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## Innovation meets entrepreneurship in event at CERN <sup>[1]</sup>

Friday, 27 November, 2015



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On Thursday 26 November, CERN openlab hosted an event on innovation and entrepreneurship. The event, which was organised in collaboration with the CERN Knowledge Transfer Group <sup>[3]</sup> and IdeaSquare <sup>[4]</sup>, was attended by over 80 people. It was supported by CERN openlab partner company Intel <sup>[5]</sup> as part of a joint project on innovation and entrepreneurship <sup>[6]</sup>.

?CERN is a unique environment, where technology is pushed to the limits and innovation really happens,? explains Alberto Di Meglio, head of CERN openlab, ?Research is a powerful source of innovation. We want to maximise the impact of our research; not only for physics, but also in terms of industrial excellence, societal impacts, return on investment, and value creation.?

During the event, participants had the opportunity to discuss their own business ideas one-to-one with invited experts. They provided tailored advice and helped the participants to assess the technical and business feasibility of their proposals.

### **The importance of well-balanced teams**

The event also featured presentations on commercialisation, public-private partnership, intellectual property, and other topics related to innovation and entrepreneurship.

Andrzej Kusmierz, an assistant professor in the strategy department at the Kozminski University in Poland, spoke about the importance of building balanced teams for start-up companies, explaining that a researcher who has an idea must find people to work with who

have different, business-related skills. It's important to open your networks, break silos, and build bridges.

This was echoed by Pawel Bochniarz, who is in charge of innovation and public aid practice at PwC Poland. He stressed the importance of researchers with business ideas building relationships, adding that they must be ready to cede control to others – those with the appropriate skills – when it comes to commercialisation. During his talk, which gave attendees a brief overview of what industry is looking for in partnerships with science, he also spoke of the need for companies of all sizes to innovate: 'Competitive advantage is only temporary; innovation is a must, not a choice.'

### **Further perspectives on innovation, entrepreneurship, and more**

Ophir Marko, a patent attorney specialising in start-up companies, who himself has much experience as an entrepreneur, presented attendees with an overview of intellectual property laws. And Bert Quint, a business development director with a strong background in life sciences, gave attendees an overview of some of the emerging healthcare-related areas in which new start-up businesses could potentially provide innovative solutions.

Another perspective was provided by Enrico Giuliani, who is the founder and CEO of a start-up company called Neuron Guard. Having worked as an anaesthesiologist, he came up with a new system of protecting the human brain during emergencies, such as in the case of stroke, cardiac arrest, or traumatic brain injury. He too emphasised the importance of building a good team. 'You need to collaborate with others who have a range of competencies,' says Giuliani. 'It's changed me deeply: it's given me wealth of experience and knowledge beyond my wildest imagination.' He continues: 'Working on a start-up company is a journey: you know where you want to be, but you don't necessarily know how you're going to get there.'

'According to the initial feedback we got, the knowledge imparted through the presentations at the event, along with the one-to-one discussion sessions, has equipped the participants with at least a map and a compass for the journey,' concludes Di Meglio.

*Stay tuned for more information: a second event will be organised by summer 2016.*

[Agenda of the event and Indico link](#) <sup>[7]</sup>

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