

# Creating the Right Ecosystem for Knowledge Valorization: A Case Study of ODTÜ Teknokent



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in collaboration with ODTU Teknokent



## Last Session Delegates Conclusions

The EIB/CMI representative expressed his satisfaction in the content and outcome of this second regional workshop about Science & Technology Parks (STPs) in Turkey. Turkey is close to the MENA region and has succeeded to set up in a relatively short period a “right ecosystem” for innovation and economic growth. He also added that one should therefore not be discouraged by innovation index rankings (e.g. GII) as MENA countries tend to lose points when it comes to valorisation, certification, and internationalisation, and these can be tackled as was demonstrated during this workshop. For ODTU Teknokent representative, this regional workshop was a lot of learning from other peers from the MENA, and suggests the group to agree on a small and concrete mechanism in order to work together. ISESCO representative recommends that the group identify 5 people from each country who would be the interface with the organisers as well as other countries. UN-ESCWA Technology Center representative advises to identify what exactly each delegate expect from the organisers of this activity and then work on specific points with them.

# Recommendations & Suggestions

- **Representation:**

- To identify a group of experts that would represent the 9 MENA countries. These could be 3 or 4 experts from each country representing a sector (academia, STP, private sector, government). These delegates would be the contact point between the CMI/EIB and partners. They would disseminate information, receive specific requests and proposals from their national actors, and would look for funding.
- To mobilise a national contact in each country to apply for Horizon 2020 calls.

- **Capacity-Building**

- To design trainings for trainers in major subjects related to Science & Technology Parks (STPs) including commercialisation, industry-academia collaboration, mapping of talents in STPs, internationalisation, incubation, Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs), etc.
- To design a *certified course* on how to build a Science & Technology Park (STP).
- To design a course for STP managers on how to foster an adequate innovation ecosystem.
- To provide a road map for STP managers (e.g. establish incubator before a TTO or the opposite?)
- To organise three days in-depth workshop about commercialisation and success stories from the region. In-depth workshop to better understand the different stages from ideation to commercialisation.
- To invite Turkish innovation actors on an “expert mission” to a country.
- To organise other national case studies similar to the one on ODTU Teknokent, introducing STPs models and most successful national programs.
- To design a model on how to create incubators in well-established universities

- **Exchange, Sharing & Collaboration:**

- To use social media to communicate and exchange information among STP managers leveraging on existing networks, e.g.: MENAinc, LinkedIn group, and INPT.
- Through online media, share with other STP managers tools, mechanisms, and successful programs Parks have developed and successfully implemented.
- To have a mapping of the different STPs and to see what is offered in terms of incubation, acceleration, TTO, Funding, Valorisation Office, etc.
- To share the use of research and technology centres (prototyping centres, Fablabs) with other STPs (and their residents).
- To collaborate and organise exchange of start-ups between STPs in the region.
- To disclose and promote what STPs accomplish to stakeholders, shareholders, and peers in the MENA.
- To design an online platform/ “virtual souk” showcasing MENA region start-ups.
- To encourage knowledge transfer through swapping of incubatees between incubators in the region, or/and exchange of researchers between countries.
- To clarify how to better work across the region in order to register EU call for proposals and cooperate under Horizon 2020.

- **Suggestions:**

- To establish a framework of cooperation among the different STP of the MENA region.
- To look into the internationalisation of the region’s cultural and indigenous products.
- Internationalisation is important but so is regionalisation.
- To develop mentorship; that is essential throughout companies’ creation and innovation ecosystems consolidation.
- To foster an entrepreneurship culture from an early age starting from high schools.
- To outline Terms of References (TOR) to look for funds in order to carry out projects and finance the right talents.

- Independent evaluation of STPs to assess if they accomplish their mission is necessary. Establishing specific KPIs for each STP is important.

## Takeaways from the Workshop:

Lebanon: The meeting was very informative and enriching. The difference between the two models of Ankara STP and Istanbul STP or campus vs. non-campus based Science Parks was very useful. It is important to include “start-up” training in the university curriculum and finance talent development.

Libya: The Libyan innovation ecosystem is at its first stage of creation and so are Science & Technology Parks. We need your assistance at the policy/government level in order to have the full support of the Libyan government officials and decision-makers. The Central government has a role to create and reinforce National Innovation System. ODTU Teknokent intermediated between the government of Azerbaijan and Qafqaz University Technopark. South-South dialogue is important as demonstrated by the Turkish model.

Egypt: The pool of experts that presented their best practices and lessons learnt to us was extremely useful and deserves more than two days. We would love to have them in Egypt on an expert mission. Moreover, we will be considering setting-up an incubator in our Park. We will consider implementing the Science Park ranking index in Egypt.

Tunisia: Building capacity is very vital to our STPs. This workshop is a great example of capacity building activities our Parks need. We have now a clear idea about different steps to undertake in our STPs. More importantly we need to be up to date with the novelties in innovation ecosystems, STPs and their offers. We need to promote to our shareholders and peers in MENA what we do in our Parks, as well as ensure an independent assessment of their impact. Moreover, we have centres that we will be happy to open for use to other STPs in the region.

Syria: the main takeaway is that the mission of STPs is to bring innovations into the market, and the private sector is an important partner. On the other hand, facilitating business creation and commercialisation for faculty and training them to commercialise ideas is a winning choice.

Morocco: The importance of partnership and facilitation is the main takeaway. Getting the government involved is difficult but we can start connecting universities with the industrial sector inside our STPs. Moreover, having a selected group of experts to refer to if needed, and to advice about e.g. setting up an innovation ecosystem where universities are sided by STPs, is very much welcomed.

Palestine: Physical meetings similar to this regional workshop are needed, as online collaboration is not easy nor enough. Soft landing and pre-incubation are needed.

Bahrain: the main takeaway is that we will work on connecting incubators with universities, with the advice of ODTU Teknokent.

Jordan: The region needs a champion and we can find specific successful sectors/ entrepreneurs in our region. We need to think not only about internationalization, but also about “regionalisation” of new products, processes and services. On the other hand, a model to create incubators in well-established universities is welcomed.

In conclusion, ISESCO announced that in case an STP manager or an innovation actor wishes to share information with the rest of STPs, then they can do it through ISESCO national committees which can disseminate the information to all STPs of the region. Besides, all delegates agreed that they had “homework” to do back home.