



HEinnovate Information Session

June 12, 2025



Agenda

10.30 – 10.35: **Welcome and opening**

10.35 – 10.45: **Introducing HEInnovate and its 8 dimensions**

10.45 – 10.55: **Introduction to HEInnovate Resources**

10.55 – 11.15: **The experience of New Bulgarian University with HEInnovate**

11.15 – 11.25: **Open Discussion and Q&A**

11.25 – 11.30: **Closing and Next Steps**

About HEInnovate

- A **free** self-assessment **tool** for higher education institutions to evaluate their **entrepreneurial** and **innovative** capacity
- Developed by the **European Commission** in partnership with the **OECD**
- Higher education institutions assess themselves in **key areas, rating statements** on a scale from 1 to 5

Key benefits:

- Helps institutions **identify strengths** and **areas for development**
- Supports **continuous improvement** through **training, case studies**, and **action guides**
- Enables **internal** and **historical comparisons** but **not** a **benchmarking** tool

How to use HEInnovate



Individual

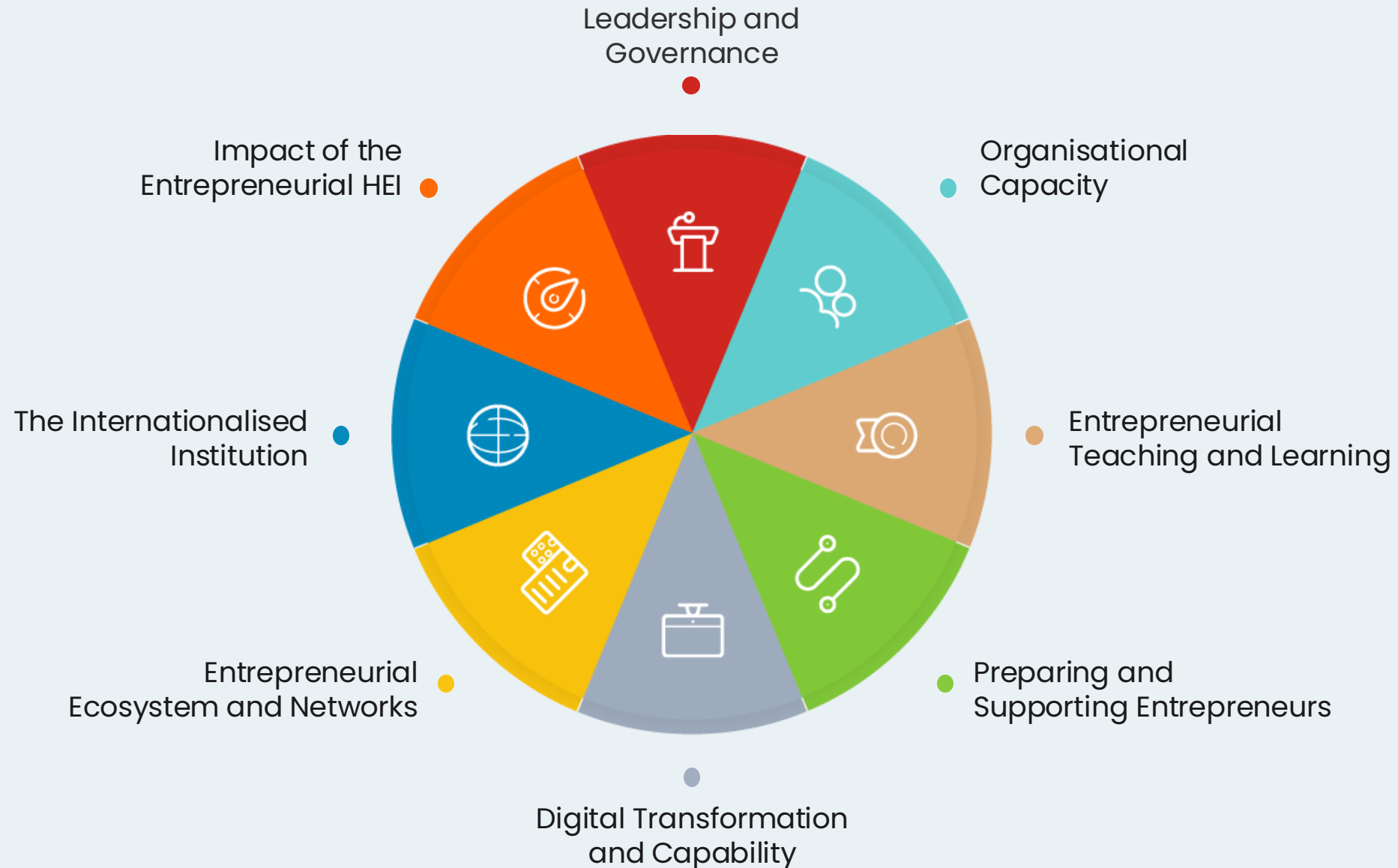
User evaluates their institution's entrepreneurship and innovative capacity



