



PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITH ENTREPRENEURIAL REACH

P O W E R



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1. Introduction to POWER

a. Platform

Startups, upon invitation by their respective incubator, are able to set up their profile outlining their activities and interests. The startup profile information allows them to see and receive relevant student profile information and manage the selection process.

Startups are able to fill in the standard template to announce the placement position. Regular updates of their placement offer status is enabled as well as a possibility to share several offers by one startup.

Startups carry out a selection process according to their preferred system in order to choose the most suitable candidate.

1. Main window

After running the platform you will see a main window:





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In the central place 4 main roles are presented to be chosen by the user. End user can as:

- ❖ Student
- ❖ University member
- ❖ Start-up representative
- ❖ Incubator facilitator

The Login button for registered users is located in the top-right corner of the main page. The POWER, Home and Contact buttons are located in the top-left corner of the main page.

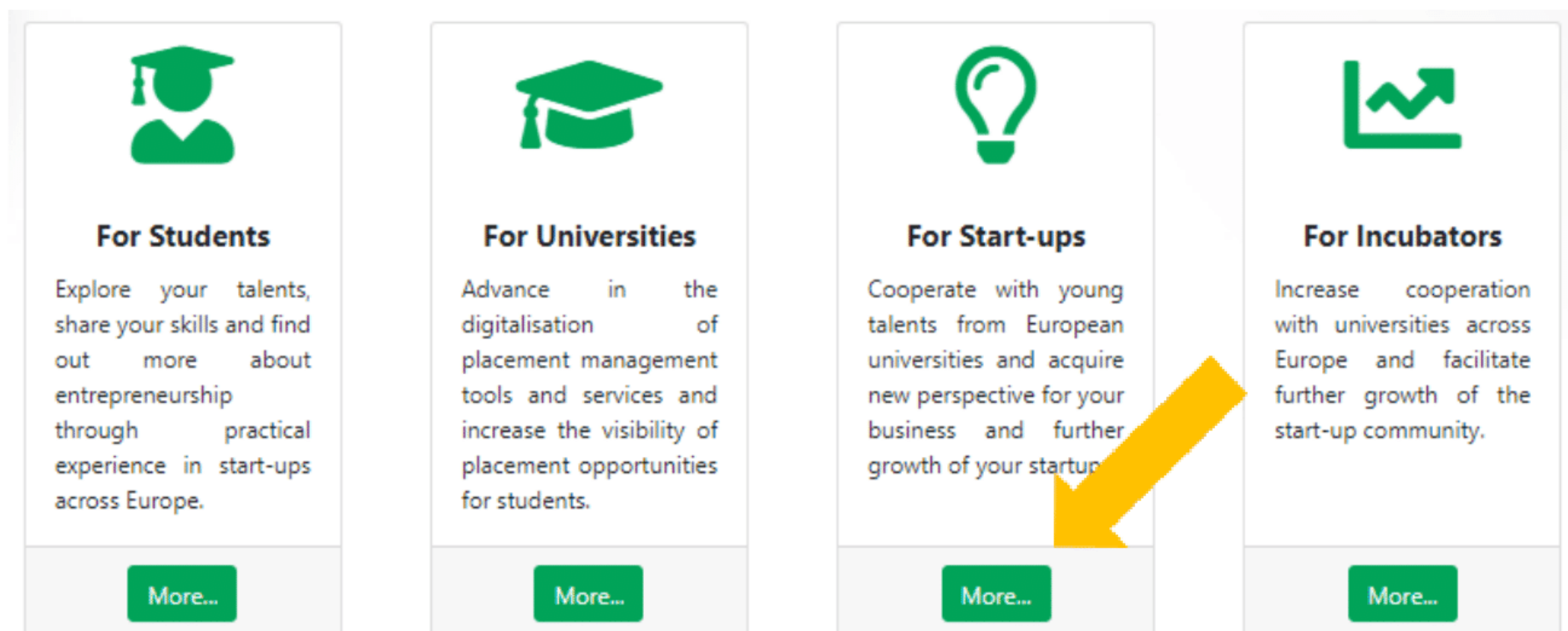


The following functions are realized after clicking:

- ❖ **POWER** button redirect you to POWER website,
- ❖ **Home** button always allow you to return to the main platform website
- ❖ **Contact** button allows you to contact POWER platform representatives

2. Registration to start-up account

Startup representatives to register a new account must click on **More...** button in the For Start-ups tab in the main POWER Platform window.




The pop-up window will appear with an explanation about the platform and 3 options to select: Close window, Sign up and Login.



For Start-ups ×

POWER seeks to empower European start-ups by creating favourable circumstances to enable meaningful collaboration with talented students. A support system accompanied by a set of targeted material will be designed and offered to facilitate smooth management of placements this way allowing to focus fully on the content of the placement as well as enabling highly impactful cooperation with young European talents. Through a network of universities and incubators, POWER will connect talented students with startups both locally and across the EU.

Close Sign up Login



Create Account

Create Star-up Account in POWER platform:
Please provide your real representative Name and Surname.
This data will be used by students to browse your profile.

Personal info

First name Last name

Startup name

Username


Password

Confirm password

Affiliated incubator

This field is required, please fill field

By signing up to a free POWER platform you agree to our [Terms](#) and [privacy policy](#).

I'm not a robot 

Create Account

After selecting the **Sign up** button the Create Account panel will be presented:

All fields like Name, Surname, of startup's representative, Startup Name, username which email account and password must be filled in. Moreover you need to select an affiliated incubator.

Read and then accept Terms and privacy policy. Then using Captcha, verify that you are not a robot. After clicking the **Create Account** button the confirmation email will be sent to the email you provided.

Importante note: The password validator is implemented to check whether the password is too short, too common, purely numeric etc. The correct password should have at least 8 characters including capital letters, special signs and numbers. It is not allowed to use passwords like "qwerty" and others. You will be notified if the password fulfills password policy requirements.

During the registration, the end-user is also notified about the necessary changes in the dialog box next to the registration form. Please follow the hints provided. Sample windows with warnings are presented below:



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Messages 1

- This password is too short. It must contain at least 8 characters.
- This password is too common.
- This password is entirely numeric.

Messages 1

- Passwords don't match

End-user must change its password as long as he/she eliminates all warning messages. When the password is finally typed properly, the second phase of validation will occur. The confirmation email to the provided address will be sent.

Thank You!

Please check your email for further instructions on how to complete your account setup.

Having trouble? [Contact us](#)

[Continue to homepage](#)

After clicking the link, the startup account is successfully registered in the POWER platform. Depending on the browser you are using you may be asked to memorize the password. Now, you need to check your email to finish registration. Sample email is presented below:

Usually the confirmation email is sent immediately but please check the SPAM folder or wait up to 10 minutes depending on the email servers you are using. Click the **Confirm** button to finish registration.

