

Academic Summit EU-LAC countries
Workshop: Universities as key stakeholders for innovation

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Innovation, in particular technological innovation, is recognized as key for the economic development of a region. In this context, universities can play three important roles: first, they create and develop knowledge that can be valued commercially, secondly, they educate qualified human resources that should contribute to innovation in their professional life as through their impact on society, thirdly, universities, through their strategic alliances with enterprises and governments – territorial pacts for development – can contribute to the development of the socio-institutional conditions which are favourable for the production of public goods, social capital and organizational innovation. In this workshop, we invite scientists and researchers from Europe, Latin America and Caribe to share their experience of academic contribution to innovation and growth. This should allow us to compare practices, to learn lessons from our various contexts and to elaborate concrete opportunities of collaboration in innovation between our two regions.

The workshop will welcome interventions concerning especially the following sub-themes.

(1) University-Industry-Government partnerships for innovation: the Triple Helix dynamics

The Triple Helix model has been proposed in the nineties by Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff in order to explain the exceptional dynamics of some very innovative regions, as the Silicon Valley. They showed that those regions share a particular integration of the academic, entrepreneurial and public worlds. This model has inspired a lot of public policies dedicated to the support of innovation.

On the other hand, the interaction between universities, enterprises and governments (at all levels) produces horizontal relationships, which are the basis for socio-institutional development leading to a local culture of collaboration and innovation (districts, clusters, and the like).

Diverse topics could be looked at in this sub-theme: public policies supporting the collaboration between universities and firms; managerial issues in U-I innovation collaboration; innovation collaborations between small firms and universities, etc.

(2) Valorisation of the scientific knowledge: technology transfer modalities

For some decades, universities are more and more involved in the valorisation of their scientific production. The modalities of such a valorisation are diverse: spin-offs, licensing, vulgarisation, etc. To manage valorisation, universities have created interfaces between researchers and firms: Technology Transfer Offices.

This sub-theme covers also a variety of possible interventions: spin-off cases, TTO experiences, critical approach of the role of universities, intellectual property questions, academic entrepreneurship, etc.

(3) Living Labs: When the university labs integrate communities and consumers

Universities are still considered as being “ivory towers”, very isolated from the society's reality. To improve the integration between academic research and society, new scientific experiences have been launched very recently: living labs. Such labs are embedded in the environment to which they intend to contribute. Technologies and innovations are experimented with users who become co-innovators. This sub-theme should welcome presentations of living labs (or similar) experiences, even at their very early steps, as such research modalities are emergent.