschenreuther,
Business Support Services & EU Outreach at eumcci@eumcci.com
SEBSEAM-M is implemented by EU-Malaysia Chamber of Commerce and Industry

www.eumcci.com

Immigration to innovation

Madi Sharma makes the case for why it is important to nurture new ideas that immigration brings to countries

A few weeks ago I was privileged to go with the European Economic and Social Committee on a visit to the refugee camps in Slovenia. It was extremely devastating to see people who have left their homes in search of more secure lives and better opportunities for the families, but at the same time I could not help but consider the opportunities that many of these people would bring to the economy of the European Union.

There are many who would argue against me, but my father came to the UK in 1953 with just £3.00 in his pocket and built a strong and successful business. There are thousands more just like him; Asians from the subcontinent and also from Africa; the Jewish community who settled in many countries across the world and have grown strong trades; the Afro-Caribbean community, especially in the UK who have brought foundations for the growth of the UK economy; and the list goes on. Just our food tastes alone demonstrates the diversity and acceptance of integrations. Where would we be without our Indian and Chinese restaurants, Lebanese, Moroccan, Tibetan, Jamaican take-away? In fact we are so used to it, it is no longer considered foreign!

Times have not changed greatly from the 50's, 60's or 70's where there were different waves of immigrants coming into countries with little or no support from the State. Indeed this lack of support drove the economic migrants to become entrepreneurs and start their own ventures. They created their own wealth to take care of themselves, their families and were able to send money 'back home'.

They created jobs and invested in skills very often with people from their own communities. They created niche market products and also fusion products taking the best of multiple cultures. It is this innovation and new technologies from the amalgamation of different thinking that has created the growth we have seen across the globe today.

However, times have changed especially for those migrants currently seeking new opportunities. They can begin as entrepreneurs and grow their enterprises, create jobs and grow much faster than their predecessors. Statistical evidence from the US highlights that the greatest number of SMEs created since the crisis were by women, and the greatest proportion of those were migrant women. Furthermore the greatest number of jobs were created by women-owned companies. It is time to be more inclusive in our thinking towards economic growth and less judgemental.

Today there are the provisions and facilities; business support centres, incubator networks, coworking spaces, accelerators, etc to enable business startup and development. Thanks in particular to partnership working, collaboration and communication developed by organisations such as EBN there is now a sharing of best practice and transfer of knowledge which empowers the entrepreneurs and increases their potential for success.

An economy's human capital is its people, wherever they are from. When people are empowered they can deliver amazing impact from which the whole society can benefit, economically, socially and culturally.

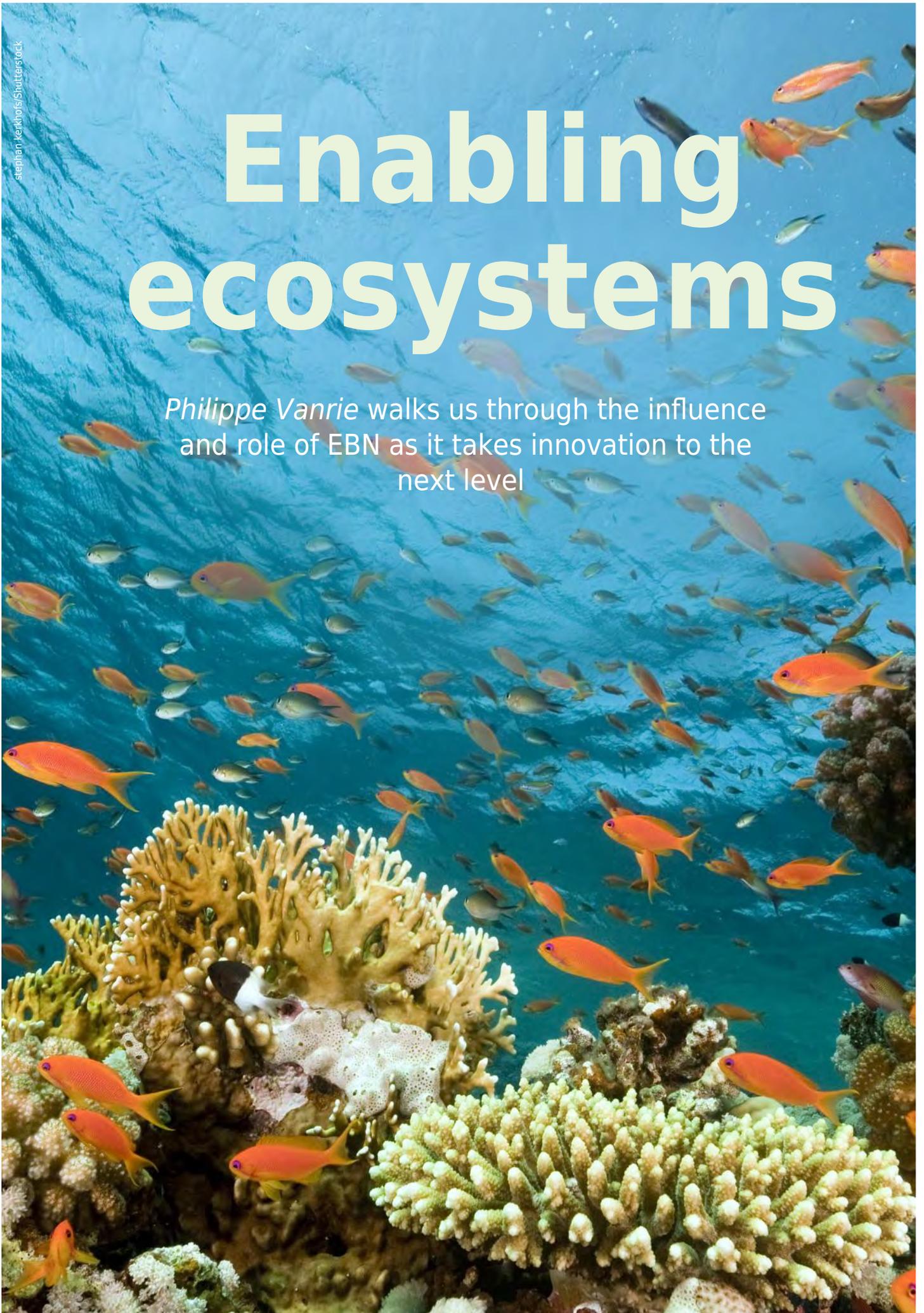
Madi Sharma is an entrepreneur who founded and runs the Madi Group, a group of international private sector, not-for-profit companies and NGOs. The philosophy is to create innovative ideas tailored to local action which can achieve global impacts beneficial to a sustainable society. Madi is an internationally renowned public speaker in the field of entrepreneurship, female empowerment and diversity; her passion is for corporate social responsibility. Her achievements include Asian Woman of Achievement and UK's Best Boss. She is a member of the Employers Group of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in Brussels, a Prime Minister's appointment.



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Enabling ecosystems

Philippe Vanrie walks us through the influence and role of EBN as it takes innovation to the next level



Let's examine the current scenario. The after-effects of the global recession have been manifold: increased unemployment, downsizing and offshoring, decreased entrepreneurship, slow growth, ultra-cautious investors and confused policy makers.

Such a scenario, affecting European economies, requires macroeconomic and fiscal reforms, labour market changes, drastic budget control, but also policies which create conducive environments for job creation, innovation, and SME development.

THE SYNERGIES AND NEW POLICIES

The empowerment and synergies of European policies such as H2020 (and its Digital Agenda, SME instrument, and Key Enabling Technologies components), COSME (and its Clusters elements), and the ESIF (and its RIS3 characteristics) is essential.

Synergies are indeed becoming a true priority in EU policies in order to ensure coherence and coordination between all funds covered by the Common Strategic Framework, maximising complementarities between instruments available at EU level. A modern investment policy has indeed to take advantage of the many positive interdependencies in achieving an innovation-driven growth.

Horizon 2020 has shown its potential in Europe's search for scientific excellence, but is more and more driven by mechanisms which combine a top-down (technology) vision with bottom-up (market) drivers. The scale-up of the SME instrument, as well as the recent adoption of the 'Seal of Excellence' initiative are examples showing synergies take place around SMEs. In the field of the digital agenda, several programmes (Start-up Europe, Fi-ware communities, Digital Innovation Hubs, Wafify, e-skills) are very interesting initiatives and will hopefully contribute to

the emergence of a new class of digital entrepreneurs, and to the digital modernisation of Europe's manufacturing sector and more traditional SMEs.

The wide range of services to SMEs provided by several EC-initiated networks (EEN, EBN-EU|BICs, Start-Up Europe, EIT-KICs, EUREKA-Eurostars, NCPs, etc) and the encouraging results coming out of a series of H2020, COSME, ERASMUS+, EUREKA and INTERREG Europe projects are raising expectations and provide a series of policy recommendations in the fields of entrepreneurship, clusters, internationalisation, social innovation and early-stage finance.

Regional policy is probably the EU's main tool to deliver the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Smart specialisation and the pooling of resources to address common challenges will pave the way for Europe's future prosperity.

The current EU Regional Policy is helping Europeans to successfully navigate ahead of the new frontiers in economic models, in new technologies, in open collaboration, in social innovation, in green- and bio-economy, in digital transformation and in international markets.

The current economic climate of Europe actually offers promising opportunities to entrepreneurs and innovators who can now take advantage of new frontiers which are international by nature and encompass many sectors.

A STRONGER FOCUS

In the EU Cohesion Policy's 2014-2020 programming period, SMEs are on top of agendas of several thematic objectives.

The RIS3 methodology, which is anchored in the key concept of entrepreneurial discovery process, influences policies by collaborating closely with entrepreneurs and this happens both at the design stage and the delivery stage.

“The ability to respond to change, a questioning mind-set, agility, a partnership orientation and openness to embrace non-traditional solutions...

A revolution can only be created by true innovators and entrepreneurs. The ability to respond to change, a questioning mind-set, agility, a partnership orientation and openness to embrace non-traditional solutions and, above all, the courage to start as well as stop will be key to this revolution. Skills acquisition and efforts aimed at the deliberate cultivation of entrepreneurial DNA will also further this story.

Policies will need to aim at not just aiding startups and early stage players, but also focus on that ultimate goal of handholding them as they turn into global flourishing businesses, scale-ups, gazelles, SMEs and, eventually international corporations.

Enabling intermediaries will continue to play a key role in creating the right ecosystem for the innovation revolution by improving the flows of ideas, projects and investments, and their transformation into competitive and sustainable economic activities.

THE CORNERSTONE

The word ecosystem perfectly describes the complex interplay of stakeholders, infrastructures, roles, interactions, interferences, synergies in a state of economic and technological flux which exists in Europe presently.

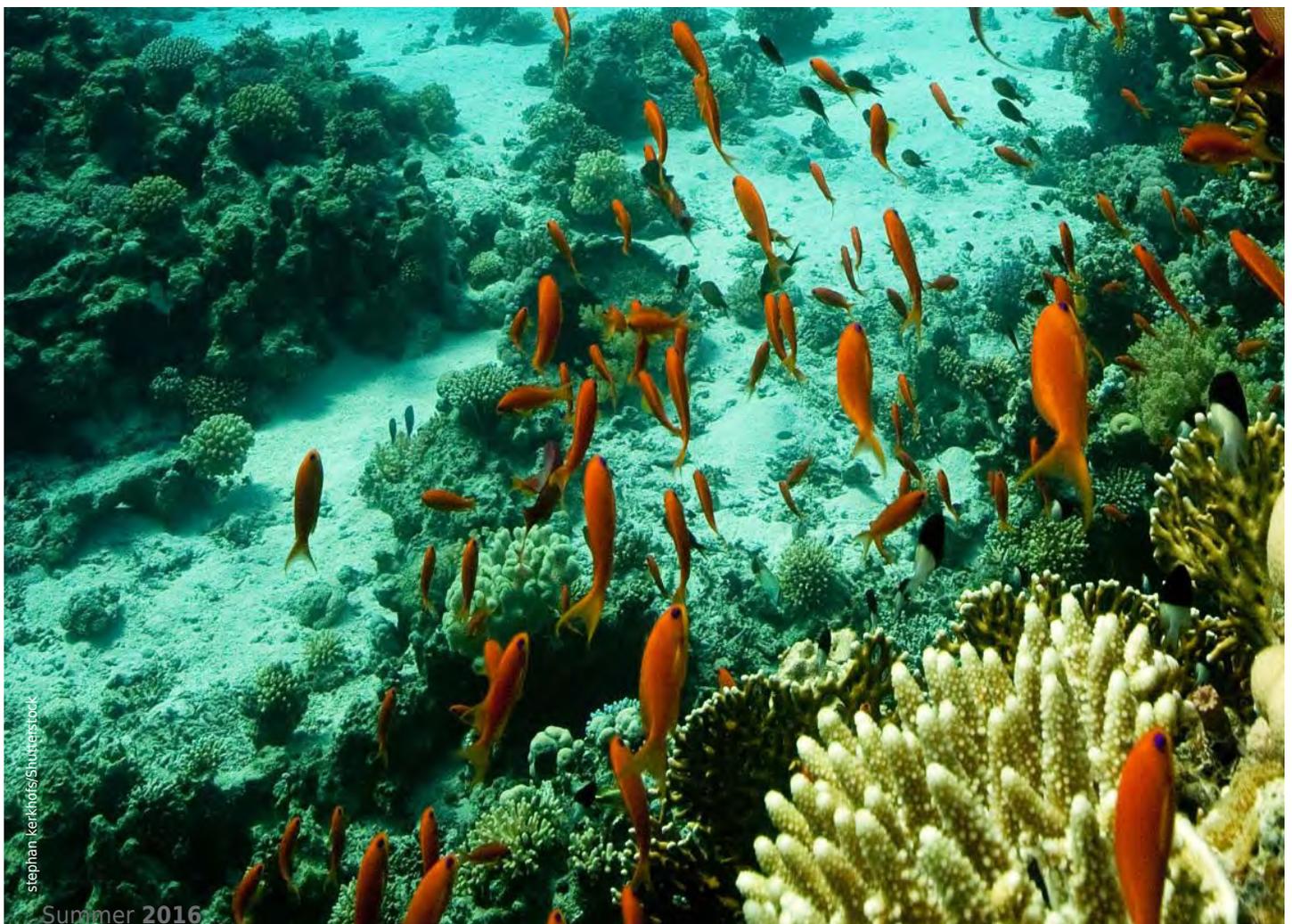
A wave of unprecedented transformation and the need to balance global connectivity, territorial realities, political alignment, better communication of research with entrepreneurs, as well as the necessity of driving the economy by delivering end-user level impact make this a complex innovation ecosystem. Moreover, new players are now rocking the innovation support ecosystem who then interact with established players: digital accelerators, mobile app camps, boot camps, startup weekends, hackathons, Fablabs and the many other avatars of these kinds of tools are here to stay.

INTERMEDIARIES OR CATALYSTS

This transformation is largely led by organised communities of professional enablers such as EBN, ERRIN, EURADA, EBAN/BEA, IASP, ECN, EEN and EARTO who aid the various intermediaries like EU|BICs, incubators, innovation centres, science and technology parks, clusters, technopoles, early-stage financial instruments, entrepreneurship centres, research organisations, FDI and regional development / innovation agencies.

Such intermediaries have a key role in structuring and accelerating the real territorial economies by:

- a) building and growing new businesses, startups and spin-offs
- b) transforming existing firms into more competitive ones via innovation support
- c) attracting talent and investors around nodes of excellence



HOW IT WORKS

With its Open Innovation focus, the Systematic Paris-Region innovation and technology cluster brings together and promotes an ecosystem of excellence that counts over 800 members (SMEs, large corporate and academics). Systematic connects stakeholders from software, digital and industry, and boosts digital projects through collaborative innovation, SME development, networking and business sourcing, across a range of future growth sectors: energy, telecoms, healthcare, transport, information systems, factory of the future, digital city, and security. The cluster also promotes its members, the Paris-Region and its innovation projects, with the aim of raising their profile and enhancing the attractiveness of the region and its ecosystem.

Within this ecosystem, Systematic Paris-Region interacts with funding agencies at EU, national, regional and local level; professional organisations, institutional bodies (national government, local authorities, etc.). The following outlines some of the benefits and services that Systematic brings through its activities to its various stakeholders:

- significant and impactful R&D projects
- a powerful attraction tool
- support in the development and creation of innovative companies
- significant economic impact as a result of its R&D projects
- expertise and major events.

www.systematic-paris-region.org -
@Pole_SYSTEMATIC



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d) creating value for mid-sized firms through open innovation schemes.

As new generations of smart entrepreneurs emerge and innovation clearly shifts to a world of applications where the search of open innovation and networking, and the adoption of new creative and digital behaviours are key, diverse ecosystems become imperative to achieve delivery of the 'real stuff' at the end of the magical supply-chain: concrete stories of entrepreneurial success!

