

GOOD PRACTICE

VIT Emprende/Agroincube and Red Emprendia: Valencia Startup Community

ORGANISATION: VIT Emprende- Las Naves Valencia

TOPIC: Creating and sustaining of cross regional/international partnerships

TOPIC OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

VIT Emprende is Valencia's network of innovative entrepreneurs that the City Council launched via Fundación Las Naves València.

Its members have the possibility to share knowledge, collaborate in R&D activities, transfer technology, go international and create synergies by networking with prominent bodies in the field of Valencian entrepreneurship.

Two more networks have been added as best practices, both managed by the University of Valencia, and aimed at innovative companies establishing international networks. These best practices relate to regional and international partnerships.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

Name of the good practice: **VIT Emprende**

Name of the stakeholder: Municipality of Valencia

Beneficiaries: start ups and entrepreneurs.

Budget: 60,000 euros annually

Duration:

Location: Europe, United States

Topic of the good practice: VIT Emprende is Valencia's network of innovative entrepreneurs that the City Council launched via Las Naves València.

Its members are offered a springboard to share knowledge, collaborate in R&D activities, transfer technology, go international and create synergies by networking with prominent bodies in the field of Valencian entrepreneurship.

Description: Competitive talent and ease in building teams. Easy access to training for entrepreneurs. Players that participate and are willing to collaborate. Events and activities that give visibility to projects, connect entrepreneurs with the city's industry and foster networking. Mentors and leaders who share their knowledge. An emerging ecosystem with access to investment through its accelerators. An environment that generates and disseminates innovation. 500 Startups. 7 accelerators. 15 Ventures Capital. 40 co working spaces. A network of 2,500 stakeholders.

Our claim: Start it in Valencia, the best place to start in Spain. We have launched an international program to give the opportunity for the startups to meet, exchange and cooperate with other ecosystems and stakeholders. Benefits of the program are to scale up their companies knowing other solutions, competence, markets, investors, and public areas.

Our methodology: 2 working teams.

One for startups and another for facilitators.

We co-create the public program of VIT Emprende together in order to improve the startup ecosystem. After selecting target areas we make the strategy together launching programs for talent, for internationalization, for networks, investors and other activities.

Firstly, we test our news solutions via pilot programs in order to implement them once the solution has been assessed.

There is also an on-line networking platform and an app. A member of the network can locate within the ecosystem, companies of its own sector and create synergies, complete teams, seek investment or contact public entities in an agile and direct way.

It is also a tool for fostering knowledge in the city of Valencia and attracting new businesses from abroad.

Name of the good practice: **Agroinncube / Red Emprendia**

Name of the stakeholder: University of Valencia

Beneficiaries: agrifood companies / innovative companies

Budget: 150,000 euros

Duration:

Location: Portugal, Colombia, Chile and Argentina

Topic of the good practice: The University of Valencia Science Park launched the creation of an Ibero-American business incubators network focusing on innovative companies in the agro-food sector. Consortium is made up of 8 incubators from 6 countries of the Ibero-American space (Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Colombia, Portugal and Spain) that hosts more than 400 start-ups companies.

Objectives:

Strategic alliances between European and Latin American partners

Access collaborative R & D & I projects and international cooperation

Start-ups soft-landing among the Ibero-American and European markets.

AGROINNCUBA is conceived as a community based on complementary identities with common interests for the value and diffusion of knowledge (both in terms of business incubation and transfer mechanisms). It is about forming a dynamic and participatory platform where its members can find:

- Discussion Forums
- New business and scientific opportunities
- Mechanisms to expand their contact networks (both in Europe and America).

Description: In short, a network with the established channels for the exchange of information and obtaining resources: investment, talent, markets, partners, suppliers and clients of all the Ibero-American space represented in this Network.

In this sense, the network will be represented by business incubators linked to different public-private environments (Universities, Science-Technology Parks, Chambers of Commerce) with different governing bodies and that interact in a different way with the socioeconomic environment in which they are. All this in order to complement their experiences and fully reflect the different actors involved in the innovation

ecosystem (both the knowledge-generating centers as the productive environment and the investment area).

The generation of ideas and innovation comes from open environments, spaces and activities that promote transversal knowledge and the exchange of experiences between the entrepreneurs of different sectors (Open Innovation). However, the agro-food sector has been little permeable to these methodologies and has remained relatively closed to the multidisciplinary nature. AGROINNCUBA will focus on the agri-food sector but also on its intersection with other areas: ICT, biotechnology, health and nutrition, tourism and gastronomy.

Topic of the good practice: RedEmprendia Landing is an acceleration program for start ups, university spin-offs, and technical staff of innovation and entrepreneurship of the university network. This program designs trade missions for start ups in different destinations mostly in Iberoamerican countries, and put in contact university incubators from Europe and Latin America, with technical staff and researchers to promote the knowledge of good practices in innovation and entrepreneurship.

RedEmprendia Landing dates back to 2011 when the association began working on strengthening university R & D strategies with business acceleration programs for startups and university spin-off.

This experience revealed the lack of specific programs in the incubators, focused in the international competitiveness for startups and technical personnel prepared in this field. This void appears to have an impact on the low rate of Latin and European startups born with a clear international vocation, a reason for the existence of this program.

