

Title: **Building an Entrepreneurial Thinking Environment in Education**

Topic: **Future Universities**

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Today's global context provides our world with wicked problems, requiring complex thinking to come up with simple solutions. The objective of this idea is to introduce entrepreneurial thinking in the teachers' education curricula in order to have a next generation of entrepreneurial thinkers, who will be able to make their regions smart and sustainable.

Although the EntreComp (the European Commission's framework for entrepreneurial thinking) was published in 2016, it seems as if the educational landscape was able to stay relatively untouched by it, though in Flanders alone, there were 4781 students starting mini-companies during their studies in 2018 (as one example of entrepreneurial thinking). How are teachers going to embrace these (and other) students with their entrepreneurial thinking and endeavours? Most teachers might still be wondering what entrepreneurial thinking is, might still interpret that entrepreneurial thinking aims at forming solely entrepreneurs and therefore might not yet be open to the idea of understanding, adopting or weaving entrepreneurial thinking in their teaching subject.

The Future University will be embedded in the ecosystem called society, and one of the primary actors of societal change are the teachers. They have contacts with children, youngsters and adults at every possible moment of their lives (especially in the context of lifelong learning) and therefore it is important that teachers would be educated to the recognition of problems as opportunities, that they would know how to educate children to critical thinking, to creativity so that the inhabitants of the regions would come up with simple solutions (resulting from complex thinking).

The actors that should be involved in this education are the teachers education departments in the various universities, the local schools to provide safe internship places, the parents to whom this program should be explained and local entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs who could come into the universities to tell more about entrepreneurial thinking. This idea would involve the whole community and can easily be repeated in time as well as geographically.

The training program we propose takes the (future) teacher on a journey starting from discovering entrepreneurial thinking, to adopting it and weaving it into her own teaching subject. School leaders or teachers who would like to go further, can team up with colleagues, spread the word in the community and eventually take the lead to be real ambassadors of entrepreneurial thinking in their region. The main purpose of the project is to make people autonomous and ambassadors of entrepreneurial thinking in their own regions, schools, communities.

Teachers generally don't recognize themselves as potential engines for innovation, but during the past year we have seen the importance of the teacher, it is therefore crucial to educate them so they can educate for what is going to be the synthesis of 21st century skills (including creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, etc). Not knowing how to educate the next generation in these skills, is like keeping these learners illiterate, and that cannot be a 2030 objective of the Future University in a smart and sustainable region.