NEW IN POWER

Thank you for your interest in our Placement Opportunities With Entrepreneurial Reach (POWER) platform. Please confirm the registration process by clicking the button:

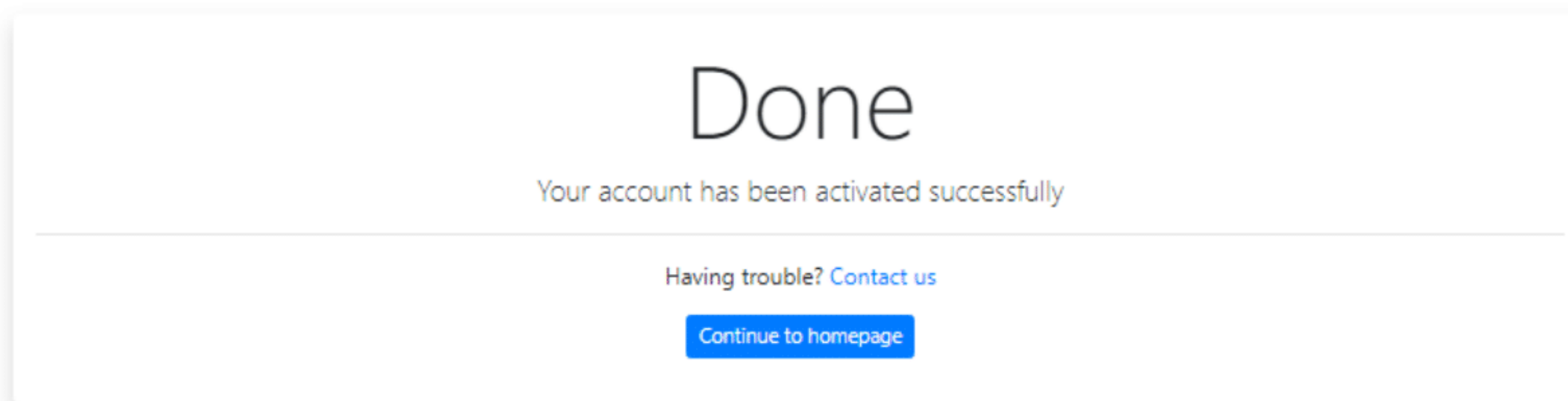


If the registration was an error, or the account has not been ordered on your behalf, you can ignore this e-mail.

POWER Platform Team



You will receive following notification:



The registration process is finished, but the startup profile is empty so there is a need to add more information to use the POWER platform.

3. **Profile creation and editing**

After login to the platform, the new functions are available. After clicking the top-right icon which presents your first letter of name and surname two options will be available:

- ❖ Startup setting
- ❖ Offers

Initially the startup settings should be selected to create the profile. The changes to profile are done in the same way. The following window with required information will appear.

Startup must provide its:

- ❖ Logo (emblem) as a file



- ❖ Startup name
- ❖ Country of origin
- ❖ City of origin
- ❖ Industry Sector like IT or Chemistry, etc

Below, the general Startup Description window is presented:

The Startup should provide a brief description no longer than 500 characters using Markdown editor. Notice that below the affiliated incubator is shown.

At the bottom of the page, the info about the startup manager is presented. You may change/provide your data or change the password. The action is initiated by clicking the green button.

b. How to prepare a placement offer, and browse through applications.

1. Adding placement offer

Since the profile of the startup is created, it can add the placement offer. To do that you should select **Offers** in the top right menu.

The following window will be presented.



Initially the list of placement offers is empty.

To add an offer click the button **Add offer**.



Smart Soft Solutions

SMART
SOFT
SOLUTIONS

Offer name

Availability of offering

from: 2020-05 to: 2020-06

Offers list Add offer

First, you need to specify the placement offer name like Web developer or Project Manager. You must also add data of offer availability. By clicking Add offer you will be able to define your placement.

Smart Soft Solutions

SMART
SOFT
SOLUTIONS

Offer name

Web developer

Short Description (max 500 chars)

Please brief short job offer!

limit: 500 characters
Please fill description.

Country

Select country

This field is required, please fill field

City

This field is required, please fill field

Availability of offering

from: 2020-05 to: 2020-06

Period

from: rrrr-mm to: rrrr-mm

Placement Type

Office

Language

Choose language

This field is required, please fill field

Salary

Not paid

Update info



You can select the **availability of offering** which informs how long the offer is visible for students. Then you can set up when the placement might start and when it should finish. In the next field you can set the **type of placement** – either it is an office (in situ), remote or mixed placement. Then the required **language** field needs to be filled. You can add as many languages as you wish. Below, there is information whether the placement is paid or not.

On the left side you will see the logo of the company and the **offer name** provided previously. Below, you should add a **short description** of the placement. At the end of this window, you must add the country and city of the placement.

In the next section, you must add **skills** you are looking for from applying student. You can add up to 10 skills. The skills are predefined and have over 30.000 categories.

Preferred skills on offer

Search

Search

Added

Update info

The last section is connected with **required documents**, **responsibilities** and extra **benefits** for students.

Required documents

Add

Type of document Add

Required documents

Responsibilities

List of responsibilities

Please brief short job offer!

limit: 300 characters
Please fill description.

Update

Benefits

List of benefits

Please brief short job offer!

limit: 300 characters
Please fill description.

Update

Back Preview



To add **required document**, write its name – i.e. CV, motivation letter, reference from faculty member, etc.

In the middle window, you can add information about duties during the placement. Finally, in the right panel you can add information about extra benefits i.e. travel cost reimbursement or dormitory, etc.

At the end, you can preview your offer by clicking **Preview**. All data is stored in the database and becomes active according to the visibility offer setting. If you wish to make any changes you can click the **Edit** button. If you are satisfied with your offer, then you can activate it by clicking **Activate Offer**.

2. Offer deactivation

To deactivate the given offer, enter the **Offers section**, select the offer you wish to deactivate by clicking the **Preview** button and then click the **Deactivate** button at the bottom of the next window.



Offers List / Page 1

The screenshot displays the 'Offers List / Page 1' interface. At the top, there is a briefcase icon. Below it, the title 'Offers List / Page 1' is centered. The main content area shows a preview of an offer titled 'Web developer'. A yellow arrow points to the 'Preview' button at the bottom of this offer card. Below the offer list, there are two rows of navigation buttons. The first row contains 'Back to profile' and 'Add offer'. The second row contains 'Back', 'Edit', and 'Deactivate offer', with a yellow arrow pointing to the 'Deactivate offer' button.



3. Application browsing

To check current status of student applications, select **Offers** section and then, select the given offer by clicking **Preview** button.



Offers List / Page 1

The top section is describing the offer. Below, you have a section with information about applicants.

List of students
Students which apply for this offers are in the list below

#	Student	University	Overlapping of skills	Rating number	Accepted
1	John Smith		0	5	New
2	John Stone		0	2	New



You can browse them and evaluate each of the applications. If you click the student's name, the following window will appear.

John Smith

Affiliation: Didn't specified ✕

Country: ● Bangladesh

Linked In profile: Didn't specified ✕

Area of Studies: Sports

Degree: Bachelor's degree

Overlapping: 74% skill_1 skill_2 skill_3 skill_4 skill_5 skill_6
skill_7 skill_8 skill_9 skill_A

Sended documents: [dummyCV.pdf](#)

Rating (0-100):

Comment:

You can check basic attributes of a student's application, like country of origin or LinkedIn profile. You can browse the attached documents which will appear in the new window. Finally, you can rate each applicant and store some comments for further validation process. The comments are not sent to students. Click **Update** to store the data.



