Roadmap for the HEIs to Develop Regional Alliances

Authored by Norbert Buzás, Szabolcs Prónay and Sándor Huszár

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PREFACE

This publication has been produced under the project supported by the Erasmus+ program entitled Embedding Entrepreneurship Education (EEE). It aims to promote the spread of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial mindset within higher education. It is produced in the form of a roadmap, in which we review how a Regional Alliance can be developed in 10 steps to support these aims.

The roadmap may be utilized by academic actors, higher education policy makers, as well as by business actors, organizations and chambers. It facilitates the creation of the conditions and organizational connections that are essential for the processes promoting the education of entrepreneurship. In addition to this roadmap, the EEE consortium has developed a set of other valuable materials that also contribute to the fostering of entrepreneurship education. Stakeholders of the Regional Alliances can also refer to these materials to support their activities after they are established.
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The economic potential of a region is defined not only by natural and financial resources, but also by human resource, within which entrepreneurs have a key role. These are determined, ambitious people who imagine the implementation of their own, typically innovative idea in the context of an own business. Entrepreneurship is a peculiar lifestyle requiring specific skills, competences and mentality.

Unfortunately, in today’s Europe it seems that this lifestyle – despite the efforts of the member states – is not particularly attractive for the young, especially not for the ones studying in higher education. Although there are efforts to make higher education more practice-oriented, entrepreneurship requires not only practical knowledge but also a special motivation and mentality. This is rather difficult to transfer in the framework of traditional education.
Entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial lifestyle can be learned through interactions with real entrepreneurs (several research studies have proved that it is primarily the parents' entrepreneurship that has a positive effect on the young's entrepreneurship intentions). In the light of this, if we intend to strengthen the idea of entrepreneurship in higher education, it is inevitable to go outside the walls of institutions and involve real entrepreneurs in our endeavours. Although this approach requires thinking outside the box, it still has significant benefits that make it justified for each actor to establish cross-sector relationships.

Why is it important for a higher educational institution?

The main tasks of universities today – in addition to education and research – involve social value creation and taking on a role for regional (economic) development. Instead of simple knowledge creation and ex-cathedra knowledge transfer, training employees able to succeed in practical life is increasingly more difficult.

In our rapidly changing world, a higher educational institution that offers their students primarily theoretical knowledge within their traditional educational framework is increasingly less likely to fulfil the expectations of the young. It has become the aim and responsibility of universities to provide practice-oriented education, as well as training that strengthens the competitiveness of the region. These objectives attribute a key role for entrepreneurship education – not only in the case of business programs, but in each faculty. However, it necessitates extensive and active networking of entrepreneurial contacts, as well as the effective cooperation of this network for that purpose.

This publication aims to provide help in this task by giving a detailed description how a higher educational institution can explore, attract, and involve those partners who may contribute to the education of entrepreneurship.

Why is it important for the region?

Locally started businesses have a significant effect on both the competitiveness of the region and its workforce retention capacity.
These can be encouraged by various subsidies; however, it is unquestionable that the number of start-ups depends on sufficiently widespread entrepreneurial intention. Several actors within the region benefit from innovative start-ups, but the contribution of many actors (university, local entrepreneurs, NGOs, chamber, etc.) is needed for the success of the process. With the present roadmap we outline a potential way in which the stakeholders of a region can have a share of the involvement in entrepreneurship education by mutual agreement.

Why is it important for the entrepreneurs of the region?

Competitiveness today can be interpreted at the level of business networks rather than separated companies (take the companies of the Silicon Valley, or the Italian industrial clusters as an example). The existence of a well-developed regional business ecosystem is crucial for the sustainable and growth-oriented development of firms. Additionally, it catalyses the development of innovative enterprises, who themselves have become crucial actors in modern business communities.

Innovative start-ups are typically backed by young entrepreneurs who – often motivated by the examples of successful entrepreneurs of the region – have the determination and preparedness to set up a business. It is common that successful entrepreneurs do not intend to cut the similarly ambitious young entrepreneurs out, but much rather motivate, support and voluntarily share their experience with them. Ultimately, entrepreneurship is also a special profession of faith, which is willingly represented, moreover, spread by those who believe in it.

For this reason, the present roadmap also provides guidance for the entrepreneurs who are concerned about the fate of the entrepreneurial ecosystem they are involved in and are willing to take part in activities that potentially render entrepreneurship education in their region more efficient.
How to use this roadmap?

We find it important to point out that the education of entrepreneurship does not have one single right way. Moreover, there are several bottom-up examples in the world where, without any special focused control, entrepreneurship promotion has emerged in higher education with the leadership of a particular committed individual or organization. In several cases local entrepreneurs have been involved in academic education and successfully promoted entrepreneurial lifestyle. Still, we must accept that this is not a widespread practice yet. There may be a general intention on the part of the higher education policy makers and business actors, but there is a lack of clear action plans and programs regarding how to transform intentions and ideas into actual implementation.