Going forward, not only must these intermediaries be clearly positioned as specialised enablers capable of accelerating innovative entrepreneurship, but also infrastructure (physical and non-physical) must be set up and upgraded.

A new class of Regional Innovation Catalysts (RICs) consisting of various types of essential downstream field-players will be essential for implementing policies and strategies.

THE EU|BIC RELEVANCE

An EU|BICs' core mission is to accelerate innovative entrepreneurship at the territorial level, through the customised delivery of a comprehensive range of professional support and pre-incubation, ongoing and post-incubation services.

The services provided include business idea assessment, business planning and modelling, economic and technological intelligence, financial modelling, ad-hoc training, seed and early-stage funding, coaching, physical incubation infrastructure, international business development support, constitution and animation of clusters and communities of innovative firms and collaborative projects development.

The three macro-economic missions for EU|BICs are:

- the identification of new frontier entrepreneurs, to ensure entrepreneurial discovery is a regional priority

- the creation of a new class of manufacturing champions, to ensure territorial synergies to re-industrialise Europe
- the championing of synergies and collaboration, to maximize competitiveness and impact

The EU|BIC trademark is fully endorsed by the European Commission as the best practice to follow when deploying innovation-based incubation and acceleration strategies. Managing a startup, scale-up or SME requires a combination of special skills and expertise, such as:

- ensuring business stability and growth
- customer acquisition and retention
- optimising operational margins
- mid- and short-term income projections
- securing USP and differentiation
- strengthening core-competences
- HR and skills development
- compliance
- quality control and improvement
- competitive intelligence
- new market exploration and expansion
- organisational management
- improving the financial structure of the firm
- tech-savvy on ecommerce/ cloud solutions / cybersecurity
- a collaborative mind-set

It is very important that policy-makers at all territorial levels have the capacity to really understand and even anticipate the priorities, trends and the critical issues of SME managers, not only as a theoretical projection, but as a set of solutions. EU-BICs teams are experts in this field.

FORWARD-LOOKING MISSION

Mid and long-term views are crucial to the success of an SME as the critical impact of new technologies on current business models can be either destructive or constructive.

HOW IT WORKS

Cap Digital Paris Region, French Competitiveness Cluster for 360° acceleration in digital transformation, just joined EIT Health KIC to bring their expertise in Digital Health innovation, with a community of more than 100 startups, large groups and public players. As such, Cap Digital is operating with LyonBiopôle, the acceleration programme 2016 in France, and supporting the pillars of Innovation (Projects by Design fundings) and Education (EdFab spinoff).

Cap Digital counts 600 members - primarily innovative SMEs but also major universities, higher education establishments, research labs, and corporations. Their members represent the digital industry's most active players in digital content. Nine vibrant member communities make a vital contribution to the strategy and direction of the cluster: Image, Sound and Interactivity, Video Games, Knowledge Engineering, Culture, Press, and Media, e-Learning and e-Training, Collaborative Technology & Intelligence, Mobile Lifestyle & Services, Robotics and Communicating Objects, and Digital Design.

www.capdigital.com

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cap·digital
Paris Region

Technology trends and innovation practices such as cloud computing, cybersecurity, big data analytics, nano-technologies must be closely followed by EU|BICs' experts teams to bring vision and solutions to help forecast the next stages of their business development.

THE QUALITY POLICIES

The emergence of a significant number of regional innovation networks and the accumulation of instruments increase the need for efficient territorial ecosystems, where all core competences and stakeholders collaborate smartly along the various value chains of innovation support and services.

With the encouraging rise of efficient regional innovation strategies and systems comes an opportunity to respond to a major weakness of policy-delivery. Efficient and credible operational instruments lack clarity and there is widespread confusion regarding the core mission, competencies, services offered and resource identification.

With all this confusion it is but natural that there is a negative effect on reliable impact assessments, professional standards development and, indeed, interconnectivity itself. In other words, a limitation to the very principle of synergies!

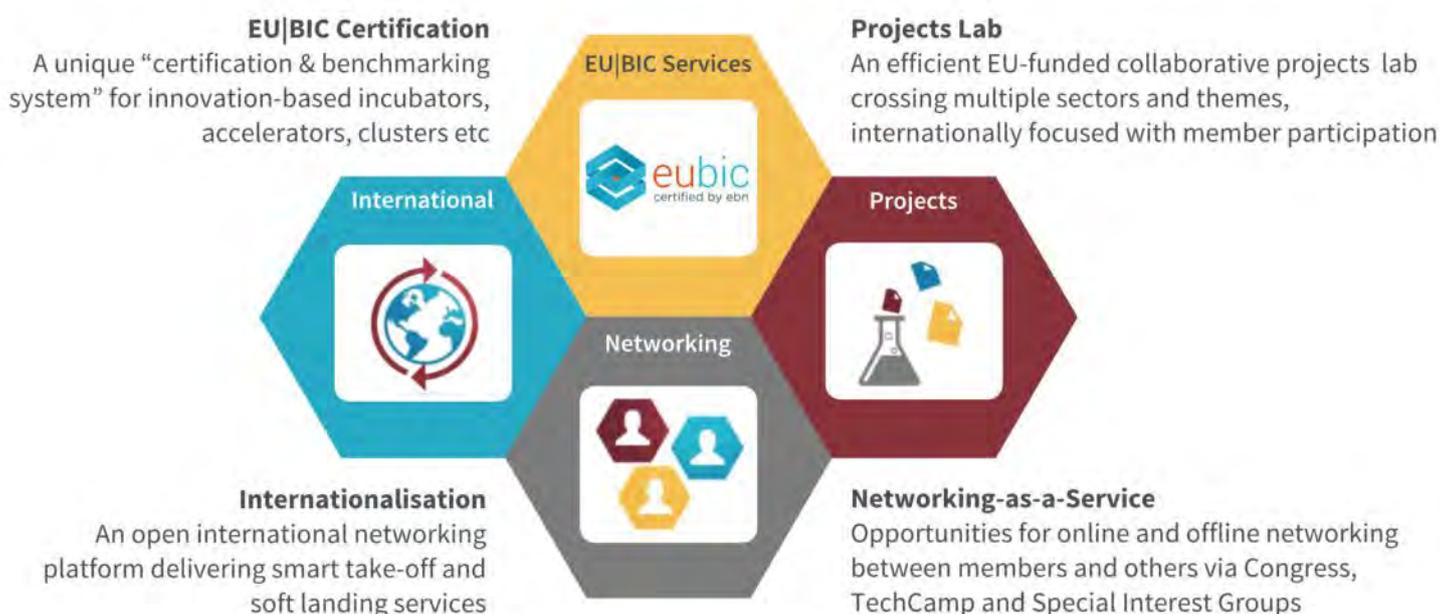
A good solution would be to promote the permanent evaluation culture within the intermediary organisations. This is essential in order to enable monitoring and benchmarking which typically leads to better management, effective reporting, road-mapping, strategic re-direction, quality improvement and most importantly to create authentic success stories. Instruments are then better able to showcase their core competencies and thus gain a distinctive market advantage.

This is a route we at EBN (the European network of EU|BICs) took about fifteen years ago. We developed a 'quality system' which comprises compliance, benchmarking and branding components. Powered by a community-based self-assessment protocol, a routine web application, a combined set of both process and performance indicators, and a 'peer-to-peer' audit system, this initiative has enabled the EU|BIC brand and label to be highly respected in private and public circles. The EU|BIC label is becoming a standard of reference for incubating/accelerating innovation-based entrepreneurs. An open and agile standard, thanks to its non-governmental operational dimension is however aligned as much as possible to public policies.

These aspects are at the core of recent reports published by the European Court of Auditors on

“ EBN agrees completely with the ECA report that EU|BICs have better impact than other EU incubators ...

EBN CORE SERVICES



Business Incubators and Technology Parks, and studies undertaken for DG Regio by EBN about EU|BICS / incubators, and by IASP about science and technology parks.

THE VIRTUOUS APPROACH

EBN agrees completely with the ECA report that EU|BICs have better impact than other EU incubators thanks to the promotion of sound monitoring, benchmarking and quality mechanisms.

The main finding of the study is that, despite ERDF’s significant contribution to infrastructure creation, the audited incubators were seen to underperform. This is, in particular, illustrated by the statement that “... too little attention had been paid to the effectiveness of incubators’ business support functions ...”. The ‘soft dimension’ is often the weak element of the ‘hard-driven’ investments.

The report clearly recognises that “... the effectiveness of the benchmarked EC-BIC certified incubators ... was much higher... and that support offered to businesses beyond the scope of physical incubation ... had contributed to this high startup creation rate...”.

EU|BICs, which embed the EBN quality system, provide a wider range of professional services to their target audience, reach higher KPIs and have higher ROI for the public sector, than non-EBN accredited incubators. This is due to EU|BIC’s consistent investment in the development of up-to-date services which ensure that the business support value chain is fully supported with skilled staff, robust methodology, best practices and constant monitoring.

THE KEY ASSET

EBN is the European Network of Business and Innovation Centres, an international community of 160 EU|BICs and 80 associate members that support the emergence, development and growth of innovative entrepreneurs, startups and SMEs. The network acts as the global backbone, a key asset, for a set of entrepreneurship support services that enables the creation of valid businesses from mere ideas... dissolving international boundaries to enable a global impact... creating clusters of innovation and business support excellence that serve Europe and beyond in enabling entrepreneurship to survive and thrive.



Philippe Vanrie has been the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of EBN since 1999.

He was instrumental in developing this unique community, that gathers together thousands of smart innovators and entrepreneurs. A recognised expert and experienced speaker in innovation and incubation, Philippe has developed strong relationships and several collaborative projects with the European Commission (EC), the European Space Agency (ESA), and a series of national and regional Governmental Agencies.

Sailing the startup seas

Cláudia Silva takes a look at Portugal as it navigates its way through the swiftly moving waters of entrepreneurship support, innovation and new businesses in the country





A recent travel-related article posed an odd question: what do San Francisco and Lisbon have in common? A little Googling showed that despite the cities being separated by over 9,000 kilometers they actually have a lot in common. For starters, they are situated at almost the same latitude: 37°N in San Francisco, and 38°N in Lisbon. They are both famous for their cable cars, hills, friendly people, and for being rather welcoming as far as big cities go. Lisbon also has a huge suspension bridge - built by no other than the same construction company that actually built the original Bay Bridge in San Francisco some 30 years prior. And let's not forget the sunny and warm weather that shines down on both Portugal and California most of the year. Much like San Francisco, Lisbon is a small city where one can find joggers along the waterfront in sunny weather.

But here's the lesser known link that connects these two cities and their twin souls: a vibrant startup community.

In the last five years the startup scene has grown exponentially in Portugal, especially in and around Lisbon, granting the oldest city in Western Europe (Google said so!) the title of first ever European Capital for Entrepreneurship (2015), and official host for the Web Summit 2016.

The biggest city in the country and the 11th most populous urban area in the European Union, Lisbon accounts for 27 percent of its country's population. Its close proximity to the ocean, an international airport just 20 minutes away and with numerous support systems in place, it is no wonder Portugal's entrepreneurs choose to settle their newly created businesses in old Lisboa.

Lisbon, much like the rest of Portugal, one could say, is a place where old meets new. It is a place where adventurers parted to discover the world, navigating unknown waters making use of the latest technology and innovations in the maritime industry. As in the times of Vasco da Gama and Infante Dom Henrique, courageous entrepreneurs are now starting off their adventures in Portugal and sailing into the brave new startup world.

PLOTTING THE COURSE

However, unlike San Francisco, you won't yet be sharing your office with the Twitters, Ubers or Airbnbs of this world in Lisbon city. But you might be privileged enough to meet some of the great national successes such as Feedzai, DivePod, Science4You, Single Code, Beanstalk or Connexall.

“ One cannot forget though, the immense contribution EBN members have had in the resurgence of entrepreneurship

And yet, five years ago such a resurgence of the entrepreneurial world would have been unimaginable. Portugal stands alongside other southern European countries as one of the worst hit during the recent financial crisis. Portugal experienced a terrible recession, throwing the most educated generation the country has ever seen, into escalating unemployment. In this deeply centralised country that tends to rely on the state for financial aid, entrepreneurship was virtually non-existent and mostly badly perceived.

Some say the rise of entrepreneurship was due to state-

backed programmes like Startup Lisbon - an incubator created in 2011 that has already supported over 180 companies, and is co-financed by the Lisbon Municipality. An example of a company that was nested in this incubator is Codacy, the automatic code review tool for developers that won the Dublin Web Summit Pitch Competition in 2014. It is also true that simpler regulations were put in place in order to enable entrepreneurship - from company creation (it takes no more than 30 minutes to register your company online!), easier access to public financing, friendlier corporate tax laws... among others.

Forbes Magazine said that tech entrepreneurship “just makes you want to be an entrepreneur, or at least makes you believe you can be one too”, and Portugal has certainly underlined that thought. The last few years have seen abundant startup programmes and initiatives popping up around the country. Starting from the top here are a few examples.

Startup Braga, partners up with the local University of Minho and Microsoft Ventures to focus on pre-acceleration, acceleration and incubation programmes in the area of nanotechnology, among others. Just a little further down the coast, UPTec in Porto, works as an incubator helping new companies transform ideas into fast-growing businesses with the help of the local University and Technology Park. One hour south of Porto, in Aveiro city, Start-up UA is the official programme of the University of Aveiro that helps and encourages members of the academic community to create their own businesses. Much like its host city of Coimbra - a renowned student city with all-night parties - Startup Coimbra is famous for its 72-

hour challenge where participants are expected to emerge with a tech-based company idea that can then be developed.

Back in Lisbon, Beta-i is a key player in the ecosystem. A non-profit organisation that hosts various programmes and events focused on developing the startup scene in Portugal, it is best known for organising the Lisbon Challenge - an accelerator challenge focused on scaling up Portuguese startups globally.

SPEND MONEY TO MAKE MONEY

As you all know, it's very hard to have a vibrant startup ecosystem without money to back it up. Portugal Ventures confirms that Portugal's incubator and startup programmes produce consistently good results. As startups grow, they need funding in order to get to the next level. Portugal Ventures was born as a result of the increasing need for greater-sized investments: a venture capital and private equity firm founded in June 2012 that results from the merging of three state-backed venture capital and private equity firms. These VC funds, managed by Portugal Ventures, are also backed by the European Union through FINOVA, COMPETE and POR LISBOA programmes. Arguably the largest national VC fund, the firm focuses its investments in innovative, scientific, and technology-based companies with competitive advantages for global markets.

In little over four years, Portugal Ventures has helped empower small businesses across the country that have the potential to grow internationally. They have fuelled the scaling up of many successes

(and exits) such as Farfetch, Chic by Choice, Fiber Sensing, Landing Jobs or Outsystems... to name just a few.

JOBS, GROWTH AND INNOVATION

Despite all this new startup support activity, EBN's eight quality certified incubators have been operating all over the country for years - in NET Novas Empresas e Tecnologias S.A. (Porto), BIC MINHO (Braga), Instituto Pedro Nunes (Coimbra), DNA Cascais (Cascais), CIEBI (Covilhã), Sines Technopolo (Sines), TagusValley (Abrantes), Centro de Empresas e Inovação da Madeira (Madeira) and Nonagon (Azores). A national change of heart happened after the crisis and today entrepreneurship is now a real and viable option, and public financing for business creation and support programmes is growing. Moreover, the widespread awareness-raising of the benefits of entrepreneurship is also much more visible; and, as a result, starting one's own business is much cooler today than it was, perhaps, just a few years ago.

EBN's Business and Innovation Centres (EU|BICs) have also ventured beyond the sea and the urban areas of bigger cities, where even state programmes are struggling to keep up. The far off shore islands of Madeira and Azores, are typically less privileged areas of the country. And despite that Funchal has a fully-fledged incubator - BIC Madeira - helping local businesses realise their potential. In the Azores, Nonagon (given the nine islands of the archipelago) is on its way to becoming the first incubator in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean to be granted the EU|BIC label. In 2013 alone, the conglomerate of eight EU|BIC-labeled incubators have supported over 640

companies and helped create over 390 jobs in startups and SMEs, with a public cost of only around €8,000 per job created. The figures are testament to EBN's trend in charting entrepreneurial waters long before others set sail on those routes.

THE LONELY UNICORN

Despite its vibrant and growing startup community, Portugal still has a long way to go until it truly mirrors San Francisco. The revolution has begun however with more and more attention given to risk capital funding and proper business support programmes being put in place by the Government. Nonetheless, the hard task of mentoring the thousands of potential entrepreneurs that have risen from the ashes of the crisis is still a daunting task.

