



## Universities as Centers of Dynamic Entrepreneurship

European Foundation for Entrepreneurship Research

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Europe needs more gazelles; high growth companies that are able to grow both locally and across borders (Breeding More Gazelles: The role of European Universities, EFER, 2004). Universities have an opportunity to play a key role in the development and growth of the entrepreneurial eco-system. However, this requires a rethinking of the role of the university and engagement with the local business community, entrepreneurs and alumni.

In this study, presented in Berlin in November 2006, EFER analyzed eight universities from Europe and the U.S., which serve as entrepreneurial hubs. These included:

- Technical University of Munich (TUM), Germany
- University of Cambridge, U.K
- MIT, Cambridge, U.S.A;
- London Business School, U.K.
- Stanford University, Palo Alto, U.S.A
- Harvard Business School, Boston, U.S.A
- Lomonosov Moscow University, Russia
- ESC Grenoble, France

The study showed that there are many different ways in which universities serve as centers of dynamic entrepreneurship and breeding grounds for high growth oriented gazelles. At the same time, there were several key themes which were evident across the schools:

- Entrepreneurship well integrated into the curriculum
- Entrepreneurship courses offered for students across disciplines
- Degree programs or specialization available
- Partnerships with other schools (often between business schools and technical universities but also across borders)
- Strong links and partnerships with the business community
- Recognition and involvement of the school's alumni often leading to significant financial support
- Funding and support for entrepreneurial ideas developed by researchers, students and alumni
- Creating spin outs (most often from the technical universities)
- Developing and sharing entrepreneurship research, courses materials and cases
- Encouraging exchange of practices with other schools and across borders, including running workshops and training programs for teachers (professors, entrepreneurs and others)

Universities play an important role in the entrepreneurial eco-system. Often these efforts are led by champions within the university but they also require a strong commitment from the university leadership. **FOR A COPY OF THE DETAILED STUDY, PLEASE CONTACT EFER AT [wvanderluur@efer.nl](mailto:wvanderluur@efer.nl)**

### About EFER

The European Foundation for Entrepreneurship Research (EFER) fosters and promotes research and teaching in the field of entrepreneurship at institutions of higher education across Western and Eastern Europe. Since it was founded in 1987, EFER has conducted research studies comparing entrepreneurship in the U.S. and Europe and generated support for 50 European case studies. EFER initiated "Teach-The-Teachers" program in the early 1990's with the support of Harvard Business School. Through these programs, EFER has focused on building linkages between academia and students in Eastern and Western Europe. Over the years, numerous other HBS alumni, banks, venture capital firms, universities, entrepreneurs and international organizations have supported and been actively involved in EFER's activities. For further information, see [www.efer.nl](http://www.efer.nl).