



Discussion Paper - Thematic session 3:

"A new faculty" - collaboration between academia and industry

Panel:

Moderator: *Prof. Rosette S'Jegers* - Secretary General of the Flemish Universities' Association

Participants:

Dr. Yrjö Neuvo - EIT Governing Board and Executive Committee

Bert Vandenkendelaere - President of the European Students' Union

Prof. Robert Zemsky - Chair of the Learning Alliance for Higher Education, University of Pennsylvania

Francois Weiss, Advisor of the President, Grenoble Institute of Technology and KIC InnoEnergy – CC Alps Valleys
Education Manager

Rapporteur: *Peter Baur* - Deputy Head of Unit EIT and Economic Partnerships, DG EAC, European Commission

The objective:

This session's objective is to discuss and explore how academia, industry and other stakeholders can collaborate in the education process and how this could be applied in the context of the EIT in general and EIT KICs in particular. The discussions should lead to 3-5 recommendations from the panel and the audience to the EIT.

The context:

The competitiveness of economies is increasingly dependent on the availability of a qualified and entrepreneurial workforce. The *New Skills and Jobs* initiative has confirmed that the EU's need for highly-qualified and entrepreneurial graduates will continue to grow in the years ahead. At the same time, enterprises have for many years been reporting a mismatch between the competences of graduates as they emerge from universities and the qualifications which they seek as employers.

In the European higher education landscape, a consensus has emerged over the past years on the need for a comprehensive change to curricula and learning methods and notably for the inclusion of transversal skills, such as communication and presentation skills, team and leadership skills, etc.

Examination methods should also be more geared towards the assessment of learning outcomes and competences, i.e. what a person knows, understands and is able to do. Traditional boundaries between disciplines have become obsolete in many regards when it comes to tackling new and often global challenges. This development should be reflected by more inter-disciplinarity and trans-disciplinarity in education and research agendas. This requires a departure from traditional concepts of designing and delivering study programmes, with a far more intensive collaboration between academia and business.

The EIT will play an exemplary role in putting these approaches into practice, as one of the EIT's "*raison d'être*" is to improve the working of the knowledge triangle of education, research and innovation. A "new faculty" that overcomes the traditional boundaries between disciplines as well as between places of teaching, of research and of application is needed. The purpose of this thematic session is to explore how the KICs can provide an environment that will stimulate the much needed collaboration both within academia and between academia and business.



Discussion Questions:

- How can the different KIC partners, students and professional bodies be engaged in the design and delivery of the curriculum in order to ensure that the study programmes become more relevant to the labour market and provide the right mix of (transversal) skills and competences for employability across sectors?
- How can the KICs ensure they provide a stimulating research environment and innovative research training, particularly for PhD candidates, preparing them for later research careers in and/or with companies?
- How can the KICs ensure that all participants – i.e. universities, business and research centres – see the added value of a strong involvement of the business side in curricular development? What would be a balanced division of responsibilities in this respect?
- How can the KICs demonstrate the added value of such cooperation? Which criteria should be used to measure the impact?
- There are a number of challenges and barriers to the development of cooperation between academia and industry. A crucial issue is the management of IPR. How can the KICs and their collocation centres overcome these challenges and stimulate knowledge sharing among KIC partners, staff and students?
- How could the KICs serve as role model for promoting the spirit of a “new faculty” (e.g. by offering teaching assignments to practitioners from businesses, by inciting academics to upgrade their knowledge and experience through stays in enterprises, etc.)?