So far Portugal has only produced one so-called unicorn: Farfetch. Although there are also some gazelles to look out for such as Uniplaces, Feedzai, Unbabel, Veniam, Crowdprocess or Chic by Choice. Farfetch was founded in 2008 and its unique business model earned the company \$86 million in its Series E round of investment. This gave the company the much-desired \$1 billion valuation in 2015, which rightly earned it a spot in the "exclusive and highly magical unicorn club" (Financial Times). Farfetch is arguably Portugal's biggest startup success. It was born in the north of the country where textile and leather industries have ruled for decades. The company offers users around the world an e-commerce platform connecting fashion-conscious clients with a global network of high-end boutiques. This company, a native of Guimarães now employs around 700 workers and trades across three continents.



Navigation Systems for Portugal

An interview with State Secretary for Industry, Mr João Vasconcelos, sheds light on Government support to the burgeoning startup community in Portugal

As the former CEO of Startup Lisbon, a programme that was a pioneer in Portugal at the time, you have a long history of hands-on experience in supporting entrepreneurs and their businesses. Recently, you were appointed by the new Portuguese Government as the State Secretary in charge of Industry. What can Portuguese startups and SMEs expect now from having a real “practitioner” in charge of policy-making? What are your priorities for small businesses now that you are in office?

JV: Portuguese startups can expect to have their voice clearly represented in public policies. They can expect a very executive approach in the implementation of a national strategy to foster entrepreneurship. Since

coming into office, last November, the Government launched a very pragmatic programme called Startup Portugal (www.startupoportugal.com) which encompasses 15 measures to help startups at all stages of development: from the idea, through growth, to internationalisation.

Our priority is to make sure that everyone who wants to be an entrepreneur, no matter the social background or the industry he wants to work in, has access to the same opportunities to develop new businesses.

The Portuguese startup scene has increasingly been in the spotlight during the last couple of years and Lisbon has been cited as having a “thriving startup community” by the founder of the Web Summit – which is now moving there. What do you think contributed to this exponential development in the last years?

JV: Lisbon has 500 years of history dealing with people from other cultures. It is a cosmopolitan city that breathes diversity as very few in Europe do. This is where Europe ends and the world begins. And that’s the perfect environment for any startup with global ambition. The fact that Portugal invested heavily into its infrastructure, and in the education of its people allowed for these dynamics to spread quickly across the country. And today it’s not just Lisbon that has a booming entrepreneurial sector. Other cities are starting to unravel their own potential as suppliers of startups and innovation to more traditional industries, such as health, textiles and shoes, auto industries, moulding and plastics, as well as to agriculture and sea-related industries. The Startup Portugal public strategy that we recently launched aims to leverage and consolidate this national movement.

What would you say are the biggest challenges for a company starting their business in Portugal today? And what are the unique advantages or opportunities that Portuguese entrepreneurs might have compared to others in the world?

JV: The challenges for a startup setting out in Portugal are the same as in any other country: to find their place in the market and to validate their services and products to that market. Regarding the advantages that Portugal might offer an entrepreneur, I would highlight the vast network of Portuguese-speaking countries around the world and the fact that we are used to dealing with a variety of cultural backgrounds. Also, not being a country rich in natural resources, we always had to be able to find and pursue opportunities outside of our own market, which contributed to the development of national traits such as resourcefulness and resilience.

We have heard you are planning to pilot a national incubator network in Portugal. As you know, there are already eight EBN certified incubators spread out through the country. For example, in 2013 alone, these incubators supported over 640 companies and helped create over 390 jobs in startups and SMEs, with a public cost of only around €8000 per job created. How do you see the role of these EU|BICs in a potential national incubation network? And would you consider benchmarking their success?

JV: We count on all our business incubators and consider them all critical to the overall success of our plans. The purpose of creating a national incubator network is to map out clearly who is working, where and with whom. It is important to find out best practices and create processes to promote deeper collaboration and learning from each other.

Do you believe more support to innovation and entrepreneurship may be part of the route to economic recovery in Europe? How do you see the role of governments in supporting business support organisations like incubators, accelerators, etc?

JV: Yes! Supporting innovation and entrepreneurship in the country is fundamental for our economy and its growth. Take Portugal's example: for every company that closes, three new companies are being created; and the companies launched in the last five years are already responsible for half of all the new jobs that have been created in the country. Many business incubators and accelerators are an important source of innovation and competitiveness to the more traditional and well-established industries. So evidently new businesses and the entire entrepreneurial ecosystem must be at the very top of our priorities. The role of governments is to take them into consideration in every policy that focused on job creation and innovation that they create as this will serve to help us sail into smoother economic waters.



Cláudia Silva works in the Marketing, Communications and Events team at EBN. She contributes to the marketing and communications strategy and execution as well as managing all things media. At EBN she specialises in social media management, having been responsible for implementing the organisation's first steps into the world of social networks. She completed a Master's degree in European Studies from Maastricht University, following on from her undergraduate studies in International Relations at the University of Coimbra. Cláudia's passions are media, digital marketing, startups, tech, art and politics.

“ Our priority is to make sure that everyone who wants to be an entrepreneur... has access to the same opportunities to develop new businesses

WHICH BRINGS US TO...

Expect an exciting voyage into the Portuguese startup world at Guimarães, next September 28 - 30th. The EBN incubator in Braga - BIC Minho - will host the network's annual Congress to discuss Design for Innovation.

While a long way from San Francisco, Lisbon, and Portugal certainly, have already taken their place on the global startup map. Against all odds and in just a few years, they have demonstrated capacity and potential for the tech industry and steered an innovative course. This seafaring nation that once led the world in exploration and adventure is now charting a new course and redrawing the entrepreneurial map. With players like EBN at the helm and the innate sense of 'what's out there' that is the legacy of Portugal, expect to see a whole new world of startup action that will change the world. AGAIN.

Acing acceleration

Margaret Mulligan gives us an overview of a very successful programme that facilitated the internationalisation of European startups





For over a decade now business incubators and business accelerators have co-existed in the entrepreneurial space, mentoring and investing in hundreds of thousands of startups to support their successful growth and internationalisation. As more and more business incubators today deliver acceleration and investor readiness programmes to high-potential startups (HPSUs) to help them scale up internationally, the boundaries between incubation and acceleration are increasingly blurred. Rather than ask where, if at all, these boundaries exist, over the past ten years incubators, accelerators and other key players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem (including of course investors, entrepreneurs and policy makers) have worked together in the EU|BIC Network (EBN) to develop new methodologies to speed up the early-stage internationalisation and the accelerated growth of highly innovative startups.

The fifth EBN Technical Note, *Accelerating International Growth: A Practical Guidebook for Business Support Organisations (Guidebook)*, distils the lessons learned along the way into a set of concrete recommendations intended to serve as a reference point for EU|BICs and other business support practitioners working to accelerate the early-stage internationalisation of startups and SMEs. Drawing on the experiences of the EBN Soft-Landing Club and International Hub and the pilot ACE Acceleration Programme, this Guidebook also looks beyond EBN at other emerging trends and methodologies. These are yielding impressive results in their early years to identify tried and tested best practices that may inspire and be adopted or be built upon by other business support organisations.

In this short article, we look at the key ingredients the Guidebook identifies as the basis for a successful international acceleration programme and the best practices it recommends for accelerators and incubators who wish to collaborate across borders, with one another and other stakeholders, to deliver such

programmes to support startups and SMEs to achieve their full international growth potential.

First though we ask: what is internationalisation and why does it matter?

WHAT IS IT? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a critical role in the European economy. They represent 99 percent of all businesses in the European Union (EU) and in the five years following the financial crisis of 2007-2008 SMEs have created 85 percent of new jobs, providing two-thirds of total private sector employment in the EU. The continued and sustainable recovery of the European economy depends upon the full participation of SMEs in all stages of the innovation process and growth cycle, from startup through to international expansion. This is especially true for technology-intensive SMEs who are often 'born global' with the potential to become international from the startup phase itself.

Internationalisation is the process of increasing startup and SME involvement in international markets. It encompasses all activities that foster meaningful cross-border and international business relationships between companies and foreign partners, at transnational level inside the EU or at international level beyond the EU. The positive correlation between internationalisation and business performance, in terms of turnover growth, job creation and level of innovation is well recognised. Yet only 25 percent of European SMEs export and in general, the smaller the SME the lower their prospects of engagement in any form of internationalisation or cross-border activity. In order to achieve the smart, sustainable and inclusive economy envisioned in the Europe 2020 growth strategy this low level of internationalisation among SMEs, and especially startups, must be addressed urgently.



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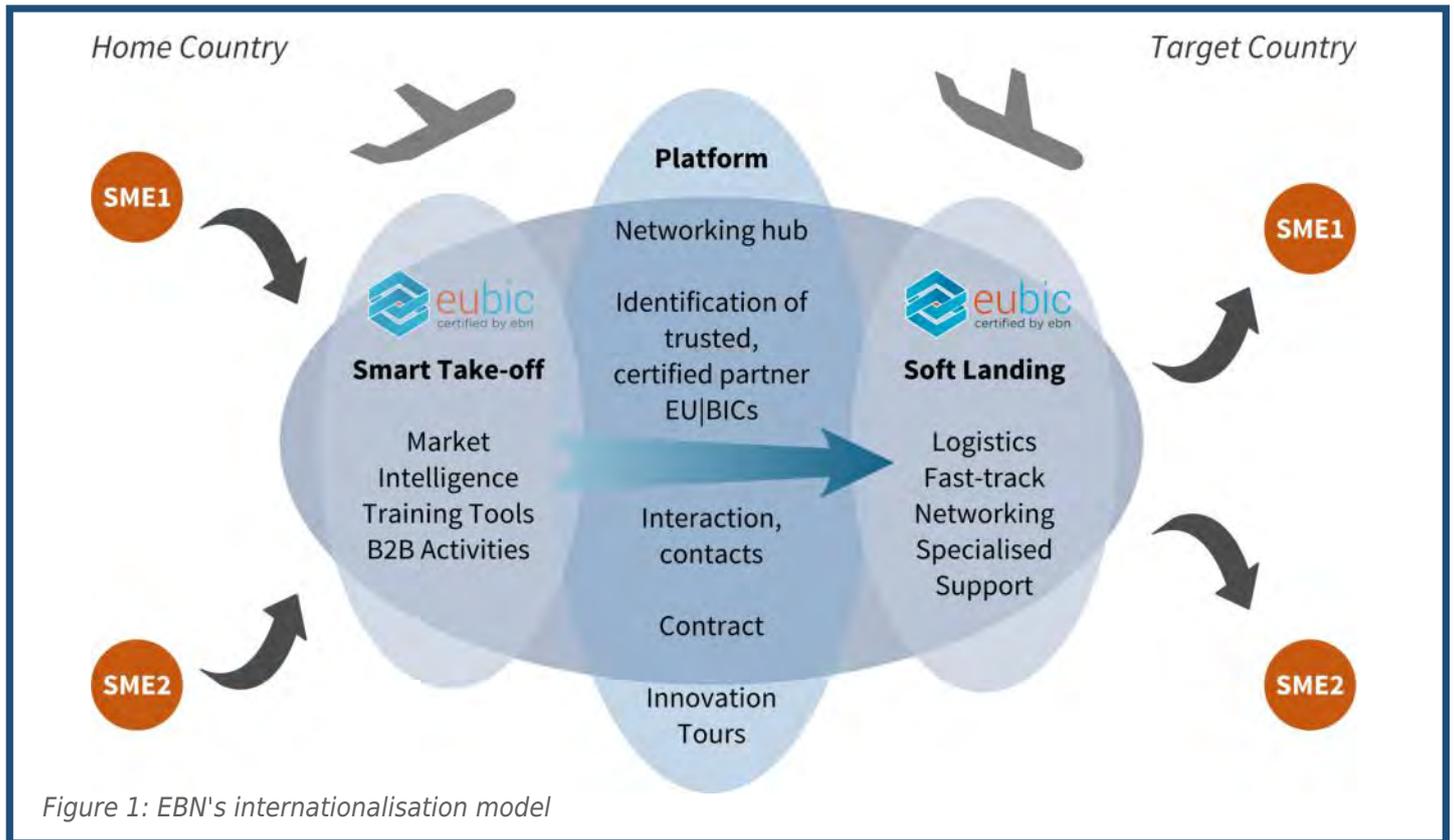


Figure 1: EBN's internationalisation model

“...the resulting ‘ACE’ approach networked leading incubators, accelerators, clusters and living labs throughout Europe

Joe Greaney, Director of WestBIC and Co-Coordinator of ACE, stated accurately, “Internationalisation is a process and it takes time to put in place. You need to start the process at the early startup stage as soon as the company has acquired seed funding, has initiated the sales process and has a team in place to service the needs of an international market. If we want to have scalable SMEs, and larger scale enterprises across the EU, then we need to have a consistent funnel of startups. This requires ongoing investment in the startup process to support entrepreneurs in scaling their businesses, which in turn means that programmes such as the ACE programme are really crucial. Unless we encourage and support entrepreneurs with innovative ideas at an early stage, then we will not develop scalable, high growth enterprises across the EU in the longer term.”

THE EBN AND ACE APPROACHES

Viorel Peca, Head of Innovation at DG CONNECT, European Commission said, “In Europe today, the big

problem is not the lack of startups but the lack of company growth. ACE addresses this by providing targeted support to help highly innovative startups and SMEs in the ICT sector to grow internationally.”

Recognising the challenges of internationalisation, EBN, with the support of the Innovation Unit of DG Connect, coordinated an FP7 funded programme to look at a new approach to address low levels of internationalisation among ICT startups and SMEs. Building on the EBN Soft-Landing Club and International Hub, the resulting ‘ACE’ approach networked leading incubators, accelerators, clusters and living labs throughout Europe, who committed to pooling their knowledge and expertise in internationalisation and opening up their existing facilities and support services to each other’s local companies. By building on and connecting to these existing internationalisation support services, the ACE programme delivered new value-added support to high potential ICT startups and SMEs to accelerate their international growth. An Irish ACE startup looking to expand into the French and German markets, for

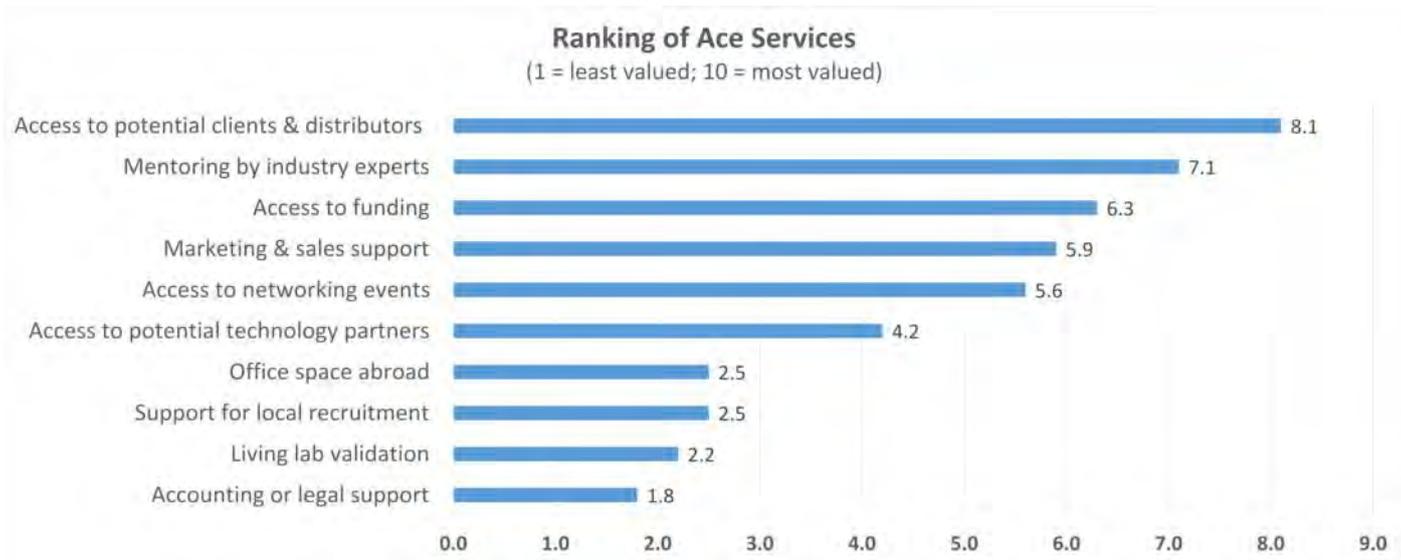


Figure 2: Impact assessment of ACE services

example, is treated by ACE partners in France and Germany like one of their local companies and receives personal introductions to relevant contacts on the ground, from customers through suppliers to potential partners and investors.

