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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

EEE Project International Launch was held in London

Hosted at the Mermaid Theatre London on the 20th of June, EEE Project International Launch brought together a diverse group of practitioners, researchers, policy makers and program managers from across the world. The event was held alongside the University-Industry Interaction Conference that allowed the dissemination of project results to larger groups of audiences. The launch program was designed in three sections; the panel Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education – Global Experiences, EEE Project introduction and showcasing of results, and the interactive Workshop Fostering Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education, a mix of activities that combined learning, knowledge exchange and hands-on practice.

The Global Experiences session started off with short presentations by the panellists, Ingrid Wakkee, Professor of Entrepreneurship at Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, Rodney Ridley, Executive Director of Allan P. Kirby Center for Free Enterprise & Entrepreneurship at Wilkes University and Silvia McCormack, Acting Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor at La Trobe University Australia. During their presentations, the panellists elaborated on the status-quo of the entrepreneurial education in their institutions, success factors, and challenges they tackle in establishing working structures. The diversity of speaker profiles and experiences led to lively discussions between the participants and the experts, with leading questions addressing e.g. assessment of entrepreneurship education, motivation of academics to adopt new approaches to teaching, expansion of entrepreneurial teaching and mind-sets across all study fields, and culture of start-up failure in European vs. American context.

This session was followed by EEE project introduction and showcasing of the results presented by Florian Bratzke of Univations GmbH, who provided information about the project timeline, outputs and the nature of the stakeholder interaction in the Halle region, in Germany. Further input into the project outputs and regional impact was provided by Christine Pirhofer from Management Center Innsbruck (MCI), and Szabolcs Pronay from the University of Szeged, representatives of the two university partners of the project consortium. These presentations provided a deeper insight into the individual journeys of the institutions during project development and implementation, as well as informing the audience on the most recent advancements in Szeged, and in the region of Tirol, concerning stakeholder collaboration and start-up ecosystems.

The third component of the international launch program, the workshop Fostering Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education was facilitated by Thorsten Kliewe, in a structure that followed three steps of group work: identification of current challenges in the promotion of entrepreneurship education, development of scaling and funding proposal ideas, and pitching of the developed ideas to the audience. The exercise attracted interest of the participants, due to its interactive nature that fostered discussions on institutional challenges, exchange of experiences, and generation of joint solutions to the common problems identified.

The major challenges addressed by the groups included difficulties with expanding the reach of the entrepreneurial education across all disciplines, lack of opportunities offered to PhDs in adopting an entrepreneurial approach to translate their research into business models, and unavailability of assessment models for entrepreneurial teaching and learning at the universities. This phase was followed by the groups having another round of discussions on whether there is an existing approach that might address these challenges, or fresh new ideas have to be developed. In the last step, the teams visualised their solutions on flip charts, and pitched them to the other team members for further opinion and feedback.

The workshop was concluded with a call for attention to the development of soft skills, and recognition of it by the higher education institutions. When integrated into the curriculum, not as an add-on course or an isolated content but rather an embedded skill present in all subjects, entrepreneurship can find a ground to flourish among learners and staff, both as a mind-sets and a valuable competence.

While the project is approaching to the end of its lifetime, the outputs presented in the EEE platform will be kept updated. Stay tuned!