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Author(s): Möttönen, Tuomas; Tunkkari-Eskelinen, Minna

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4 ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS

Tuomas Möttönen & Minna Tunkkari-Eskelinen

The rise of the entrepreneurial society is reflected in the aim of promoting entrepreneurship in society through entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurial education encourages an entrepreneurial attitude. Entrepreneurial education is not just about teaching students to be entrepreneurs; the goal is also to develop a comprehensive attitude and skills. Entrepreneurship education is directed at children and young people, with the aim of promoting a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship, increasing entrepreneurial capacity and developing an entrepreneurial culture. Entrepreneurship education also aims at creating new entrepreneurship in society. This chapter discusses how entrepreneurship education is carried out in Finland and gives examples of regional and educational programs.

The purpose of entrepreneurship education is to influence peoples' entrepreneurial behaviour, skills and beliefs.¹⁹⁶ It is education in which entrepreneurship is understood in a broad sense, and it seeks to influence people's skills, behaviour and beliefs in such a way that they are useful in life, in the world of work and in business, regardless of whether they work as independent entrepreneurs or in the service of other people. The aim is for more and more people to become entrepreneurs and to be entrepreneurial. The starting point is the idea that one can learn and grow as an entrepreneur.¹⁹⁷ However, entrepreneurship education is a broad concept that is not just about growing as an entrepreneur. Today, it is thought that entrepreneurial behaviour is required for everyone in working life as society changes.¹⁹⁸

Entrepreneurship education is part of the overall development of education. It includes the reform of school culture so that entrepreneurial spirit is generally reflected in schools. Entrepreneurship education and the appreciation of entrepreneurship are reflected in the focus on entrepreneurship at all levels of education. Next, the stages of Finnish entrepreneurship education will be discussed.

4.1 FROM ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

In Finland, entrepreneurship education is provided in secondary schools, universities and other adult education institutions. Entrepreneurial education, which promotes entrepreneurial attitudes, means developing entrepreneurial attitudes from primary school onwards.

The beginning of entrepreneurship education is linked to the first phase of promoting economic education in the 1950s and 1960s, when students were taught the basics of economics. Entrepreneurial training did not start until the 1980s. In the 1990s, the current entrepreneurship education phase began. Entrepreneurship training and education became more common concepts.¹⁹⁹

Entrepreneurial training and education can be distinguished by the fact that entrepreneurial training is a short-term activity that promotes professional entrepreneurial skills, while entrepreneurship education helps build entrepreneurial values and attitudes at all stages of life. Entrepreneurship is promoted through a variety of entrepreneurial courses.²⁰⁰

Entrepreneurship training began in some way in the 1970s. At the same time, entrepreneurship began to attract political and research interest. In addition to its cultural significance, education was seen as the goal in order to achieve economic growth. When economic growth factors were identified in smaller companies, the need to train individuals in small businesses began. Initially, it was considered necessary to train entrepreneurs who were already active in business life. This gave rise to the idea of providing training to a wider group of people.²⁰¹

During the deep economic crisis of the early 1990s, the development of entrepreneurship education acquired the importance of labour and economic policy. Its primary starting point was the difficult employment situation. The government had to provide training related to earning a living or strengthening people's labour market skills.²⁰² The current form of entrepreneurship education began in the 1990s. In 1992, the Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI) set up an Entrepreneurship Advisory Board (yrittäjyyden neuvottelukunta in Finnish). Its task was to propose and implement different models to promote entrepreneurship. At that time, network cooperation between the various actors began. Among other things, the Advisory Board developed a basic curriculum (opetussuunnitelmien perusteet in Finnish). Entrepreneurship was more systematically taken into account in the curricula of primary, secondary and vocational education and training institutions, and the curricula were reformed between 1994 and 1995. At the same time, continuing training in

entrepreneurship was planned for teachers, and educational materials suitable for different types of schools and a specialist qualification for entrepreneurs were created. Pilot projects in entrepreneurship education were started in the primary schools in several municipalities.²⁰³

Entrepreneurship education has been a topic in primary and secondary school curricula since the mid-1990s and has been integrated into vocational and higher education. Research on this subject has gradually increased in the scientific community, which has been reflected, for example, in the form of dissertations.²⁰⁴ Today, the number of dissertations on entrepreneurship education in Finland is the largest in the world in relation to the country's population. These dissertations are mainly in the fields of economics and education, with entrepreneurship being studied more widely at the frontiers of different disciplines. A more cross-disciplinary research trend has emerged in entrepreneurship education. From the beginning, Finnish researchers have actively worked in international contexts.²⁰⁵

4.2 UNIVERSITY-LEVEL ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN FINLAND

Entrepreneurship education has been part of the education programs of universities of applied sciences since the early 1990s. Since their establishment, the aim of universities of applied sciences has been to strengthen the links between education and working life and to link teaching to the needs of working life. Entrepreneurship education is therefore an intrinsic strategic priority for universities of applied sciences. There are currently about 30 universities of applied sciences in Finland.²⁰⁶

From early on, Jyväskylä has actively promoted entrepreneurship education, with the Team Academy being a good example (Box 4.1.). In Jyväskylä, entrepreneurship education has moved to a new phase, where cooperation between educational institutions is carried out in accordance with the entrepreneurship strategy of EduFutura Jyväskylä, a learning, research and development community whose members include the Jyväskylä Education Consortium Gradia, JAMK University of Applied Sciences and the University of Jyväskylä. Entrepreneurship studies at educational institutions are based on a common EduFutura entrepreneurial path (see section 4.6). The cooperation between the educational institutions in the Jyväskylä region is described in more detail in Chapter 5.

BOX (4.1.): The Team Academy – Business school without teachers, lectures or exams

The Team Academy is the entrepreneurship unit of JAMK University of Applied Sciences. Students learn at Team Academy by working as entrepreneurs in a real company that they themselves set up. Graduates of Team Academy receive a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration (BBA). All teams go on a trip around the world with the money they make. This is a motivational factor in this model.

Team Academy was founded in 1993 and was based on an idea of Timo Partanen, a JAMK lecturer. The first team called 'Round the World' (RTW) consisted of 24 BBA students. As a new teaching method, typical reading assignments were abandoned and learning was implemented through teamwork and small-scale projects. The projects were created by the students themselves. From the outset, students were important and active participants in building a new learning model. The operation expanded year by year.

At the turn of the millennium, Team Academy was selected as a centre of excellence (koulutuksen huippuyksikkö in Finnish) in Finnish education. Similar training units have been created at other universities, such as Proakatemia, launched in 1999 by Tampere University of Applied Sciences, and InnoAkademia, which was established in Rovaniemi. Later, units utilising the pedagogy of Team Academy's operating model started in Kotka (BusinessAkademia) and Kokkola.