This roadmap is for those – whether they are academic, business or government actors – who want to develop entrepreneurship education in the region, but are looking for already “tried” ways of practical implementation. As a matter of fact, this roadmap presents how business and academic sectors can cooperate for developing entrepreneurship education based on the experience of three, practically realized Regional Alliances (Innsbruck (AT); Halle/Saale (GER); Szeged (HUN)).

It should be highlighted that regional specificities determine the margins of development everywhere; different approaches have proved to be more efficient in the above mentioned practical examples. In the present roadmap, we took the intersection of the experience of the three practical examples, defining a series of steps that can be generalized relatively easily and adapted properly in most of the regions.

The roadmap provides guidance, in a 10-step approach, about the way from the emergence of demand to a functioning and sustainable program, in which higher educational institutions and entrepreneurs work together to foster the entrepreneurial intention of the young.
Why constitute a Regional Alliance?

The aim of the Regional Alliance is to bring together actors who have a need for as well as a fair amount of influence on the development of the entrepreneurial intention of the young in the region. By bringing them together, the actors get informed and involved, making it possible to exploit synergies stemming from that exchange. The Regional Alliance clearly identifies the entity that is responsible for the development of entrepreneurship education.

Who are the members?

1. Higher educational actors (teaching staff, management): They have the greatest influence on the young studying in higher education, their involvement in the Regional Alliance is
Fostering entrepreneurship within the walls of the university can be executed with the involvement of teaching staff and the commitment of the management. The teachers can provide a platform (course, student club, summer school) for the entrepreneurs within the university, and they themselves can transform their educational methodology with the tools and proposals of the teaching toolkit created through involving the entrepreneurs.

II. **Local entrepreneurs** They personally transfer the competences and motivations related to entrepreneurship through delivering courses, participating in lectures, mentoring, consulting. They can also provide an important input in the development of the teaching toolkit created for the teachers.

III. **Local organizations and institutions** (Chamber of Commerce, professional community, incubator, student club, etc.): Forming a Regional Alliance is more efficient if it is established based on existing partnerships, using their experience and network of contacts. In most regions, alongside general professional organizations, there are organizations supporting the entrepreneurial skills of students (e.g. start-up clubs, incubators, accelerators), thus their involvement offers a good starting point for the organization of a Regional Alliance.

IV. **Local governmental and municipal actors** Boosting entrepreneurship among the young is a priority in most regions for governmental and municipal institutions, and thus very often accompanied by publicly funded programs. In order to exploit the consistency and synergy between existing programs, it is practical to align the work of the Regional Alliance with current as well as planned measurements. Naturally, this can be done most easily done by involving relevant policy makers already at an early stage of alliance formation.
In what follows, we summarize a set of practical steps necessary for the establishment of a Regional Alliance able to positively contribute to efficient and sustainable promotion of entrepreneurship education. In terms of the actual timescale, this process may take a schedule from three months to even 15 months depending on local specificities. Thus, to allow proper planning and high-quality project management the timeframe necessary to implement each single step needs to be estimated by the local coordinator organizations before starting the project.
Figure 1: Overview of 10 Step Process of Alliance Establishment

Although the Regional Alliance itself can fulfil the function of a coordinator organization, there is still a need for a smaller group, a dedicated team, who controls the establishment and operation of the entire organization. The coordinator team performs the following functions:

I. Account management deputy: Establishing and keeping contact with the stakeholders and members of the Regional Alliance
   - Creating contact lists
   - Requesting stakeholders, making arrangements with them
   - Keeping ongoing contact; informing and getting feedback from the stakeholders

II. Education deputy: Educational organizational duties
   - Drawing up the related educational program (course, summer school, student competition, etc.)
   - Keeping contact with academic actors
Managing the administration related to education (providing the venue of presentations/lectures, keeping a record of student attendance and results)

III. Dissemination deputy: Communication activities
- Promoting the project among teaching staff within the university
- Promoting the project among students (via academic and social media channels)
- Informing local media about the milestones of the project
- Producing dissemination materials (flyers, posters, etc.) with customized content targeting stakeholders from businesses and academia

All for one or one for all: It is practical to delegate responsible individuals separately for each of the above described functions. Thus, it is proposed to establish a central team of min. three persons, which should involve people having a network of business contacts and academic affiliation.

**TOP TIP:** Instead of forming a completely new team, it is practical to ask an assembled team or organization for this task. The implementation and coordination of the activities detailed in the following sections is primarily the responsibility of this team.

