

UNIVERSITY INDUSTRY

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BY MIKKO KESKINEN & ANNELI KAKKO

JAMK Raises the Bar with its Approach to Entrepreneurial Education and Culture



JAMK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES (JAMK) IS LOCATED IN THE CENTRAL FINLAND AND HAS FOUR CAMPUSES, THREE IN JYVÄSKYLÄ AND ONE IN SAARIJÄRVI, WITH TOTAL 8500 ENROLLED STUDENTS AND WORK PLACE FOR ABOUT 700 PERSONNEL. JAMK STRIVES TO BE THE MOST ENTREPRENEURSHIP-ORIENTED UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES IN FINLAND, THUS THE UNIVERSITY ENSURES IT GENERATES ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INNOVATION SERVICES FOR ALL ITS STUDENTS AND PERSONNEL, WHICH ENHANCES COMPETITIVENESS OF THE CENTRAL FINLAND.

JAMK University of Applied Sciences (JAMK) aims to prove itself as the best university of applied sciences in Finland, with a strong record of accomplishment in quality of education, internationalization and promotion of entrepreneurship. JAMK wants to keep its position as an internationally oriented forerunner in education and a strong player in practically oriented research, development and innovation activities.

How does JAMK embed entrepreneurship education into its degree programs?

JAMK is a marketplace for innovation and entrepreneurship, where it offers services, courses and expertise for its students and partners. At JAMK, learning happens by doing. The university tries to encourage students and personnel to think and act differently. All who take part in the operations are able to question things and create something new. The purpose is not only to increase entrepreneurship, but also to provide entrepreneurial and creative abilities inside the university. JAMK offers students two different paths to become entrepreneurs:

1) JAMK Generator is a specialist team inside JAMK, which offers mandatory entrepreneurship and innovation courses and services. It also provides possibilities for students to innovate, get inspired, develop business ideas or found a company as part of their studies. Entrepreneurship course is one of its products. After JAMK made this course mandatory for all its students in 2013, students have established over 100 new companies with the help of JAMK Generator until spring 2017. In 2017- ►

2018, students have established 30 new companies and progress is still going on. Interest of students for entrepreneurship seems to be increasing continuously.

2) Tiimiakatemia (Team Academy) is the entrepreneurship center of excellence over 20 years at JAMK, which allows students to do all the same activities as JAMK Generator. The biggest difference is that Tiimiakatemia has an entrepreneurship degree program, where its students establish their own companies with their own team members. Running their own business is one part of their studies.

JAMK has built up network of coaches, entrepreneurship coordinators and tutor teachers, available for students who try to find business idea or who already have it and want to create a business concept (Figure 2). Tutor teachers and entrepreneurship coordinators of JAMK faculties ensure that most of the entrepreneur sections are implemented in every degree program. Student groups are using their own experiences, observations and knowledge to find out product and business ideas. Later they develop those ideas to products and business concepts. The students examine the business potential of their ideas and share the ideas with their group. After that, they present their ideas for a larger audience including students, staff members and representatives of work-life. At the same time, in the entrepreneurship

course in different study programs, coaches are giving acquire basic information on entrepreneurship and profitable business in functional ways to students. Students test their capacity for entrepreneurship and expend their understanding of their field with cases from corporate life.

JAMK has also built up the platform, jamkgenerator (see <https://www.jamk.fi/fi/Tutkimus-ja-kehitys/JAMK-Generator/Generator/>) where students can get new skills, are encouraged to look around, find the new challenges and opportunities, and use them. JAMK wants push students to be creative and innovative. This is one way to help students to take a charge of their own life. The platform gives students opportunity to get into a situation where they have to act and behave like entrepreneurs. As a result, students have competences how to run their own business. Nowadays the mega trend in companies in Finland is to support behavior like internal entrepreneurship, so lessons learnt do not be wasted even students would not become entrepreneurs.

