

HEKATE Workshops: Concept, Outcomes and Lessons Learnt

The HEKATE project and the partners

*HEKATE is a project supported by the European Commission's "Knowledge Alliance" initiative. The idea for Knowledge Alliances emerged from the Commission's University–Business Forum. Their aim is to encourage structured, outcome-driven cooperation between higher education institutes (HEIs) and companies for the purpose of higher education. HEKATE addresses the desire to foster an interest in entrepreneurship amongst scientists by encouraging R&D managers in research intensive industries and university research scientists to become more pro-actively engaged with each other. The HEKATE partnership allies the **European Industrial Research Management Association (EIRMA)**, together with an industrial partner **Solvay**, with **Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH)**, and **Manchester Business School**, the **University of Manchester** as HEI partners to translate this collaborative relationship into a scheme for entrepreneurship training for early career researchers and doctoral students. The partnership is coordinated by **TuTech Innovation**, the knowledge transfer arm of TUHH.*

The HEKATE concept and processes

Entrepreneurial training and learning are considered to be vital enablers for enterprise and innovation. Universities provide entrepreneurial training and education to inspire students' future career aspirations and to build entrepreneurial skills and competences. There are a number of ways in which companies get involved in such learning processes. Based on interviews with company managers and a selective number of business school professionals, HEKATE developed models of "learning in tandem" where university researchers, students, companies and individual entrepreneurs are brought together in order to share their ideas, experiences and insights, and to work collaboratively to identify entrepreneurial opportunities. The HEKATE partners have tested these models in two different higher education environments with a variety of industry collaborators.

HEKATE has sought to develop novel workshops that enhance the interaction between experienced and early to mid-career R&D managers from industry, and early career researchers and research students in the HEIs. Four workshops have been delivered – two in Manchester and two in Hamburg. The first two workshops, developed and delivered in the autumn of 2014, were seen as 'pilots'. Based on the feedback from the participants in each of the workshops, and through the exchanges of project team's observing and learning from each other's workshop, some modifications were made to incorporate the lessons learnt from the first set of workshops into the second set.

The Workshops

The first two workshops were delivered in the autumn in 2014 by the HEKATE teams in Manchester and Hamburg respectively. The second set of workshops was built on the first and incorporated collaborative learning and exchanges between the two teams, and was delivered in early 2015:

- ***Enterprising Scientists: Developing Values and Opportunities.*** University of Manchester, 28-29 October 2014 and 24-25 March 2015
- ***Turning Ideas into Business Opportunities,*** TUHH, 26-28 November, 2014 and 8-10 April 2015

In all four workshops, individuals from EIRMA Members together with individual entrepreneurs contributed in person, providing real industry case studies, and interacting with participants to address both business ideas and career development, including topics such as start-ups, corporate venturing, intrapreneurship and what it means to become an entrepreneurial academic. Each workshop had 20-25 participants working interactively in

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teams. Participants learnt innovation and entrepreneurship tools together with strategies to pursue business ideas through different development stages. Additionally the workshops provided networking opportunities; interactive sessions to strengthen the communication skills of participants, and tools to identify and manage stakeholders in volatile entrepreneurial environments. Throughout the four workshops, a unique case study was developed and delivered by the HEKATE team.

There were differences in the focus of the workshops delivered by the two HEIs. The Manchester workshops aimed to inspire PhD students and early career researchers to be “enterprising scientists”. The workshop sessions aimed to develop participants’ innovation strategies and entrepreneurial skills and competencies that could be applied in a variety of industry and academic contexts. The Hamburg workshops offered a unique opportunity to university researchers and early career industry professionals to work together in tandem and learn how to turn ideas into business opportunities. The workshops aimed at fostering entrepreneurial thinking and behaviour among participants through learning entrepreneurship tools and applying them directly to their ideas, coaching by startup consultants, pitching ideas as well as receiving feedbacks from various groups: peers, potential users, trainers and industry experts.

Lessons learnt

- HEKATE has provided an effective approach to involve practical experiences of industry directly into higher education. It provided a platform where research students, early career university and industry researchers were able to directly interact with entrepreneurs and experienced R&D managers from EIRMA member companies.
- By drawing on real issues and real industry case studies, the HEKATE workshops employed a problem-based learning approach where participants developed entrepreneurial skills and capability to solve problems and work collaboratively in an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral environment.
- By providing resources to build “tandem learning” relationships, communicating and sharing the agenda with companies of different sizes including EIRMA Member multinationals, as well as locally based start-up companies and SMEs, the project contributed to raising the capability of the academic staff and the team engaged in entrepreneurial training.

Future development

The lessons learnt from all four workshops, and the future strategies and operational plans developed by EIRMA will be disseminated through the **Final HEKATE Conference** to be held **22 September 2015 in Brussels**. This conference will bring together industry, HEIs and policy-maker stakeholders to share perspectives on how to move forward. Overall Knowledge Alliance projects are ‘show cases’ for ways in which industry and commerce can support HEIs in providing students with an education that equips them to be entrepreneurs and innovators in the C21.

In addition to supporting the workshops, the EIRMA HEKATE team have been looking at the role EIRMA Members could play in supporting these kinds of activities in the future to ensure that Europe develops its research and innovation management talent necessary for its economic and social well-being. Proposals for this have been put forward in an Operational Plan now under discussion by EIRMA’s Governing Board,

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