



Supporting the entrepreneurial potential of higher education

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Case Brief: University of Malta



UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
L-Università ta' Malta

University of Malta (UoM) is situated in the town of Msida on the north-eastern coast of Malta. It is the highest teaching institution in Malta, with approximately 11,000 students, including a large body of international students. UoM has 14 different faculties and various interdisciplinary institutes and centres. Besides the main Msida campus, there are two other campuses. The Valletta campus situated in the capital and the Gozo Campus on Malta's sister-island, Gozo. One of UoM's broader aims, through the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Incubation, is to foster socio-economic development in Malta by transforming entrepreneurial initiatives into real-world activities, such as the creation of enterprises.

Entrepreneurial education (EE) at UoM aims to promote entrepreneurship in general, and also more particularly seeks to foster a "knowledge-intensive entrepreneurial culture", i.e. the process of transforming scientific advancements into marketable goods and services. EE is integrated into the curriculum through curricular and extra-curricular offers. Courses and study units such as "Entrepreneurship and Business Venturing" and "Entrepreneurship and Innovation" are taught at the Department of Management within the Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy, and the Edward de Bono Institute, named after the renowned Maltese physician, as part of a Master programme in "Creativity and Innovation". The Institute is also the National Host for the "Global Entrepreneurship Week" activities in Malta.

At the forefront of all EE initiatives is the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Incubation (CEBI). The centre has quickly grown to undertake major entrepreneurial activities aimed at providing a "hands-on, practical learning approach" to students. In 2013, it started the development of a Master programme in "Knowledge-based Entrepreneurship" with Isis Innovation Ltd., the technology transfer arm of the University of Oxford. The Master programme is an intensive training programme (ITP) for graduates. It is taught in four week-long bursts over two semesters, using traditional teaching methods such as lectures and seminars. The programme consists of seven study-units, and mentored feasibility and business planning projects.

The Knowledge Transfer Office of the UoM and CEBI launched the TAKEOFF Business Incubator in 2014 – an innovative start-up development space on the UoM campus, which provides facilities and business support to entrepreneurs. It has also collaborated with other incubators in Malta to create an online community of entrepreneurs that hosts informal meetings, conferences and seed-funding events. CEBI has succeeded in launching Malta's first funding programme, the "TAKEOFF Seed Fund Award", a joint initiative with the Ministry for the Economy, Industry and Small Business (MEIB) intended to fund early start-ups.

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