Group

Multiple users can complete assessments and compare results

The 8 dimensions of HEInnovate





Leadership & Governance

- Prioritises entrepreneurship and innovation in the **institution's strategy**.
- Ensures **leadership commitment** to fostering an entrepreneurial culture.
- Establishes **accountable governance structures** to support innovation.





Organisational Capacity: People, Resources, Incentives and Rewards

- Allocates necessary **resources and funding** for entrepreneurial initiatives.
- Develops **staff skills and expertise** to drive innovation.
- Implements **incentive systems** to encourage entrepreneurial activities.





Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning

- Integrates entrepreneurship into **curricula across disciplines**.
- Utilises **interactive and experiential learning methods**.
- Promotes development of **entrepreneurial mindsets and skills** among students.





Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs

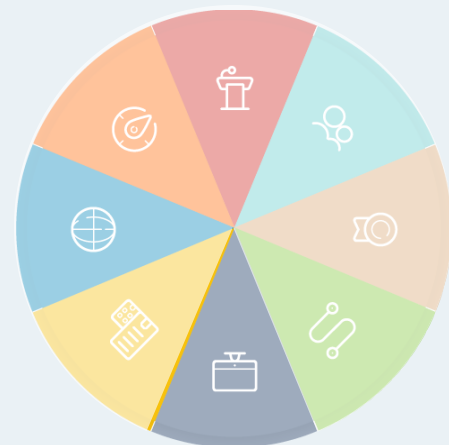
- Offers **mentorship and guidance** for startup development.
- Provides access to **incubators, accelerators, and funding opportunities.**
- Facilitates **networking** with industry experts and entrepreneurs.





Digital Transformation and Capacity

- Integrates **digital technologies** into teaching, research, and operations.
- Enhances **digital skills** among staff and students.
- Utilizes **digital tools** to foster innovation and entrepreneurial activities.





Entrepreneurial Ecosystem & Networks

- Builds partnerships with **businesses, government, and community organisations.**
- Engages in **knowledge exchange** and **collaborative projects.**
- Contributes to **regional and local economic development.**





The Internationalised Institution

- Encourages **international collaborations** and partnerships.
- Attracts a diverse body of **international students and staff**.
- Integrates **global perspectives** into curricula and research.



