IdeaLab – turning ideas into businesses through capacity building

- Marta Catarino
Universidade do Minho 11 schools/faculties :: 20,000+ students :: 1,500 faculty (95% Ph.D)

Founded in 1974
2 Campi
4 Multifunction poles

53 Graduation Programs
135 Master Programs
26 PhD Programs

Mobility:
700 outgoing students
900 incoming foreign students
300 mobility protocols worldwide
3,000 foreign students

Research:
35 Research Centers
65% Excellent, Very Good
(80% of researchers)

22 projects funded EU-FP7
35 projects funded ADI
560 projects national
Innovation Ecosystem

R&D  TecMinho (TTO)  Spinpark (Incubator)  Avepark (S&T Park)
Private not-for-profit association, founded in 1990 as an interface of University of Minho.
Entrepreneurship @ Universidade do Minho:

- Supporting the set-up of new knowledge intensive ventures
- Entrepreneurship as a research topic
- Promoting an entrepreneurial culture
Including entrepreneurship topics at all levels of teaching:

- Creativity
- Leadership
- Science and Technology marketing
- Business planning
- Project-based learning
Through TecMinho:

- Presentation of success cases
- Entrepreneur roundtables
- Seminars (IP, Marketing, Financials, Legal, etc.)
- Creativity and ideation workshops
- Entrepreneurship fair and exhibition
• Start@TecMinho – Entrepreneur helpdesk
• SpinUM – Business Idea competition
• Ignition Programme - IdeaLab
• Acceleration Programme - Company lab
• Incubation
• UMinho spin-off program
• Annual Meeting for spin-offs
Idealab is an “ignition” programme, where students, researchers, alumni of UMinho can explore and validate their knowledge-intensive business ideas.
Objectives

- Promote and support entrepreneurial capabilities;
- Support the development and consolidation of business ideas;
- Build capacity in key competencies for starting a new company.
Format

- Ideation session;
- Start-up Workshops;
- Pre-incubation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Business Model Canvas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Partners</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>What are our Key Partners?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do we recruit and retain our Key Partners?</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Key Resources</strong></th>
<th><strong>Channels</strong></th>
<th><strong>Cost Structure</strong></th>
<th><strong>Revenue Streams</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are our Key Resources?</td>
<td>Through which Channels do we deliver our Value Propositions?</td>
<td>What are the most important costs in our business model?</td>
<td>By what mechanism do our customers pay?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do we acquire and maintain our Key Resources?</td>
<td>Are we reaching all potential customers through all Channels?</td>
<td>How much do our customers pay?</td>
<td>How do they pay us?</td>
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</tbody>
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**www.businessmodelgeneration.com**
Ideation session

Creative session, through brainstorming, mind-mapping, role playing and other creativity techniques, that supports team building and early validation of the business ideas.
W1: Voice of the customer

W2: Business strategy

W3: Market analysis

W4: Financials

W5: Marketing and communication
Pre-incubation

Customised support by business coaches and mentors to further define and consolidate the business ideas.

6 working sessions with each team to prepare the business plan.
Each (surviving) project is presented to a panel of investors and other entrepreneurship support entities.
Participants by gender and age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Feminino</th>
<th>Masculino</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<td>Mais de 40</td>
<td>4%</td>
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Academic background of participants

- **Economia e Gestão**: 7%
- **Ciências Humanas e Sociais**: 8%
- **Outras áreas**: 13%
- **Ciências da Saúde**: 16%
- **Engenharias**: 56%
Lessons learnt:

- No need for significant prior validation

- Diversity of ideas and participants is essential – but get them out of the building!

- Don’t use academics as teachers...

- A lot can be done through volunteers and sponsors

- This is a first step – outcome is entrepreneurial teams, solid business plan... and contacts.
The future

ECTS accreditation
IdeaLab as a Specialized Training Course

“Research track” of IdeaLab
Business planning for researchers
Tech Transfer & Entrepreneurship

www.tecminho.uminho.pt