RedEmprendia Landing involves 28 leader universities from 8 countries, and RedEmprendia as the organization that coordinates its operation. Since 2011 more than 100 start ups, spin-offs and staff from the universities have participated in this program, improving the commercial relationship between Europe and Latin America. RedEmprendia Landing has 28 stakeholders.

This year (2017), RedEmprendia Landing will dedicate 30,000 Euros for the organization of a Trade Mission to Medellín (Colombia). 27 start ups and around 7 staff personnel, will visit Colombia in April related to commercial, industrial and technological cooperation.

ROLE OF ACTORS

7 accelerators: one specialized in social innovation, one in climate change, five in seed. The Startup Community is made up of more than 500 startups. VIT emprende works closed to The Valencia Startup Association who defends the startups community. The role of universities is key in this ecosystem. Peer transfer is our more valuable exit and the reference as a success startup. Big bang angels is the business angels association in Spain based at Valencia city. The role of Public administration is to facilitate the needs of the startups and ecosystem.

BENEFICIARIES

These best practices are focused on start ups and innovative companies. The participants start their activities and go international at the same time.

A startup is a young company that is just beginning to develop. Startups are usually small and initially financed and operated by a handful of founders or one individual. These companies offer a product or service that is not currently being offered elsewhere in the market, or that the founders believe is being offered in an inferior manner.

In the early stages, startup companies' expenses tend to exceed their revenues as they work on developing, testing and marketing their idea. As such, they often require financing.

Vit emprende has a network of 2,500 members: startups, accelerators, investors, co-workings, universities, talent communities, public administration, associations. We have a great response with more than 300 assistants in our events. We closed 2016 with 97 events and activities around the city. We have the recognition of the European Commission as the Best Public Administration 2016. One of the main expected results of the Network is the improvement in the training of the technical staff of the participating incubators.

The key objective is to strengthen the capacities of these technical staff who advise the promoters of spin-offs and start-ups that constitute the critical mass of entrepreneurs and companies of AGROINNCUBA network.

The improvement in the training of these professionals will have a direct impact on the quality of the companies that emerged from the university environment and on their subsequent development and survival. In this way, the final beneficiaries of the training process of the Network will also be: post-university researchers and / or start-up promoters and spin-offs of a strong innovative and technological nature.

Another priority axis to work in AGROINNCUBA network will be the new lines of funding R&D and the internationalization of companies based on collaborative projects between members of the Network. In a first phase, the European funding framework is intended to be addressed through Community programs in the context of H2020 and ERASMUS + in which international consortia composed of members from Latin America and Europe can participate. It is also intended to add resources within the scope of private investment, and share strategies and mechanisms for obtaining investment for transnational projects that may also be of interest.

CULTURAL ASPECTS: POSSIBLE KEY LEVERAGES FOR INTERNATIONALISATION PROCESSES

For micro companies and entrepreneurs launching new business projects, it is important to be supported and collaborate with other companies. Some of the projects are focusing on the international markets from the very beginning. Most of these projects are lacking technical, human and financial resources.

INNOVATION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE, POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVEMENT AND REPLICABILITY

VIT Emprende methodology: 2 work groups called Think tanks. One for startups and another for facilitators.

We co-create the public program of VIT Emprende together in order to improve the startup ecosystem. We assess specific areas and we define the strategy launching programs for talent, for internationalization, for networking, investors and activities. Firstly, we test our new solutions by pilot programs in order to implement an adequate solution. We use a methodology as a starting point with the purpose to achieve our objectives and providing our own experience. First of all we consider the innovation and the entrepreneur management ability, the most important factor in getting successful.

RedEmprendia Landing offers an excellent springboard to the innovative enterprises that want to explore new markets, taking advantage of the international connections from RedEmprendia, but the key is the human ability of taking advantage of that. Perhaps that is possible by the filters set to select beneficiaries, in cooperation with our universities. The main innovation of the Network is that the project focuses on the agro-food sector, interacting with other areas: ICT, biotechnology, biomass, health, tourism and gastronomy. This transversal connection will stimulate the exploration of new knowledge and new applications, resulting from the use of the knowledge generated and the existence of synergies between sectors, maximizing the results of the value chain.

In short, a network of collaboration with the established channels for the exchange of information and obtaining resources: investment, talent, markets, partners, suppliers and clients of all the Ibero-American space represented in this Network.

In this sense, the network will be represented by business incubators linked to different public-private environments (Universities, Science-Technology Parks, Chambers of Commerce) with different governing

bodies and that interact in a different way with the socioeconomic environment in which they are. All this in order to complement their experiences and fully reflect the different actors involved in the innovation ecosystem (both the knowledge-generating centers as the productive environment and the investment area).

The generation of ideas and innovation comes from open environments, spaces and activities that promote transversal knowledge and the exchange of experiences between the entrepreneurs of different sectors (Open Innovation). However, the agro-food sector has been little permeable to these methodologies and has remained relatively closed to the multidisciplinary nature. AGROINNCUBA will focus on the agro-food sector but also on its intersection with other areas: ICT, biotechnology, health and nutrition, tourism and gastronomy.

From an operative point of view, the network is born with a strategy designed to facilitate integration among participants from different countries (simultaneous seminars and seminars with streaming events, thematic working groups, international evaluators and mentors and the availability of content on -line).

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS AND THE ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT AND RESULTS OF GOOD PRACTICE

Both, the University of Valencia and the Municipality of Valencia, have developed evaluation tools for the activities they perform.

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