

Title: Competence Cluster “Intrapreneurial University”

Topic: Future Universities

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We propose to establish a competence cluster (CC) for intrapreneurship within the EUDRES network. The CC forms the organizational framework and acts as a contact and networking hub for universities interested in establishing and nurturing an intrapreneurial culture within their organizational settings. The CC pools expertise and experience, stimulates knowledge exchange and organizes offline events to set up and maintain a community of practice on intrapreneurship and to disseminate project results among its stakeholders and the broader public. The aim is to learn from each other and get a better understanding of how to implement highly diverse exploitation models that need to comply with regional, political, economic and cultural constraints and legacies. Concrete transfer & networking measures could be:

- A website & social media presence
- A curriculum on intrapreneurship for academic researchers
- Establishing and maintaining a community of practice for academic and close-to-academics intrapreneurs and those interested in intrapreneurship with regular intrapreneurship consultation days and offsite networking events together
- An interactive platform for joint intrapreneurship activities of the participating universities and their academic partners
- Gain organizational knowhow about the development of policies and programs to foster intrapreneurial activities
- Guest lectures by experienced academic intrapreneurs (or project partners) on intrapreneurship at the participating universities (curricular and extracurricular)
- Networking events during the project term (offline & online)
- Symposium on Intrapreneurship for Universities

Motivation: Exploiting results from scientific research projects - be it commercially or non-commercially - is one of the major challenges universities are facing nowadays. As a reaction to this, universities increasingly realize that employees and students who think and act entrepreneurially are a valuable resource and that universities can empower and promote them in exploitation activities in the sense of an “entrepreneurial organization” (Bouchard and Basso 2011). Ideally, universities should act as enablers for and vital source of marketable innovations, stemming from and elaborated by a creative and passionate scientific workforce that detects and serves societal and economic needs and provides solutions for real-world problems. But the concept of the “entrepreneurial university” has been subject to widespread and legitimate criticism for its tendency of subordinating itself to a neo-liberal paradigm of commodification, commercialisation and market fetishism that seriously threatens the freedom of science. Hence, the Competence Cluster dedicates itself towards investigating and developing exploitation models and strategies that accommodate a balance between the need to produce commercially exploitable research results and the scientific and epistemic advancement of society irrespective of and beyond the primacy of marketability. The benefits a university derives from an “intrapreneurial culture” can be diverse and multidimensional. It starts with the empowerment of their scientific staff to stay employable beyond their engagement within the protected environment of a university (which is especially relevant for young researchers that – for whatever reasons – are deprived of an academic career, to reputational and financial benefits a university and the wider region generates from a socially desirable and / or commercially successful spin-off).

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