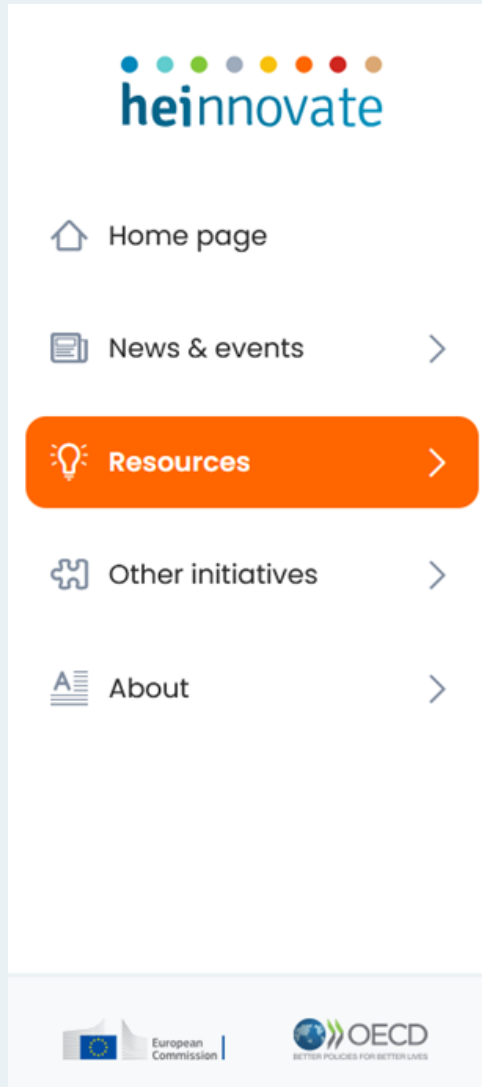


Impact of the Entrepreneurial HEI

- Regularly **evaluates the outcomes** of entrepreneurial and innovative activities.
- Uses assessment results to **inform strategic decisions**.
- **Communicates** achievements and impact to **stakeholders**.



HEInnovate Resources

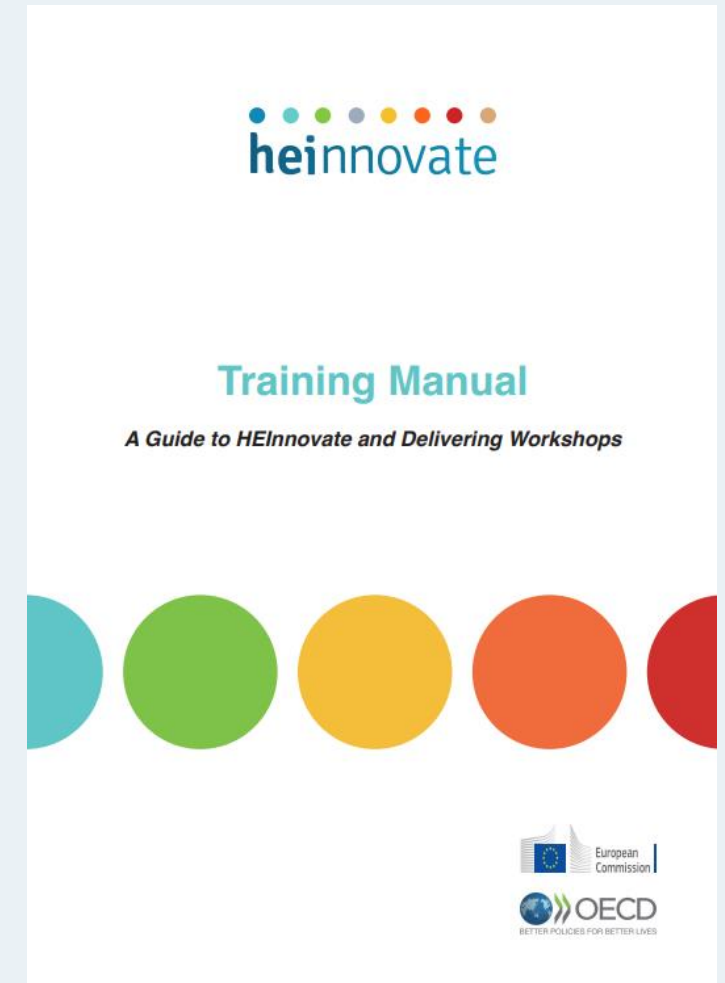


The HEInnovate Resources section offers a variety of materials to support higher education institutions in enhancing their entrepreneurial and innovative capacities:

- **Guidance Notes:** Concise documents linked to specific HEInnovate self-assessment statements, offering ideas and advice to advance institutional practices and strategies.
- **Country Reviews:** Comprehensive reports prepared by the OECD, analysing the entrepreneurial landscape of higher education within various countries (until 2021).