2. Attracting and selecting valuable placements

Hiring low-paid or unpaid University students as interns is quite an exciting opportunity for all companies, let alone the cash-stretched startup founders. Indeed, a team of talented, productive interns can allow startups to remain focused on high-level strategy while others achieve basic goals and handle daily issues. Who (what entrepreneur) could refuse such an opportunity?

As many startups have little or no experience in talent acquisition or /and selection process, they are facing problems to find good candidates and recruit talents. Creating a quality team is a single good predictor of success but it needs time, preparation, attention and promotion or marketing strategy.

There are certain steps that a startup can follow in order to plan and develop an internship program which will be meaningful and effective in accomplishing its objectives.

- a) Identification of your own needs and profile you are looking for.
- b) Finding and attracting new talents.
- c) Evaluation of candidates & Conducting interviews.
- d) Selecting the best candidate.

The following advice and tips can help early stage startups in order for this process to be less time-consuming and profitable for both sides.

SIMPLE TECHNIQUES

Structure your recruitment – be clear on the qualifications and skills the successful candidate needs to have and plan each part of the recruitment process.

Imagine yourself in the candidate's shoes when designing this process.

Map out what you want to achieve from each stage of the recruitment process.

Prepare in advance, particularly for the interviews.

Learn about legal implications which need to be followed.

Enable your candidates to give their best and show their potential.

Adapted /Copied from Wright, St. & Sponton, J. (2005) Managing Recruitment Pocketbook, Management Pocketbooks Ltd, UK.



a. Identifying own needs and the profile you are looking for

A good hiring strategy begins with 2 basic questions: “*What exactly do we need?*” and “*Where are we going to find it?*”.

Identification of the needs means developing a thorough understanding of the position you have available in order not only to find the best candidate but also to plan and target your recruiting efforts accordingly. You have to think thoroughly of what are your needs and your goals out of this internship. Make a list of potential benefits of this internship. Would you like to introduce your company to interns, to provide career training, work experience and mentoring for a prospective career within your company? Or you just need an extra person to work on a small and time framed project. What is the job purpose (why does this job exist?) , what is the scope (who will this person report to?), what are the duties (tasks and responsibilities) and which is the budget (if any) for this position.

After thinking thoroughly of what exactly do you need, it is appropriate to write down the information in a job profile or in other words create a document with the position description which defines well the title, responsibilities, knowledge, skills and qualifications (essential and desirable) for the position.

In order to build a strong job description, start with why this position is important and determine its value.

In order to attract young talents, make sure you present your company, your values, working environment and culture. Your job description needs to sell the cool, world-changing stuff the intern will be working on, in addition to the usual internship tasks, in order to grasp the interest of talented young students to apply.

Secondly, explain well the responsibilities and tasks for this position as well as the benefits and working hours. Describe also the knowledge, skills and qualifications needed (pg field of education, level (undergraduate or master), former experience etc) Based on our experience, usually, there are many different schools and different degrees that may provide appropriate qualifications and therefore try more to give emphasis on what skills are needed for this position rather than which school is one attending. Make sure also to include both technical skills but also personal skills appropriate for this job position.

Last but not least, explain how to apply and give a clear explanation of when, how and what the applicants have to do in order to express their interest for your open position.



There are plenty of ready-made templates available on the net. Here are some you may like to use:

- ❖ <https://hiring.monster.com/employer-resources/job-description-templates/intern-job-description-sample/>
- ❖ <https://resources.workable.com/job-descriptions/>
- ❖ <https://www.careeronestop.org/BusinessCenter/Toolkit/QuickJobDescription.aspx?&oTAbid=0&oCode=19101100&oState=06&oExclude=0&lang=en&oUniqueld=1677533>
- ❖ https://learn.marsdd.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Job_Description_Template.pdf

b. Finding and attracting new talent

Finding and attracting new talents may seem difficult. However, based on your experience and understanding of the job and labour market, you may also determine the best methods for sourcing qualified candidates. Think about how people of different fields are looking for jobs and decide where and how to search for young talents from different domains. Based on your time, money and the shortage or not of qualified students for your particular internship position, you may consider the following sources and choose the most appropriate process in order to collect applications.

1. Universities

Universities produce young talents and they are the source where most of the people cultivate their technical and scientific knowledge and skills. Therefore, connecting with Universities is the best way for finding young new talents.

a) University Career Offices

The University Career Office is the administration department of a University whose main goal is to act as a liaison between the university and the labour market. Among their main goals are to develop and maintain relationships with employers that facilitate placement of students and graduates, offering at the same time assistance to employers in the process of finding young talents for new job openings.

Usually each career office has its own customized services for their students or graduates and companies or organizations but almost all collect and advertise open jobs or internship positions for their students and young graduates. Usually, it has a website or an open platform where you may add job openings for your company, search among alumni's CVs or post internship vacancy openings for students. Career offices also organize career events or



career fairs where you may present your company and network with senior students and young graduates. There might be a small cost or no cost at all for all these services but sign up for an employer account at universities can be a very quick way in finding and attracting new graduates, interns or summer students.

i. Career Fairs

A **job fair** is an event, usually organized by a University Career office in which employers and recruiters present their company, provide information to potential employees and they may also conduct the first interview session. Students and young graduates join career fairs in order to have a positive start in their **career** search, get valuable information about the job market in their field and further develop their interview skills. Employers join University career fairs in order to find the students they need to fill entry-level positions.

As a startup company, there are several tips in order to maximize your benefits from the career fairs.

Firstly, University career fairs are an excellent opportunity to promote your business and present your company to young talents. In order to grasp their interest, make sure you present your company, your values, working environment and culture. Students want to start their career and get hands-on experience in different aspects of their profession. To consider a low-paying position at an unknown company, a candidate will clearly need to know “What’s in it for me? “Why should I consider working for you?”

b) Conduct University Professors and ask for referral

University professors know well the skills and qualifications of young talents. In case, there are some of them in your network, don’t hesitate conducting them and asking for young talents. Arranging to give a speech during a course or present your company during their lesson helps you connect and make your company visible in the exact pool you would like to connect with.

c) Student networks and associations

Similarly, you may like to connect with student networks and associations. Arranging to give a company presentation or speech during their events, can help you connect directly with young talents. Sometimes, student associations such as Best, AIESEC, ESN may organize



specialized career events where you have the exact opportunity to network with young students, promote your company and search for young talents. Also, they have online platforms where you may post your open positions.

2. Employee Referrals

A traditional and effective way of searching employees in the hidden job market is through employee referrals. If you already have some employees working for you and you are interested in hiring new and young students, you may start by asking the existing personnel to make reference through their own network. This method is thought to be an excellent way of assuring the good matches of your working team as none will introduce or make a reference for people who don't appreciate either for their skillset or their personality traits and values. Existing employees know well the needs of your startup, the culture and they can act as a "stick filter" for qualified candidates with the right knowledge, skills and motivation.