The pedagogy is based on Peter Senge's ideas about learning organisations and the ideas of Ikujiro Nonaka and Hirotaka Takeuchi on the nature of knowledge. The Team Academy teaching concept has been used outside Finland, for example, in Bilbao, Spain, where it continues to challenge old teaching methods and inspire future builders.

SOURCES

Leinonen, Partanen & Palviainen 2002. Websites: <http://tiimiakatemia.fi/fi/info/historia/>; <https://www.tiimiakatemia.fi/english>

Following are examples of entrepreneurship education at universities of applied sciences and how they are linked to the local economy. Similar entrepreneurial studies and programs can be found at other universities. Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SAMK) is profiled as an industrial university, but it is also an entrepreneurship university that acts as an activator for the creation of knowledge-intensive business in Satakunta. In SAMK's strategy, entrepreneurship is seen as an activity supporting strengths and emerging sectors. Today, it is possible for students to complete up to a third of their studies through enterprise accelerator activities. From 2013 onwards, five credits of entrepreneurship studies are mandatory for all students at SAMK. The New Entrepreneur training program was started in 2017. SAMK has long had an enterprise accelerator program. The services of the enterprise accelerator are available to all start-up entrepreneurs and growth entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs receive support for their business ideas, the development of a functioning company or change of ownership. Start-up entrepreneurs aiming for rapid growth will be trained in terms of scalable business ideas. SAMK also invests in start-ups. SAMK is closely linked to the Satakunta region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Much attention has been paid to accelerating the financing of early stage companies.²⁰⁷

Seinäjäki University of Applied Sciences (SeAMK) has received recognition for integrating entrepreneurship into regular studies and learning environments and for developing entrepreneurial activities based on research. Every student takes part in an innovation week. Business administration students implement entrepreneurship in a virtual context. BBA students set up a fictional company in the first year of studies. By joining SeAMK's Y-Zonen Business Hub (Yritystalli), the students can develop their own business ideas while completing a university degree. The students can combine their idea for a company and its development with their studies and thus earn credits. In the Y-Zonen Business Hub, a personal study plan is drawn up. Courses or training events outside SeAMK can be included.²⁰⁸

Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) is an active and cutting-edge developer of entrepreneurship and new business. It has developed new entrepreneurial training concepts that are at the forefront of higher education in this area. TAMK has been using team coaching since the beginning of the 21st century as a tool for learning entrepreneurship. The educational innovations created at TAMK include Proakatemia, Y-kampus and Kykyläakso. The Y-kampus service concept has been adopted throughout the Tampere higher education community.²⁰⁹

Entrepreneurship education began to be implemented at traditional Finnish universities a little later than at universities of applied sciences. Today,

almost all university students in Finland have the opportunity to complete entrepreneurship studies. For example, one can complete entrepreneurship studies online through the University of Lapland.²¹⁰

As a discipline, entrepreneurship education came to universities at the turn of the 21st century. For example, a Master's program in entrepreneurship was started at the University of Jyväskylä in 1996. Dr Paula Kyrö was appointed professor of entrepreneurship in University of Jyväskylä and she will be discussed later in this chapter.

At the end of the 1990s, the University of Jyväskylä implemented Master's and Doctoral programs in entrepreneurship. Professor Matti Koiranen was responsible for the programs, which focused on family entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education. Before the millennium, Paula Kyrö strengthened the subject, and doctoral schools were created in Kokkola with the help of Kokkola University Consortium Chydenius and in Helsinki with the help of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences. At the time, the doctoral students were pedagogical staff of local universities of applied sciences whose qualifications were requested to be upgraded from graduate education. They did their doctorates in economics or social sciences.

Today, at Jyväskylä School of Business and Economics it possible to complete a two-year Master's program in international business and entrepreneurship in the discipline of Management and Leadership.²¹¹ In addition, one can minor in entrepreneurship at the University of Jyväskylä. The University of Jyväskylä also participates in the EduFutura collaboration, which is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology (LUT) has been an active player in the field of entrepreneurship education, particularly since 2003, and has participated in numerous regional, national and international development projects.²¹² In LUT's Industrial Engineering and Management department, one can complete the entrepreneurship Master of Science (Technology) program, which leads to a Master's degree. Today, there is also a doctoral program on entrepreneurship under Industrial Engineering and Management unit.²¹³ The directors are Professor Timo Pihkala and the Director of Entrepreneurship Education, Elena Oikkonen (formerly Ruskovaara). Elena Oikkonen was responsible for the LUT University Entrepreneurship Operational Program in the previous strategic period (2015–2020) when LUT was developed into Finland's first entrepreneurial university. LUT also coordinates the Measurement Tool for Entrepreneurship Education used by several primary schools and a separate university. This is a self-assessment tool for teachers to assess their own entrepreneurialism.

Entrepreneurship studies can be found in different forms in the curriculum of various universities. In the early 1980s, Finland's first professorship in entrepreneurship was established at the Helsinki School of Economics (founded in 1904). Since 2010, it has been part of Aalto University in Espoo. Today, the Aalto University School of Business is the largest business school in Finland. It offers Master's and Doctoral programs in entrepreneurship at the Department of Management.²¹⁴ Entrepreneurship and start-up spirit are closely linked to the Aalto University community, which is seen in the pioneering entrepreneurship work done by the students of the Aalto Entrepreneurship Society (AaltoES).²¹⁵ AaltoES will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

The Turku School of Economics at the University of Turku has its own entrepreneurship unit that examines entrepreneurship and provides related training.²¹⁶ The Turku School of Economics has promoted entrepreneurship in Finland since the 1990s. Professor of Entrepreneurship Jarna Heinonen has long been an expert in internal entrepreneurship. As a Head Teacher in Entrepreneurship (2012–2018), Heinonen was responsible for curriculum planning and was a principal lecturer in a number of different courses at the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral levels in entrepreneurship studies at the school.²¹⁷ A new position of professor of entrepreneurship was created in 2019 and held by Ulla Hytti, who we will discuss below.

BOX (4.2.): Professor of Entrepreneurship Ulla Hytti – promoter of Finnish academic entrepreneurship education



In 2019, Ulla Hytti was awarded the European Entrepreneurship Education Award (EEEE). Centre for Entrepreneurship at Lund University.