Training Materials

- The HEInnovate self-assessment tool works best if it is used as part of a process for HEIs who are exploring their entrepreneurial and innovative potential rather than in isolation.
- The training materials were designed to:
 - Help HEIs integrate HEInnovate into a broader development process
 - Support the planning and facilitation of workshops for discussion and action planning
- They include draft agendas, participant guidance, presentation templates, and evaluation forms
- Provide tools such as action sheets and downloadable statements in all EU languages
- Helps to turn self-assessment results into meaningful dialogue and strategic next steps



HEInnovate Resources



Case Studies

Detailed examples showcasing diverse institutional approaches and best practices across the eight dimensions of HEInnovate.



Testimonials

Highlighting the experiences of HEIs that have undertaken the HEInnovate self-assessment, including lessons learned and outcomes achieved.

Action Cards

- Offer customised recommendations based on your institution's entrepreneurial profile (7 stages from Aspirant to Guru)
- Each profile includes a dedicated set of action cards with practical, evidence-based guidance
- Recommendations draw from real case studies and expert interviews across diverse HEIs
- Organised around the 8 dimensions of the HEInnovate framework to support focused development



Action Cards – Institutional Profiles



Only for registered users!

PROFILE SCORE

We used the following averages based on your self-assessment completion to assign an institutional profile for action planning to you.



Leadership and Governance



Organisational Capacity: People, Resources, Incentives and Rewards



Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning



Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs



Digital Transformation and Capability



Entrepreneurial Ecosystem and Networks



The Internationalised Institution



Impact of the Entrepreneurial HEI

- The Entrepreneurial Aspirant
- The Builder
- The Educator

★ The Internal Performer

- The Regional Performer
- The International Performer
- The Guru

★ RECOMMENDED ROLE

The Internal Performer HEI offers resources to its academic staff to integrate entrepreneurial learning into the classroom. Additionally, the HEI offers extracurricular entrepreneurship courses and regular activities that foster entrepreneurship and innovation among students and educators. The Internal Performer HEI has also initiated other entrepreneurial programmes to provide training and support to would-be entrepreneurs. This includes, for instance, incubation programmes and mentoring for start-ups and entrepreneurs-to-be. The Internal Performer has the potential to grow in the area of knowledge and exchange collaboration by working with other partners (HEIs, enterprise agencies and other stakeholders) to exchange resources and ideas.

Dimension criteria to consider for this profile:

✓	Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning	≥ 3.5
✓	Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs	≥ 3.5
✓	Entrepreneurial Ecosystem and Networks	< 3.5



Entrepreneurship Board or Council

Actions & Formats

Form an entrepreneurship council that brings together local key stakeholders.

Create an entrepreneurship board to challenge and mentor your organisation. Include internal decision-makers and external stakeholders on the board.

Set up a scientific council of advisors to advance your entrepreneurship research agenda.

Timespan

Medium-term

Medium-term

Long-term



Entrepreneurship Board or Council

Regular checks by external stakeholders and experts can provide necessary feedback to craft a realistic yet ambitious entrepreneurship strategy for your HEI. An entrepreneurship board or council can provide non-binding strategic advice to your HEI, interest group or department.

An internal entrepreneurship board could comprise relevant stakeholders, such as vice-presidents, rectors and deans who provide context-specific counsel and help with supporting new initiatives. An external board may consist of national and international entrepreneurship experts who can provide strategic insights into current developments within the field.

A regional entrepreneurship council made up of local industry representatives, politicians and other relevant stakeholders can help connect your activities to the existing local entrepreneurial ecosystem.

If you are part of a research-driven HEI, setting up a scientific council may provide valuable guidance on strengthening your international research profile.

Applicable Profiles

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4 Internal Performer, 5 Regional Performer,
6 International Performer, 7 Guru



From Aspiration to Action: Applying HEInnovate to Foster Entrepreneurial Transformation



Juliana Vassileva | June 12, 2025



Introduction

- HEInnovate Trainer the Trainers matters
- HEInnovate as a tool for transformation
- “Entrepreneurship is not a course, It's a culture shift.” as key premise