3. Professional & Personal Networking

Your professional and personal networks are the most traditional and effective sources for searching devoted and with good references, young employees. People find it difficult to find and remember all people that belong to their network, because they usually think and use their short-memory. The following steps will help you find and use your networks.

- a) In order to look and find all the members of your networks, write down and list the people you may know, in categories (relatives, former colleagues or fellow workers, former fellow students or professors, people you may know from seminars or training, from your hobbies, friends or neighbors). This brainstorming tip can help you overcome your memory's shortage and find good connections.
- b) Make this list and then choose "top 10" people who either have the characteristics and skills you are looking for (young, new talented etc) or may have some kind of connection with such people.
- c) Call them and inform them about your needs and open positions. Ask people who you trust for their relevant abilities and skills to introduce you or suggest to you some new graduates or senior students with similar skill sets and the same entrepreneurship mindset.



4. Professional Associations

Being a member of a professional association helps you network with people who share the same interests and goals. Attending association events enables you to network with potential candidates and let you introduce your company and your positions to new young members. In case it is possible, you may post your open position on their webpage also.

5. Social Media

Social media are online platforms and channels of communication that enable interaction between individuals and organizations. The majority of young people prefer to search for information and communicate through these channels. Therefore, you may like to consider making your appearance visible via *Facebook*, *Twitter* or *LinkedIn* and cultivate their users' interest in your startup. Specifically:

- ❖ **LinkedIn** is the world's largest and most famous professional platform. Having a profile in LinkedIn makes you visible to millions of professionals. Using this channel as a way of searching and attracting young talents is low cost and effective. There are 2 options:
 - Having a basic account, free of charge, where you present your startup, you can join relevant to your business groups and post open positions.
 - A fee based talent finder account where you buy job posting packages.

Also, you may search for talents via searching tools. Write exact skills you are looking for and contact directly those candidates who possess them. In this way, you have access to hundreds of young people around the globe or you may diminish your list in Europe or particular countries.

In order to increase the effectiveness of this channel as a recruitment tool, try to have an active and regular (weekly at least) participation in discussions, write posts and keep your followers' interest alert on your actions, goals, achievements and services.

Having a **Facebook** page is a good way of promoting your services and informing followers about your actions and goals. Therefore, you may also use *Facebook* as a method for attracting the interest of young graduates and informing potential candidates on your open positions. Again, try to have a regular presence and make posts on your continuing advancement in order to grasp the interest of your followers – potential interns.



6. Website

Having a website is a marketing tool where you present your organization's vision, mission, services and products in order for people (investors, clients, cooperators, etc.) to get to know you. As for recruitment methods, posting your open position for interns in your webpage is the easiest and cheapest way of advertisement.

Recruiting interns and law

Your recruitment process should follow legislation for internships. Therefore, try to learn all laws that you have to obey in order to protect your organization and potential employees. There are certain issues you have to comply with. These issues include the need to establish nondiscriminatory criteria for job descriptions and to implement nondiscriminatory strategies for attracting talents and also rules you have to follow in order to hire international interns for working hours, compensation and insurance.

c. How to conduct interviews with potential candidates

Having collected applications from candidates, it's time for their screening and evaluation process. This typically begins with the review of a candidate's CV and/or application, followed by an interview.

As a pre-screening tool you may also like to use the candidate's social networking profile such as Linked-in. Type the name of the candidate in a Google search engine, and you may find photos, videos, posts or other information for their career or personal history. You may extract useful information about their education, work experience, hobbies, interests, volunteer or mobility experiences and geographic location. Especially, on linkedin you may find information on their professional network, pieces of their work and recommendations. You may like to read and see what their colleagues, friends or former supervisors say about their skills.

Review of CVs and applications is effective in screening out the applicants who do not meet the basic requirements for a position. Screening candidates' applications fairly and objectively can ensure that only suitable candidates will be invited to interview. There are Applicant Technical Systems that help the management of the applications but you may consider both the benefits and costs. ATS is paperless, gives you the opportunity to set up pre-screening questions, allows you to have online interview booking calendars and easily arrange interviews, and communicate with young talents in a modern way. However, you may also



like to consider the cost for buying such a system based on your overall budget. In this case, you may like to do the screening manually and book your interviews by yourself.

Either online or in a pdf format CV based applications are evaluated for their layout, length, quality and presentation of the author's skills and competencies. Usually, a well-written cover letter can also help you understand why this person would like to work with you and what are their career prospects and aspirations from this position. Try to be fair and objective when evaluating the Cvs, based on the role's profile. Usually these self-branding tools can give you interesting insights for the candidate's communication skills and personality style. However, CVs vary and it might be difficult to find the key information you are looking for while also bearing in mind that candidates might try to ameliorate their experiences and skills. In order to increase your objectivity, use a simple checkbox style form linked to the job profile. It might be in an excel format and you use the criteria that can clearly be identified. Ideally, cross check this list twice (give yourself appropriate and sufficient time and space) or work with a colleague who can recheck your list.

For those who meet the basic criteria, you may forward to the second phase; the interview. You may like to have a short- phone interview with them in order to check their availability and skills or arrange a proper interview (online or in person, if possible). As they are students, it is possible that this might be their first interview. Therefore, it would be nice to explain to them the whole hiring process and try to ease them by giving them details and clear instructions on what to expect (who they will meet, what they are going to talk about, for how much time, using what platform (in case of online interviews) etc).

As a startup founder, your time is extremely valuable. Try not to spend several hours on phone- and live-interviews of candidates. As you're interviewing and hiring candidates, it's important to keep in mind [who you're really looking for](#). Depending on what you'd like your interns to take on, you may be looking for specific work experience or academic credentials—but those shouldn't always factor into your decision as heavily as you may think. Look also for students who demonstrate enthusiasm, coach-ability, and solid listening skills, and those who take initiatives. Most importantly, look for students who demonstrate genuine interest in your industry or the position.

Send the candidate pre-interview reading materials or simply ask them to check out your website and to prepare questions about your company and the position. Evaluate how much and how deeply they have considered all information provided.



As an interviewer, be well prepared for the interview, as it's a way not only to find and choose the best candidate but also an excellent opportunity to showcase your company to future employees or people with similar business interests. Therefore, it's worth the effort and time invested.

Preparing for an interview means preparing interview questions and an objective way of evaluating the candidates' answers. Your particular goals of an interview with an intern are the same as interviewing an employee;

- Learning more about the person's skills and abilities,
- Assess their interest in your company and
- Determine whether or not they are going to fit well with your team.

Make sure you revise the job profile and description and you know well the job requirements and duties of the particular position. You might like to write down and prepare some questions in advance.

Here is a list of appropriate /common questions. You may feel free to adjust them in your own communication style and alter them in order to meet your needs. Try to ask as many open questions and encourage the interviewees to provide examples and further information about their experiences.

Questions on skills and abilities

- ❖ Tell me about your studies. How did you choose your specialization?
- ❖ Tell me more about your coursework / Could you please describe to me your thesis?
Do you think it is relevant to this position? In what way?
- ❖ What is your favorite course in your studies program? Why
- ❖ Do you follow any other courses online? Why?
- ❖ Could you please give me more information on your volunteer experience?
- ❖ What do you think are your main positive and negative characteristics?
- ❖ How would a colleague describe you?
- ❖ What skills do you want to gain?
- ❖ What skills do you think you can offer us?
- ❖ Provide an example where you had to take the lead in a group setting to overcome an obstacle.