Committed academic engagement is essential for the education of entrepreneurship. Although the program itself is not limited to a single faculty, it is still useful to link the program to a faculty (or at least to a separate organizational unit of the university). The reason for this is that the organizational structure of the university is generally built at the level of organizational units (faculties, institutions), thus the processes and administration are interpreted accordingly. The following tasks can be performed more easily in the course of implementation related to an organizational unit:
- Providing venue and technology
- Student registration (student attendance, keeping a record of results, giving credit points for lectures)

**STEP 2**
Agree with a faculty of the university who will host the program
- Launching a dedicated course (or modifying an existing one)
- Dissemination within university (using communication channels of faculty)
- Mapping business contacts (using contact list of faculty)

**Administrative barriers:** The university system is typically hierarchical and linked to formal decisions. This means that the first step of a faculty agreement is an agreement with the dean, which is generally followed by the required approval/contribution of the faculty council. Alike processes are often dealt with in a rather bureaucratic way, which makes it a time-consuming activity that ought not to be underestimated when schedules are tight.

**Opportunities offered for the faculty**
- Launching a new, innovative course fostering students' entrepreneurship.
- Modifying and improving an existing course.
- Connection with other projects running in the faculty, making them more efficient.
- Extending the program of the Summer School, Student Competition or International Week with the topic of entrepreneurship education.
- Contributing to the methodological development of other courses and colleagues by the modules of the Teaching Toolkit created in the project.

**Required contribution of the faculty**
- Providing venue and technology
- Providing educational administrative background
- Requesting its network of business contacts
- Making its communication interfaces available for dissemination purposes

**TOP TIP:** It is practical to start contacting with the economics or business studies faculties. If they do not seem to be open to welcome the program, further requested faculties may include the faculty of engineering, faculty of natural sciences and faculty of medicine.
When compiling a potential partner list, it is more useful to start with a broader list (including at least 60 contacts). The following partners should be added to the list:

- University management (deans, heads of department, heads of research group)
- University teaching staff
- Representatives of university student organizations (student unions, student clubs)
- Representatives of start-up communities and organizations in the region
- Management of university spin-off companies
- Management of incubator houses and accelerator programs
- Representatives of the Chamber of Commerce in the region
- Entrepreneurs in contact with the university (especially those who have already been at the universities as lecturers and/or students)
- Actors of regional media
- Local authorities

The following may be a good starting point of the contact lists:

- The business network of the university
- The network of the Chamber of Commerce
- The network of involved organizations
- The personal network of the coordinator team

**Think organically:** It is essentially practical to consider organic expansion, i.e. first involving directly accessible actors, and then requesting new members from the network of the actors who already that have already joined (or committed to) the Regional Alliance. The efficiency of involvement is made significantly higher if the request is initiated via informal network instead of a formal request. Thus, applying the “snowball” principle, starting from a smaller, personally known and committed group, may lead to a dynamic and fast increase of the Regional Alliance members and supporters through the exploitation of the network of contacts.
More is not always better: It is important to note that there is an optimal size in the case of the Regional Alliance (about 30-60 people), so it is not intended to expand without limits, since the number of major tasks (giving a lecture, mentoring, participating in student competition, etc.) is limited.

Personalize: The contact list should always include people and not organizations. Hence, to collect contacts linked to a specific person rather than central corporate contacts will be a better means to initiate lasting and worthwhile relationships. Furthermore, it is also useful to register the name of the involved party next to a given member of the list who they have direct contact with (it will be relevant in the 5th step).

TOP TIP: To start with, local opinion leaders and local “heroes” should be requested. They themselves represent attraction to every newcomer, and relevant actors can be easily reached through their networks.

In creating the partner list, it is useful to consider the following filter criteria, which are the conditions of being added to the list. The partner who is included in the list should ...

... be committed to the project.

... participate in the project not for the purpose of gaining financial benefits.

... be linked to the committed stakeholders of the project through personal acquaintance.

... have relevant knowledge and experience in terms of being an entrepreneur.
Before requesting potential partners, it is important to clarify the ways a partner can be involved in the implementation of the project. In the present formulation, “offer” refers to these opportunities and “ways to be involved” which can be offered to the partners. In order to define the offers, it is practical to divide the members of the Regional Alliance into four categories:

I. Local SMEs and entrepreneurs:

- **Giving a lecture**: It is an efficient way to familiarize students with entrepreneurial lifestyle by letting them listen to lectures from real entrepreneurs with a topic related to successful entrepreneurship. It may refer to an entire course dedicated to foster entrepreneurship, or to an appearance in other courses (the topics of the courses are detailed later on).

- **Mentoring**: The most efficient way of transferring entrepreneurial tacit knowledge is having direct, personal interaction between the entrepreneur and the student. Mentoring may refer to team work incorporated in an academic course, to supporting a team participating in a university competition, and even to giving advice to a start-up (student) firm.

