



Reinforcing the Innovation-Employability Nexus in the Mediterranean

Forum on Innovation and Employability: Innovating the Academia-Industry Linkage in the Mediterranean

Location	Remote – Zoom	
Seminar date/times	Thursday 18 November 2021	13:00-16:00 CET
Time commitment	3 hours	
Language	English with interpretation to/from Arabic and French	
Theme/topic	Synergies with the innovation ecosystem in the Mediterranean region in order to inspire follow-up actions	
Outcome	Increase high-level stakeholder’s knowledge on interrelation between innovation, employability, and economic growth, and increase awareness of existing policy tools, best practices, instruments, and available opportunities for improving future career prospects (employability & innovation of students and researchers)	
Geography	Entire UfM region	
Participant profile	Focus on top-level members of HEIs & research centres with participation of policy bodies (e.g. research ministry, economics ministry) and other relevant complementary stakeholders	
Participant number	80 participants	
Interactivity/B2B section	View-only participants are able to see view-only participants, with title name and institution, and they will be able to communicate among themselves.	

Description

This forum is part of the UfM initiative ‘Reinforcing the innovation-employability nexus in the Mediterranean’, bringing together academia, industry, and policymakers to discuss, assess and share experiences and best practices around strengthening innovation and improving the employability of graduates.

Even with substantial differences in political, social, and economic conditions across the Mediterranean region, the 25% youth unemployment and the un- and underemployment of university graduates has been a major challenge with all of the characteristics of a so-called “wicked problem”. It is socially complex, has many interdependencies, and is charged with social, economic and considerations that limit the effectiveness of any single course of action. Wicked problems can be best tackled by taking a collaborative approach, engaging all stakeholders to create a common vision and narrative, and develop innovative strategies.


In recent years, the Union for the Mediterranean has therefore doubled its commitment to higher, developing exchange platforms that enhance information flows between academia, industry and policymakers, fostering dialogue and a shared vision. In the quest for increased connectivity between the three spheres to power innovation and employability, higher education institutions and research centres are seen as key drivers of change, ideally suited to ‘connect the dots’ because they are impartial, and driven by curiosity and long-term perspectives. However, to deliver on those expectations, the three spheres must work together. Together they can become a new motor of innovation and employability.

Agenda

Thursday 18 November 2021 13:00-16:00 CET	
13:00 – 13:10	Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nasser Kamel, Secretary General, UfM</i> • <i>Regine Qualmann, Head of Division for North Africa, Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)</i>
High level session: Keynote speakers	
13:10 – 13:20	Keynote speech: Innovation and Employability – The Case of Italy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maria Cristina Messa, Minister of Universities and Research, Italy</i>
13:20 – 13:45	High-level Panel: Innovation, Sustainability and Careers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dia-Eddin Arafah, Higher Council for Science and Technology, Secretary General, Jordan</i> • <i>Maria Cristina Russo, Director, DG RTD, European Commission</i> <p><i>Moderator: Giuseppe Provenzano, Advisor for Research and Innovation, UfM</i></p>
Context of UfM Reinforcing the Innovation-Employability Nexus	
13:45 – 14:05	Education and Industry – A key to recovery and jobs <i>UfM and Paeradigms</i>
14:05 – 14:10	<i>Coffee Break</i>
Part II: Lessons, ideas, and opportunities	
14:10 – 14:20	Setting the scene: Innovation and careers in the Mediterranean <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Angelo Riccaboni, Chair, PRIMA Foundation</i>
14:20 – 14:50	Mediterranean Lessons and examples of best practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Global University Network for Innovation (TBC)</i> • <i>Ayhan Kızıltan, President of Mersin Chamber of Commerce and Industry - ASCAME's Commission on Innovation</i> • <i>Joseph Assad, Dean of School of Engineering, University of Holy Spirit of Kaslik</i> • <i>Cristian Chiavetta, ENEA and Michela Cariglia, Gargano Shellfish, B.BLUE Initiative</i>
14:50 – 15:25	Ideas and needs for way forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mokhtar Mahouchi, Head of the Cabinet, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Tunisia</i> • <i>Representative from pilot training – Jordan (TBC)</i> • <i>Maria Sobron Bernal, Policy analyst at the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Cities, and Regions, OECD</i> • <i>Gonzalo León - Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM) (5+5 dialogue on RIH)</i>
15:25 – 15:35	Project presentation from UfM Regional Training on Innovation and Employability
15:35 – 15:55	Opportunities and voices of funders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ingrid Schwaiger, Deputy Head of Unit, DG NEAR, European Commission</i> • <i>Enrique de Villamore Martin, Director, SCP/ RAC (Entrepreneurship and Environment)</i> • <i>Development cooperation representative (TBC)</i>
15:55 – 16:00	Closing <i>Itaf ben Abdallah, Senior Advisor for Higher Education and Research, UfM</i>


*Schedule subject to change/adaptation

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