Questions on your company

- ❖ What do you know about our company? How did you get this info?
- ❖ What are your expectations from this position?
- ❖ Why do you want to work for us?
- ❖ How do you think you are going to be valuable for our company?
- ❖ What are you looking for?

Questions on fitting with the team

- ❖ Why do you believe you make a good fit in our company /in our team?
- ❖ Describe a time when you worked as part of a team. What challenges did you face and what was the outcome?
- ❖ In case there might be a problem in a project, how do you handle the situation?
- ❖ What are your short term and long term career goals?
- ❖ How do you see yourself in 5 years?

You may also like to give candidates skills-based assignments (mini tests that assess certain skills such as translate a page for translators or debug a piece of code for software engineers) or present them a work scenario and ask how they would handle it. All these projects that simulate job duties will help you understand how students apply knowledge despite their lack of work experience.

Make sure to allow time for the interns to ask their own questions. Also, during the interview you might like to give more details on the position, the duties and the working hours that can also help them realize more on the value of this opportunity. Interview is a two-way communication and it is always more interesting and playful if both parties have active participation as both sender and receiver of the communication. Remember that although you are the recruiter, they are evaluating you as well. All candidates may also be your future employees or clients, so make them feel comfortable and welcome, and show appreciation for their time. Try to build a good rapport with the candidates in order to ease uneasiness, gain their appreciation and positive remarks on your professionalism.

Taking good notes during the interview is another good tip in order to ensure that the recruitment decision is fair and objective. You would like to record factual evidence of their answers or /and non-verbal communication. However, it is better to concentrate more on the communication with the candidate rather than keeping good notes.



Right after the interview, when the candidate has left, you might like to review your notes and relate the evidence written with the job requirements and the profile. For each criterion, give a score and try to weigh both the quality and the quantity of the candidate's responses. Sometimes, having another employee or colleague participate in an interview helps being more objective and fair.

d. How to select the best candidate

At the end of an interview, you should have a much better understanding of the candidate's credentials and suitability. Equally, the interviewee should leave knowing a lot more about their role and your company.

Apart from scores, rating scales and comprehensive evidences that can be valuable for you to reach a final decision, you might like to answer the following 5 questions before you make an offer to the best candidate:

- **Are they motivated to do the job?** Or in other words, **is the candidate interested in learning new skills?** Usually good interns would like to have a chance to grow and learn. In case you have clearly presented your startup's vision, your team's experience, and the relevant skills that a candidate could learn through this internship and you haven't noticed enthusiasm or motivation in working with you, this could be a red flag to not make them an offer, no matter their academic credentials or excellent references.
- **Does this candidate have different career goals?** Having different career goals, means that he/she won't be motivated to work and get experience on your goals and objectives. Also, they won't try to make more out of this internship but rather try to spend their time easily.
- **Are they professionals?** There might be certain behaviors during the interview that can act as "red flags" for the professional ethics and attitudes of an intern; being late for the interview, not respecting your time and effort, having poor listening skills, not being polite. Although someone might say that it's all because they lack experience of the professional world, these behaviors also show that they might be difficult to be coachable or working without close guidance. In case you are feeling annoyed by such behaviors, you might like to reject this candidate.



- **Are they a good culture fit?** Think what “culture fit” means to you and try to find actual traits like “team spirit”, “taking initiatives” etc. Your main concern should be to hire the person who would work smoothly with your team, who would adjust easily and be a valuable team player. Think over “out of all candidates, who fits best with your team?” The best candidate should have the most necessary skills but also have the potential to grow and be a culture fit for your team. However, hiring strictly for culture fit may result in homogenous teams that don't benefit from diversity's advantages. Try to be open and not choose the best candidate based on bias but build a diverse and inclusive culture where you benefit from diversity's advantages. Look at culture fit as only one of several desirable attributes. In other words, try to search and find how the best candidate would contribute to your culture or what knowledge, skills, perspectives and ideas will boost creativity, and lead to well-reasoned decisions in your startup company. In case you would like to help the interns fit well with your teams, explain well your startup's culture, working hours, communication style, etc. This will not only help them succeed and fit in, but also enhance your company's culture.

Find more in the following useful pages:

- ❖ <https://resources.workable.com/stories-and-insights/recruiting-tools>
- ❖ <https://idearocketanimation.com/15168-intern-hiring-tips/>
- ❖ <https://resources.workable.com/tutorial/faq-interview-process#evaluating>
- ❖ <https://resources.workable.com/tutorial/interview-questions-to-ask>



3. Best practices for valuable placements

a. What is a valuable placement? Case studies

[Hiring Interns in Startups](#) 30 min

[Benefits and Challenges for Start-ups working with Students-interns](#) 35 min

b. Training to align the interest of the startup with the student

Internships are often the first professional experience that today's students have before graduating from college. By aligning the interest of the startup with the student, both parties will greatly benefit. The startup will notice an increase in productivity and lower costs due to hiring interns, and the interns will gain more skills and experience necessary for future jobs. Apart from pitching in on projects in the company, interns can also give another perspective and pick up on details that a long-time employee may overlook. Sometimes, interns become valuable full-time employees at a later date.

It is vital that the startup support the intern throughout the process. Each startup should be provided with necessary training to align with internship responsibilities. One of the most common problems that both companies and their interns face is a disconnect between what the expectations and end goals are throughout the whole process. This can lead to the intern being unsatisfied with the experience and the company. During the first meeting between the intern and the startup, the following should be discussed and made clear to both parties:

- ❖ Setting clear expectations and goals, as well as the roles and responsibilities for each intern
- ❖ Have a clear plan for the internship experience, from day one with objectives and goals to meet throughout the time period
- ❖ The skills that the intern can provide the startup with and the new skills they hope to develop throughout the internship
- ❖ Confirmation of important information such as start date and weekly schedule
- ❖ Ask the intern about their interests and goals to make sure that the roles and responsibilities of the internship are best suited for them (click the link below to see an example template)
 - https://drive.google.com/file/d/12OOteuv8C6MB87KK6otSp55VBCaDV4_5/view?usp=sharing



c. Onboarding of interns

To help interns integrate during the first week of the internship and have a successful onboarding it is a good idea to:

- ❖ Schedule training to make sure interns will be able to complete tasks necessary for their position and feel they are contributing to the team.
- ❖ Assure that supervisors are prepared for interns and are aware of their:
 - Purpose and tasks in the organization
 - Projects they are involved in
 - Everyday job duties
- ❖ Help interns get set up by providing them with all the materials needed such as software accounts to complete the job as well as any necessary paperwork to fill out.
- ❖ Arrange group meetings and activities to help interns better fit in with the company culture.

Many Fortune 500 companies include mentoring in their internship programs. This allows for interns to better adjust to the work environment and learn directly from someone from a higher position in the organization. Mentoring programs allow interns to receive much needed feedback and gain confidence needed to become leaders at their future organizations. In order for this type of program to be successful the startup must:

- ❖ Assign a mentor based on relevant content areas.
- ❖ Have a set schedule of how often the intern and their mentor meet to assure that they are receiving the greatest amount of help possible.

