



Background Note

Regional workshop on "Governance and Management of Science and Technology Parks in the MENA region"

I/ Background and Rationale

The workshop will be organised within a cooperation framework between the ISESCO and its partners- the World Bank (WB) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) - through the Centre for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), in their joint effort to promote the knowledge economy in their member countries.

Fundamental to economic development, innovation ecosystems are based on the "Triple Helix" model, which represents the development of innovation through close cooperation between components of the public sector, the private sector and academia. In practice, however, this model induces complexity at the level of governance and operational management given the number of stakeholders with diverse, if not opposing priorities and political orientation.

II / Objective of the workshop

Science and Technology Parks (STP) and Science Cities are innovation ecosystems where all the actors of the triple-helix are present. This poses challenges both at governance (strategic and political) and management (operational) levels. Whereas the governance of the park relates to the right institutional representation, balance and strategic decision making capacity, the management structure and model requires the right mix of competences and skills sets to guide the operations of the different actors within the park.

The objective of the workshop is to assess appropriate models for the governance and management of science parks and innovation cities: first, through an exchange of local experiences on how to fuse the complex cooperation between public policy-makers, local governments, managers of science parks, and private actors by addressing the following points:

1. Science and Technology Parks governance and management models in developed countries, and the latest developments (e.g. third generation parks). A comparative assessment Middle East / North Africa.
2. Actors of effective Science and Technology Parks and Science Cities and their role.
 - Coherence of science parks' strategic plans;
 - Articulation of science parks required managerial competences, which entails issues of regionalisation (relationship between science parks and urban/regional centres), human capital (skilled entrepreneurs and creation of new training programs), innovation management (research programs on the short and long-term), science parks governance (implementation of programs by relevant administrations, relationship with relevant players, and organization/supervision of projects), and management of the relational capital between actors;
 - Coaching and support to enterprises.

3. Reinforcing university role and responsibility in economic development and value creation as opposed to its traditional role of educator and knowledge supplier.
 - Mechanisms that establish linkages and foster collaboration between universities and other stakeholders of science and technology parks (local authorities, incubators, technology transfer offices, technology platforms and research centres and entrepreneurship networks).
 - Quality of infrastructure, available resources for research, and their relevance to local needs for economic and social development.
4. Public authorities' role in the creation, promotion and support of Science and Technology Parks.
 - Mechanisms that provide for linkages and collaboration between science and technology parks tenants as well as integration into local industrial and social structures.
 - Government role in creating a legal and financial framework that is enabling and favourable to the local innovation ecosystem (e.g. venture capital fund, funds for innovation and scientific research, SMEs funds).

III/ Expected Results

To enable a dialogue between the key players of Science and Technology Parks in the region in order to specify:

- Best practices in governance and operational management of science and technology parks as well as collective and interactive support activities (science parks relationship Intra-park/inter-park inter-parks by Networking in the Maghreb region or MENA, technology parks / government institutions);
- Appropriate models and required skills for the management of the innovation process (academic excellence, productive research, initiation and management of a deal flow, i.e. selection, implementation, protection and commercialization of ideas);
- Effective management models for science and technology parks (methodology, cooperation, organizational structure, communication channels, required resources, policy and legal framework, access to finance).

IV/ Participants

- a) Managers of science parks in MENA region
- b) National Research Centres closely involved in science and technology parks
- c) University management

V/ Organization

ISESCO and the European Investment Bank, within the framework agreement with the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI)

VI/ Contacts

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