During the lifetime of the programme (September 2013 – November 2015), the ACE network delivered over 300 support measures to 125 companies from 18 European countries to accelerate their entry into new European and international markets. The value of this support programme was measured independently throughout the pilot with the result that 85 percent of startup and SME participants showed high satisfaction with the services received, evidenced by a 92 percent referral and recommendation rate to other startups and SMEs.

THE KEY INGREDIENTS

Internationalisation typically happens in two phases. The first actions aim at exploring and reaching new markets as well as acquiring some partners, investors or clients abroad. At a second stage, if successful in the local market targeted and if a physical presence there is necessary to consolidate this market presence, the company will typically enter into the process of creating a local venture there, hiring new staff, and co-developing new products with local stakeholders.

It is important to bear this in mind when developing an international acceleration programme and ensure that support services on offer are tailored to the realities of the target startups and SMEs. With limited financial and human resources available, managing the international support process can be challenging for startups and SMEs. The entrepreneur and international support partners need to carefully manage their interactions to ensure efficient and successful outcomes.

Checklist for managing the internationalisation process

Keeping the following points clearly in focus can be invaluable in achieving the necessary outcomes:

- Have clear deliverables and milestones been established with the international support team?
- Is there an agreed communication process (eg weekly Skype calls, email updates etc)?
- Is access to on-site soft landing/incubation facilities and services a requirement and, if so, when is the time right to avail of those services?
- Are soft landing facilities/services available within the budget of the startup company looking to internationalise?
- Are face-to-face meetings required and can these be arranged with

mentors, partners and potential customers?

At some stage, there may be a necessity to meet with mentors to explore and discuss issues in more detail, these should be scheduled in a cost-effective manner, ensuring efficient use of time. Meetings with potential customers are always desirable and are often dependent on the willingness and availability of the potential customer. In these instances, it is important that the startup is fully prepared for such meetings.

ACE offered participating companies a comprehensive range of services, from living lab validation through investment readiness preparation to introductions to potential clients and distributors. In order to prioritise services to offer in the future, the independent ACE impact assessment rated the services from most to least valued, (as summarised in Figure 2) which revealed that the most valued services were 'access to potential clients & distributors' and 'mentoring by industry experts'. The services 'access to funding', 'marketing & sales support, including market research', and 'access to networking events' were the subsequent services assessed as most valued, followed by 'access to potential technology partners'. The least valued services were 'support for local recruitment', 'office space abroad', 'living lab validation' and, finally, 'accounting or legal support'.

BUILDING ON ACE

The EBN Internationalisation Special Interest Group carries on the networking activity initiated by the EBN International Hub and ACE. This internationalisation network is open and actively seeking new members committed to supporting companies to grow internationally. This may be through sector-specific iterations of the ACE Programme, such as ACE Creative, through other seed acceleration programmes, such as the FIWARE accelerators or on an ad-hoc basis to match the specific needs of individual companies with high international growth potential. (For more information or to get involved and share your suggestions please get in touch with EBN at info@ebn.eu or download the full Guidebook here: http://ebn.eu/downloads/TechnicalNote05_ACE_GUIDE_To_Accelerating_International_Growth.pdf)

“ In response to these challenges, ACE Creative networks innovation support players harnessing their regional strengths...

GETTING CREATIVE

An interview with Robert Sanders gives a brief synopsis of the spin-off ACE CREATIVE programme that serves a very specific market need

ACE Creative is a spin-off of the original pilot ACE Programme that aims to support the international growth of ICT-driven creative SMEs. Why did you think this sector-specific focus was necessary?

RS: The creative economy is a source of growth in the EU, accounting for 4.5 percent of total EU GDP, employing 6.7 million people in the EU and accounting for more than 4 percent of the EU external exports. Moreover, the value of the creative economy is not only intrinsic but, as recognised in the Europe 2020 strategy, the cultural and creative industries are important drivers of economic and social innovation in other sectors. Despite this promising potential for growth 80 percent of companies in the creative sector are sole-traders or micro-SMEs employing only a handful of people, indicating substantial and very real difficulties for the growth of small companies within this sector and there is a need therefore to develop blueprints for their sustainability and growth. In response to these challenges, ACE Creative networks innovation support players harnessing their regional strengths into a European ecosystem of supports to meet the needs of two specific groups of end-user SMEs: creative industry SMEs exploiting advanced technologies and ICT SMEs innovating in the field of creative industries.

What elements of the original pilot ACE Programme do you replicate in ACE Creative and what do you do differently?

RS: As in the original pilot ACE Programme, ACE Creative focuses on the provision of highly customised support to SMEs and startups through a local mentor



and international support team. Support on offer ranges from expert mentoring through access to finance and investment readiness training to introductions to potential clients and partners and office space abroad. As in the original pilot ACE Programme, another important ACE Creative service is access to networking events. To this end we will run fifteen International Bootcamps across Europe for ICT-driven creative startups and SMEs, in partnership with established creative industry events such as the Creative Business Cup.

How can potential partners and interested startups and SMEs get involved with ACE Creative?

RS: When it launched in January 2015 ACE Creative had eleven full and six associate EU | BICs, accelerators and other business support partners from 15 European countries. Our goal is to grow this network to over 100 partners from across the EU and beyond by the end of 2016. If your organisation is interested you can sign up today at www.acecreative.eu. Startups and SMEs can also register at www.acecreative.eu to ensure they are among the first informed when registration opens for new International Bootcamps and when calls for applications for customised support programmes are opened.

“ During its pilot phase, ACE offered participating companies a comprehensive range of support services...”



GAME CHANGER

Programmes and initiatives such as ACE serve a specific and important need. In a world where business borders are dissolving, yet barriers to entry into specific pockets or areas become increasingly difficult, the ACE project and its affiliates and partners can change how the game plays.



Margaret Mulligan joined EBN as a Project Manager in September 2012. She works on a range of projects in the ICT and Creative Industries sectors, with a particular focus on FP7 and Horizon 2020. Prior to joining EBN in September 2012, Margaret worked as the Research Forum Coordinator at the European Foundation Centre in Brussels, where she was responsible for facilitating the development of joint activities between research-funding foundations and their stakeholders. Previously, as an Information and Communication Officer at the Research Enquiries Service of the European Commission she gained extensive experience of EU funding programmes, in particular the Framework Programmes for research and innovation. Margaret has a BA in Sociology and French from Trinity College Dublin and an MSc in Sociology (Research) from the London School of Economics.

The open road



Iakov Kalinin/Shutterstock

Vasu Briquez tells us why open innovation is the win-win solution when it comes to bridging the gap between corporates and innovators

Open innovation has been getting a huge amount of attention recently. Across the world... in all industry sectors... and with all kinds of market players! It is not as if this is a new concept... it has been in practice for many years, since Henry Chesbrough introduced the concept in 2003. So why such new excitement?

Simply because, big or small, companies of all sizes have now clearly understood that they must embrace 'open innovation' to be able to even barely keep up with their competition (let alone getting a chance to surpass them). The sense of urgency you can feel in the air is very real and there is no question of choice anymore. The pace at which innovation is happening out there in the market, in any industry sector you may think of, is much too fast to be matched only by one's own internal innovation means. The wake-up call is loud and clear and those companies that are not hearing it are lagging behind and are going to continue to lag behind.

OPEN INNOVATION IS HERE TO STAY!

The advances in new technologies fuel this momentum even more! They are expanding the playing field, putting young, innovative startups at the centre of attention and action, bringing in new types of actors and communities, creating new types of innovation services and platforms, and at times spawning totally new value networks. Increasingly businesses, especially large businesses, are going after an agile, open way of innovating, realizing fully well that it is at the core of their winning streak.

THE NEXT WAVE

What we mean by open innovation now includes new, open forms of collaboration, partnerships and co-creation (including crowdsourcing), which are rendering it considerably more effective and powerful, helping to reap bigger and faster benefits for all parties involved. The industry is resolutely entering the era of open and collaborative innovation which takes place in a true 'partnership' mode.

And in this new movement of the industry towards open innovation 2.0, there is one area in particular that is getting close attention and is also in need of solid improvement: collaborative innovation between large, established businesses and young, emerging technology startups.

Let us be clear about what we mean here and define things a bit further: creating effective partnerships which not only favour large companies, but also help and assist the startups in achieving sustainable business growth and success in the market, benefiting from the partnership in their own right.

It is in this context, that The European and Business Centre Network - EBN, - positioned in the centres of a highly active and vibrant ecosystem of Business Innovation Centres across Europe (the EUJICs), supporting many thousands of startups in the ecosystem, is enthusiastically stepping up to be part of this brave new world!

Let us first take a small step back for a minute though, to remember how it all started, before we fast-forward to today again.

OPEN INNOVATION – SUCCESSFUL ADOPTION

In its original concept, as stated by Henry Chesbrough, "Open innovation is a paradigm that assumes that companies can and should source innovation from external actors as well as their own internal R&D departments, and similarly also use internal and external paths to market, as they look to advance their technology/product/service" (adapted from Wikipedia). Simply put, it means that the company is reaching out far beyond its own internal boundaries in order to innovate, working with customers, suppliers, partners, startups, universities and other players. In doing so, it's vastly increasing its ability to innovate, making use of bright minds and ideas from outside its own enterprise and internal R&D processes.

It is also well understood that, while internal R&D divisions are extremely good at incremental innovation and even radical innovation at times, they are not generally positively inclined towards disrupting their own products and creating new markets.

Several large companies and corporates have adopted open innovation as part of their R&D practices in the past decade, experimenting and implementing to varying degrees. There is quite a lot of material available today on their experience, successes, best practices, tools and techniques as well as the various challenges that need to be overcome within the organisation.

A highly successful example that immediately comes to mind is one from Procter & Gamble, a company well-known as a pioneer in open innovation, who established their Connect & Develop (C&D) open innovation programme some 12 plus years ago. Indeed, EBN was one of its external C&D partners. The results were compelling. Connect & Develop delivered 35 percent of all successful innovations in the first two years of the programme, according to a 2006 HBR article. Several breakthrough products and well-known brands like Febreze and Tide Total Care have come out of their open innovation programme.

To cite a few more names, GE with its famous Ecomagination challenges, Lego, Samsung, Unilever, Eli Lilly are all well known for their successful open innovation programmes. Considerable innovation in the Fast Moving Consumer Goods or bio-tech sector has been propelled through an open innovation approach, and strategic partnerships with large companies have shown a significant impact on the survival and growth of young startups.

BRIDGING THE GAP

Yet, the story of collaboration between large open innovation programmes and young startups with hot innovative technologies



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has not been a very successful one, especially in Europe, where it is needed to reinvigorate a hugely challenged European economy.

One of the main reasons for this is there are many more instances of successful startup acquisitions by corporates, subsuming them within their own organisations, than those of lasting, successful innovation partnerships, where large corporations have nurtured startups, with the objective of helping them to grow over time, gain more revenue and expand their business, which in turn drives increased job creation in the economy.

Let us take a moment to zoom into this area of collaboration in an enlarged context of open innovation, and examine them more closely.

Acquisition: Many corporates like IBM, Oracle, Cisco or Facebook see outright acquisition as the most effective way of working with startups, and getting new technology and expertise into their incumbent portfolio. While it does ensure that new, break-through technologies hit the market at the right time and enjoy early success, this open innovation strategy does not necessarily help job creation, often quite the contrary. Over a period of time, a large percentage of the startup's employee base leaves and there has been job detriment as the corporates seek to achieve economies of scale.

Open innovation programmes and partnerships: Many large companies are now realising that open innovation is a strategic game for them, and one of the most effective ways in which to foster 'unrelenting innovation' within their own products/services. And that this will inevitably be a key factor to sustain their competitive advantage over the long term.

Such companies tend to put in place a well-defined open innovation programme, which fosters startups and entrepreneurs, leans towards co-innovation and co-design, focuses on developing the startup companies for driving new business opportunities, and leads to longer-term partnerships

and collaborations that are beneficial to both camps.

P&G and Unilever are pioneers and have been well-known examples for some time, while GE, Samsung, Google and others also favour this strategy. In this approach, the corporations have a more holistic thinking around the requirements for success for these longer-term partnerships.

GE's chief executive, Jeff Immelt, during the opening of their first open innovation lab in China said, "We believe open innovation practices, especially the customer co-creation approach [embodied in the China Innovation Centre in Chengdu], is essential for multinational technology companies such as GE..."

“Most importantly, the startup or innovator enjoys a high level of visibility at a global or European level

Accelerators: Large companies set up accelerators with facilities that provide resources and support for entrepreneurs and startups. This helps them to better understand and leverage emerging technologies, and develop high potential technologies together in order to scale and roll them out globally. For example, Microsoft Ventures or Orange Fab have a comprehensive programme with different options to help startups at different stages of maturity. This manner of engaging in open innovation, along with the strategy above, is one of the most effective ways to constantly leverage leading innovations in any domain, drawing benefits for own purpose without stifling the young startups at the same time.

Challenge-based, competition-based: Several companies (as well as public institutions) develop and launch open innovation challenges and competitions to attract the best startups, entrepreneurs and innovators from around the world.

Well-known names such as GE Ecomagination Challenge or Intel's Global Challenge have attracted several thousands of entrepreneurs. The startups that win the top awards get access to prizes or investment funds, which may further result in a business relationship which could be a commercial partnership, licensing or even lead to acquisition. Most importantly, the startup or innovator enjoys a high level of visibility at a global or European level, which is an enormous advantage they can leverage to capture new business opportunities.

Spin-offs (inside-out): One other method that has been tried and tested by some large companies, for instance several big telecom operators, is the spin-off of homegrown new technologies and intellectual property in external hands, like those of a startup or a specialised entity established for this purpose. This typically allows the large company to reduce their own R&D costs, lets the innovation take its own path, creates new partnerships and helps develop an innovative ecosystem around the new spun-off technologies, while still continuing to play a prominent role in marketing these innovations and staying focused on achieving commercial success thus benefitting both sides.

The list above is not exhaustive. Companies large and medium, now make use of newer ways to engage with their customers, partners, startups, entrepreneurs, innovators and public/private research institutions, like organising innovation conferences dedicated to specific subjects, startup days, innovation networking events and so on.

Crowdsourcing: Increasingly now, crowds are becoming the partner of choice when there is a need to answer the most intriguing innovation questions. We can remember very well the AIDS-related crowdsourcing discovery of an enzyme involved in the reproduction of AIDS, opening up the potential for development of new drugs to fight the disease. Or the EBOLA-related crowdsourcing grant

programme called the Ebola Grand Challenge to help contain the spread of the disease - inspiring examples of ways in which open innovation can bring vast benefits to our society in the medical domain.

“Many large companies are now realising that Open innovation is a strategic game for them...”

At the moment, only a few companies use crowds effectively despite a growing list of success stories, for instance in the marketing and branding areas. Pushing problems out to a somewhat unknown crowd seems risky and integrating a crowdsourced solution(s) into corporate operations seems like a big hurdle to most innovation managers. Yet, using

crowdsourcing as an open innovation method has serious advantages. It exposes the problem to a wide audience of people with diverse skills, knowledge and experience. And it can operate at a scale that exceeds even that of the biggest and most complex global corporation, getting people from different continents to focus on a specific challenge.

Innocentive is an excellent example of one of the recognised leaders in challenge-driven innovation, crowdsourcing innovation solutions. Innocentive also offers a cloud-based innovation management platform, which has been used for years by companies such as Astra Zeneca, Booz Allen Hamilton, NASA, Procter & Gamble and others.

As we speak, there are more and more sophisticated online crowdsourcing platforms appearing that make crowdsourcings available on demand!



Startups and corporates collaborative challenges innovation

However, the actual path to a real win-win open innovation partnership may be strewn with challenges and hidden dangers. To mention just a few:

- Creating ad-hoc relationships with innovation leaders at the corporate is not enough... this may lead to quite some effort for the startup but may or may not produce any results. Additionally, ad-hoc efforts do not scale.

- If the open innovation process of the corporation is not well implemented, then the startup ends up needing to raise visibility about its innovation and technology/products to several different groups in the organisation, and this without giving rise, ultimately, to any interesting outcomes for the startup.

“ Furthermore, doesn't EBN itself have a significant and pivotal role to play, from its uniquely advantageous central position in an ecosystem

- Corporate ventures groups interested in making investments or acquisitions tend to have heavy due-diligence and competitive processes, again a lot of time and effort needed which may ultimately not produce results. And so on...

From the corporation's standpoint, this means that those looking to engage with startups need to have the right processes in place to make this happen, and work together in a well-defined, well-structured, budgeted open innovation process, in order for the collaboration to be sustainable. They have to get out of their own silos, overcome barriers and the corporate machine, and ensure focus on win-win objectives, that can make a real difference in the market at the end.