In order for the student to get the most out of the internship, it is a good idea to allow them to set goals. This will allow the startup to see what interns are hoping to accomplish, on both a personal and professional level, and better understand how to design internship programs for both current and future interns. For the intern, this allows them to see the before and after to track their progress and help them decide if they want to continue working in the sector of the startup in the long run.

Towards the end of the internship, it is a good idea to conduct an exit interview with all interns. This allows for the startup to receive feedback from interns about what they learned, wish they had learned, and any changes that they would recommend in order for future interns to get the most out of working at the startup.



d. How to set OKRs (Objective Key Results) and manage time efficiently

Studies have shown that committing to a goal can help improve employee performance. But more specifically, research reveals that setting challenging and specific goals can further enhance employee engagement in attaining those goals.

OKR is an abbreviation for Objective & Key Result. Key results are almost always defined with numbers, so you can measure success. At the end of a work period, your OKRs provide a reference to evaluate how well you did in executing your objectives. This feedback can help you plan better moving forward.

Step by step:

- ❖ Understand the methodology.
- ❖ Define the global objective of the company for the next 12 months.
- ❖ Choose the duration of the oKRs (3-month cycles may be too long for a startup).
- ❖ Choose the OKRs' template.
- ❖ Do a full OKRs exercise before presenting them to the team.



OKRs at a glance:

- ❖ Objectives are ambitious and may feel somewhat uncomfortable.
- ❖ Key results are measurable and should be easy to grade with a number (Google uses a scale of 0 – 1.0).
- ❖ OKRs are public so that everyone in the organization can see what others are working on.
- ❖ The “sweet spot” for an OKR grade is 60% – 70%; if someone consistently fully attains their objectives, their OKRs aren’t ambitious enough and they need to think bigger.



- ❖ Low grades should be viewed as data to help refine the next OKRs.
- ❖ OKRs are not synonymous with employee evaluations.
- ❖ OKRs are not a shared to-do list.
- ❖ OKRs can enable teams to focus on the big bets and accomplish more than the team thought was possible, even if they don't fully attain the stated goal. OKRs can help teams and individuals get outside of their comfort zones, prioritize work and learn from both success and failure.

The more time spent crafting OKRs the better your strategy will be, which makes it easier for your employees to see how they are contributing to the big picture and align with other teams.

Tips for setting objectives:

- ❖ Pick just three to five objectives - more can lead to over-extended teams and a diffusion of effort.
- ❖ Avoid expressions that don't push for new achievements, e.g., "keep hiring," "maintain market position," "continue doing X."
- ❖ Use expressions that convey endpoints and states, e.g., "*climb the mountain*," "*eat 5 pies*," "*ship feature Y*."
- ❖ Use tangible, objective, and unambiguous terms. It should be obvious to an observer whether or not an objective has been achieved. Research shows more specific goals can result in higher performance and goal attainment.

Tips for developing key results:

- ❖ Determine around three key results per objective.
- ❖ Key results express measurable milestones which, if achieved, will directly advance the objective.
- ❖ Key results should describe outcomes, not activities. If the OKRs include words like "consult," "help," "analyze," "participate," they're describing activities. Instead, describe the impact of these activities, e.g., "publish customer service satisfaction levels by March 7th" rather than "assess customer service satisfaction."
- ❖ Measurable milestones should include evidence of completion and this evidence should be available, credible, and easily discoverable.



OKRs: individually or by groups?

The group (or project / product)-based OKRs are more important to define clearly. The people in that group should have a good idea of how they contribute to achieve these goals.

Individual OKRs are useful for personal development. As an individual contributor you can see how you're doing in the areas that matter and where you might need to improve.

Should we grade the OKRs midterm?

This is a helpful way to keep the team aligned and on track. Without trying to disrupt the workflow too much, grading the OKRs midway through the quarter helps understand what is getting dropped or requires more attention.

You should go overboard with your goals. Sometimes reality can be limiting in nature if you're unsure of the capacity of your team. Of course, failing at your goals doesn't feel good either which is why you should strive to hit a 0.7 or better. Ideally your goals will stretch the capacity of your team and if you're continuously hitting 1.0s, you are not thinking big enough.

Advantages:

- ❖ Productivity is hugely increased:
 - Teams gain autonomy and decision-making power.
 - There is a standard measure to know if the company is doing things well.
- ❖ The whole company is aligned:
 - Conflicts of priorities disappear. Mechanism to say NO to opportunities.
 - Teams collaborate more naturally.
 - Full visibility and predictability.
- ❖ Better work dynamics:
 - Clear transparency on what is expected and what has been achieved.
 - Employees have a mechanism to propose their ideas.

Templates:

- ❖ Template 1
 - Rework with google
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KyKt6yAwu0NCM1f55JSjpOBpr5YjhL4E_vYN0VWuEg/edit



- ❖ Template 2
 - https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_3NioJD2K9hopqLGqr7yxbZWRHJQGbOIID2b86A1y3o/edit#gid=1855645115
- ❖ Template 3
 - <https://www.notion.so/Company-OKRs-Notion-template-9e787e68ab9b4281ac29cf089494752e>
- ❖ Template 4
 - https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Tm1h7O4B4sUX_VDVO-aprDRFu8YxT7UmFPkx8Bp3zBU/edit#gid=815064250

e. Remote placement

1) Giving instructions in remote internships

Before you start actively recruiting students, you need to understand how to teach and give assignments correctly. On the one hand, students can become the driving force of your company, and on the other hand, they can turn the whole process of work into a black hole: you will spend a lot of time and energy on learning, and students will simply merge, leaving you with a mountain of tasks.

For each intern, you need to create detailed instructions for the task, and provide materials that would help increase their knowledge.

It is important for a start-up to write very clear instructions for future interns, specifying what to do, where to look. It is necessary to clearly and understandably structure knowledge and skills in order to facilitate the transfer of experience for everyone and to make the learning process effective for the intern.

Since students do not have the opportunity to come to the office, it is necessary to check all assignments and do a comprehensive analysis of their work.

In addition, you need to make important meeting recordings, which just allow you to analyze the work done. So, a startup needs to record its daily calls and send them out to those (interns) who don't have time to attend meetings. It will help everyone to understand current tasks better and communicate within the team.



Video instructions.

Often you can prepare video instructions. You can record on the screen, supplementing with audio. Video instructions make the work easier, because no one is pulled on every issue, and an intern can watch the video at least 1000 times and figure it out. This is especially true for marketing, where the team has to work with a ton of services.

Additional sources on specifics in managing remote placements:

- ❖ Onboarding Remote Interns: <https://info.parkerdewey.com/remote-internships-101>

2) Following the remote work of intern

Personal participation is especially important in the process of transferring knowledge. Dry documents, instructions in Google Sheets cannot be compared with video courses, weekly calls (ideally with video), which help not only to evaluate and monitor work, but to build a dialogue with an intern and help him/her become better.

How to control.