- **Defining the problem**: The opportunities and challenges of being an entrepreneur are known best by entrepreneurs themselves. They should be involved in defining the central problem of student competitions and tasks, as well as in filtering the student venture ideas; moreover, they may be requested to define potential entrepreneurial ideas.

- **Sharing experience**: A teaching toolkit can be prepared for the purpose of a wider use of the educational activities carried out by the Regional Alliance, for which entrepreneurs may provide valuable input as well as feedback for already prepared teaching material.

- **Funding**: The whole project itself relies on voluntary participation and operation based on faculty support, thus it is less dependent on financial backing. However financial
contributions (e.g. by offering the prize of the student competition) increase the attractiveness of the program.

II. University lecturers teaching business studies:

- **Giving a lecture:** Besides entrepreneurs sharing their practical experience, it is also useful to involve colleagues with extensive knowledge in management, marketing, finance, business law and accounting in the program to extend the general business knowledge of students through short lectures.

- **Mentoring:** Similarly to professionals, teachers with theoretical experience can also give important feedback to students through direct interaction. It is particularly efficient if mentoring by an entrepreneur and a teacher is applied in combination.

III. University lecturers teaching non-business studies:

- **Advocating:** In order to inform the highest possible number of students about the educational possibility of supporting entrepreneurial aspirations, it is important to inform the highest possible number of university teaching staff about the program and involve colleagues open to entrepreneurship in promoting the implemented programs.

IV. Other stakeholders:

- **Dissemination:** It is a crucial element in the success of the program to raise the awareness of the program by the most stakeholders possible. In this respect, every stakeholder can contribute by advertising through their own communications channels. It is itself valuable information if they share the news about participating in the program on their online platforms.

**TOP TIP:** The opportunities we offer for entrepreneurs should not require more than 30 minutes of engagement per week. If done otherwise, many of them will drop out after a while despite the initial enthusiasm.
In this step, the call formulated in the 4th step is sent out to the contact list created in the 3rd step. The following aspects should be considered in sending out the call:

- **Segmented message:** As the partners in the Regional Alliance may have various, different motivations and interests, a one-size-fits-all general approach should be avoided. Instead, it is practical to send out the call by segments separated in the 4th step.

- **Personalized sending:** The importance of personalization has already been emphasized in the 3rd step, according to which it is useful to register the name of the internal contact person who has a direct (personal) relationship with a given member of the contact list. Instead of using the central email address of the project, each contact should receive messages or calls from this internal contact person.

- **Brief content:** Although the program has a broad spectrum and numerous partnerships may be formed in the context of the Regional Alliance, it is still practical to announce only the most important message (i.e. the call for establishing the Regional Alliance and the venue and date of a kick-off meeting). It is enough to provide the details when it is clear who is actually involved in the project. Providing too long and complicated content, results in refusal without reading.

- **Monitoring the process:** Establishing contact may take place via email, as well as social media channels (or by specialized CRM software). Whatever channels are chosen, it is important to ensure ongoing monitoring (opening rate, clicking rate, etc.), and, where justified, resend the message (“reminder”). It is useful to put a link in the first message to be used by those interested, thereby separating uninterested people (who opened it but did not click on the link) from unaware people (who did not even open it).

**TOP TIP:** Use a question and/or number in the subject line of the message. For example, ‘three ways you can contribute to the development of the
local entrepreneurial ecosystem’ // ‘What will make the young more willing to start a business?’

It is the first occasion for the Regional Alliance to meet. The following topics must be covered by the coordinator team in the meeting:

- The aim of the Regional Alliance
- Brief description / introduction of members
- Presentation of the possibilities of involvement in the program targeted at entrepreneurship (i.e. the offers elaborated in step four)
- Collection of attendant feedback

**TOP TIP:** The official part of the meeting should not take longer than 40 minutes (it should be highlighted in the request letter also), followed by a possibility to have an informal discussion. This increases the rate of attendance, as well as allowing the establishment of informal contacts, which provide the real cohesive force of the Regional Alliance.

A needs assessment should be sent out to the attendants of the kick-off meeting (and the ones who cannot attend but express their interest), in which they indicate their expressions of interest and the form of involvement. As the offers are presented in detail in the kick-off meeting, every stakeholder is aware of how they can take an active role in the project.

The needs assessment questionnaire is an online list of questions, containing the following:

- Name of the person involved in the Regional Alliance
- Name and logo of the company involved in the Regional Alliance
- CV and photo of the person involved in the Regional Alliance
- Indication of the way(s) of involvement – from the offers described in the 4th step
- In case of undertaking teaching tasks, indication of the topics of expertise
In case of undertaking mentoring tasks, indicating the field of interest of the students they would like to mentor

- Personal needs, expectations

**TOP TIP:** Before sending out the questionnaire, it is practical to define potential teaching contents and topics, thus the respondents open to teaching simply need to choose from a list.