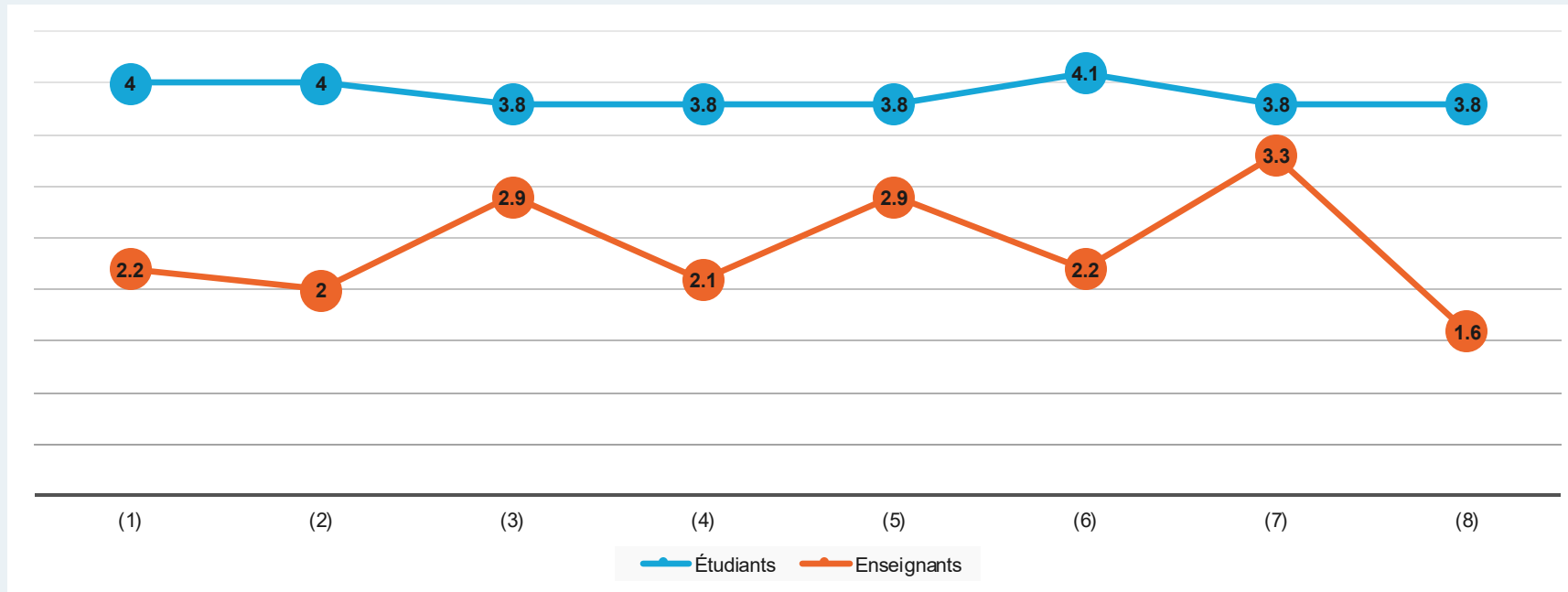
Institutional Context & Motivation

- NBU as leading private HEI
- Need to structure and scale entrepreneurial activity
- Institutional goals: stronger student engagement, innovation, societal impact
- Challenge: decentralized entrepreneurial efforts, no dedicated incubation unit
- Vision: toward an Entrepreneurial University (EU), based on EU models and the “Third Mission”

HEInnovate Implementation

- Mixed-method approach: self-assessment, surveys, focus groups discussion (Students & Faculty)
- Integration with GUESSS survey data
- All Dimensions studied: Leadership, Learning, Knowledge Exchange, Impact
- Tool used as reflection and benchmarking mechanism (Students vs Faculty)

HEInnovate assessment by dimensions (2023)



Note : (1) Direction et gouvernance, (2) Capacité d'organisation, (3) Enseignement et apprentissage, (4) Préparer et soutenir les entrepreneurs, (5) Transformation et capacité numérique, (6) Échange de connaissances et collaboration, (7) Internationalisation, (8) Mesurer l'impact.