Students who are just starting to work have a lot of strength and desire to try themselves in everything. Therefore, it is very important to hold on to their unrestrained energy, which can either destroy or create. And, of course, your task is to channel the energy of students in a positive direction for example by finding ways to recognize and reward the intern.

In the first stages, you need to control every sneeze of a novice intern. If a student makes a mistake, the intern needs to point out his/her mistakes and explain why this should not be done. Teach him/her to think.

The first two or three weeks, even a month, should be spent on checking not only the fulfillment of the task, but also how the interns reacted to it: how they thought, how they made a decision.

This practice is very important for remote work, so that a person is not only in his routine, but understands what is happening in addition to his tasks. Such calls help not only build trusting relationships with the team, but also understand where you are going.

It is also very important to teach and train employees to use the regulations and instructions related to work with interns. After all, you can write the most detailed and structured guides,



and the person will eventually ask you, especially if the intern is inexperienced or the intern is generally lazy.

The following policy need to be explain to intern:

- ❖ First, you look for the answer to your question in an internal document or in a specially designed Google resource.
- ❖ If the answer is not found, ask colleagues, perhaps they have encountered such a situation.
- ❖ Only if you don't find the answer anywhere and your problem turns out to be unsolvable (*hint* - you have to solve it by this moment), only after that you ask other leaders. Before that, our names did not exist at all.

3) The art of understanding the intern

Remember that you have a lot of power in the eyes of the intern. Perhaps the intern is just afraid to disrupt the conversation with you, and wants to please with all his might. Intern may not ask questions even when intern does not understand something. Make life easier for yourself and pull these questions out of the intern by saying "*tell me more*", "*explain this to me*".

Such guidance questions invite the interlocutor to calm down, think and remember more details. In fact, with their help, you also ask, but not directly. They reflect your interest, and if you ask them in the right tone, and your body language shows openness, then the interlocutor perceives this as a positive assessment of his words, which is very important for overcoming barriers. In such remarks, a person usually does not see a threat.

The likelihood that you will spend time answering his/her questions is negligible compared to the likelihood that without asking the necessary questions, your student will move in a completely wrong direction.

Additional sources how to follow the remote work of intern:

- ❖ Supervising Remote Interns: <https://info.parkerdewey.com/remote-internships-101>



f. How to manage Intellectual Property rights

1) The problem

Interns have a different status than employees:

- ❖ Conditions of the Agreement:
 - The intern does not replace or displace any employee of the company.
 - The education received by the intern from the internship is for the express benefit of the intern.

As a result:

- The company shouldn't claim to derive an immediate advantage from the activities performed by the intern.
- The IPR rules applicable to employees and interns typically differ.

2) Typical rules for employees

Improvements - Inventions - Intellectual property rights

In general, all or part of the improvements and inventions made by the employee within the framework of his employment and which are by all possible means related to the activities of the company or the employer, must be reported immediately to the employer and are the exclusive property of the employer. At the employer's request, the employee is obligated to take all necessary steps to license the inventions in Luxembourg and abroad and to grant the employer the exclusive rights and titles to these inventions.

In particular, all intellectual property rights of any kind (including, but not limited to, copyright, patents and similar or analogous rights) arising from the services provided under this employment contract shall be exclusive and executive property of the employer.

This rule is typically a standard term of the work contracts:

- ❖ No further agreement on IPR is needed.
- ❖ No specific financial compensation is considered.

The student not being an employee of the start-up, in accordance with the legislation in force in most countries, the intellectual property rights resulting from the completion of the internship belong to the student.



A French court recently confirmed the validity of this principle, whether it is clearly specified in the internship agreement or not.

3) The solution

Rule often included in the standard internship agreements provided by European universities: *"if the host organization wishes to use the work and the student consents to this, a contract should be drawn up and signed by the intern (Author) and the host organization."*

The contract should notably include the extent of the transferred rights, the conditions of exclusivity, the destination of the work, the resources used and the duration of the transfer of rights as well as the total remuneration owed to the student in relation to the transfer or rights, if applicable.

Contract for the assignment of intellectual property rights.

What to include in this contract? Which terms to use?

Let's go through it together based on an example:

BETWEEN THE UNDERSIGNED :

Mr. or Mrs. **[name and surname]**
Born on **[date of birth]** in **[place of birth]**
Of nationality **[nationality]**
Residing at [address of residence]
Hereinafter referred to as the "Transferor",
On the one hand,

AND :

The Company **[name of the company][form of company]** with a capital of **[capital expressed in figures]** euros
Registered with the company registry of **[city]** under the number **[number]**.
Whose registered office is located at **[full address of the registered office]**.
Represented by Mr. or Mrs. [Name and first name] in the capacity of **[President or Manager or General Manager]**, duly authorized for the purposes hereof,
Hereinafter referred to as the "Transferee",

On the other hand, Hereinafter individually or collectively referred to as the "Party or Parties",

It being previously recalled that :

The Assignor is doing an internship with the Assignee. As part of his internship, the Assignor will be required to carry out work that may be protected by copyright. It therefore appeared necessary to the Parties that the related property rights be



transferred to the Assignee. The Parties have therefore approached each other to formalize this assignment.

The following has been agreed and determined:

Purpose of the assignment

1.1. The Assignor hereby assigns to the Assignee, without restriction or reservation, all copyright in the software created during the Assignor's internship, including but not limited to:

the right to reproduce and use the Software for any purpose whatsoever, by any means, in particular the Internet, on any medium, existing or future, foreseeable or unforeseeable, and for any exploitation;

the right of public representation and distribution of the Software, on all media and by all means, in particular the Internet, existing or future, foreseeable or unforeseeable;

the right to translate, arrange, modify, integrate, transform, adapt and correct the Software, on the initiative of the Assignee or with the collaboration of a third party;

the right to associate the Software with any visual, audio, audiovisual, multimedia and/or textual elements;

the right to reuse the Software, in whole or in part, in order to create and exploit, in particular, any other software, websites, games, applications or any other products of the Licensee's choice;

the right to market and exploit the Software for any purpose;

as well as the right to transfer to third parties the use or ownership of all or part of the rights hereby assigned, according to the terms and conditions that the Assignee deems most appropriate.

This transfer is granted on an exclusive and definitive basis, for the entire legal duration of copyright and for the entire world.

1.2. The Assignor undertakes to regularly communicate to the Assignee, during his training period, an exhaustive list of the Software, as and when it is produced, and to hand over to him the source codes, object codes and all the documentation relating to the Software, the material property of which is irrevocably assigned, without restriction or reservation, to the Assignee within the framework of this contract.