OVER TO YOU

It is evident that startups all across Europe have an enormous opportunity to benefit from the open innovation dynamics out there. But this is a new, constantly evolving, fast-moving, highly competitive, relatively unstable environment. Startups can do with some solid help and support.

So, as we fast-forward to 'today', the question reverts to you, to us. You, the EU|BICs, who dedicate your efforts and resources all through the year to help entrepreneurs and innovative startups to turn into viable, successful and sustainable businesses, should you also help them win in this space of open and collaborative innovation with the large companies and corporations? And how should you help?

The EU|BICs, have great assets that can be brought to bear on this context. A well-established, quality-certified Business Innovation Centre organisation, with an innovation environment which can tap into a large national network of entrepreneurial startups and the international network of EBN, which is currently not being accessed by the corporates and large companies running open innovation programmes.

Isn't there a new role for the EU|BICs to play, as an open innovation facilitator, connecting large enterprises to the startups they are supporting? A few EU|BICs have already started doing it. Here is what Mats Dunmar of Ideon Science Park EU|BIC in Lund/Sweden says, "To be honest, it was not Ideon's ambition to become a major player in open innovation.... But we have learned that a Science Park or EU|BIC has a new role to play - a role which assists established large companies with disruptive innovation." (ref: Business Incubator Volume 3 Issue 1).

Furthermore, doesn't EBN itself have a significant and pivotal role to play, from its uniquely advantageous central position in an ecosystem - one that comprises hundreds of EU|BICs and thousands of startups spanning all countries in Europe and beyond?





Answering the question in the affirmative, EBN has developed and launched a new open innovation service called 'EBN Open' in October of 2015, in its annual Congress. (more information available from EBN, www.ebn.eu)

This new service aims to help the thousands of innovative, high potential startups and SMEs in its ecosystem to develop novel open

“ EBN has developed and launched a new open innovation service called *EBN Open* in October of 2015

innovation partnerships with large companies and corporates in a systematic, programmatic manner. EBN is already engaging with large companies, like SAP, Microsoft, Continental and a few others, who have put in place well-managed open innovation processes, offering clearly defined benefits for the startups, leading to sales enablement, marketing support and customer access.

Several startups from the EU|BICs in Belgium (iMinds, Innotek, Héraclès, Impulse), the Czech Republic (JIC), UK (St. John's Innovation Centre, Warwick University Science Park), Spain (BIC Euronova, BIC Granada),

Luxembourg (Technoport), France (Atlantpole, LMT) and others have had the opportunity to get involved and are now enthusiastically engaged in making open innovation a way of life.

THE TIME IS NOW

The time has come now for EBN and the EU|BICs to naturally find and assume their rightful place in this changing landscape. One where different kinds of open innovation service providers, platforms and consultancies are emerging with increasing rapidity. There is no doubt that the breadth and depth of knowledge and experience readily available in EBN's vast network of innovation will pave the way for a resounding success within the startup community and an ingenious evolution of the EU Business Innovation Centres in Europe, and beyond. Open innovation is the way forward and it is vital to understand the value of EBN and the EU|BIC label in addressing the challenges and needs of this new way of doing and thinking.



Vasu Briquez has 35 years of experience in the software & IT industry in innovation, strategy and business development, gained from a career at multinationals such as ORACLE, AT&T and HP/Digital Equipment Corp. Vasu is currently leading EBN's new Open Innovation initiative and service. She is passionate about new technologies and innovation, and has driven many innovative products to market successfully during her

time at Oracle as VP of Innovation for Europe, Middle East & Africa. Vasu chaired the Innovation Board of Oracle EMEA for many years, working with leading customers in industries like Telecommunications, Banking, Energy, Healthcare/ Life Sciences and more. Today, she continues to consult in the area of digital and software technologies, participating in global innovation and professional learning networks.

From Bolshoi to business



Olga Popova/Shutterstock

Sergey Yushko walks us through the innovation landscape in Russia and the exciting ideas that are taking shape there

From Tchaikovsky to caviar to Russian dolls to Rasputin...Russia's impact on the world has been considerable. Culturally, literally and technologically it continues to wield significant influence. In fact, one has to only look at a Sukhoi-27 in action to realise that technologically Russia holds its own and surpasses many developed countries in innovation and design. Its focus on innovation is especially keen and it has come a long way in the last decade or so. And with good reason. Meet EUJBIC Technopark 'Idea', (Kazan, Tatarstan) one of the flagships of the innovation movement of the Republic of Tatarstan, and the pioneer of the EUJBIC concept across the Russian Federation, which so far has reached six innovation territories.

AT THE CROSSROADS

The Republic of Tatarstan is one of the most economically developed regions of Russia. It is situated in the centre of a large industrial region of the Russian Federation, at the crossing of the most significant highways that connect East and West, North and South of the country. The Republic of Tatarstan is rich in natural resources, boasts a powerful and diversified industry, backed by high intellectual potential and a skilled workforce.

The industry share of the Gross Regional Product (GRP) of Tatarstan is 44 percent, the construction share is nine percent, the transport and communications share is eight percent and the agriculture share is seven percent. The share of the small and medium business in the GRP of Tatarstan makes up about 25 percent of the national numbers.

The innovative infrastructure that supports these SMEs consists of one technopolis, nine technoparks, eight business incubators, four industrial parks, two SEZs (Special Economic Zones), 51 operating industrial sites of which nine are still under construction.

Needless to say, this network of technoparks has been growing rapidly in the Republic of Tatarstan

and CJSC Innovation and Production Technopark, Technopark 'Idea', the Kama Industrial Park Master, the IT-Park and Technopolis Himgrad have all been functioning successfully. Launched on February 5th 2004, Technopark 'Idea' was one of the first technoparks to open in Tatarstan. The domestic and foreign experts deem it a pioneering effort in the Russian Federation, a unique Federal Training Platform and it encouraged the creation of technoparks and business incubators in other regions of Russia. Today 104 companies with a total of 2,162 employees reside on its premises.

By the end of 2015 the total production, including the extraterritorial residents of Technopark 'Idea', amounted to \$110 million. 30.4 percent of the total production (\$34 million) is around nanotechnology production. Technopark 'Idea' has been implementing a business model involving anchor residents and small innovative companies from the startup to expansion level. The anchor residents (technological subsidiaries of major international brands, such as GE, Bosch) ensure its financial stability, making the technopark more appealing to new clients and define its line of business.

Technopark 'Idea' is a successful example of a public-private partnership in the development of the SME and high-tech business oriented innovative infrastructure in the country, and by 2010 it had fully recovered the investments of the Republic of Tatarstan. With the involvement of Technopark 'Idea', Tatarstan has won several Federal programmes and contests: the Technopark in the Hi-Tech Sphere, the Federal Business Incubator, Nanotechnology Centre, Technopolis Himgrad etc. In collaboration with JSC KAMAZ and 'Tatneft' - major private companies - the Technopark has since founded the Kama Industrial Park Master and Technopark Idea-South-East.

SUCCESS STORIES

The pride of the Technopark 'Idea' is its residents. The technopark's residents are known for their success far outside Tatarstan. Eidos LLC, for example, started in 2010 with the release of driving simulators. The Company has designed and has been actively selling their driving simulators to KAMAZ. The simulator is 75-80 percent realistic and allows drivers to train in different weather conditions, which are impossible to simulate on the equipment at a driving school. The simulator does not require petrol or spare parts, but just 3kW of power. Annually each simulator at the driving school saves \$16,120 in maintenance and fuel. In addition to the driving simulators, Eidos also manufactures simulators for emergency services, navigation and aviation and has ventured into several other lines.

“Technopark 'Idea' is a successful example of a public-private partnership...”

Eidos-Medicine is the only company in Russia that produces surgical simulators. There are only five other such companies worldwide. The popular solution of Eidos-medicine is the hybrid operating room. This complex allows to perfect the proficiency of a team of doctors with simultaneous participation of an operating and an assisting surgeon, an emergency physician, an anaesthesiologist and a nurse. The company has also designed training complexes for endosurgery, emergency medicine, endourology, gynaecology, obstetrics, etc. Eidos-Robotics aims to change the approach to the implementation of robots at plants, making it easier and more affordable. The Centre of Prototyping and Implementation of National Robotics focuses on the execution of measures to implement domestic industrial third generation robotics by creating a unique engineering-

and-production complex specialising in the development of a complete production system - from computer design, prototyping of robotic systems and equipment to its further technological implementation at industrial enterprises. The Centre also aims at coordinating separate groups of software developers as well as developers of electronic and robotic devices.

Another successful project intends to create the cancer and HIV treatment drugs and transplantation medications. The Nanopharma Development project, created by the Nanotechnology Center (Technopark 'Idea' is the investor in the project along with the Technology Transfer Center) in collaboration with Izvarino Pharma LLC, focuses on the development of medicinal products, based on the use of nanoparticles. The second line is the development and production of drugs for the treatment of cancer, transplantation medications as well as drugs to treat HIV-related diseases. At present two drugs - Imatinib (a drug for the treatment of leukaemia) and Tacrolimus (a drug required for the post organ transplantation and post-grafting therapy) have been developed

and submitted for state registration. In total, up to ten innovative drugs are to be produced as part of this project with the support of the Nanocenter, using an automated production line requiring no staff contact with the drugs.

At the end of December 2015 the Nanocenter withdrew from the project and its share in Nanopharma Development was purchased by Izvarino Pharma. The transaction was executed in compliance with the investment agreement that was drawn up when the company was launched. As a result, the Nanocenter has duly fulfilled all of its partnership obligations and withdrew from the project with the planned return. Izvarino Pharma remains the sole owner of Nanopharma Development which will run its operations independently, in collaboration with the Nanocenter on a contractual basis. The production of medicines is scheduled to start in the summer of 2016.

with key Russian development institutions: JSC Russian Venture Company, OJSC RUSNANO, the SKOLKOVO Foundation, Foundation of Assistance for Small Innovative Enterprises (FASIE), etc.

“ At the Center the students gain engineering knowledge that can be applied in the modern world of science, engineering and design

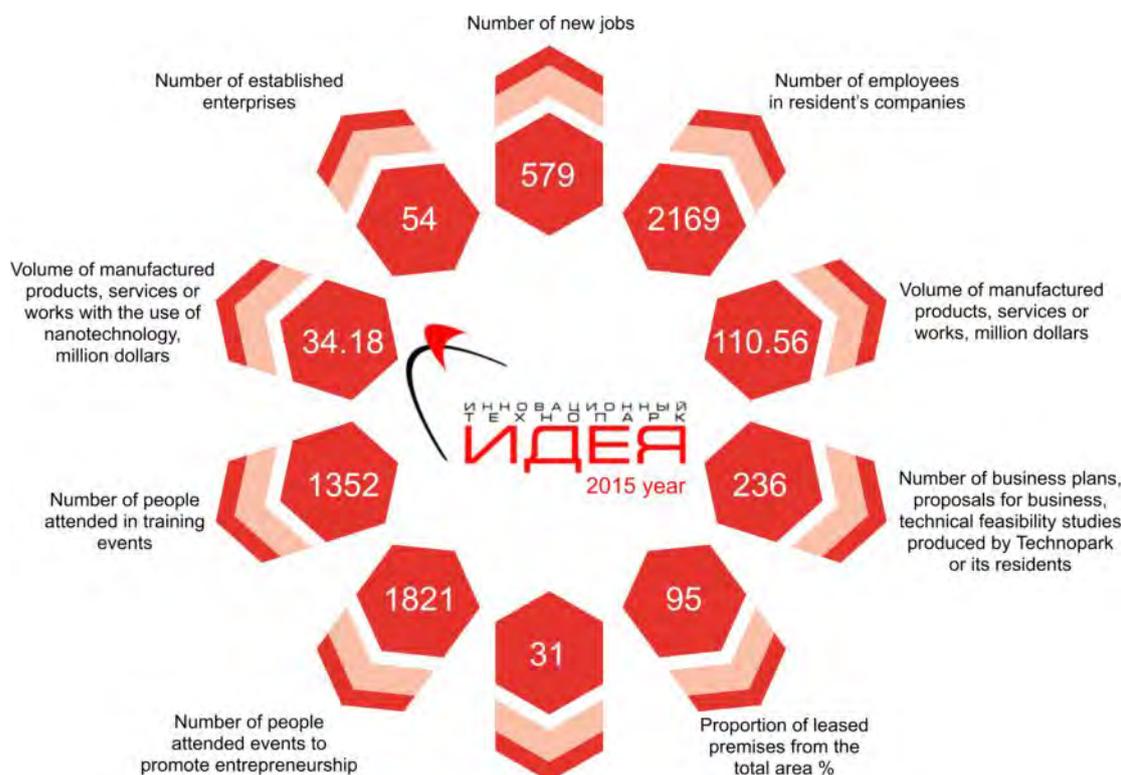
A point to note is the importance of collaboration with the largest enterprises of the region. Technopark 'Idea' in collaboration with OJSC KAMAZ created the Kama Industrial Park Master in the North-East of Tatarstan, and in collaboration with JSC Tatneft - Technopark Idea-South-East in the South-East of Tatarstan.” Currently, these two facilities employ 6,000 people.

ECOSYSTEM INTERACTIONS

The successful work of the Technopark 'Idea' and its residents depends on the effective interaction of the technopark

SCHOOLING IDEAS

In addition to working with established and new entrepreneurs, Technopark



MADE IN RUSSIA

'Idea' has been actively engaged with the younger generation in order to capture their interest. In 2008, in collaboration with our partner, Innovative Solutions in Education LLC, Technopark 'Idea' founded the Center of Construction and Robotics for students from grades five through to grade nine. At the Center the students gain engineering knowledge that can be applied in the modern world of science, engineering and design. The students design, assemble and programme completely functional robot models. They learn what it is like to be young scientists by conducting simple research, following or/and measuring the behaviour of robots, and then recording and representing their results. The children demonstrate their achievements at various robotics festivals that are organised. For example, since 2011, the technopark has been arranging the Republican Robotics Festival on its premises which has already become a much-anticipated event with 400 students from different cities and regions of Tatarstan having participated at the Festival over the last five years".

Certainly, middle school students are now actively engaged in the Youth Innovation Creativity Centre Idea - the first one in Russia - which was founded in Technopark 'Idea' in February 2013. The proof of success is that now the Republic of Tatarstan has a whole network of YICCs. By the end of 2015 the network of YICCs of Tatarstan was recognised as the largest and most successful one in Russia.



Sergey V. Yushko is Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor, MBA, Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan, Member of Board of Directors of The European Business and Innovation Centers Network. He finished the Kazan State Technical University named after A.N. Tupolev, propulsion engineering sub department, specialty - aircraft engines, graduated with distinction in 1994. In 2004 he became a director of innovation of Innovative Technopark 'Idea'. Since 2006 - he has been the CEO of Technopark 'Idea'.

High school students and university students have not been left out of consideration. Since 2008, the Erudite contest for high school students has been running successfully and 2,650 students have participated in it over the last seven years. In 2015 alone, the contest had more than 300 participants. In 2011, Technopark 'Idea' launched an IQ-nano category, which encouraged the interest in nanotechnology, nanomaterials and nanosystems and motivated students to deepen and expand their knowledge of modern development trends of the interdisciplinary field of fundamental and applied science and technology. Annually, for the last three years, the participants who showed the highest erudition in the nanotechnology sphere have been awarded special prizes from the creator of this category.

University students have not been forgotten and the Innovative Projects Development Program Idea-1000, (which was initiated in Tatarstan in 2006 by the Foundation of Assistance for Small Innovative Enterprises (FASIE), Technopark 'Idea' and the Investment and Venture Fund of the Republic of Tatarstan) received 105 applications in 2015.

The result of the two programme phases were impressive. There were 30 winning projects in the START-I category and one winning project in the START-II category. The total financing of the winners of 2015 is expected to amount to \$103 million. During the period from 2006 to 2015, 2,324 applications were accepted for participation in the Idea-1000 contest and during the same period the Advisory Council accepted 485

projects for funding, totalling about \$12 million.

BUSINESS FINESSE

From the singular writings of Dostoevsky to the intricacy of art and architecture to the space race to their impressive jet technology, Russia has never ceased to surprise the world. As a country it has a legacy of leading the way, trying out new ideas, bringing precision and fine detailing to all it collectively undertakes, - and we see this in their startup support initiatives as well. Technopark 'Idea' leads the way in setting the pace for innovation support in the country. Applying the same rigorous control and the self-same artistry and precision one sees with the Bolshoi to the no-less-exciting and exacting world of business and wealth creation.

