



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
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MIMIR

## From Research to Business: Turning Knowledge into Jobs, Innovation, and Growth

October 13–15, 2025 in Malta

The Mediterranean region is rich in scientific talent and academic output, but the valorization of research into tangible economic and societal value remains limited. While research institutions across UfM member states continue to generate world-class knowledge, structural barriers persist in scaling inventions, attracting investment, and enabling cross-sectoral collaboration. This gap between knowledge creation and innovation uptake constrains the region's potential for job creation, sustainable development, and regional competitiveness.

Despite being the most educated generational group in Southern Mediterranean history, youth unemployment remains alarmingly high, often exceeding 30% in some countries. In fact, the region hosts the highest unemployment rate among higher education graduates globally, reaching 25% in North Africa according to UNDP figures. This reflects a disconnect between the region's advanced academic output and its underperforming innovation ecosystems. In several Southern Mediterranean countries, over 32% of enterprises cite labor skill mismatches as a major constraint to hiring.

At the same time, the region holds significant opportunities to reposition itself as a hub for sustainable innovation by strengthening research commercialisation, enhancing public-private collaboration, and building innovation-ready ecosystems. Universities and research institutes are increasingly recognized not just as educational actors, but as engines of regional development.

Promising groundwork already exists on this topic. Research programmes such as PRIMA (Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area) and Horizon Europe's Mediterranean Initiative have already yielded mature, high-potential research projects across critical sectors, from water and agriculture to health and renewable energy. These initiatives offer fertile ground for scaling solutions into real-world impact and should be actively harnessed to drive inclusive economic development and green innovation

Against this backdrop, and building on the UfM Ministerial on Research and Innovation (2022) in Paris, the UfM Youth Forum (2024) in Helsinki, and prior Innovation–Employability Nexus conferences, the High-Level Segment of the “From Research to Business” conference seeks to elevate the role of research valorisation in regional cooperation. **The conference, supported by the German Development Cooperation, brings together policymakers, leading institutions, and regional actors to share strategic initiatives, reflect on stakeholder needs, and contribute to shaping the innovation pillar of a future UfM Ministerial on Research and Innovation.**

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MONDAY, OCTOBER 13   High-level Segment   Villa Bighi	
8:30 – 9:00	<b>Welcome Coffee and Registration</b>
9:00 – 9:20	<b>Opening Remarks</b>  This high-level session focuses on unlocking the potential of research commercialisation as a driver of innovation and regional development. Through strategic dialogue and real-world inspiration, it aims to elevate research valorisation as a shared priority across institutions, sectors, and borders.
9:20 – 9:40	<b>Fireside Chat   Daring Futures: Youth, Space &amp; Science</b>  In this fireside, astronaut and entrepreneur Sara Sabry will share how science-driven entrepreneurship can empower the next generation to tackle humanity's most pressing global challenges.
9:40 – 10:20	<b>PANEL 1   The Unsung Heroes: Scaling Research to Business Across the Region</b>  This panel shines a light on the innovators turning research into real-world impact across the region. By sharing their journeys, challenges, and successes, these pioneers highlight how scaling research-to-business can strengthen regional innovation ecosystems and inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs.
10:20 – 11:00	<b>PANEL 2   The Unprecedented Opportunity: Research Valorization as a Key Enabler of Regional Prosperity</b>  This panel explores how research valorization can serve as a cornerstone for building resilient innovation ecosystems across regions. Bringing together ecosystem leaders across the region the discussion will highlight the unprecedented opportunities that emerge when research is transformed into market-ready solutions: driving growth, talent development, and cross-border collaboration
11:00 – 11:25	<b>Closing Keynotes: The Road Ahead</b>  The closing keynotes will bring learnings from the panel discussions as well as launch a new regional initiative on scalability.

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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14   Research to Business Workshop   Notch Conference Center	
9:00 – 11:15	<b>World Climate Simulation</b>  A workshop with a systems simulation exploring the complexities of climate change, highlighting the need for scalable, global collaboration and solutions. This sets the scene for the environmental aspect of the quintuple helix model, while creating urgency for research commercialisation.
11:15 – 11:45	<b>Coffee Break</b>
11:45 – 13:15	<b>Understanding Research Commercialisation</b>  A session contextualising commercialisation pathways, key considerations throughout the process, different models from around the world, and how we have ended up in the models we have today.
13:30 – 14:30	<b>Networking Lunch</b>
14:30 – 14:45	<b>Ecosystems as a Key Enabler for Research Commercialisation</b>  This segment features discussions on the current state of research commercialisation in the Mediterranean and highlight successful initiatives that have advanced innovation.
14:45 – 15:30	<b>Panel 1   Emerging Pathways: Regional Cooperation for Research to Business</b>  This panel explores how regional institutions and initiatives are laying the groundwork for stronger research-to-business pathways. By identifying challenges and opportunities, the discussion will highlight how collaborative programs can enable research commercialisation to thrive across the region.
15:30 – 16:00	<b>PRIMA Foundation   Paving the Path from Research to Business</b>
16:00 – 16:45	<b>Panel 2   Research Commercialisation in Practice</b>  This panel brings together practitioners showcasing how university research is taken from lab to market.
16:45 – 17:00	<b>Closing Remarks</b>

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## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15 | Research to Business Workshop | Notch Conference Center

9:00 – 10:30	<b>Funding &amp; Legal</b>  A session focused on an overview of how venture capital works, public funding instruments and grants, and typical legal considerations with emphasis on IPR.
10:30 – 11:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>
11:00 – 12:30	<b>Go-to-Market &amp; Spinout Support</b>  This session will double down on the everyday work in supporting research commercialisation. The session will be centered around the Innovation Readiness Level™ framework developed for innovation advisors in universities but later adapted to cover a wide range of fields.
12:30 – 13:30	<b>Networking Lunch</b>
13:30 – 14:30	<b>Academia &amp; Business</b>  A session focused on the mechanics and systems of how academia and industry can collaborate to enable and enhance research commercialisation. The session will include co-innovation and licensing, as well as an overview into the trends related to the topic over the last decades.
14:30 – 15:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>
15:00 – 16:30	<b>Overcoming Obstacles</b>  A closing discussion where participants reflect on structural barriers and share ideas for unlocking the potential of research commercialisation in the region.
16:30 – 17:00	<b>Closing Remarks</b>  Charting the next steps in the context of the Union for the Mediterranean.

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