"Professor Ulla Hytti, Turku University, Finland, is today one of the most central pillars in the community of entrepreneurship education and an important driving force in the "machinery" to develop education and research in the field"

– The EEEA award committee's citation

Ulla Hytti's dissertation *Stories of Entrepreneurs: Narrative Construction of Entrepreneurial Identities* (2003) dealt with an entrepreneurial identity that she studied using narratives. Hytti was awarded the title Doctor Primus in the Conferment of Degrees in 2005. The dissertation still has international significance, and there are also numerous references to Hytti's other academic publications.

Hytti was appointed Adjunct Professor at the Turku School of Economics in 2007 and specialises in research on entrepreneurs. Between 2009 and 2019 Hytti was a Research Director and in 2010–2011 and 2012–2016 acted as a Professor of Entrepreneurship at the in the School's second campus in Pori. Hytti has been a Professor of Entrepreneurship and Section Head of the Entrepreneurship Unit since 2019.

Ulla Hytti has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Scientific Association for Entrepreneurship Education for a long time until she was elected to become the President of the European Council of Small Business (ECSB) in 2021. ECSB is Europe's largest association of entrepreneurship researchers, covering about 400 members. It organises annual RENT conferences in Europe together with EIASM and, from 2013 onwards, the 3E conferences on entrepreneurship education. The role of Finnish entrepreneurship education is important among Europeans. Ulla Hytti has been active in this academic group and involved in doing things throughout the 21st century.

At the moment, Hytti raises a critical perspective on entrepreneurship when speaking at various meetings. Her message is that we need to critically assess the forms and models of entrepreneurship and that we must give students the opportunity to experience and be critical of entrepreneurship. Hytti believes that 'understanding entrepreneurial identity has a significant link to entrepreneurship education and training.'

According to Professor Ulla Hytti, "the teaching of entrepreneurship should not only look at the development of the idea and business, but should equally have a view of one's own identity. Who am I? What do I want to become?" Hytti adds that "it is up to you to make it visible if someone has strong assumptions, such as "A man is masculine and a woman wonders how it fits into her own desire," and " should be able to dismantle other ways of being an entrepreneur, such as such stereotypical risk takers or such a growth-oriented male type. There should be more such reflection in education." Ulla Hytti gives a tip on the basic course of entrepreneurship as a practice. "Entrepreneurship studies has to offer opportunity to reflect on yourself, and when you work in a team, it's important to reflect on it together, too.

In 2019, Ulla Hytti was awarded the European Entrepreneurship Education Award (EEEEA). The prize is awarded annually to an individual or organisation that has contributed to improving entrepreneurship education in Europe. The tradition of recognition launched by Lund University began in 2012, when the first award was bestowed upon Allan Gibb.

SOURCES

Interview with Ulla Hytti. Sten K. Johnson Centre for Entrepreneurship, European Entrepreneurship Education Award, Award winner 2019. Websites: <https://www.utu.fi/en/people/ulla-hytti> (Cited 13.3.2020); <https://www.utu.fi/en/news/news/professor-ulla-hytti-as-the-president-elect-for-the-ecsb> (Cited 13.3.2020).

The growth in entrepreneurship education in education institutes increases the need for teacher training in entrepreneurship. Teachers are needed to integrate entrepreneurship education into different subjects. At the JAMK University of Applied Sciences, Senior Lecturer in Professional Teacher Training Piia Kolho is responsible for providing entrepreneurial capacity for providing entrepreneurial capacity to teachers seeking to teacher's competence in vocational education and training (VET) schools and in higher education. She has developed e-learning training for teachers and teacher trainers in entrepreneurship education, funded by Finnish entrepreneurs and the Sakari Alhopuro Foundation. The training is free of charge for participants. Those who pass the course receive a certificate and an Open Badge.²¹⁸ Professional Teacher Education (JAMK) is also involved in the European Union's START IN (Developing Inclusive and Innovative Entrepreneurship Education in Europe) project, which promotes entrepreneurship in Europe. The aim is, among other things, to feed entrepreneurial thinking and provide tools for young entrepreneurs. Piia Kolho works as a project manager and expert for the project.²¹⁹

In her work, Piia Kolho has noticed that there is a strong demand for entrepreneurial education. She has started a dissertation on entrepreneurship education in a group of LUT postgraduate students. For her, the selection of the theme was natural, as she has worked both in education and as an entrepreneur. Kolho states that 'The implementation of entrepreneurial education naturally fell to me. I was interested in doing research when I was thinking about doing a dissertation. I became interested to know how entrepreneurship education is understood and what it means.'²²⁰

Piia Kolho will use 'the Measurement Tool for Entrepreneurship Education' research material collected by LUT in her dissertation articles to required in assess the entrepreneurial education skills of a vocational education and training teacher. The renewed instrument and its materials, developed by LUT, will be ready in the autumn. In Finland, LUT is a pioneer in measuring teachers' entrepreneurial skills from the primary school level up to the university level. This study of teachers in secondary education is the final part of the education system in a comprehensive series.²²¹

Measurement Tool for Entrepreneurship Education (MTEE)

LUT University has developed the world's first tools for evaluating entrepreneurship education and promotion, the Measurement Tool for Entrepreneurship Education (MTEE), that is used by research-based primary and secondary teachers. The tool can be found at <https://mtee.lut.fi>.

MTEE was a four-year ESF development project (S10339) during which indicators and a related manual was prepared for entrepreneurship education. MTEE is an easy-to-use, Web-based self-evaluation tool for teachers and principals. The indicators are intended for basic education and are modified for the purposes of secondary education where applicable. The indicators are built to support the work of teachers, principals and decision makers and to guide entrepreneurship education. The project was coordinated by LUT University and founded by the Finnish National Board of Education and the Foundation for Entrepreneurship.

The Teacher's Entrepreneurial Instrument for Teachers at Universities of Applied Sciences helps teachers at universities of applied sciences reflect on their own activities as entrepreneurs (see www.lut.fi/yrittajyysmittaristo).

SOURCES

Website: https://developmentcentre.lut.fi/esittely_entre_en.asp

4.3 POLICIES FOR PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The educational policy of entrepreneurship education is reflected in programs and plans that have been drawn up at both the EU level and in Finland on how to implement entrepreneurship education. Emphasising the importance of entrepreneurship and related education is an international trend. In Finland, EU policies have been taken into account in national entrepreneurship programs.

INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP POLICIES

In March 2000, the Lisbon European Council set the objective of making the European Union the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world that succeeds in creating economic growth, new jobs and greater social cohesion. In order to achieve this objective, promoting entrepreneurship was considered to be a key factor.²²² The European Commission's *Green Paper on Entrepreneurship in Europe* was released in January 2003. The overall objective is for Europe to support entrepreneurship efforts more effectively. The *Green Paper* states that education and training must promote entrepreneurship by developing the right way of thinking, strengthening entrepreneurial skills and raising awareness of the entrepreneurial career option.²²³

In 2012, the European Union's strategy *Rethinking Education: Investing in Skills for Better Socio-economic Outcomes* made the development of entrepreneurship education a priority. It starts by stating that 'investment in education and training for skills development is essential to boost growth and competitiveness.' According to the strategy, 'member states should foster entrepreneurial skills through new and creative ways of teaching and learning from primary school onwards, alongside a focus from secondary to higher education on the opportunity of business creation as a career destination.'²²⁴

In 2013, the European Commission launched the *Entrepreneurship 2020* action plan, which aims to highlight entrepreneurship education in Europe. It was the first entrepreneurship policy program produced by the European Union and promotes entrepreneurship and a culture of innovation in Europe. The action plan states that 'investment in education is one of the most productive investments that can be made in Europe' and includes three main areas of development—entrepreneurial training for growth and business start-ups, creating an environment for success and growth and reaching specific target groups.²²⁵

EntreComp – The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework is a European Union reference framework that 'offers a tool to improve the entrepreneurial

capacity of European citizens and organisations'. In the EntreComp framework, entrepreneurship is built on 15 competences (such as creativity, motivation and perseverance) and three competence areas—ideas and opportunities, resources and action. Entrepreneurship competence is regarded both as an individual and collective capacity.²²⁶

Entrepreneurship education has been given an important role in safeguarding Europe's well-being. According to a European Commission proposal, every secondary school student should be offered experience of entrepreneurship, for example through training in business activities.²²⁷ Initiative and entrepreneurship have been identified as one of the key competences for lifelong learning across Europe.²²⁸

The Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan

The Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan identifies three areas for immediate intervention:

- I. *entrepreneurial education and training to support growth and business creation;*
- II. *removing existing administrative barriers and supporting entrepreneurs in crucial phases of the business lifecycle;*
- III. *reigniting the culture of entrepreneurship in Europe and nurturing the new generation of entrepreneurs.*

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/promoting-entrepreneurship/action-plan_en

FINNISH ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION POLICIES

Entrepreneurship education was introduced into the education system in Finland in the mid-1990s.²²⁹ According to the Ministry of Education's 2009 *Guidelines for Entrepreneurship Education* (Yrittäjyyskasvatuksen suuntaviivat in Finnish), entrepreneurial characteristics include life management and management skills, creativity and self-orientation. The guidelines state that the aim of entrepreneurship education is to promote internal entrepreneurship, which combines, for example, self-help, activity, courage and determination. An enterprising person has a need to perform his or her duties independently and spontaneously.²³⁰ The publication also

emphasises that the foundation of an evolving society is entrepreneurial activity. The well-being of citizens is based on the activity and responsibility of individuals themselves. Economic prosperity is driven by competitive companies that provide jobs and by taxes that are used to maintain and develop the welfare society.²³¹

Entrepreneurship education was first mentioned in the program of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government 2011. It states that 'the working-life links in education and information on the rights and obligations of the citizen, the worker and the entrepreneurs will be strengthened at all levels of education and training.'²³²

The program of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's government in 2015 stated that the skills needed for working life should be taken into account when renewing education and that there must be an effort to bring education and working life closer together. The program concluded that the relationship between universities and enterprises in innovation activities would be intensified.²³³

The development of Finnish entrepreneurship education has been influenced by the policies of the Ministry of Education and Culture. In March 2017, the Ministry adopted new guidelines to promote entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education. These guidelines strengthened the 2009 guidelines for entrepreneurship education.²³⁴

According to entrepreneurship policies, entrepreneurship education aims to disseminate positive attitudes related to entrepreneurship. In addition, there must be an effort to develop entrepreneurial knowledge and skills to create new entrepreneurship. The aim is also to support research, development and innovation in enterprises. Entrepreneurship education aims to create genuine enthusiasm for an entrepreneurial culture. It should promote a creative and interactive atmosphere that encourages experimentation.²³⁵

Entrepreneurship education plays an important role in building an entrepreneurial society. Studies have shown that entrepreneurs learn by doing. Entrepreneurs adopt new information from other entrepreneurs and customers. They develop by experimenting, solving problems and seizing different opportunities.²³⁶ The capacity to act as an entrepreneur can be supported by entrepreneurship education. Emphasis has been placed on strengthening entrepreneurship education, especially in teacher training, to which more entrepreneurship pedagogy has been introduced.²³⁷

In November 2019, EDUFI published the basics of the school curriculum for high school education, which will be introduced for students who have started upper secondary school as of August 2021. This includes a national

regulation issued by EDUFI, according to which local curriculums are prepared. It states that 'the student's entrepreneurial and working life capacities will be deepened in different subjects as part of study periods and guidance in studies, as well as in other high school activities, in particular by developing a wide range of forms of cooperation between high school, working life, companies and the third sector. Subjects and broad-based competences, as well as non-school activities in favour of studies, open up prospects for a meaningful life in which work is one of the key elements.'²³⁸

4.4 ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION PROMOTERS IN FINLAND IN THE 21ST CENTURY

At the beginning of the 21st century, entrepreneurship education became part of Finnish business and educational policies. Several actors have joined the network of entrepreneurship education. The state government has supported the development of teacher entrepreneurial training and the diversification of student entrepreneurship studies across the country. There are many organisations in Finland that support and implement entrepreneurial education, such as the YES Network and Junior Achievement Finland.

Entrepreneurship education was strongly promoted by the *Yvistä energiaa yrittäjyyskasvatukseen!* (YVI) project as a major network operator. Launched in 2009, the three-year regional project has built a virtual learning environment for entrepreneurship education for teachers and teacher trainers. Material and information has been collected in the YVI learning environment to support the design and implementation of entrepreneurship education. The development of the YVI learning environment continued in the national YVI project (2010–2014). The main objective of the project was to develop teacher training. In addition to developing the learning environment, the goals of the project expanded to cover teacher education and network collaboration and to influence entrepreneurial education strategies and curricula. In addition, it set up an open entrepreneurship education research group. The special features of the YVI project included the scope for networking (more than 30 partner organisations around Finland) and a focus on developing both vocational and general teacher education.²³⁹

Economy and youth TAT, in cooperation with educational institutes, develops path studies for young people (i.e. so-called free business courses). For example, the University of Jyväskylä Open University has opened a free course for high school students. The TAT courses are also included in the curriculum of the University of Jyväskylä.²⁴⁰