Key Insights & Perception Gaps

● *Strengths Identified:*

- High student engagement in entrepreneurship (44% aim to be entrepreneurs in 5 years (GUESSS, 2023))
- Diverse extracurricular ecosystem: hackathons, pitching, startup visits
- Flexible program pathways (major, minor, electives)
- Faculty-led bottom-up innovation culture
- Bottom-up multiple initiatives

● *Challenges Identified:*

- Lack of formal incubator/acceleration infrastructure
- Gaps in entrepreneurial leadership and institutional strategy
- Divergent perceptions: students (4.1/5) vs faculty (3.2/5)
- Weak mechanisms for funding student ventures

Actions Taken & Impact

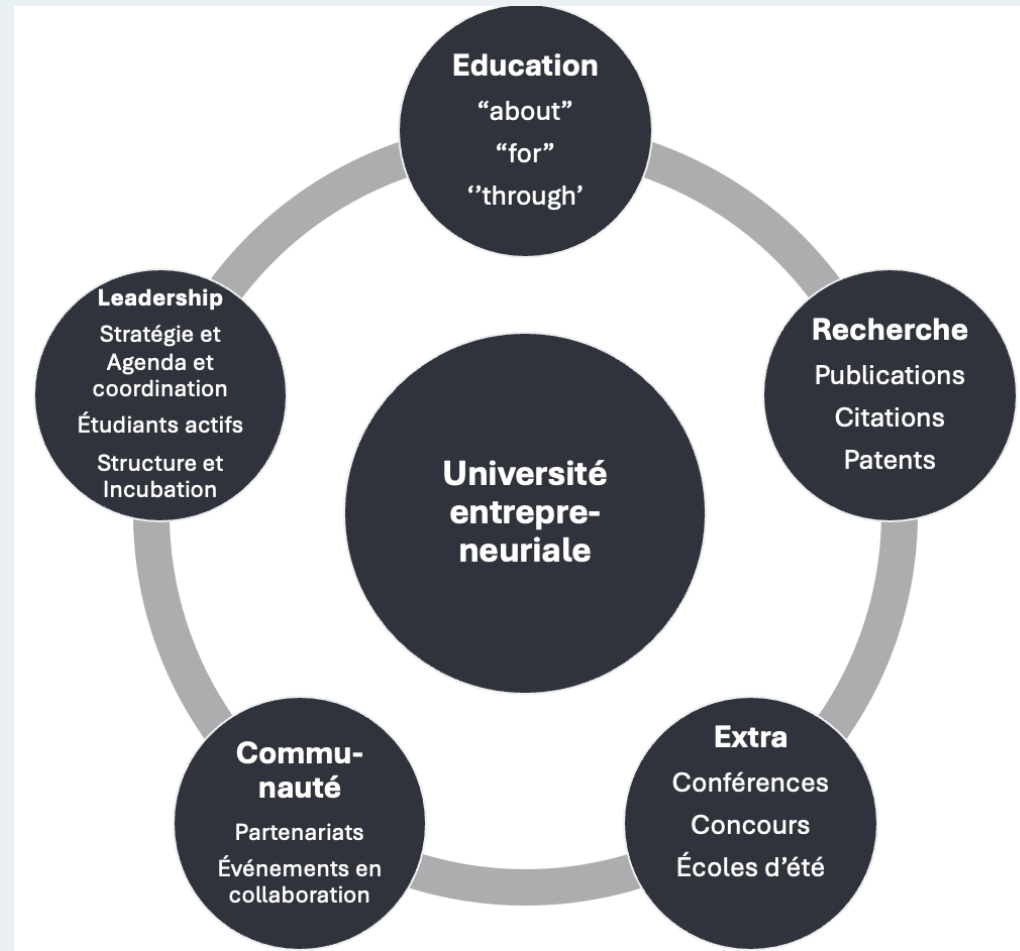
- Cross-faculty, U2U, B2U & U2B collaboration on entrepreneurial projects and assignments
- Discussions toward entrepreneurship center & co-working space
- Alignment with ERUA innovation objectives for creativity and experimentation (Startup Bootcamp)

