INNOVATION LABORATORIES:

using an open innovation learning platform &

action research in enterprise education in order to enhance the engagement &

innovative capabilities of universities in Post-Socialist Societies

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Enterprises are key to the success of societal development and they are not alone in this endeavour. Alongside there is always a university which invests into such development and both representing two different spheres, business and education, and striving for sustainable results. Neither can succeed independent of each other, only together can grow forcing the development of the surrounding world.

University and business accumulate best practices in the world, learn from each other's experiences of accumulation. There is a primordial need in acting together to attract breakthrough ideas and solutions. This is the way to success all aimed at advancements in society.
Why This Project?

An international project is a great means of accumulating best practices, enhancing the existing partnerships and building new.

The EU-funded TEMPUS project INNOLAB 530429-TEMPUS-1-2012-1-UK-TEMPUS-JPHES “INNOVATION LABORATORIES: using an open innovation learning platform & action research in enterprise education in order to enhance the engagement & innovative capabilities of universities”

Project is in the Right Place at the Right Time...

Belarus and Ukraine ... are waking up to the need for better quality products but, despite having strong academic universities, there is no culture of working with universities to innovate... Our goal is eventually to help create a culture of open innovation, which is recognised as one of the fastest ways for a country to speed up its economic growth.” Christos Kalantaridis, project coordinator, Bradford University, in the Telegraph & Argus, 27 March 2013.

It is a global tendency to innovate for obtaining better results and to achieve economic efficiency. Professionals all over the world see the potential to make innovative products only in cooperation between business and university. This is a world practice of building a bridge between the two through INNOVATION LABORATORIES.

The Main Result

The project will produce an INNOVATION LABORATORY which will become a virtual space revolving around an open innovation learning platform & action research in enterprise education.

Made in the advanced format of “cloud” technologies, the INNOVATION LABORATORY will establish a virtual network between participants in the innovation process. This network is built on the idea of social networks to continually generate new members for its human resources, ideas and tools for collaboration.

Creation of an innovation laboratory gives a chance to enterprises and the university to
- exchange innovative ideas
- foster subject-matter expertise & cultivate fresh thinking
- get more profits and enhance development
- find new partnerships.

The Project Has Offers to Enterprises

By involving the university community and enterprises, the INNOVATION LABORATORY will bring together enterprises that are active in innovative changes, academic research and creativity of students.

You have problems in your business but do not know how to tackle them on your own, or a burning ambition to make your product or service more competitive on the market but cannot see the ways to do it, the local project team together with researchers and students at the university are ready to help.

The INNOVATION LABORATORY welcomes enterprises to share their problems that require challenging solutions, a different approach and creative ideas, on the open innovation learning platform. The problems will be solved, different approaches and creative ideas suggested by professionals and talented students almost in no time. The project will give you an opportunity to experiment with breakthrough ideas. They will provide the setting for the development and advancement of solutions.

The INNOVATION LABORATORY has a deposit of fresh and creative ideas of academics and students. Just click on the link and you will be right in the milieu of fresh concepts where you are awaited not as a random guest but as a participant. The concepts we have for you are attractive and can become breakthrough for the development of your product or service. This is growth on experimentation.

Refer to us and we shall help you find the right person or solution. We have contacts and we know the right people who will be willing to help.
Needs Analysis – Key Findings on Innovations in the Region

Across both countries radical innovators appear to be better placed to engage with universities. The main challenge they are confronted with is that universities have difficulty in understanding the needs of the firms.

Less innovative firms appear to be confronted with different challenges: more specifically circumnavigating the complex structures of universities and articulating their needs.

Universities are part of lived experiences of entrepreneurs in both Ukraine and Belarus: linkages are established through a period of personal study or social linkages with individual academics. These appear to be much more important than co-ordinated efforts to develop engagement on the part of universities.

Universities are important sources of knowledge to enterprises not only because of their own research capacities. They are important in facilitating access to knowledge generated elsewhere.

For some people this means frameworks for discoveries or inventions, for some this is simply boosting profits from attracting and realising very extraordinary ideas and solutions. Innovation is a process of finding novel solutions to important problems... Aliaksei Viahera, Deputy CE, NAFTAN Plc, Novopolotsk, Belarus.

This is something new and progressive, when we think of something new we always have a drive to utilise it. Indeed, in innovations new or fresh ideas are always made for utilisation. This is the real value of innovations... The project will definitely open new horizons through building new partnerships and attracting new contacts and ideas... Tatsiana Hancharova, Head of the R&D Office, Polotsk State University.

The needs analysis carried out at the university has shown that the key success factors of knowledge transfer lie in the interest on the part of the university in regional enterprises, and on the part of enterprises – in the research potential of the university.

Innovative enterprises in Ukraine and Belarus do not often utilise the resources available in universities in the process of introducing innovations. However, it is more innovative (radical innovators) enterprises that more commonly work with universities in the process of introducing innovations.
The consortium representing 10 partners in Belarus, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Estonia, and Greece, are a team of actors that are performing the TEMPUS project. Networking between innovation labs across Belarus & Ukraine will facilitate openness to external influences and sharing best practice, and the development of distant partnerships between students belonging to different universities and enterprises.

Regarding the regional innovation ecosystem development platform, the approach adopted is that innovation is a place-based process. This brings to the fore the challenge of accessing and creating linkages between different types of actors such as universities, enterprises, and public organisations.

INNOLAB aims to embed links between education, research & innovation in core university activities. This will be achieved through the development of a network of an Open Innovation Platform at the INNOVATION LABORATORIES jointly developed for the use in the 5 regions – Uzhgorod, Kiev and Kharkiv in Ukraine, and Polotsk and Grodno in Belarus. They will have virtual connectivity with enterprises & each other through the innovation ecosystem platform & ideas market.

INNOVATION LABORATORIES will be a visible point of cooperation between universities & enterprises. They will enable student teams to work with enterprises in resolving ‘real-world’ problems & developing innovations. The outcomes of these activities will offer primary data for academic research that is applied and relevant.

This will sustain enterprise engagement in the medium to long term: manifested either through deepening of relationships or developing new relationships not only in their own region but widely across the other regions involved in the project. The strong international team of the consortium is making a single platform.

Polotsk State University has strong connection with business through its 32 branch chairs at the leading enterprises in the region. Study programmes & research have been tailored to the needs of innovatively developing enterprises around the university. Due to its strong polytechnic profile & state-of-the-art research, the university attracts business partners & investors. PSU has a Science and Technology Park. Its Technology Transfer Centre, Intellectual Property Office, the Patent Department & Innovations Working Group, are active and highly motivated teams driven by the idea of transferring knowledge, getting profits out of it, and advancing cooperation with enterprises in the region and outside. The Research and Development Department at the university boosts its potential in innovations in research.

We have talented students who are motivated, practice-driven, with bright ideas
We conduct research that can change your product or service

We invite companies to cooperation and are open to any contacts. Should you get interested to join us in the project, please, do not hesitate to contact one of the staff who are willing to assist:

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