The summarized results of the needs assessment questionnaires will form the actual program of the Regional Alliance. This program should define:

- List of persons involved
- Tasks undertaken by involved parties
- Offered educational program elements (topic of lectures, tasks of students, call for competition, etc.)

The final summary should be sent out to every partner involved for final approval.

In order to record the ways of involvement approved in the 7th step it is practical to formally confirm the establishment of the Regional Alliance by signing an action plan. This document should include the following:

- The fact of and rationale for establishment of the Regional Alliance
- The name of involved parties and organizations
- The aims of the Regional Alliance
- The measures needed to pursue the aims of the Regional Alliance

Signing this document offers a good opportunity for the involved parties to meet again and elaborate the practical implementation of the collaboration in the course of a final consultation before starting the actual educational activities.

**TOP TIP:** The action plan should be formulated in the simplest and broadest way possible as a too strict document may deter somebody from getting involved – even in this last step.
The formal establishment of the Regional Alliance can be followed by carrying out the actual activities fostering entrepreneurship. This process can be divided into three sub-steps:

I. **Recruitment:** In this step, students need to be informed about the entrepreneurship education program and the platform for application. Students may be accessed via the following communications channels:
   - Online interfaces of the involved faculty (its website, Facebook page, Twitter channel)
   - Informing the management of each faculty through the central educational and/or marketing directorate
   - Informing students in person (during courses) through fellow lecturers involved in the program
   - Online advertisement
   - Encouraging the applied students to share their own participation on their social portals

II. **Education:** This is the implementation of the educational program itself, which may take various forms, for example:
   - Full-time course (10-14 weeks)
   - Part of an existing course
   - Student competition
   - Start-up academy
   - Summer school
   - International Week course

III. **Evaluation:** It is essential to provide acknowledgment outside the scope of mere knowledge transfer to motivate the students involved in the program. It may take place – depending on the implemented way of education – in the form of:
   - Credit obtained for accomplishing the course
   - Prize achieved in competition
   - Document verifying the completion of course
TOP TIP: A major role should be attributed to the introduction of involved entrepreneurs (with a photo and a pertinent quotation) in the call. The interest of the students will be raised by the people rather than the program.

In the course of implementing the educational activities, an open and flexible attitude on the part of both the organizers and the participants is crucial. It is important to emphasize that there are no two identical programs, the outcome of a program changes in place and time, generally according to the specificities of the involved parties. This is the reason why the ongoing monitoring of the program is important. An essential element of the evaluation is regular personal meetings of the members of the Regional Alliance.

Alongside the establishment of the Regional Alliance, it is at least as important to sustain it, which may be challenged by several factors:

- The involved entrepreneurs do not intend to take part in the project in the next year, after the initial enthusiasm.
- The overall number of motivated students is relatively fixed, which is a barrier. After a few years almost all the interested students could be reached, and only a few potential participants remain, who have not yet been involved in the program.
- Drying up of other related (e.g. application) funding sources narrows the scope.

The following measures may serve as a solution to the described challenges:

- Persistent organic organization of the Regional Alliance, involving new members.
- Being present in events with the aim of promoting the Alliance and the program, as well as recruiting members.
- Joining other programs, projects and applications in the region.
- Digitalizing the educational elements using online media (e.g. recording the lectures of entrepreneurs and making them available online, organising online start-up competitions, etc.)
- Building up a professional/alumni network involving the students who have taken the course, that they can promote the program to other students from neighbouring universities to attract more interested participants
- Including student/graduate representation to the alliances to help strengthen the programs
Under the EEE Erasmus+ project, we pilot tested several practical examples of the formation of Regional Alliances, thus below we can present three specific good practices which may provide guidance for the implementation of this program in other regions. However, it needs to be noted that there is no single right solution or a practice that can be directly replicated, instead, an implementation suited to the given specificities need to be adapted in every region.

**Type A: Centred around a Faculty – The University of Szeged approach**

1. **Preconditions:**
   - Szeged is a medium-sized university town (with a population of 160,000), emerging like a ‘knowledge-island’ within a relatively less developed region.
There is no considerable industrial activity within the region, mostly food and software companies, and more recently, SSCs operate in the town. The largest employer, and, at the same time, the most important actor of the town is the university (with about 22,000 students and 12 faculties), which is one of the top three research universities in Hungary in terms of both student number and scientific performance.

II. Specificities of the Regional Alliance:
   - The organizing team of the Alliance was constituted by members who had been involved in several similar programs previously and had an extensive entrepreneurial network. They relied on this personal network in the course of creating the Alliance.
   - The Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of University of Szeged, (where many members of the organizing team work as full-time teachers) became the central partner of the Regional Alliance. The faculty provided all the necessary support for the initiative.
   - The Regional Alliance was generally dominated by a small group of local entrepreneurs who were strongly committed owing to personal contacts. Teaching staff, members of the Chamber and the representatives of other authorities participated in a very small number.