EU|BICS in Russian Federation

- High Technology Park of Yugra, www.tp86.ru/en/
- Innovative Technopark IDEA www.tpidea.ru/en/
- KRITBI - Krasnoyarsk en.kritbi.ru
- Technopark of Novosibirsk Akademgorodok, www.academpark.com/en/

EBN Associate Members in Russian Federation

- Technopark Nanotechnology Center technopark.ru/en/
- Skolkovo Technopark www.technopark.sk.ru

The third mission

A green map of Europe with white outlines of countries. Several red dots are placed on the map, marking specific locations: one in the Iberian Peninsula, one in the British Isles, one in France, one in Germany, one in Poland, one in the Czech Republic, one in Slovakia, one in Hungary, one in Italy, and one in Spain.

Arnaud Drapier reminds us that universities are platforms for the dissemination of knowledge and an important part of innovation ecosystems

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Since the creation of the first universities in Europe in the late 11th early 12th century, they have always operated as 'autonomous' environments with two missions consisting of a) facilitating and disseminating knowledge through research and teaching and b) preparing students for their future roles in the society by providing them with high skills through education. As such, universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs) have always been considered anchor entities within the community, acting as platforms - or to use a trendy expression - 'hubs' for the development of knowledge-based societies.

In the last few decades however, there has been an increased interest in the universities' role in the economy and thus there has been encouragement and financial support from governments locally and nationally to develop more rapid linkages between universities and industry. Reasons may differ from one continent to another e.g. the push for an innovation / added-value led economy and the development of transformational entrepreneurship initiatives or the need for diversifying their economies. Anyway, research on the subject suggests that a country that encourages an infrastructure of links amongst government, universities and industry gains a competitive edge through the faster diffusion of information and increased innovation: this is the much discussed 'triple helix' system developed by Henry Hetzkowitz.

While there are enough EBN events to demonstrate the application of the Hetzkowitz theory, this article will simply outline the role of 'entrepreneurial' universities in facilitating interaction between the business community, academia and governments.

THE 'RIPPLE EFFECT'

The number of universities supporting startups and entrepreneurship is on the rise everywhere and a 2012 survey by the National Centre for Entrepreneurship in Education (NCEE)

in the UK reported that 90 percent of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) support students and graduates in creating new business ventures (up from 77 percent in 2010). Different models exist for operating these 'enabling environments' which most often include business incubation. Their specialisation and modus operandi will depend on the needs of their end users (i.e. be they students, startups, early stage businesses etc.) and the contextual landscape in which these environments are being developed. This was verified with the different organisations contacted for this article: some were operating directly from the university's Research and Enterprise department, some were operating as a foundation, others as subsidiaries (commercial arm) of the university or even as complete separate entities with the university involved in the delivery of business support. Reasons for these 'enabling environments' to be set up were diverse and include one or more of the following:

- Answer to pressures from within the university and from local government
- Increase of technology transfer activity and relationship with the industry
- Encourage interaction between academia and the business community
- Actively contribute to the local economic development
- Strengthen the university's corporate image towards students, academics and businesses

Once the structure is in place, a key task of the staff running the environment is to facilitate and encourage linkages with the commercialisation of university research - which sometimes takes time due to various constraints and resistances - as well as new ideas by utilising R&D expertise available on-site and proof of concept functions. Acting as brokering/liaison agents and reaching a community that goes far beyond the supported and incubated firms (i.e. the ripple effect of business incubation), the operational team is key in the integration of entrepreneurial activity within the university, but

not just! As Hetzkowitz would put it: "Incubated knowledge increasingly lies behind new products and new firms. Incubators have developed technology and business ideas into an array of firms and to form research centres by fusing heterogeneous R&D entities from university, government and industry."

Besides the cases developed in this article a growing number of EBN members and EU|BICS are indeed embedded within a university or some other HEI framework. For example the Czech Technical University (CTU), Technical University of Ostrava, CEI Louvain (linked to UCL), i-minds in Gent (linked to U Gent), ESTIA in Bayonne, South Bank University in London, and Istanbul Sehir University, and Koç University, in Istanbul.

SHAPING THE MISSION, BUILDING THE INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

So, it seems that with a society that is always more knowledge-based and given the current economic climate, universities have gained a third mission to fulfil and that is the active contribution in stimulating, developing and sustaining the development of innovative business and entrepreneurial climate at a regional level. Strengthening links with the other local/regional/national actors of the innovation ecosystem, organisations such as CUE Ltd in Coventry (UK), Startlife in Wageningen (Netherlands) or Entapreneur in Beirut (Lebanon) contribute to creating new business ventures and to supporting resources toward specific innovation activities. They also play a major role in assisting the capacity to provide future professionals with new ideas, skills and entrepreneurial talent. Translated into their everyday life, this may mean:

- A contribution to EU-funded transnational, and transformational projects: e.g. Green Business Innovation at Technopolis, Italy
- Provision of education and training support allowing students to discover

“ In the last few decades however, there has been an increased interest in the universities’ role in the economy....

their entrepreneurial skills at the Centre for Entrepreneurship in Beirut or the Challenge Programme at Formation Zone, UK.

■ Creation and management of sources of funding appropriate to the needs of startups and early stage firms at Startlife, Netherlands.

As evidenced with the case studies in this article, critical to these ‘enabling’ conditions is how well they link and align incentives of the innovation actors and organisations, and their activities – for example, the robustness of links between research within universities and entrepreneurs in informing the direction of the former and feed commercialisation opportunities to the latter. Embedded in the wider university environment, business incubation programmes play a key role in the innovation ecosystem and actively contribute to the application of the university’s third mission. The European Commission is probably fully aware of this as a proposal for the creation of a European Innovation Council (EIC) has been announced by the Research Commissioner, Carlos Moedas. Read more at ec.europa.eu/research/eic/

The following case studies will better exemplify the points made above:

Tecnopolis Parco Scientifico, Bari (Italy)

Tecnopolis is a public company fully owned by the University of Bari. The science park welcomes university spinoffs but also indigenous knowledge-based startups as well as other ‘established’ companies looking to diversify their activities. Business incubation services form a key part of the science park and contribute to its position in the region as a catalyst for entrepreneurship activities in the development of industry clusters. A large portfolio of services provided in-house and externally is available to client firms who can also contribute to a number of EU-funded initiatives such as the Green Business Innovation (GBI) project. GBI is a transnational and transformational project allowing the exchange of technology-led solutions between businesses in Italy and Greece as well as the strengthening and collaboration between the public and private sectors between the two countries.

www.greenbusinessinnovation.eu

CUE Ltd, Coventry (UK)

Coventry University Enterprises Ltd is a subsidiary of Coventry University and runs much of its commercial, income-generating and business partnership work. Operating in a regional, national, European and international context, CUE supports the corporate aims and seeks to maximise the commercial potential of the university’s skills, expertise and resources. CUE focuses on innovation, design, high performance automotive engineering, health, environment and ICT as areas of expertise. It is, for instance, home to a number of specialised institutes including the Serious Games Institute. www.seriousgamesinstitute.co.uk

Instituto Pedro Nunes (IPN), Coimbra (Portugal)

Created in 1991 through a University of Coimbra initiative, the IPN (the EU|BIC of Coimbra) is a private



not-for-profit organisation which promotes innovation and transfer of technology, establishing the connection between the scientific and technological environments and the production sectors. Main activities include research and technological development, access to sources of funding, assistance with intellectual property and internationalisation. IPN also manages an incubator for early stage technology-based or advanced services ventures. Priority projects are spin-offs arising from the university and indigenous ventures with strong connections with the university environment, whether through students, faculty or RTD activities. www.ipn.pt

“...critical to these ‘enabling’ conditions is how well they link and align incentives of the innovation actors and organisations, and their activities...”

Innovation Centre (ICM), London (UK)

Owned by Medway Council, the ICM is one of a network of innovation centres and business parks across North and East Kent forming the Kent Innovation Corridor.

Through its access to the Enterprise Europe Network, clients of the centre have access to a number of initiatives such as The New Deal for Innovation project. This project supports innovative activities in business by accessing the expertise of the University of Greenwich (a certified EU|BIC) via a voucher scheme helping to develop new business models, test products, manage supply chains, streamline processes and provide targeted training. www.ndi-innovation.com/gb

Formation Zone, Plymouth (UK)

Formation Zone supports innovative businesses and social enterprises

from inside and outside Plymouth University. Since 2007, the incubator has supported over 180 businesses to develop and helped to create more than 70 jobs. Amongst other activities – and with the support from Santander – the business incubator manages the Formation Zone Challenge giving students and alumni the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge of business before the winners take up a place in the Formation Zone at the end of the academic year. www.formationzone.co.uk/the-challenge

Startlife, Wageningen (Netherlands)

Partly funded by the Wageningen University and the regional development agency, Startlife operates as a Foundation, and has recently been certified as an EU|BIC. The organisation is driven by innovation and economic development and is the first point of contact for new entrepreneurs in the agro, food and living environments in the area. The Foundation operates in four main areas: Centre for entrepreneurship, Pre-seed funds, StartLife, Invest BV, Business incubation support. In total, Startlife has already supported and financed more than 120 startup businesses with an idea or contributed to innovative technologies. In the last two years, the Foundation has been working towards the creation of two physical incubators both located on the campus in different buildings. The StartHub (dedicated to students and academics) was opened recently whilst the TechnoHub whose client base will also include businesses from outside the university, opened in April. www.start-life.nl

Entapreneur, Arab Open University, (Kuwait)

Supported by the Arab Gulf Programme for Development, the Entrepreneurship Center (Entapreneur) is an initiative from AOU, the only university in Lebanon operating under the Open Learning System adopted in the UK. Whilst support is provided to budding

entrepreneurs from within and outside the university, the centre currently does not operate as a business incubator although it offers a number of incubation ‘elements’: through training and coaching activities. Entapreneur focuses on the application of personal enterprising skills, attributes and mindsets in the context of setting up ventures of any kind, including, for instance, community-led initiatives or NGOs. Entapreneur’s mission is to develop entrepreneurship skills that will then turn into business opportunities. It therefore plays a crucial role in shaping the AOU as an entrepreneurial activity. www.arabou.edu.kw



Arnaud Drapier has 15 years of experience in research and project management in the fields of business incubation, growth and enterprise, local economic development. He has been involved in a wide range of projects, research and consultancy work – in the UK, EU and globally – including feasibility studies, development and implementation of business incubation strategies, competitor analysis, business cases, benchmarking and impact / measurement studies.

He also designed training programmes for business incubation managers and has recently started his own business.

He can be reached at www.bi-2consulting.co.uk

The network uncovered

A look at events, projects,
members and partners of EBN that outline
the scope of activity of the network

THE PUBLIC POLICY

EBN has been increasingly present at several high-level public policy events focusing on innovation ecosystems over the last six months, either as co-organiser or as chair and moderator of various sessions.

EBN participated in the **7th European Innovation Summit** that took place in Brussels from 7th to 10th December. David Tee, Head of Membership Services at EBN, moderated a panel on the subject of "Innovation ecosystems: Startups, Incubators and Venture Capital in Europe". The session was hosted by MEP, Cora Van Nieuwenhuizen, with expert contributions from the European Commission, ESA, the European Institute of Technology and more. Several other EBN Members took part in the Summit.

"Good governance and effective support for smart specialisation" was the topic of the **European Innovation Ecosystems Conference** co-organised by the EC, the Committee of the Regions, EBN, IASP and EARTO on 26 January 2016. Álvaro Simón de Blas, EBN President contributed to the initial panel of the conference under the subject of regional governance while Philippe Vanrie, CEO of EBN

chaired the session on 'Business creation and growth'. Several EBN members (BIC Euronova, WestBIC, JIC, CEEI Asturias, Nantes Atlanpole, BIC Citta della Scienza) made the case for the uptake of the EU|BIC model throughout Europe, as an essential smart instrument to deliver and implement regional specialisation policies to the entrepreneurs directly on the ground.

“ With over 100 companies supported, the ACE project strived to provide long standing and sustainable support to its companies

In the first week of February, during **Startup Europe Week**, eleven EBN members from Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Italy and Greece hosted several events in their local facilities. The events organised by these EU|BICs ranged from hands-on experience with 3D-printing, a dedicated networking session among women web entrepreneurs, and a FIWARE startup pitch where 54 companies presented their projects to investors in an 'open doors' exciting day-long event.

On 3 March 2016, EBN CEO, Philippe Vanrie moderated the **Future of Cohesion Policy Beyond 2020** conference, organised in Brussels by the Committee of the Regions (CoR). This conference, the result of the Future of Cohesion Policy research and reflection project that had been run by CoR since 2014, kicked-off with a serious and open debate, aiming prepare the position of regional and local authorities within the expected negotiation for post-2020 Cohesion Policy.

The European Commission's **Week of Innovative Regions in Europe (WIRE)** 2016 that took place in Eindhoven (NL), 8-10 June 2016 was one of the major events of the Dutch EU Presidency. The conference was called 'The Power of Regional Innovation Ecosystems'. As an active member of the Steering Committee of WIRE, EBN was represented by several guest speakers from its extensive membership base.

On 26th of May 2016, EBN President, Álvaro Simón de Blas was invited to debate on technological startup creation, synergies among EIT / early stage investors and TTOs strategies, opportunities, challenges, barriers and synergies at **9th Plenary meeting of the JRC - TTO Circle** in San Sebastián (Spain). As member of the Advisory

Board of the **Industrial Technologies 2016 Conference - Creating a Smart Europe** to be held from 22-24 June in Amsterdam, Álvaro Simón de Blas will also support the structuring and composition of the programme of this conference that will focus on new production technologies, materials, nanotechnology, biotechnology and digitalisation in Europe.

ACCELERATION@EBN

The last quarter of 2015 saw the finalisation of the ACE project. With over 100 companies supported, the ACE project provided long standing and sustainable support to its companies. The ACE Award, recognising excellence in early-stage internationalisation of ICT SMEs, was held at the ACE final event during the EBN Congress in Brussels in October 2015. A booklet gathering relevant information about the 100+ companies that took part in ACE and a Technical Note entitled **Accelerating International Growth: A Practical Guidebook for Business Support Organisations** have been published based on the lessons learnt throughout the 2.5 years of the project.

SECTOR-SPECIFIC ACCELERATION



Several **Smart Agri-Food** (SAF2) Project startups have been selected to showcase in different European events. In Dublin, at Web Summit 2015 (3-5 November 2015), the largest tech and startup event in Europe and one of the largest worldwide, Connecterra won the Alpha Pitch beating 200 other startups from around the world. ECOLUP, a Spanish startup that connects farmers so that they can exchange raw materials, showcased at the European Circular Economy Conference (16 February), while in Brussels Insylo, Agricolus and Stepla, three companies specialised in the

development and the use of fireware technologies, were selected to pitch at Mobile World Congress 2016 (22 - 25 February 2016) in Barcelona.

On 18 and 19 April, a 'Perfect Pitch' training was held in Brussels at EBN's Networking Centre. This training welcomed 17 finalists from the SAF accelerator programme who had the chance to practice their business pitch and receive feedback from an expert trainer, their SAF2 mentors and several EBN experts from the Bioeconomy Special Interest Group. The training was followed by a workshop on how to build an effective branding and marketing strategy. The SAF2 accelerator organised two more workshops: Investor Readiness (25 May) and IP Protection and Legal Issues (29 June).

“...made the case for the uptake of the EU|BIC model throughout Europe, as an essential smart instrument...”

SOCIAL INNOVATION ON THE AGENDA

5 February 2016: the end of the **TRANSITION Project** was marked by a social innovation incubation conference - Supporting Social Innovations to Grow: TRANSITION's Journey. Drawing on some of the key lessons and tools developed as part of the TRANSITION project, this event gathered different players from European social innovation incubation ecosystem to discuss the approaches, challenges and next steps needed to

support social innovations to grow in Europe. This was the occasion to meet some of the social innovators that took part in TRANSITION Social Innovation Journey (incubation programme) and the Transnational Start-up Lab (acceleration programme). These 20 social innovators participated in an international training and financing event which took place in Brussels on 4th February. As a result of 30 months of incubation practices, partners of the project published a guide entitled **Social Innovation Incubation - Approaches and tools for supporting early-stage social innovators: an output of TRANSITION**. The Social Innovation Journey Toolbox is available online as well as other publications highlighting experiences and success stories from TRANSITION and BENISI, the two European Networks of Incubators for Social Innovation.

WOMEN INNOVATORS AND SILVER ENTREPRENEURS

With the finalisation of these two main projects (ACE & TRANSITION), EBN is progressively being recognised as an important interlocutor for various working classes comprising women entrepreneurs and silver workers. A survey made within the framework of the EBN-led **WeHubs** project was run from April to September 2015 to investigate how women experience and assess services of the startup ecosystem. The survey also served to understand the shortfalls of these services and what improvements could be made to make them more accessible and tailored to women.

