

InnovEgypt Program

Executive Summary



This document represents executive summary of the InnovEgypt program. InnovEgypt program is an undergraduate 6-day program in Innovation and Entrepreneurship for university students in ICT specializations who are aspiring to be future innovators and entrepreneurs.

InnovEgypt

Introduction

“Innovation and Entrepreneurship” has become a key driver of equitable economic growth, and has immense potential as a generator of employment opportunities. Therefore, developing culture and skills of entrepreneurial thinking within the communities in which we live and work has become a focus for governments and societies worldwide.

One of the main mandates of Technology Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center (TIEC) is to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the ICT sector in Egypt. Among many strategic initiatives that have been developed to contribute to this promotion come the capacity building programs. Capacity building programs are directed to university students to provide the necessary education and training in the area of innovation and entrepreneurship that the current education system lacks. Experts reported that entrepreneurship education and training¹ in Egypt is poor or inadequate, and according to GEM² 2012, the entrepreneurship education at university level in Egypt valued negative. The studies³ also show that the proportion of individuals who received any training in starting a business either in or after school, was 8% in Egypt, compared to innovation-driven economies such as Finland that reported 48 % in the same year.

Building on global studies’ recommendations to embed entrepreneurship education early at university stage, while expanding the government support for innovation and entrepreneurship, TIEC has taken the initiative to launch an ambitious program under the name of “InnovEgypt” with the aim of providing widespread education and training in the area of innovation, and entrepreneurship. This would enable students to acquire innovation and entrepreneurship skills that they can use to start innovative businesses and that are imperative to bridge the supply-demand gap for qualified graduates.

Why “Innovation and Entrepreneurship” Education is Important?

Evidence from elsewhere, in particular industrialized countries, indicates that innovation and entrepreneurship education at university level plays important role in the contribution to economic growth. Experts in the field of entrepreneurship believe that the contribution

¹ Entrepreneurship education focuses on the development and application of an enterprising mindset and skills in the specific contexts of setting up a new venture, developing and growing an existing business, or designing an entrepreneurial organisation.

² The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) project is an annual assessment of the entrepreneurial activity, aspirations, and attitudes of individuals across a wide range of countries. Initiated in 1999 as a partnership between London Business School and Babson College. The GEM 2012 Global Report, launched on 17th January. <http://www.gemconsortium.org/docs>

³ Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2008: <http://www.gemconsortium.org/docs>

of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to the growth of Egypt can be much higher if entrepreneurship education is implemented at university level⁴. Better entrepreneurship education could make a significant contribution to job creation and ultimately to poverty alleviation.

For all countries in the GEM Survey⁵, the 25-34 age group had the highest early stage entrepreneurial activity (regardless of economy type), but the group with the next highest rate in Egypt was the 18-24 years old, which is not common of all other countries⁴. Thus, Egypt's young population gives it a strong entrepreneurial advantage. Accordingly, university-based innovation and entrepreneurship programs can have a tremendous positive impact on individual students, and the university environment, hence the regional economy at large⁶. It is also the key to the success of establishing a culture of entrepreneurship. To summarize, benefits include:

- Helping students to develop entrepreneurial capabilities that can be applied in a range of contexts.
- Encouraging students to consider new venture creation and self-employment as valid graduate career options.
- Helping students to develop an awareness of intellectual assets and enhance their capacity to manage and exploit them.
- Increasing the number of graduate start-up businesses.
- Providing valuable employees for local companies.
- Building the community network.
- Regional economic growth.

What is InnovEgypt program?

InnovEgypt Program is an undergraduate unique program in the area of innovation and entrepreneurship directed to university students in ICT specializations who are aspiring to be future innovators and entrepreneurs, either through establishing their own innovative start-ups or through manifesting skills that are highly required by local and multinational companies.

To attain this objective, InnovEgypt program focuses on teaching the theory and practice that support the launch and growth of IT-based companies. The program builds upon the technical strengths of engineers, providing frameworks to lead, foster, and manage innovation and technology. This unique, cross-cutting approach allows students to develop capabilities for leading innovation while growing and leveraging their own areas of technical expertise.

⁴ Egypt Human Development Report 2010

⁵ Survey includes total of 69 participating economies

⁶ Stanford technology ventures program, "Fostering Entrepreneurship Education at the university"

General Objective

InnovEgypt program aims at creating an Egyptian base of qualified calibers of potential innovators and entrepreneurs by providing widespread training in innovation and technology management and in entrepreneurship for undergraduates based on best practices and lessons learned. The main objectives of the program are fourfold:

1. Introducing the basic knowledge of innovation and technology management.
2. Learning about Innovation protection through intellectual property (IP) rights and its related topics as copyrights, patents, trademarks, and IP exchange.
3. Enabling students to generate innovative ideas addressing real challenges using structured brainstorming techniques.
4. Developing entrepreneurial skills through introducing the basic concepts of entrepreneurship and applying interactive learning for using essential tools required to start up new businesses.

Why should you have InnovEgypt in your university/faculty?

There are many reasons to adopt InnovEgypt program in your faculty/university, this would include, but not limited to, the following:

- Student demand for exposure to innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Supporting establishment of and joining healthy economic ecosystem.
- Enhancing the quality of graduation projects' ideas.
- High probability of establishing new businesses building upon the graduation projects' ideas.
- Successful entrepreneurs eventually give back to the community.

Target Group

TIEC believes that ICT specialists need entrepreneurial skills, either to establish their new businesses or to be successful at all levels within an organization. Large pool of ICT graduates enters the workforce every year, with almost 30,000 students⁷ from faculties of engineering and technical institutes. This is in addition to graduates from faculties of computer science and other ICT-related departments. Bearing in mind that in the graduation year students are working on their graduation projects that might form the basis for establishing new businesses, the program targets university students in any ICT specialization who are about to join the graduation year. Potential faculties are Faculty of

⁷ CAPMAS , 2007: <http://www.capmas.gov.eg/database.aspx?parentid=373&free=1>

Engineering, Faculty of Computer Science, Faculty of Science – Computer Section, and Faculty of Commerce- Information Systems.

Program Structure

The program comprises 2 main modules described as follows:

- (1) **Innovation and Technology Management Module:** This module provides an interactive course in Innovation and Technology Management essentials. The course provides the basic knowledge of Innovation and Technology Management topics as concepts of innovation, technological innovation, types and sources of innovation, main models of innovation, and tools for managing innovation. Also, it gives students a broad overview of the main topics encompassed by Technology Management such as patterns of technological innovation, technology trends, innovation protection, and how to measure innovation. This would provide students with the opportunity to develop a mind set as well as a tool set that will assist them in managing the technologies and innovation processes that form the cornerstone of firms' competency.
- (2) **Ideation and Entrepreneurship Module:** This module starts with 2-day warming-up Ideation Camp that teaches the students how to use brainstorming techniques to generate innovative business ideas addressing encountered challenges. The camp is followed by covering the basic concepts of entrepreneurship providing detailed knowledge of the essential elements required by potential entrepreneurs to start up their new businesses such as developing business model, calculating start-up cost and budget, learning about different basic business activities, and building a simple business plan.

The whole program is depicted in the figure below.