III. The specificities of the educational program:
The central activity of the Alliance was to implement a full-semester course promoting entrepreneurship according to the following features:

   - 40 students from the 11 faculties of the university can enrol in the course (except from the field of economics studies, as there are already many educational programs strengthening entrepreneurial skills in the curriculum)
   - The course is a part of the standard curriculum, can be taken as an optional course, meaning 90 minutes of engagement per week, with students get five credits for completion.
   - 40 students work in 10 teams of four on the implementation of a business idea throughout the semester. They present their progress in class every two weeks.
   - Three mentors assist the work of each team:
     1. An entrepreneur
II. A university professor teaching entrepreneurship

III. A student studying an enterprise development MA

The following activities are implemented during the course shifting A/B weeks:

- Week “A”: Presentation of the teams about the problem solved
- Week “B”: Two lectures of 45 minutes by practicing entrepreneurs in the following topics:
  - What is entrepreneurial life like and what is it not like – facts and myths?
  - How and from where can I get money for my idea?
  - What paperwork and administration is required for starting a business?
  - How can effective marketing be executed with little money?
  - How can I find valuable colleagues, fellow workers?
  - How should I manage tax issues and the NTCA?
  - How should I set up a business as a natural scientist?
  - What is efficient work like as an entrepreneur?
  - Can I set up a business with social purposes?
  - How should I plan business? How should I model my business idea?

The recruitment takes place by involving faculty and student leaders in every faculty of the university, and by Facebook advertising. The student applicants need to prove their commitment and outline their business idea in a cover letter. The leaders of the Regional Alliance divide the applicants and their ideas into teams by involving entrepreneurs.

- The work of the teams is finished with a public presentation at the end of the semester, where the business ideas implemented during the semester are presented for the wider public. The performance of the teams is evaluated by a professional panel.

Type B: Centred Around an Affiliated Institute – The Incremental Approach Implemented by Univations GmbH

I. Preconditions

- Halle is second largest city in the state of Saxony-Anhalt with ~230,000 inhabitants
- The wider area of the region includes two Universities, four Universities of Applied Science and one University of Arts and Design
• Research eco-system of the state is well developed (four Max Planck Institutes, six Fraunhofer Institutes, one Helmholtz Centre as well as five Leibniz Institutes) but high fragmentation of entrepreneurship support initiatives

• Economic power of the region is rather weak compared to other regions in Germany (especially compared to “old” German states)

• Apart from still suffering from structural changes resulting - among other - by German reunification (especially chemical industry and coal mining) the weak economic performance of the region is due to three main factors:
  1. Lack of investment in education and scientific research
  2. Lack of internationality (esp. companies)
  3. Lack of innovation (esp. R&D investment by companies) and start-ups

• Univations GmbH is affiliated institute at Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg and involved in all start-up activities of the university

II. Specificities of the Regional Alliance

• The regional alliance in Halle is formed bases on a hybrid approach:
  › Integration of existing initiatives linked to entrepreneurship education in the region
  + Involvement of new stakeholders not linked to any initiatives yet
  = New initiative EEE Regional Alliance Halle

• Pursuing this approach requires to start with small meetings approaching each institution to be involved in bilateral talks (incremental approach to establish Regional Alliance)

• In a second step, all stakeholders need to be gathered to hold alliance “summit“ (development of joint action plan) and by this formally institutionalize existence of Regional Alliance

• Apart from supporting all EEE related activities, one of the first major outcomes of the Regional Alliance is the vision for a state-wide entrepreneurship summer school which will be open to all students in the state (inter-institutional approach)
- Long-term commitment of all stakeholders will be secured through joint proposals to attract financing of summer school concept (integration of EEE resources)

### III. Specificities of the Educational Program

- Univations pursues a decentralized approach involving high-quality external partners for meeting educational targets within the EEE Regional Alliance Halle
  - Univations is not a teaching institution itself and relies on a strong partner support structure of academic institutions in the region to implement EEE resources
  - Each academic institution has different approach to teaching in entrepreneurship education ⇒ flexibility of educational resources necessary (e.g. modular approach in EEE teaching toolkit)
  - Degree of stakeholder involvement depends on convincing arguments by EEE consortium as well as a promising shared vision ⇒ clear plan and vision was necessary from the beginning on the get stakeholders on board

- Univations acts as intermediary institution for all start-up related activities of Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg (MLU) and works back-to-back with Start-Up Service of MLU (Univations Gründerservice) who is mainly responsible for intrapreneurship/entrepreneurship educational activities at the university
  - Implementation and testing of EEE course modules by Univations Gründerservice as part of their efforts to establish a sustainable culture of innovation and entrepreneurial Spirit at MLU (“Entrepreneurial University”)