EBN also engages in the silver worker economy with the Erasmus+ project **Silver Workers** launched in October 2015 in Rome. Silver Workers aims



at promoting access to education for jobless 50+ workers to help them acquire new professional skills and familiarity with new technologies. EBN is also a partner in the new '50+ Entrepreneurship Platform', a multi-stakeholder initiative supported by several MEPS.



'EN DIRECT' FROM THE EBN FACTORY

Brazil: On the 16th and 17th March, SPI hosted the kick-off meeting of **INCOBRA**, an EU funded project aimed at encouraging bilateral cooperation between R&I actors in Brazil and the European Union, fostering collaboration and implementing activities agreed within the BR-EU Policy Dialogue on Science, Technology and Innovation.

Space & Sat innovation: FabSpace 2.0 project began on 1st March under the lead of University of Toulouse III - Paul Sabatier (UPS). It is the open-innovation network for geodata-driven innovation by leveraging space data in particular, in Universities 2.0. It aims at making universities open innovation centres for their region and improving their contribution to the socio-economic and environmental performance of societies.

“All the SIGs have now gone through several meetings, giving results in terms of projects collaboration and exchange of best practices

Future Emerging Technologies: FET2RIN aims at facilitating collaborations to set the ground for the take up of FET projects by overcoming the obstacles related to market outreach and accessing business leaders including entrepreneurs, early

stage investors and crowdfunding communities. FET2RIN will deliver ad hoc capacity building and market acceptancy actions to FET project partners to allow them to focus on novel exploitation routes and unconventional business models to better meet and serve the need of future societal and commercial impact.

Creative Industries: The European Creative Hubs Network (ECHN) aims to create a community of experienced creative hubs leaders across Europe to enhance the ecosystem that supports the resilience and growth of the creative hubs sector and promote creative hubs as innovative models to European policy makers and funders. Creative Hubs managers from Europe will be able to connect with peers and gain access to a community of hubs, visit and learn from inspiring creative hubs across Europe, exchange best practices and strengthen skills, and learn about successful and sustainable business models

A NEW SERVICE

November 2015, EBN launched a new open innovation service - **EBN Open** - with the enthusiastic support of top-notch industry leaders and world-class organisations such as The World Economic Forum, Microsoft, SAP, Continental, Euripides and the Open Innovation Institute. This new **EBN Open** service aims to help

the thousands of innovative, high potential startups and SMEs in its highly active and vibrant ecosystem of Innovation Centres (EU|BICs) across Europe, to develop novel partnerships with large companies and corporates in a systematic manner, in order to accelerate their business growth and scale up faster and more effectively. The Neoshop concept developed by EU|BIC Laval Mayenne Technopole now fully integrates this open innovation paradigm. EBN Technical note #06 - **Neoshop - The Startup's Boutique** details the way it operates, shares experiences across Europe and gives testimonials from startups, as well as recommendations for those who want to set up and implement a Neoshop.

THE MEMBERS

The EBN network has seen the arrival of nineteen new organisations during the last semester: Budapest Enterprise Agency (Hungary), Intellexi (Hungary) FEUZ (Spain), Systematic Paris Region (France), Cap Digital (France), Koç University Incubation Centre (Turkey), Istanbul Sehir University (Turkey), Coopération bancaire pour L'Europe (Belgium), New Generation Mindset (South Africa), South Bank University London (United Kingdom), Business Technology Incubator of Technical Faculties Belgrade (Serbia), Innogate to Europe (Spain), Startups.be (Belgium) and Cyprus Research & Innovation Centre (Cyprus).

EBN was also happy to welcome six Business Gardens from Norway: Ørosregionen Naeringsshage (RHN) - Røros, Naeringsshage i Orkdalsregionen (NiO) - Orkanger, Trøndersk Kytskompetanse AS (TKK) - Dyrvik, Nasjonalparken Naeringsshage AS (NHH), Hemne Naeringsshage AS (HNN) - Kyrksaeterøra, and Leksvik Industriell Vekst AS (LIV) - Vanvikan. These Business Gardens are integrated parts in a broader local strategic framework for development in Norway, and have a local multi-stakeholder approach. They were established in 1998 as a support scheme under Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development to enhance and facilitate



entrepreneurship and new business development in remote areas without colleges or universities. Over 56 Business Gardens have been developed and administered by SIVA across Norway.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Launched in January 2015, the three sector-specific (green economy, bio-economy, and creative, cultural and digital industries) and the four cross-cutting thematic Special Interest Groups (entrepreneurship and education, acceleration and funding, internationalisation and social innovation) have progressed in different directions. All the SIGs have now gone through several meetings, giving results in terms of projects collaboration and exchange of best practices.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EDUCATION

Entrepreneurship and education SIG has started to collaborate on a specific project brought up by EBN Member, Corallia (Greece) on participatory research and innovation via science shops that are entitled: 'Open schooling and collaboration on science education'.

CREATIVE, CULTURAL AND DIGITAL INDUSTRIES

The first physical meeting of the Creative SIG took place on the 28th of January and focused on defining the Creative SIG's objectives for 2016 and developing an action plan to achieve these. This SIG aims to connect established and emerging leaders in our network who have identified concrete practices and tools to tailor their service offering to the needs of creative entrepreneurs and accelerate their growth.

BIO-ECONOMY

The last bio-economy SIG meeting which took place on the 20th of April in EBN's networking centre put forward many suggestions that could enhance

their positioning at the European level knowing that bio-economy is one of the hot topics on the EC's agenda. They have been involved in the CommBeBiz project's first round of award winners as well as in the Inno-Indigo project for the formulation of the next round of call for proposals in bio-economy enhancing the cooperation between research centres in Europe and in India.

GREEN TECHNOLOGIES

The Green Technologies SIG held a meeting in the framework of the Transiere Forum: the 5th European Forum for Science, Technology and Innovation in Malaga, Spain on the 11th February this year. The programme included visits to various green innovation locations such as the following: Smartcity Control Centre, Valley Urban Lab, Andalucía Open Future from Telefónica and Smartcity Cluster - Company. The second day of their programme was meant to establish relevant B2B contacts with researchers from different universities, companies developing large projects and companies in the agriculture-food, energy, environment, health, and similar sectors who were present at the forum.

“ This new **EBN open service** aims to help the thousands of innovative, high potential startups and SMEs

INTERNATIONALISATION

40 delegates attended the Internationalisation SIG Meeting organised during the 24th EBN Congress held in Brussels at the end of October 2015. During the session that was chaired by John Brennan from WestBIC, the SIG members had the opportunity to identify their priorities, mainly around smart take off and soft landing opportunities. In total, 34 countries around Europe and the world were represented at this huge networking event.

SOCIAL INNOVATION

The last Social Innovation (SI) SIG meeting took place on 3rd February and was followed by the TRANSITION final event on February 4th - 5th that focused on social innovation incubation. The SI SIG primarily serves as a platform for members' mutual learning and exchange of best practices on incubating/accelerating social innovations in different sectors. From a first analysis, sectors that seem particularly relevant are: bioeconomy, green economy, creative and cultural industries. Therefore, synergies will be activated with other relevant EBN SIGs. It was also agreed to initiate activities for external social innovation experts to benefit from a wider network of organisations active in this area (i.e. SIX, Nesta, POLIMI, PRE). Thanks to SI-SIG members' connections and the EBN connections activated through the TRANSITION project and now extended with ESIIN (a TRANSITION spin-off), the SI-SIG can rely on an extended network covering several European countries and different expertise (from design to CSR etc.). SI SIG members are making the most of the ESIIN dedicated platform (www.esiin.eu) for social innovation incubation news and events and have contributed to shaping a new proposal, to support social innovation.



EBN is all about being a community and sharing. The Business Innovator encourages all our members and partners and readers to keep us aware of their news, events and success stories. Write to us at editorial@ebn.eu and we'll be happy to print these stories in our next issue.

Newsworthy

A shoutout to some of the members who make EBN the dynamic and progressive community that it is

Valeria Fascione



Valeria Fascione, until recently, Director of the EU|BIC in Naples Città della Scienza, has been appointed Regional Councillor (Minister) for Startups, Innovation and Internationalization of the Campania Region, one of the most important regions in Italy. Valeria managed the EU|BIC Città della Scienza since 2002 where she coordinated a high number of projects in the field of international cooperation, strategic territorial marketing and dealt with the reindustrialisation of old abandoned industrial sites and business development.

In 2009 she was called by the Campania Region to be the leader of the evaluation of Regional Programme Contracts - multi-fund instruments supporting the development, innovation and internationalisation process of big corporates and strategic industrial districts in the region.

In 2011, she returned to Fondazione IDIS and contributed as Strategic Marketing Director to the relaunch of Città delle Scienza successfully promoting the internationalisation of

Italian companies and research centres. In 2012, the Italian Government mandated her to coordinate the China-Italy Innovation Forum for the promotion of innovative business-research ecosystems to China. She contributed to the creation of the first knowledge-based industry area (AIC), today one of the most important poles for post-incubation in the Mezzogiorno, hosting a range of successful innovative startups and former successful incubatees from the EU|BIC Città della Scienza. One of her most recent challenges was the launch of the Fab Lab at Città della Scienza (September 2015), born out of a cooperation project with MIT in Boston, that delivers services to companies in the region as well as training to young people who want to specialise in digital technologies related to 3D printing.

She is a member of the International Technology Transfer Network Executive Committee promoted by the Chinese Government, an active member of EBN and one of the founders of the BAC, Business Angels Club.

André Montaud

André Montaud, CEO of Thésame, the EUJ|BIC located in Annecy (Haute Savoie), has been appointed as the lead manager to structure the sector of the recently merged Rhône-Alpes and Auvergne regions, now called Cluster Rhône-Alpes. His mission as the Chair of this new regional robotics cluster, called Coboteam, will be to mobilise the players: the hundred roboticists, 50 labs, ten centres of excellence and clusters and the 150 to 300 companies in the field - 50 of which are 'pure players', i.e. companies specialised exclusively in robots.

This is now the 11th French regional cluster resulting from the cooperation between the Regional Agency for Development and Innovation (ARDI) and Thésame, the technology platform for companies specialised in mechatronics, manufacturing technology and innovation management. With a budget of €3 million per year allocated within the framework of RIS 2014-2020 (Regional Innovation Strategy) and through Bpifrance (French Public Investment Bank), Coboteam will organise and optimise three existing tools: Robot Start-Up SME (awareness raising), the Bpifrance Robotics loan (financing) and the Plan PME (organisation).

Created in 2000, Thésame has been recognised with a number of prestigious national and international awards (UN sustainable development Award, Golden Web Award, Innovation Award by the French Economy Press) for the relevance and impact of its actions.

www.thesame-innovation.com

www.coboteam.fr





Eva Pando

Eva Pando, General Director of Idepa (Asturias Institute for Economic Development) adds another feather to her cap by being appointed new President of the Mutual Guarantee Association of Asturias (Asturgar). Eva has held various positions at a high level over the past 10 years. With a degree in industrial engineering from the University of Oviedo and an MBA from the Technical University of Madrid, she began her professional career in a startup in the biomedical field.

In addition to managing the EU|BIC of Asturias for a decade, (2005 - 2015, where she is currently the President) she was also Vice-President of ANCES (the national association of Spanish EU|BICs). She then took over as President and CEO of the Regional Society for the Promotion of the Principality of Asturias.

Over the course of her career, Eva has developed a specialised and extensive knowledge of the Asturian Business ecosystem mainly with respect to technology-based companies. She is also Advisory Board Member for the H2020 Project InvestHorizon and External Expert Evaluator for the H2020 SME Instrument for the European Commission. As such, she participated in many programmes and activities aimed at boosting startups at the international level, both in the EU ecosystem and in Ibero-American countries.

She also worked in the venture capital market for eight years as investment director, and later on as investment department coordinator. She was simultaneously member of 13 boards of directors from participating companies and she participated actively in the set-up of ASBAN (Asturias Business Angels Network).

For the last ten years, Jarmo Eskelinen led the EU|BIC Forum Virium Helsinki, an innovation unit within the Helsinki City Group, building digital bridges between people and services. With an educational background in architecture, Jarmo is an expert in digital content, smart cities and user-driven design, currently devoted to open data. He was also the President of the European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL) founded in 2006, that has grown into a network of 345 members across the globe, promoting international cooperation in user-driven innovation and with which EBN closely collaborates.

Jarmo has previously held positions as the director of Media Centre Lume in the University of Art & Design Helsinki, the programme director of the Helsinki 2000 European Capital of Culture, and the CEO of a successful music, media and event production company, PopZoo Promotions.

From April 2016 onwards, Jarmo is the new Chief Innovation & Technology Officer of the Future Cities Catapult in London that belongs to the Catapult programme of Great Britain. The organisation accelerates urban ideas to market, to grow the economy and to make cities better. The company brings together businesses, universities and city leaders so that they can work with each other to solve the problems that cities face. The research company employs about 100 people and runs its operations from the Urban Innovation Centre in central London.

Commenting on his new position, Jarmo says, "Future Cities Catapult and Forum Virium Helsinki share many goals and practices. The two organisations intend to collaborate closely on future work."

futurecities.catapult.org.uk

Keep us posted on changes to your career and achievements so we can let the network know. Write us at info@ebn.eu

Jarmo Eskelinen



The business

A quick glance at some of the top-performing incubatees who have had significant success in terms of growth and investment

BEFORPHARMA

www.beforpharma.com/en

BeForPharma is specialised in radiopharmaceuticals supporting customers in reaching high-quality standards compliant with CGMP (current good manufacturing processes). Their innovation lies in the modality of services supply: once the customer has reached the adequate quality standard, he becomes partner of a network where scientific, technological and economic resources are shared for the achievement of common R&D objectives. BeForPharma acts as the hub of the network. They have, so far, performed GMP services in Kuwait, Russia, Romania and Italy and completed the validation of the King Hamad University Hospital Cyclotron Department, Bahrain in a period of two-and-a-half months, providing the hospital with an important tool to improve cancer diagnosis. Clinical imaging research center in Singapore relied on them for GMP validation support of the ¹¹C-PIB production line. The performed protocols have guaranteed the safety of this important tracer, used in investigational studies for Alzheimer disease.

Supporting BIC - Puglia Sviluppo, Bari (Italy)



IN2CARE

www.in2care.org

In2Care is a Dutch research company founded by three academics from Wageningen University. Their aim is to bridge the gap between academia and industry by utilising their scientific expertise to develop effective control products against disease-transmitting insects. They have developed a new and specific expertise for preventing the transmission of malaria through a passive technology. The method involves limiting mosquito access to houses by screening windows and installing 'eave tubes' that contain a unique type of insecticide-laced netting developed by In2Care that kills the insects as they attempt to enter. That trap not only kills visiting mosquitoes but it also contaminates them so they kill others. The startup recently received a \$10.2 million grant to participate, with other partners in the US, UK and Africa, for five years, in a study funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the UBS Optimus Foundation.

Supporting BIC - Stichting Starlife, Wageningen (Netherlands)



REPUTATION VIP

www.reputationvip.com

Reputation VIP developed a solution, 'Digital Fortress™ Technology', which enables the control, protection and monitoring of the online reputation of its clients. By doing so, they became one of the first internet players to provide a simple and free service ('Forget.me™') to enforce the right to oblivion, helping individuals to create their request to Google and Bing. The company targets individuals (famous entrepreneurs and politicians) and the brands owned by the major companies through an annual (and recurrent) subscription. Created in 2012 by two people, the startup grew significantly and very rapidly, exceeding one million Euros in revenues in 2014. Initially founded by five shareholders they now employ 50 personnel, half of whom are engineers. Their ambition is to become one of the worldwide leaders of e-reputation solutions. They recently raised €2 million and enriched their strategic committee. The new funding round included Iliad, Finp (Google Fund for Digital innovation of the press), BPI France Investment as well as Phi Square Holdings, a society making investments in information sciences.

Supporting BIC - CCI Lyon - Novacite (France)



ONYX GROUP

www.onyx.net

Established in 1994, the Onyx Group is a leading technology provider specialised in IT infrastructure and support which has grown from a small regional, home-grown internet provider company to a UK national technology provider with sites in the North East, London, Scotland and Yorkshire regions. The company has seen staff levels rise to over 170 in the last year and has a long-term target of reaching 500 employees by 2020. Following their £10 million acquisition of fellow tech firm Knowledge IT in December of 2014, Onyx have achieved an overall revenue growth of 34 percent, with turnover now standing at £28.3 million. Their ambition is to become a national, £100 million revenue IT support and services business within the next five years. Today it runs six data centres and seven recovery centres, with sites in Stockton, Newcastle, Sunderland, Gateshead, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Rotherham and London.