When a student has a business idea, he/she discusses with the entrepreneurship coordinator, who accepts student's enrollment to Pre-Incubator course. This practical course consists of lectures on competence areas required by business activities, entrepreneur stories, weekly assignments and development of a shared business idea



in cross-disciplinary teams. The course concludes with a business idea competition judged by a specialist panel and the students. Course includes ten face-to-face sessions following the same pattern: discussions of weekly assignments, specific topics' lectures and instructions for next assignments.

After start up, JAMK provides students Incubator Service course. In the beginning of the course JAMK and a new company, write a consultancy agreement. This course is provided by JAMK's specialist and it is tailored for the needs of a company and it lasts one year.

Innovation Week at JAMK

In autumn 2013, the first Innovation Week was arranged at JAMK (Figure 3). During this kick-off week, 600 students were involved in solving the development challenges set by the company clients. The key challenges varied from the development of a well-being service concept to the recognition and achievement of hidden customer potential. During one week, students have about 3,000 phone calls and face-to-face discussions with customers and target groups in Jyväskylä. They also created ideas and concepts for solutions to assignments and perform quick tests of their solutions on-site with the customers. As the results of this first Innovation Week nine clients got workload of 600 students and 30 coaches, who together created 60 000 ideas for the needs of clients.

One goal of Innovation Week is to provide all JAMK students a Design Thinking-type problem-solving method (Figure 1). The method is also used and taught at the world's leading business schools as an operating model for diversified, multi-disciplinary development groups. JAMK is the first educational institute in Europe to teach the method to all students through practical experience.

Since its kick-off, all JAMK students have taken part in this course, which is mandatory for them. Total number of students, who has already passed this course, is 6500. Students have so far had 90 assignments from company clients and JAMK students have generated 650 000 ideas and concepts for the needs of clients. Nowadays both face-to-face and virtual innovation weeks are arranged twice per year. Beside this student course, JAMK Generator is running this service for companies and JAMK own developing tasks.

EU granted HEIBus project

In the beginning of year 2017 started EU granted Erasmus + Knowledge Alliance 2 project Smart HEI-Business collaboration for skills and competitiveness (HEIBus). JAMK School of Technology is the main partner and coordinator of this three-year project. One work package of HEIBus is Multidisciplinary Student-level Real-life Problem Solving (RLPS). In RLPS implementations, students from three different countries and universities form three international and multidisciplinary groups, which solve the same real-life problem given by a company. In the beginning of every implementation,

two student groups have one face-to-face intensive week in the country and city, where the company locates and one student group takes virtually part in it. During the intensive week, there are tailored lectures and during the whole implementation, there are supervision by professors/teachers from three universities and company representatives for all student groups. After the intensive week, all students work at their own universities and meet regularly and virtually other members of their group and supervisors. In the end of the implementation the company representatives choose the winning group and professors/teachers give the grades. The objectives of RLPS implementations for students are that they become more international and learn to work together with students from different study areas and countries, but in the same time that they learn the basics of entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship, new enterprises and workplaces. What will happen next?

In Jyväskylä, there are two universities and several vocational schools, with altogether around 42000 students. In the beginning of year 2018 JAMK University of Applied Sciences, the University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä Educational Consortium GRADIA and City of Jyväskylä built up a coalition, the purpose of which is to serve the society, to support its wellbeing and to expand entrepreneurship and innovation education to all these institutions. This co-operation will lead entrepreneurship education to the new level. It will provide possibilities for all students in Jyväskylä to participate in special courses, to develop own business ideas and to aquiretask from business clients.

Finland needs creative and courageous young people and it is via entrepreneurship we offer possibilities and freedom to them. This is an important part of the Finnish image of an affluent society. ■

SINCE INNOVATION WEEK KICK-OFF, 6500 STUDENTS HAVE PASSED THE COURSE, SUBMITTED 90 ASSIGNMENTS, GENERATED 650 000 IDEAS TARGETING THE NEEDS OF BUSINESS CLIENTS.

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