- Additionally, EEE stakeholder (especially HEIs in Saxony-Anhalt) inside Regional Alliance Halle assist in implementing modules from the EEE Teaching Toolkit (Piloting)
  - Offer to stakeholders to integrate EEE teaching toolkit (open educational material) into their curriculum as well as to implement entrepreneurship promotion campaign
  - Collaborating closely with stakeholders to improve content and methodology of EEE teaching toolkit and EEE promotion campaign
  - Shared Vision: Establishment of Entrepreneurship summer school open to all students in Saxony-Anhalt under use of EEE teaching toolkit
IV. Roadmap, Alliance Focus, and Activities

- Intensification of entrepreneurship education involved in EEE Regional Alliance Halle by, among others, full exploitation of all open educational resources developed within EEE consortium
- Pooling of resources and activities to increase efficiency of efforts in entrepreneurship education
  - Establishment of regular meetings of EEE regional Alliance Halle to coordinate efforts in entrepreneurship education as well as upholding and extension of existing network structure
  - Enhance EEE toolkit with other high-quality resources developed by other HEI in the region (e.g. founders’ playbook developed by O.V. Guericke University Magdeburg)
- Development of Entrepreneurship Summer School Concept under the participation of all HEI active the Regional Alliance Halle (entire state of Saxony-Anhalt)
- Application for funding to support entrepreneurship summer school concept (medium-term) as well as establishment of private support structure (long-term) to render program independent of public financing (if possible)
- Extension of efforts in entrepreneurship sensitization to secondary school level (age 14-18) through business planning competition and alike targeted initiatives
- Increasing efforts to foster social entrepreneurship in the region by learning from existing initiatives in other regions of Europe and beyond
- Attract more attention to promising start-ups in Saxony-Anhalt to facilitate raising of venture capital and convincing them to stay in the region
- Integrate more successful start-ups into entrepreneurship education efforts
- Increase visibility of scientific efforts and outcomes of HEIs to follow recommendation identified by a study undertaken by Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft for the “Knowledge Region Halle-Saalekreis”

Type C: Connected to an Existing Alliance – The MCI Approach

I. Preconditions

- Innsbruck is a medium sized city of about 136,000 inhabitants.
- Innsbruck is characterized by a large student population of more than 30,000 students. The largest higher education institutions are the University of
Innsbruck (27,000 students), the Medical University of Innsbruck (2,800 students), and the MCI Management Center Innsbruck (3,000 students).

- The industrial structure of Tyrol is characterized by rather low share of large companies and a high share of SMEs. The tertiary sector accounts for more than 70% of the economic performance in Tyrol. The particularly strong tourism sector contributes to this.

- The Management Center Innsbruck follows the concept of an Entrepreneurial School, which is characterized - amongst others - by a focus on entrepreneurship of students and faculty.

- Entrepreneurship education is part of the curriculum in most of the study management and engineering programs.

- Even prior to the engagement in the EEE project MCI has been deeply embedded in the regional, the national and the international entrepreneurship system through numerous activities such as supporting business plan competitions, through MCI's faculty serving on various boards for entrepreneurship funding and finance, and through support of several spin-offs by students and faculty.

II. Specificities of the Regional Alliance

- The Regional Startup Tirol Alliance is an alliance formed by all major actors in the Tyrolean entrepreneurship ecosystem. This includes all relevant higher education organizations, the chamber of commerce, the regional business attraction agency (Standortagentur Tirol), and a number of private investors and financiers (such as the IECT Hermann Hauser).

- The aim of the Regional Startup Tirol Alliance is to coordinate the countless entrepreneurship support and awareness activities. The MCI Management Center Innsbruck is an integral part of the alliance.

- The Regional Startup Tirol Alliance (under the lead of the Standortagentur Tirol) prepared a proposal to successfully attract more than two million Euros regional and national funding for setting up / modifying the start-up center for academic spin-offs.

- All activities of MCI in the context of the EEE project are coordinated with the Regional Startup Tirol Alliance. Hence, the specificity of the regional alliance is not to build a new alliance from the scratch but to contribute to shaping the existing alliance.
III. Specificities of the Educational Program

- As MCI follows the concept of an Entrepreneurial School, an entrepreneurship tradition was already established at MCI. This allows us to use some of the concepts and ideas to include them into the Teaching Toolkit that is being developed in the context of the EEE project.

- The activities to coach and counsel student and faculty entrepreneurs have been ramped up in the course of the program to be able to offer more intensive entrepreneurship coaching and education on top of the courses already offered in the study programs.