Quote from faculty and students

- Business and entrepreneurship students at NBU feel that it is *“easy for them to get feedback on their ideas by asking their lecturers for proper advice”*, but they feel that this is not the same for students from other disciplines who do not have direct contact with entrepreneurship and business lecturers (S1). Many suggested creating a *“system”* (mechanism) to help all students in a structured and systematic way.
- For example, by creating a centre for entrepreneurship, commercialisation and/or an incubator (S2, S6, S9, S12) to *“help innovative students develop their business dreams”* (S2), or a *“business club”* where *“different ideas from different students can be discussed and implemented”* and to create the opportunity to communicate easily with people from the business environment, in particular by creating a dedicated platform for this purpose (S4), as well as obtaining funding by establishing relationships with *“funding sources such as innovation funds and programmes, such as StartUP, SeedBlink, Amundi, Peer-to-Peer, Eleven Ventures”* (S3), and developing links with industrial partners, in particular to obtain more internships and jobs (S5, S10, S12)
- Systematic efforts needed towards full-scale Entrepreneurial university on all levels – strategic and operational (F)

EU model

(Hadjitchoneva&Tsafack Nanfosso, 2023)



Context and development of EU

Specificities	NUB
External factors	
E1. Public policy/strategy (promoting entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship)	+
E2. Partnership with public institutions	++
E3. Partnership with local authorities	+++
E4. Partnership with specialised organisations (tech-parc, business incubators)	++
E5. Partnership with businesses	++
E6. Support from NGOs (funding, mentoring, etc.)	+
E7. Regulation (commercialisation of research results and economic valorisation)	+
E8. Entrepreneurial society and culture ++ Internal factors	++
Internal factors	
I1. University strategy (entrepreneurship mentioned)	+
I2. Entrepreneurial agenda	-
I3. Management position (e.g. at vice-rectorate level) and co-ordination	-
I4. Organisational structure (entrepreneurship centre, marketing centre)	-
I5. Initiatives by faculties, departments, academic staff	+++
I6. Entrepreneurship bachelor's degree programmes	+++
I7. Master's programmes in entrepreneurship	+
I8. Entrepreneurship courses for a whole specialization (non-business students)	++
I9. Feasibility and validation of the entrepreneurial idea	+
I10. Mentoring	++
I11. Pitching	++
I12. Entrepreneur meetings and networking	+++
I13. Incubator/Accelerator	+
I14. Office space/co-working space	+
I15. Experimental laboratories/FabLab/Prototyping	+
I16. Financing	+
I17. Hackathons/competitions	+
I18. Inspiring and encouraging teachers	++
I19. Acceleration programmes	-
I20. Active student association	+
I21. Professional and continuing training (long-life learning)	+
I22. Support for alumni (funding, mentoring, angel investment)	+

Rating: +++ (strongly influenced/supported/developed), ++ (moderately influenced/supported/developed), + (weakly influenced/supported/developed), - (not applicable/not influenced/not developed)

Lessons Learned

- HEInnovate isn't just diagnostic—it's a **conversation starter**
- **Institutional culture** matters more than structure
- Bottom-up enthusiasm needs **top-down structure** to scale
- **Student feedback** and proactiveness is a vital compass for progress

Next Steps

- Institutionalize support structures: incubator, mentoring, funding?
- Extend HEInnovate assessment across departments and ERUA partnership
- Stronger engagement of alumni and local business ecosystem as mentors and sponsors
- Measure long-term impact via startup outcomes and GUESSS follow-up

Closing Message & Key Message

- "To know in order to act, and act in order to know." – Hägg & Kurczewska
- Entrepreneurial transformation is a long-term process
- "Entrepreneurial transformation doesn't happen overnight. But with tools like HEInnovate, we can measure, mobilize, and multiply change—one insight at a time."



Q&A Session

Upcoming events and opportunities to engage

- **Train the Trainer (3 sessions per year):**

- Fully funded session to help you lead HEInnovate workshops in your institution

- **Share Your Experience:**

- Used HEInnovate? Reach out to contribute a testimonial
- Got a good practice in innovation or entrepreneurship? Contact us to develop a case study

- **Info Sessions and workshops:**

- Stay tuned for upcoming events

- **Host Workshops:**

- Facilitate group assessments and strategic planning on campus.

- **Join the Community for Educational Innovation**

- To connect with like-minded institutions and individuals



Thank you for joining! If you have any further questions, please contact us at info@heinnovate.eu

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