Economy and youth TAT is one of the main organisations that has an active role in developing economic, entrepreneurial and working life skills in Finland. TAT's activities are targeted at teaching personnel and school pupils directly. In the sixth grade, more than 75% of Finnish pupils attend Yrityskylä, a learning environment where pupils are taught skills relating to society, working life and entrepreneurship. Yrityskylä is a miniature city where the students work in a profession and earn money for their work. In addition, the students act as consumers and citizens, as part of Finnish society. There is also an Yrityskylä learning environment for ninth graders where the students compete in managing a company on a global scale. During the game, the teams manufacture and sell their products to customers and head the company for a period of one year. The winning team is the one that has been able to achieve the best reputation in addition to a good operating profit.²⁴¹

The YES network of experts in entrepreneurship education, run by national entrepreneurial organisations, is the most important expert forum in Finland. It promotes the implementation of entrepreneurship education and shares teaching material on its website. The National YES network has made statements on the curriculum work of EDUFI, and the regional YES Network has been involved in the preparation of educational institution-specific plans so that entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behaviour become part of every institution's activities. The network supports educational institutions in regional entrepreneurship education.²⁴²

National YES started the Entrepreneurship Education Path project in 2017, which developed a single entrepreneurial education path for teaching staff to carry out entrepreneurship education at all levels of education. Its aim is to support coherent and goal-oriented entrepreneurial education at educational institutions. President Sauli Niinistö is the protector of the path to entrepreneurship education.²⁴³

The YES Network – brings together people interested in entrepreneurship education

Established in Finland in 2001, YES is a network of experts who support and train teachers in entrepreneurship education, serving as a developer of regional entrepreneurship education and school–business cooperation. The YES Network is a network of networks bringing together entrepreneurship education agents and other agents interested in the development of entrepreneurship and work life skills both regionally and nationally.

The Tralla service (tralla.fi) was created as part of *the Entrepreneurship Education Path* project. It offers teachers a wide range of materials, methods, templates and tools to more easily develop entrepreneurial pedagogy and entrepreneurship skills among children and young people. The service brings together the actors and services of entrepreneurship education and training in Finland. LUT University participates in Tralla’s development as an expert organisation.

YES Network goal is ”that every young person in Finland receives entrepreneurship education regardless of educational level and municipality, and that every teacher has the capability to implement entrepreneurship education in their own work.”

SOURCES

Websites: <https://yesverkosto.fi/en> (Cited 4.3.2020); <https://tralla.fi/en/>(Cited 4.3.2020).



The increase in entrepreneurial education has been reflected in increased cooperation in research. The Scientific Association for Entrepreneurship Education was founded in 2009, which promotes multidisciplinary research and its practical application in entrepreneurship education. The purpose of the association is to support research into entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education and business and to increase national and international cooperation between researchers and actors. In addition, the association organises an annual Entrepreneurship Education Conference (Yrittäjyyskasvuspäivät in

Finnish), where different scholars meet and present their work. The first issue of the association's *Periodical of Entrepreneurship Education* was published in 2014. Today, a new issue is published every two years.²⁴⁴

BOX (4.3.): Professor Emerita of Entrepreneurship Education Paula Kyrö: cross-disciplinary pioneer in entrepreneurship education in Finland and Europe



In 2014, Paula Kyrö was awarded the European Entrepreneurship Education Award (EEEA) for her remarkable work as a messenger and pioneer of entrepreneurship education. Centre for Entrepreneurship at Lund University.

Paula Kyrö holds a double doctorate in Education and Economics. She started cross-disciplinary entrepreneurship education research in Finland at the end of the 1990s, when the societal need accelerated its development. Finland was the first country in Europe to adopt entrepreneurship education in its national curriculum framework in 1994.

Paula Kyrö is a pioneer of entrepreneurship education studies and research. Kyrö was a visiting professor of entrepreneurship at Jönköping International Business School in Sweden in 2000–2001. When she returned to Finland, she started cross-disciplinary, approbatur, cum laude and doctoral studies of entrepreneurship education in consortium with the Faculty of Education at Helsinki University, the Faculty of Business

Administration at Lappeenranta School of Technology and the Vocational Centre for Adult Education at Tampere University.

For almost two decades, Kyrö has pioneered and been a leading figure in the development of the European University Network on Entrepreneurship (ESU). The ESU network has annual conferences and offers a Europe-wide doctoral program and publishing arena. Kyrö was a long-time editor of a book series on European research in entrepreneurship together with her colleague Professor Alain Fayolle of the Lyon Business School. The series is published by Edward Elgar, the largest entrepreneurship publishing house in the world.

In Finland, researchers and teachers in entrepreneurship education quickly combined their resources and formed a national network. In 2009, Kyrö became the first long-term chairman of this network, known as the Scientific Association for Entrepreneurship Education. Its objective is to promote scientific research, its application and publishing in the entrepreneurship field, as well as education and international cooperation. The country-wide network is made up of teachers and those who have debated and are now promoting entrepreneurship education at different levels of education. Numerous multidisciplinary dissertations on entrepreneurship education in Finland speak for themselves about the results of Paula Kyrö's pioneering work. Currently, Kyrö is an honorary member of the association.

Before retiring, Paula Kyrö worked at Aalto University. During her retirement, Kyrö has been an invited keynote speaker at several conferences. She trusts that the new generation will now carry out entrepreneurship education and research. The latest textbook by Paula Kyrö in 2015 deals with entrepreneurship and sustainable development research. The book required collaboration with more than 100 scholars worldwide.

According to Kyrö, there seems to be a current international consensus that there are two phenomena central to entrepreneurship; one is the opportunity process and the other is the transformative capacity of entrepreneurship. Both of these provide opportunities for wide-ranging application and for entrepreneurship education to be attached to, for example, phenomenon-based learning.

Kyrö believes the current direction of entrepreneurship education research in Finland is positive. Entrepreneurship research has provided an understanding of what entrepreneurship education is and how it is implemented. The social importance of entrepreneurship education in Finland has grown steadily. Entrepreneurial attitudes and willingness among students have increased enormously. According to Kyrö, 'entrepreneurship education is a broad phenomenon that permeates society'.

According to Emerita Professor Paula Kyrö, it has become obvious that entrepreneurship education is a complex and multilevel phenomenon, and its development requires national and global collaboration. 'Alone we are very weak; everything is done in cooperation with others.'

SOURCES

Interview with Paula Kyrö. Sten K. Johnson Centre for Entrepreneurship, European Entrepreneurship Education Award, Award winner 2014.
Kyrö 2005; Kyrö (Ed.) 2015.