Supporting BIC - Castres - Mazamet Technopole (France)



APPSIX

www.appsix.al

Launching at the Pristina Startup Weekend, Appsix, Kosovo, with their Creative Innovation Agency boast a product range from mobile games and mobile ordering to social networks and mobile news engines. As one of the fastest growing tech startups in Kosovo, they managed to build powerful channels of interaction with disruptive ideas, top quality engineering and intuitive designs, quickly establishing themselves as a leading strategic mobile partner to local and regional businesses. Founded in 2012, they were double winners of 'App Camp Kosovo 2012' National competition for Best App with the 'Skenderman' game and 'Pristina Street Style'. Appsix then transitioned from a small startup to a leading service delivery company. They have managed to successfully complete and implement projects in different countries including working with different companies in the United States, Norway, United Kingdom, Italy and the Balkans.

Supporting BIC - Innovation Centre Kosovo, Pristina (Kosovo)

THE PACKAGING HUB

www.thepackaginghub.eu

Formed in 2010 by George Banks and John Hudson, The Packaging Hub provides packaging design and expertise in procurement with extensive resources in global freight management and contract logistics/fulfilment solutions. They provide innovative presentation packaging that can be shipped in bulk and in a collapsed state, and can be assembled at customer premises. They also deliver a complete supply chain and logistics solution where the primary product is sent to the local market where the local Packaging Hub team converts it into a retail finished product to be distributed to local outlets. TPH logistics solutions act on the philosophy 'think globally, site locally' ensuring that the best locations are chosen and that all the necessary logistical support services are available at each location at the distribution centres to service specific customers/market sector requirements. Today they cover the crystal, ceramics, drinks, confectionary, general food and giftware sectors and have secured contracts of supply in Eastern Europe, the USA and China. Their model has delivered significant growth and ensured 40 jobs in Waterford with more to come. They aim to turnover close to €10 million in 2016.

Supporting BIC - South East BIC, Waterford (Ireland)



Innovation and entrepreneurship support serves a final purpose of turning ideas into successful business realities.

Please contact us at **The Business Innovator** to let us know who your top performers are and we'll do our best to promote them through our publications and website.

For further information contact:
Editorial@ebn.eu or visit www.ebn.eu



GEMATICA

www.gematica.com

Gematica is a company specialised in the realisation of advanced telecommunication systems using new emerging technologies with a specific expertise in communication systems for railway transportation (trains and metros) and buses. They are capable of carrying, among others, the data related to railway signaling based on CBTC (Communication Based Train Control) in a safe, secure and standard-compliant way. They also provide innovative solutions for high-tech building management systems within the Smart Cities, applied to R&D projects both at local level and beyond. They started in 2004 with a team of four coming from research and ICT / telematics networks. In 2007 they were contacted by Ansaldo STS to build a totally new system that would track the exchange of information between them and the control-based metro stations. Today Gematica employs 32 people (expanding to 35 soon) with an annual turnover of €3 million. They have managed to sign contracts for the implementation of metro telecommunications infrastructures with big cities such as Taipei, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Ryahd, Rome and Naples among others.

Supporting BIC - Citta della Scienza, Naples (Italy)

The innovation

Business innovation helps make the world a better place and these ideas are testament to that fact

PROKARYA

www.prokarya.com

Building upon four years of research in partnership with Northumbrian Water, for the first time industry can benefit from Prokarya's powerful tools in an operationally relevant way. Biotech company Prokarya analyses bacteria in water for customers in the industry, testing bathing water and tracing its microbial content. The company offers two services. BacTrack, to detect and source-track faecal bacteria in water samples such as bathing water or reservoirs. It determines percentage contribution from individual point sources as well as diffuse sources, enabling targeted asset investment. The second one, BacPro, can link the identity of bacteria to reactor performance, such as sewage works by profiling methanogens in anaerobic digestion and nitrifiers in activated sludge along with many others. The company is providing a unique service as it is the only company of its kind in the UK. The two services can be tailored to the customer's needs.

Supporting BIC - North East BIC, Sunderland (UK)



UBIKWA

www.ubikwa.com

Ubikwa combines Smart Sensors, Wireless Sensor Networks, Cloud Computing and Big Data to build the farm of the future. They have developed a low cost plug & sense, solar-powered solution that can be installed in only five minutes, remotely monitors the stocks of the silos of the livestock farms and optimises the replenishment routes. Composed of a new generation device installed on top of the silos, and a collaborative cloud platform, it provides all the apps and services needed by farmers and feed suppliers and reduces up to a 25 percent of the logistics costs and CO2 emissions of the replenishment process of the feed silos. In Europe alone, the agricultural sector can look at saving more than €2 billion each year with this innovation.

Supporting BIC - BIC Euronova, Malaga (Spain)

MOBILITY MOJO

www.mobilitymojo.ie

Mobility Mojo is a new user-generated content web and mobile-based platform covering all aspects of accessible travel through collaboration and community involvement, promoting access and independence for people with impaired mobility. Focusing on accessibility, users can share personal tried and tested knowledge about accessible tourist attractions, hotels, restaurants, public facilities, accessible tours, sports event and transport. Providing reviews, photos and tips to inform others about places they can recommend visiting and the level of accessibility provided. This sharing platform aims to be the one-stop-shop for accessible travel information for people with impaired mobility, their friends and families. The key to Mobility Mojo is to provide a platform for collaboration and build a community where people help people and in doing so they help themselves. Because trust and reassurance are critical for those with mobility impairments who wish to travel, specific photos and criteria will be given about each venue.

Supporting BIC - WestBIC, Galway (Ireland)



access at your fingertips



C & M AUDIO CO. LTD

www.chord-m.com

Founded in 2012 by a group of music-loving friends in Taiwan, C&M AUDIO Co., LTD has developed a complete new concept of optimised earphones that are tuned to different music styles to suit the tastes of different listeners. These 'Tonal earphones' as they are called convey sound that is faithful to the original recording. This was achieved by delving deeply into the world of musical instruments and recording expertise, as well as their final representation within the music they produce by studying the history, elements, features, and recording techniques of each genre. This resulted into five basic genres – Rock, Classical, Jazz, Ballad, and World Music making the task of the consumers who are familiar with techniques and specifications much easier to choose suitable headphones. Thanks to this innovation, the first of its kind in the world, they have seen a ten times revenue increase over the last three years, selling their products to Taiwan, Japan, Korea, USA, France and Australia.

**Supporting BIC - Chaoyang University of Technology
Innovation Incubation Center, Taichung (Taiwan)**



TEACHONMARS

www.teachonmars.com/fr

This startup created in 2012 by three co-founders from the world of digital education, is specialised in the development of portable training applications and has already achieved a significant breakthrough to the general public thanks to e-learning applications (Zero stress) set up in partnership with media (mainly magazines). TeachonMars has become a recognised leader in producing engaging mobile learning apps for the consumer and professional market. TeachonMars mobile learning technology has already helped tens of thousands of people learn new skills and achieve their goals using their smartphone. Their customers achieve measurable results in sales force performance support, compliance training, alignment of people and organisational goals, professional development, brand content & customer education. Brands like Philips, Lagardère and Clarins are amongst their most prestigious clients and they have recently signed a partnership with DEMOS Institute that specialises in continuous professional training.

Supporting BIC - CASA Sophia Antipolis (France)



SHORT REST SOLUTIONS OY

www.unisolutions.fi

Short Rest Solution Ltd, founded in 2011, is a Finnish company specialised in innovative, ergonomic seating solutions to optimise the wellbeing of travelers. Their GoSleep Pod can be converted into a bed enclosed by a shade that isolates the passenger from the surrounding noise and light and the gaze of other passengers. It is easy to install, maintain and clean and provides a secure solution for short time rest at airports and other monitored spaces. These pods include an under seat hand luggage storage space, as well as universal power outlets for portable devices such as laptops and cell phones, and an alarm clock among others. The solution not only adds value to the terminal experience but also generates revenue opportunity for the operator through rentals of the pod as well as options like pillows, blankets, WIFI, entertainment etc. GoSleep pods are already present in some of the world's busiest airports such as Abu Dhabi and Helsinki.

Supporting BIC - Hermia Business Development, Tampere (Finland)

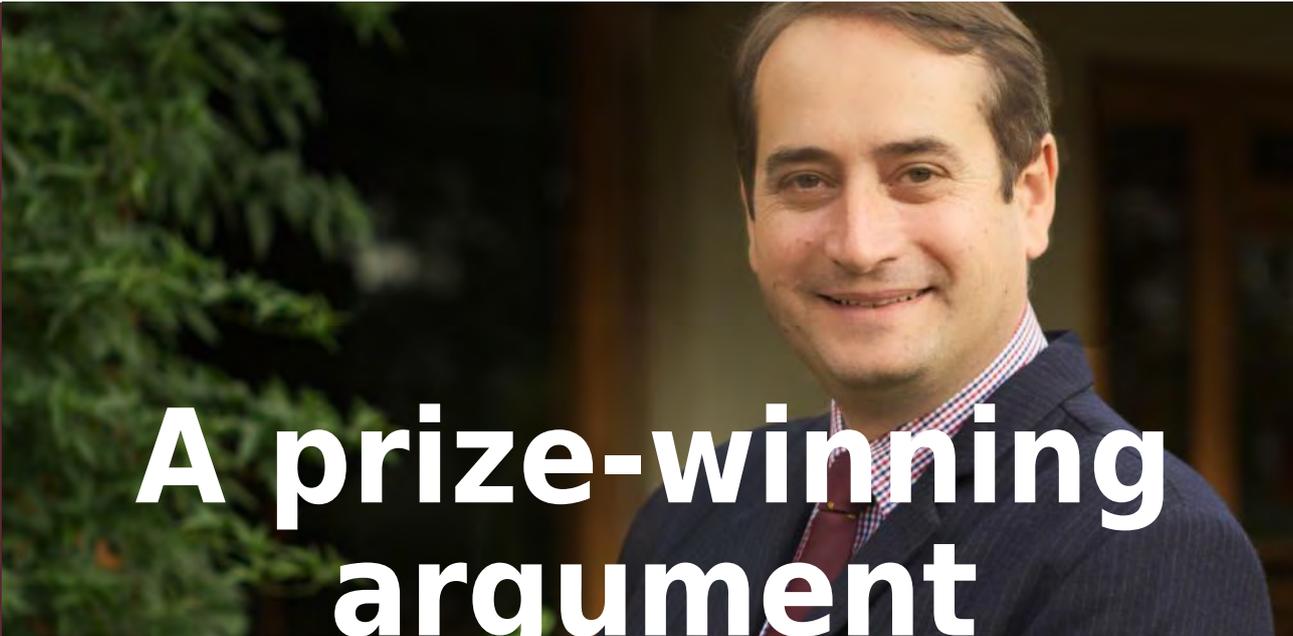
LEVITA MAGNETICS

www.levitamag.com

Levita Magnetics is a medical device company that develops less invasive surgical procedures. It is a platform that uses instruments inserted into the patient's abdominal cavity and that can be released from the body with the help of a magnet. In practice, it means that instead of having four incisions for standard vesicular surgery you now only need one. This is compatible with other surgeries involving cavities, such as gynecological and urological surgeries, among others. This technique allows a greater range of freedom for movement for the surgeon and decreases postoperative bleeding as well as the risk of infections. The startup is now based in Silicon Valley as they await approval from the Food and Drug Administration US Agency. With their approval Levita Magnetics can be assured of global reach and recognition.

Supporting BIC - Incuba UC, Santiago (Chile)





A prize-winning argument

Why is a trip to Silicon Valley the 'prize' in so many European - and probably Asian and African - startup competitions? Sure, it's the home of 'all that is exciting' in the world of tech. Sure, it's the hub of investment in 'the next big thing'. Sure, it would be cool to meet the stars of the startup world in their own habitat.

But, why, oh why, would you want to send your brightest and best entrepreneurs, with their (mostly unprotected) IP, into the heart of your biggest global competitor? It just beggars belief.

Silicon Valley technology evangelists, angel investors and VCs are continuously searching for new ideas. And the entrepreneurs who can deliver on those ideas. They won't miss a beat when they spot something that they believe could be the next billion dollar business. If we continue to take our smart people into their backyard and allow them to pitch to the Silicon Valley talent spotters, we will never create the next European unicorns.

Sure, it's great for the individuals who get a US work permit, investment, a good team and eventually a nice exit with a few million in the bank. But what has this done for the European (or Asian or African) economy?

When economic migration happens within the EU (for example from Spain to the UK), you know that at least there is a transfer of value back from your adopted country, via the EU, to your home country. This does not happen when startups migrate from Europe to the US. All the value stays in the US.

If we want Europe to grow its own unicorns we have to stop obsessing about Silicon Valley. We should be offering trips to Cambridge, Berlin, Amsterdam,

Barcelona not California. We should be encouraging startups to find the most attractive locations within the EU to establish their company, find talent, find investment and create wealth that stays in Europe. A Europe of multiple valleys of innovation from Coimbra, Ostrava, Granada, Uppsala, Lappeenranta, Bologna, Sežana, Riga...

European 'areas of startup excellence' have a duty to promote themselves harder within Europe. And there should be far less excitement when a Facebook, Amazon, Netflix or Google (FANG) moves in next to the new startups. Make no mistake, they are not always there to help, despite the growth in open innovation activities. They are often there to find IP and talent who can help their US parents.

Globalisation is great. It enables us to buy and sell anything, anywhere. It allows us to work anywhere. It has enabled great collaboration opportunities for EBN with InBIA, US Mission to the EU, etc. But as a continent we must not let all the value end up in one place. Enough already with the European obsession with Silicon Valley. As Europeans, we have great ideas. We have the investment. We have the talent. We have the technology. Let's use it to build great businesses here and offer American startups the prize of visiting us!

David Tee is Head of Membership Services at EBN and a 30-year veteran of startups, consulting and incubation. He has worked across the world setting up incubators, developing, evaluating and monitoring incubation networks and running small enterprises; he is the co-founder of three companies, to date. At EBN David manages the day-to-day relationship between EBN and its members, focusing on communications, events, web platform and other online and offline networking activities.

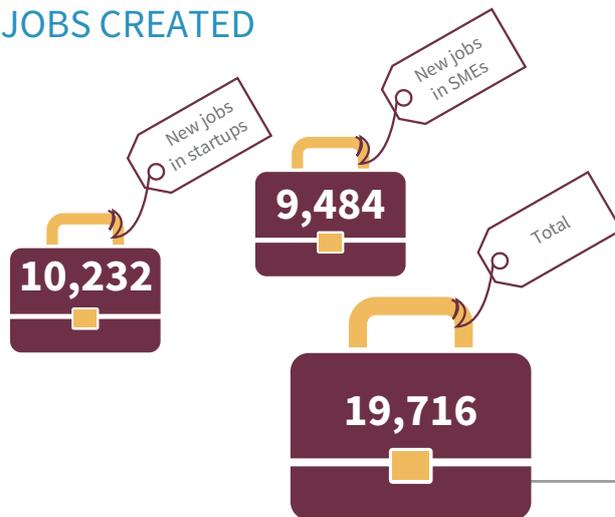
EBN IMPACT 2016



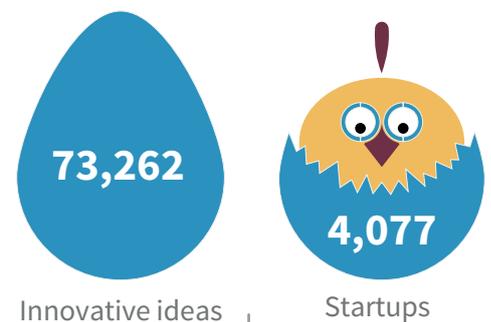
CLIENTS SUPPORTED



JOBS CREATED



DEAL FLOW



ACCESS TO FUNDING

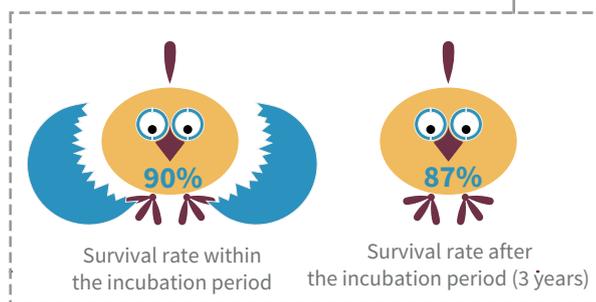
Total funding raised
€ 480,000,000

12,453
Supported



7,663
Funded

SURVIVAL RATES



COST PER JOB CREATED

€ 2,985
Private financial contribution

€ 6,312
Public financial contribution

1 JOB





DESIGN FOR INNOVATION

ebncongress2016

Guimarães, Portugal
28-30 Sept 2016

ebncongress.eu

Organised by



MUNICÍPIO DE
GUIMARÃES



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