- The activities in collaboration with the Regional Startup Tirol Alliance implement some of the modules from the Toolkit.

IV. Roadmap, Alliance Focus, and Activities

- Focusing on entrepreneurship activities which gives rise to start-ups with high growth potential

- Systematic screening and scouting activities in universities / higher education / upper secondary education institutions

- Qualification of entrepreneurs
  - Consolidating entrepreneurship education – networking of entrepreneurship educators
  - Harmonising entrepreneurship education
  - Use of common tool kits (results of EEE)
  - Develop a process of teaching and coaching activities / events for start-ups

- Coaching and counselling of nascent entrepreneurs and start-ups, focus also on the composition of the teams

- PR and measures to increase interest in entrepreneurship and starting up a company

- Supporting the international orientation of start-ups
  - Embed Startup Tirol GmbH into an international network of start-up centres and incubators
  - Develop an exchange program for entrepreneurs and actors in the system

- Building structures that support the start-ups sustainably
CONTACT US

Univations GmbH
Florian Bratzke
bratzke@univations.de
+49 345 13 14 27 04
Weinbergweg 23, 06120, Halle/Saale
Germany

Management Center
Prof. Bernd Ebersberger
bernd.ebersberger@mci.edu
+43 512 2070-1810
Universitaetsstrasse 15, 6020 Innsbruck,
Austria

University of Szeged
Szabolcs Prónay
pronay@kmcenter.szte.hu
+36-62-544-499
6722 Szeged, Kálvária sgt. 1.
Hungary

Canice Consulting
Canice Hamill
Canice@caniceconsulting.com
+ 44 (0) 28 9266 6161
269 Lisburn Business Centre, Enterprise Crescent
Lisburn BT28 2BP

University Industry Innovation Network (UIIN)
Thorsten Kliewe
kliewe@uiin.org
+31 20 89 50 182
Science Park 400 1098XH Amsterdam
The Netherlands
## Appendix 1: Course description

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<th><strong>Course title:</strong> Entrepreneurship Education – EEE project</th>
<th><strong>Credit:</strong></th>
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<td>Type: lecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact hours / week: 2</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Evaluation: exam mark</td>
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<td>Semester: fall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prerequisites:</strong> accepted letter of intention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Course description:

**Aim of the course:**
Bringing closer the world of entrepreneurship to those students who have affiliation of starting an own business

**Number of participants:**
40 students from 11 (non-business) faculties of the university and MA students from the Business Development programme of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration,

**Methodology**
- Paired weeks: lectures by 2 entrepreneurs in 45-45 minutes
- Unpaired weeks: Group presentation about the task that was solved during the week with the help of mentors

**Topics of the lectures:**
- What is the life of an entrepreneur?
- How to raise fund for my innovative idea?
- What is the administrative way of starting a new business?
- How to do effective marketing from small budget?
- How to find useful colleagues?
- How to solve the legal and taxation issues?
- How to start an own business as a lawyer?
- How to start an own business as an engineer?
- How to start an own business as a scientist?
- How to work efficiently as an entrepreneur?

**Graduation:**
- At the last class, the students present their full-project that they were working on throughout the semester in front of a professional board. The grade is the average of the grades that were given by the members of the board. In case of a failed presentation, the group have an opportunity to represent at a later date.

**Targeted competences:**
- Entrepreneurial skills
- General business understanding
- Group working skills
- Presentation skills

**Literature:**
| Course coordinator : |
| Teacher(s): |
Appendix 2: Contact database sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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Appendix 3: Action Plan

Action Plan

Under the “Embedding Entrepreneurship Education” Erasmus+ project, as a manifest of a regional alliance cooperation, in accordance with our mutual interests in developing programs of entrepreneurship education, and for the purpose of establishing a long-term mutually beneficial association, the below mentioned partners join in the following action plan. All parties agree to exercise their best efforts to develop the following forms of cooperation:

1. Establish ties of cooperation and communication in the form of a Regional Alliance.

2. Promote mutual understanding among university lecturers and industry members.

3. Work toward fostering the entrepreneurial thinking in the higher education with taking part in any of these activities:
   - Holding lectures for university students.
   - Mentoring students in entrepreneurial tasks
   - Pilot testing of Teaching Toolkit dedicated for entrepreneurship education.
   - Providing supervision and feedback on the tasks that are realized under the EEE project – especially the forming of a Road Map that can serve as guidance for establishing Regional Alliances in other regions as well.
   - Promote the results of the EEE project.
   - Giving insight to entrepreneurial way of thinking that can be applied in higher education.

All parties are committed to working together to establish and sustain the Regional Alliance that can support and foster the entrepreneurial education in the Region. The Regional Alliance will fulfill the spirit and purpose of this general letter of intent.

Date:

......................................................... .........................................................  
Name of the institution  Signature of the representative