The impact of entrepreneurship education is also reflected in the fact that students have established networks. Their activities have been based on support for growth entrepreneurship and student-centred entrepreneurship. The National Entrepreneurship Society (ES) network started operations in 2007–2009. Its activities have been significantly influenced by the birth of the Aalto Entrepreneurship Society (AaltoES) in 2009, inspired by Aalto University students' excursion to Stanford University in 2008.²⁴⁵

AaltoES activities have contributed to the creation of a start-up boom in Finland. AaltoES's main purpose is to promote growth entrepreneurship in Finland and particularly to encourage students to become entrepreneurs. It is most famous for the internationally known Slush event, which is described in Box 4.4. In 2010, two accelerators were established for early growth companies, now known as Startup Sauna, Finland's central hub for the student-run entrepreneurial movement,²⁴⁶ and Kiuas Accelerator, an early-stage start-up incubator. Kiuas Accelerator is a nine-week program comprising one-on-one mentoring, the aim of which is to help entrepreneurs enter the market, scale products and sales and progress to the next level.²⁴⁷

In 2011, AaltoES established an internship program called Startuplifers that sends Nordic tech, design and business students and graduates to work for start-up companies in the San Francisco Bay Area.²⁴⁸ AaltoES also started Europe's largest non-profit hackathon and tech community, Junction, which organises hackathons, speaker events, coding workshops and other tech events. Junction is Europe's leading hackathon.²⁴⁹

AaltoES biggest annual event is FallUp, Europe's largest entrepreneurship event for students. It brings together talented university students, entrepreneurs and key players in the start-up ecosystem.²⁵⁰ AaltoES also organises Dash, the biggest design hackathon in Europe.²⁵¹

Other events organised by AaltoES include Revive, which focuses on work-life balance and overall well-being, and a two-day event called Showdown Tomorrow where students, speakers and stakeholders come together to learn about how to create a sustainable tomorrow.²⁵² AaltoES is Europe's largest student-driven entrepreneurship organisation focused on student-centred activities.²⁵³

BOX (4.4.): SLUSH – one of the world’s leading growth business events

Joint learning opportunities and meetings for entrepreneurs contribute to the functioning of entrepreneurial education ecosystems. Events take place in different locations in Finland and are highly popular with entrepreneurs, financiers and other actors in order to build partnerships and networks. The most famous of these is the annual technology and growth company event called Slush, held in Helsinki since 2008. Initially, it was a one-day networking and funding event for university students held in autumn time and therefore called Slush. At the time, the aim was to make Finnish people’s attitudes more entrepreneurial. Today, the event has become a globally renowned start-up event that attracts international growth companies, investors and media. For companies, it is a way of gaining international visibility and creating important business relationships.

Slush has grown rapidly into one of world’s leading growth business events. For example, at a 2018 Slush event there were over 3,100 start-ups and 1,800 investors from over 130 countries. Speakers in previous years have included John Collison (founder of Stripe), Werner Vogels (CTO of Amazon), Martin Lorentzon (founder of Spotify) and Niklas Zennström (founder of Skype). Slush is organised by a non-profit organisation consisting of investors, entrepreneurs, students and volunteers.

Slush has also expanded its operations in the start-up field by producing the Soaked by Slush online media publication and establishing the Slush Academy, which offers a three-month summer program comprising accelerated learning, mentoring from experienced founders and an internship in a high-growth start-up training program.

The mission of Slush is ‘to create and help the next generation of ground-breaking entrepreneurs.’ It aims to bring together international growth companies, investors and media and to help entrepreneurs succeed. Slush events and communities have been started in more than 40 cities, including Shanghai, Tokyo, Singapore, London, Berlin, Stockholm, Paris, New York and Trondheim.

SOURCES

Leino 2014. Website; <https://www.slush.or> (Cited 5.6.2020).



Entrepreneurship education also exists in Finland's early childhood and basic education. For example, the 4H organisation emphasises civic and entrepreneurship education for children and young people.²⁵⁴ 4H clubs are good examples. Primary schools also have a study program maintained by JA Finland (Junior Achievement Finland; Nuori Yrittäjyys in Finnish) where pupils 10–12 start their own small businesses. The best small entrepreneurs advance to national, European and global competitions.²⁵⁵

Junior Achievement Finland also supports entrepreneurship education. It is part of the international Junior Achievement (JA) network. JA is the world's largest organisation for entrepreneurship and consumer education for young people. The network reaches more than 10 million pupils in 113 countries per year. Its goal is to make young people identify and exploit their own talents by providing entrepreneurship and working life skills and financial management programs for those aged 7–29 implemented in schools as part of teaching.²⁵⁶

BOX (4.5.): Finnish entrepreneurs have their own day – 5/9



Swedish artist Eva Löfdahl and The Entrepreneur Monument. The Entrepreneur Day Foundation.

Since 1997, Finland has celebrated Entrepreneur's Day on 5 September. It is based on cooperation between Helsinki-based entrepreneurial organisations to increase the value of entrepreneurship and improve the operating conditions of entrepreneurship. The goal was to officially establish an Entrepreneur's Day and to erect an entrepreneur monument in a central location in the capital. The idea of an entrepreneur monument was born in the recession of the 1990s when there was little talk of entrepreneurs and appreciation for them was declining. The overall objective was to increase appreciation of entrepreneurship and to increase the value they provide.

Finland's Entrepreneur's Day was first celebrated in Helsinki at Merita Bank on 5 September 1997 and was attended by Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen. An entrepreneurial delegation was set up the same year and consisted of key business influencers. The first member of the delegation was Minister Aatos Erkko (Sanoma Yhtymä) and the second was Nokia's CEO Jorma Ollila. The delegation membership gradually grew to 50 in 2004.

In 2002, the Entrepreneur Day Foundation (originally the Entrepreneur Monument Foundation) was established. The Foundation's Chairman, entrepreneur Riitta Antinmäki, has been a key promoter of the monument project. In 2010, Antinmäki was awarded the Finnish honorary title of *yrittäjäneuvos*. The foundation's first task was to create an entrepreneur monument. The city supported the project and earmarked a prominent site in the city centre. The Foundation started collecting funds from entrepreneurs, businesses and business associations. The monument project was carried out without the support of the state or other public organisations. The monument was unveiled on Entrepreneur's Day in 2006. Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen acted as patron of the project. The monument is shown on the cover of this book. Swedish artist Eva Löfdahl won the international invitational competition for the design of the monument.



"Entrepreneur has earned its day",
The Chairman of the Entrepreneur Day
Foundation, Riitta Antinmäki. The Ent-
repreneur Day Foundation

Entrepreneur's Day events are currently widely celebrated in different parts of Finland. The Foundation has worked in cooperation with representatives of the education sector and has sought to promote the spread of an entrepreneurial attitude in schools. The main event of Entrepreneur's Day is organised every year by one of the partners in the cooperation network.

Entrepreneur's Day was put on the Finnish calendar in 2010. The Foundation's aim is to make this a special day throughout the European Union. Entrepreneur's day and the monument have had a significant impact on improving appreciation of entrepreneurship and on encouraging a positive image of entrepreneurs in Finland. This has been reflected, for example, in the increased interest of young people in entrepreneurship.

SOURCES

Interview with Riitta Antinmäki. Website; Finland's Entrepreneur Day – September 5 (The Entrepreneur Day Foundation). Toropainen 2009.

4.5 ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECOSYSTEMS

The effectiveness of entrepreneurship education has been supported by the creation of multifunctionality ecosystems in education and training. In this way, new creative entrepreneurship has emerged, and entrepreneurship education has become an important part of the curriculum of educational institutions, which in turn has contributed to the creation of new enterprises. Because employees must be entrepreneurial today, all companies benefit from entrepreneurship education provided by schools.

The concept of an ecosystem comes from the natural sciences. It generally refers to a community of several interdependent organisms confined to a particular area. The study of ecosystems does not focus on individual actors but on the roles and relationships between different organisms. The concept has been increasingly applied in the research literature on business, entrepreneurship and innovation.²⁵⁷ In general, an ecosystem is a deliberate network of dynamic interactive systems and subsystems.²⁵⁸

Entrepreneurial ecosystems create new growth-oriented entrepreneurship and start-ups and are closely linked to the geographical and political context at national, regional and local levels. An entrepreneurial ecosystem refers to all the business services and financing that support growth entrepreneurship. It includes the conscious activities of large companies aimed at finding innovations that stimulate basic business and at generating start-up entrepreneurial growth platforms.²⁵⁹

The *Global Entrepreneurship Index 2018*—an annual index that measures the quality and scale of the entrepreneurial process in various countries and identifies the strength and weakness of the entrepreneurial ecosystem—defines entrepreneurial ecosystems 'at the socio-economic level [as] having properties of self-organisation, scalability and sustainability.'²⁶⁰ The idea of entrepreneurial ecosystems has been further developed by Zoltan J. Acs, Erkko Autio and Laszlo Szerb, who introduced the new concept of National Systems of Entrepreneurship. Acs, Szerb and Autio have defined it as "... *dynamic institutionally embedded interaction between entrepreneurial attitudes, abilities and aspirations, by individuals, which drives the allocation of resources through the creation and operation of new ventures.*"²⁶¹

Entrepreneurial ecosystems are complex socio-economic structures that come to life through action at the individual level. The main element in an entrepreneurial ecosystem is an agent, an entrepreneur who drives the system. An entrepreneur is a person who makes decisions based on the evaluation

and coordination of scarce resources. The economic institutions of society, such as property rights and effective market frameworks (i.e. the rules of the game), represent another key element. Another element is comprised of innovation systems or clusters.²⁶²

Start-up cooperation has increased significantly in recent years, as the challenges of digitalisation and internationalisation increase. In addition to large companies, small and medium-sized companies are increasingly cooperating. Nearly one-fifth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) now work in start-up cooperation.²⁶³

The University-based Entrepreneurship Ecosystem (UBEE) generally refers to academic entrepreneurship programs at the university level, focusing on student development and the creation of new businesses. Higher education plays an important role in the emergence of entrepreneurship ecosystems. Educational institutions play a key role in shaping young people's attitudes, skills and behaviour. Actors outside education and training systems have also become increasingly important, and cooperation between all stakeholders will result in new entrepreneurial ecosystems.²⁶⁴

Networks are often intra-industry or cross-industry (i.e. clusters), and local and regional networking is natural. When companies collaborate, they can reduce certain costs, such as those relating to product development and marketing. Regions and cities often expect companies to work together to bring development to the region. Some growth centre regions, such as Lahti, Oulu and Jyväskylä, have been successful because companies work closely together there. For example, the cluster-like operations of the information technology sector in the Oulu region are well known. A cluster refers to geographical concentrations of companies and communities representing interconnected industries. The creator of the Triple Helix Model for Innovation and founder and president of Triple Helix Association (THA), professor emeritus Henry Etzkovitz (Stanford University), has been a kind of mentor in the Oulu and Jyväskylä regions.

4.6 THE JYVÄSKYLÄ EDUCATIONAL CONSORTIUM GRADIA'S ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDIES AS PART OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM IN CENTRAL FINLAND

Entrepreneurial ecosystems can also be applied in entrepreneurship education. One example is an entrepreneurial learning model in place in educational institutions in Jyväskylä. A key player is the Jyväskylä Educational Consortium Gradia. Entrepreneurship has long been one of the strategic priorities of Gradia,

which cooperates extensively with the region's educational institutions and has developed training initiatives for teachers, developers and supervisors at those institutions.²⁶⁵

Gradia participates in EduFutura Jyväskylä together with the University of Jyväskylä and JAMK University of Applied Sciences. Entrepreneurship is one of EduFutura's priorities. EduFutura participants have a common entrepreneurship strategy based on the entrepreneurial path described above. The participating institutions have joint entrepreneurship studies, R&D funding opportunities, a student entrepreneurial path and the opportunity for beginners and entrepreneurs to develop their own businesses as part of the services of a business factory. Chapter 5 describes the cooperation between the institutions.

In the entrepreneurial ecosystem of Gradia, students can build their own individual EduFutura entrepreneurial path. It progresses from the student's own enthusiasm through experiments to starting a business and developing one's own company. In Gradia, the student can try to be an entrepreneur, for example, through co-operatives or NY (Young Entrepreneurship) businesses, which are supported by entrepreneurship coaching.²⁶⁶

Gradia's entrepreneurship ecosystem strengthens students' working life skills. Entrepreneurship is emphasised as an attitude and a way of working to exploit one's own know-how. Learning is central to entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship studies stress an entrepreneurial mindset, continuous learning, teamwork and self-development.²⁶⁷

Cooperation under the EduFutura Jyväskylä umbrella includes joint entrepreneurship studies at the different institutions and a clear, modelled entrepreneurial path. The entrepreneurial learning model is based on the 'I Get Excited, I Test, I Try, I Develop' (Innostun Kokeilen, Yritän, Kehitän in Finnish) concept, which describes the entrepreneurial path from enthusiasm to experiments to starting and developing one's own business. Gradia's entrepreneurial path is illustrated in the following diagram.



Gradia in the entrepreneurship ecosystem of central Finland. The Jyväskylä Educational Consortium Gradia.

The first step on the path is *'I get excited.'* It emphasizes an entrepreneurial attitude and interest in the challenges of working life in the future. The economy increasingly requires people to have entrepreneurial skills and competences. Gradia inspires all students to reflect on their dreams and develop their working life skills. Among other things, it offers the DreamUp Project course and the Dreams+Inspiration! course implemented in cooperation with EduFutura. The DreamUp course lasts the whole school year, during which students organise DreamUp entrepreneurship day. The functional Dreams+Inspiration! course involves meeting inspiring self-employed people. The goal is for the student to recognise their own strengths by doing.²⁶⁸

The second step on the path is *'I Test'*. In this step, students are encouraged to try to become an entrepreneur as part of their studies. At Gradia, students can try to act as an entrepreneur, for example, by setting up NY (Young Entrepreneurship) company for a year following the JA/YE Company Program or by joining a multidisciplinary pedagogical cooperative. Gradia supports two student cooperatives, Versotaan (Gradia Jyväskylä) and Pegosus (Gradia Jämsä). Gradia also provides its students with either sectoral or multidisciplinary entrepreneurial training and coaching.²⁶⁹

The third step on the path is *'I Try'*. In this step, students are supported in acquiring the skills to start their own business. Students who are interested in starting a company are allowed to enter in From Idea to Company (Ideasta yritykseksi in Finnish) business incubator.²⁷⁰ Alternatively, the students can

complete an online course package that includes the following themes 'From idea to reality', 'Networking and profitability' and 'Entrepreneurial readiness'.²⁷¹

The fourth step on the path is '*I develop*'. In this step, students are offered opportunities to develop both their business and their business expertise. Students can participate in entrepreneur coaching (yrittäjävalmennus in Finnish) as part of the services of the Startup Factory.²⁷² At Gradia, entrepreneurs can apply to obtain vocational and specialist qualifications related to entrepreneurship. Gradia offers entrepreneurs a wide range of additional and continuing training opportunities. Vocational and specialist qualifications related to entrepreneurship include an entrepreneur's degree, a specialist qualification in product development and a special qualification in management and business management.²⁷³

Gradia is strongly involved in the Central Finland entrepreneurial ecosystem and cooperates closely with entrepreneurs and public organisations in the region. In association with Gradia, the city of Jyväskylä and the Jyväskylä Association of Education and Training Group are preparing an operating model whereby Gradia will provide business start-up advisory services in the region as a stakeholder in the city of Jyväskylä.²⁷⁴ The investment in entrepreneurship is also reflected in the appointment of sectoral entrepreneurship education coordinators at the institution.²⁷⁵

Gradia's entrepreneurial learning model as part of the central Finland entrepreneurial ecosystem has gained both national and international visibility. Suomen Yrittäjät (The Finnish Entrepreneurs organization) and Taittajat 2019 chose Gradia's ecosystem as Finland's best entrepreneurship teaching model in 2019. The theme of the Finnish Entrepreneurship Education Competition was the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The competition sought Finland's best entrepreneurial education model affecting entrepreneurship in the region.²⁷⁶

In the same year, Gradia was awarded the Entrepreneurial School Award by Junior Achievement Europe (JA Europe) for its entrepreneurship learning model as an indication of its significant entrepreneurship education work. JA Europe, the European umbrella organisation of Junior Achievement (JA), awarded the annual Entrepreneurial School Awards (TES) for the fifth time. In total, there were 34 award-winning schools across Europe representing all levels of education. Among these educational institutions, the European Commission selected two finalists, of whom Gradia's entrepreneurship learning ecosystem was chosen as the best for Europe in a Europe-wide open public vote. The selection was announced at the main event of The European Vocational Skills Week at Finlandia Hall in Helsinki on 17 October 2019. It was a recognition award for excellence in vocational education and training.²⁷⁷

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Today, guaranteeing the operating conditions for business is seen as a key task for public authorities. The aim is to increase entrepreneurship by arranging appropriate training, to make it easier to become an entrepreneur and to make graduates more aware of entrepreneurship and its importance.

Entrepreneurship education became part of the education system in the 1990s. Entrepreneurship education is provided at an increasing number of educational institutions and in an increasing number of fields. This translates into a positive attitude towards business, working life and entrepreneurship.

In Finland, there is advanced entrepreneurship education, as evidenced by the trust positions of Finnish entrepreneurship experts in international organisations and the recognition of entrepreneurial teaching models.

WHAT HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND ECOSYSTEMS

'Successes with the student's school path can be a stimulus for the rest of the study and career path. Entrepreneurship education emphasises experimentation and functionality, which is why it can give you new experiences of success. Entrepreneurial activities are responsibility and management, continuous development and innovation. These characteristics are also necessary in other areas of life'.

– President of Finland Sauli Niinistö

*"Entrepreneurship education is part of lifelong learning; in it, entrepreneurial skills are developed and supplemented at different points in life. It is a question of life management, interaction, self-guided action, a capacity for innovation and an ability to encounter change. Education and training help entrepreneurship evolve into a mode of operation, in which attitude, will and a desire to take action combine with knowledge and advanced competence."*²⁷⁸

– Guidelines for entrepreneurship education, Publications of the Ministry of Education 2009:9

*"If countries enjoy a healthy entrepreneurial ecosystem the efforts of innovative entrepreneurs will materialize in new value-adding combinations of resources that will expand the countries' productive capacity and the global production frontier."*²⁷⁹

– The Global Entrepreneurship Index 2018

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATORS BY PROFESSOR ULLA HYTTI

Develop your business idea & simultaneously reflect on:

- Who are you (professionally)? How you identify yourself? How does becoming an entrepreneur fit with your (professional) identity?
- Do you recognise any conflicts? ('identity crisis'?) (professional conventions)
- What do you need to give up? Do you recognise experiences/skills that lead to this moment?
- What (earlier) experiences / beliefs do you have about entrepreneurship?
- How do you value them and want to build in your own entrepreneurial process? (identification with a group of entrepreneurs (social identity)?)
- What do you don't like and what do you want to give up? (becoming distanced from certain (types of) entrepreneurs?)
- What kind of an entrepreneur you want to be(come)? How do you see your future? ("Remembering a good/successful future as an entrepreneur") (*Best case scenario*)
- What is your worst fear or worry related to entrepreneurship? What will happen if your worst fear becomes a reality? Can you influence that your worst fear does not materialise or can you influence that the effects will be smaller (than your wildest imaginative fears?) (*Worst case scenario*)

STUDY QUESTIONS

- What is the difference between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship training?
- What should entrepreneurship education be like to support becoming an entrepreneur?
- How would you like entrepreneurship to come out in your own studies?
- What do you understand about the entrepreneurial education ecosystem?