1.3. The Assignor hereby also assigns to the Assignee, without restriction or reservation, all the copyrights relating to the other works of the mind, other than software, created during the Assignee's internship (hereinafter referred to as the "Creations"), as these rights are listed below, namely:

the right to reproduce the Creations, in whole or in part, in any format, on any medium, in particular printed, magnetic, electronic and digital, on any



product, of any nature whatsoever and by any tangible or intangible process, existing or future, foreseeable or unforeseeable;

the right to manufacture or have manufactured, publish, distribute, disseminate and market the Designs, in as many copies as the Assignee wishes, in whole or in part and in all marketing channels;

the right to publicly represent the Designs, in whole or in part, in any physical location, through all media, all computer networks and all means of dissemination, of whatever nature, existing or future, foreseeable or unforeseeable, such as, but not limited to, the Internet, mobile telephony and television broadcasting;

the right to adapt, translate, modify, arrange, transform and correct the Designs, in particular, without this list being exhaustive, by retouching, cropping, changing the format or colours of the Designs or by affixing to them, by the Assignee, its name, brand and logo, in order to take into account, in particular, technical, material or commercial constraints or for any other legitimate reason, subject to respect for the moral rights of the Assignor,

the right to use the Designs, in whole or in part, in order to associate them with, incorporate them into or exploit them through, without this list being limitative, all visual, sound and/or textual elements and all products, in particular all multimedia or audiovisual products, websites, games, applications, etc;

the right to use the reproductions and/or representations of the Creations made in accordance with the methods described above, for promotional, commercial or other purposes, as well as to distribute them free of charge or for a fee;

the right to use all or part of the Designs for the purposes of derived exploitation (commonly referred to as "merchandising"), in particular with a view to manufacturing and distributing commercial products of any kind whatsoever, in particular in the fields of games, toys, objects or works of plastic art or applied arts, stationery, office supplies, wallpapers, office items, clothing, furnishings, decorative items, tableware, toiletries, hygiene, food;

the right for the Assignee to take all steps and carry out all formalities, including any renewals, with a view to filing and registering the Designs with any authorized body on the basis of trademark law, designs and models or any other protection recognised under intellectual property law;
as well as the right to transfer to third parties the use or ownership of all or part of the rights hereby assigned, according to the terms and conditions that it deems most appropriate.

This transfer is granted on an exclusive and definitive basis, for the entire legal duration of copyright and for the entire world.

1.4. The Assignor undertakes to communicate regularly to the Assignee, during his training period, an exhaustive list of the Creations, as and when they are produced,



and to hand over the Creations in their original form, as well as any copies that may have been made and, more generally, any documentation relating to the Creations, the material ownership of which is irrevocably transferred, without restriction or reservation, to the Assignee within the framework of the present contract.

1.5. The Assignor assigns to the Assignee, without restriction or reservation, all his rights relating to inventions, whether patentable or not, and to any patents for inventions (hereinafter referred to as: the "Inventions"), of which he will be the inventor during his internship and, more generally, in the field of the activities of the Assignee or through the knowledge or use of information or means belonging to the Assignee.

This assignment is granted on an exclusive and definitive basis, for the entire legal term of protection of the rights concerned and for the whole world.

The Assignee shall thus be the only one entitled to exploit the Inventions and to carry out any registration formalities in its name, if it deems it necessary, although the Assignor who originated the Inventions may, if it so wishes, be mentioned as the inventor. The Assignor undertakes to sign any document and to carry out any necessary formalities with any organization concerned to enable the Assignee to assert its rights.

1.6. The Assignor undertakes to communicate regularly to the Assignee an exhaustive list of the Inventions, as and when they are made, and to hand over to the Assignee all work, studies, research and documents relating to the Inventions, the material ownership of which is irrevocably transferred, without restriction or reservation, to the Assignee within the framework of the present contract.

Guarantee of the Assignor

The Assignor guarantees the Assignee full and peaceful enjoyment of the assigned rights against any and all disturbances, claims or evictions.

In particular, the Assignor guarantees the Assignee that it has all the rights and authorisations necessary to grant the present assignment and that the Software and Creations contain nothing that could fall under the laws and regulations relating in particular to counterfeiting, unfair competition, privacy, image rights, personality rights and more generally, infringe the rights of third parties.

The Assignor guarantees the Assignee against any complaints, claims and/or demands from a third party that the Assignee may suffer as a result of the Assignor's violation of the above guarantees. The Assignor undertakes to compensate the Assignee for any prejudice he may suffer and to pay him all the costs, indemnities, charges and/or sentences that he may have to bear as a result.

Applicable law and jurisdiction

This contract is subject to **[country]** law and shall be governed and interpreted in accordance with that law. Any dispute that may arise in connection with its validity, interpretation or performance shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of **[city]**.



Done at **[city]**, on **[date]**,
In two original copies.

For the Assignor **[Name and first name of the signatory]**

For the Assignee **[Name and first name of the signatory]**, representing **[name of the start-up]**.

4) The tricky point

The financial terms.

For example, "Assignment free of charge". The assignment provided for in Articles 1.1 to 1.6 hereof is granted free of charge. Free assignment is in principle possible.

The contract should notably include the extent of transferred rights, the conditions of exclusivity, the destination of the work, the resources used and the duration of the transfer of rights as well as **the total remuneration owed to the student** in relation to the transfer of rights, **if applicable**.

Beware however that according to some national laws and the practice at most courts, the assignment contract must include a **real and serious price**. Pieces of code for internal use may be for free, not a full and actionable new software you can sell for a high price.

Alternative.

In consideration of the transfer of the software and the rights thereto as defined above, the transferor shall receive a lump sum of **[in letters (number)]** Euros, all taxes included.

5) Points to consider

Sign the agreement as soon as possible and ideally before the work starts.

Check the confidentiality terms of the internship agreement too as publications / no respect of the company's trade secrets may be highly detrimental to the start-up company.



Terms to check.

❖ Circumspection and non-disclosure:

The duty of circumspection is absolute. In this respect, the intern agrees that in no circumstances will they use information they have gathered or obtained, including the internship report, for the purpose of publication or communication with third parties, without prior consent from the host organization. In addition to the duration of the internship, this continues to apply after the internship has ended. The intern agrees not to keep, take or make a copy of any document or software belonging to the host organization, regardless of its nature, without consent from the host organization.

❖ Confidentiality:

The intern agrees to treat as confidential all information provided by the hosting company regarding such company's business, technologies and operations. All confidential information provided to the intern shall be used solely for the purposes of rendering services pursuant to the Internship Agreement and shall not be disclosed to any third party without the prior consent of the hosting company. The foregoing shall not be applicable to any information that is publicly available when provided or which thereafter becomes publicly available other than in contravention of this agreements or which is required to be disclosed by any regulatory authority in the lawful and appropriate exercise of its jurisdiction over a party, any auditor of the parties hereto, by judicial or administrative process or otherwise by applicable law or regulation.

To be noted.

Within the framework of nondisclosure of information contained within the internships agreement, the host organization can request a restriction on the distribution of the internship report and even the withdrawal of certain elements of highly confidential information.

Academics who have knowledge of the information contained within the report should be restricted by professional confidentiality not to use or disclose any information contained therein.



g. How to manage and motivate international teams: Cultural differences & working methods.

From POWER Webinar “*Cross-cultural communication startups – students*”.

Webinar speakers: Ilona Baumane-Vītoņa and Annija Apsīte, University of Latvia.

Ilona Baumane-Vītoņa has been working in talent search since 2008 for different companies from Financial Services, Manufacturing, Retail, IT & Telecommunications, Pharmaceutical for all three Baltic States. Academic and research background at the University of Latvia and other European universities relates to organizational behaviour, innovations and cross-cultural aspects.

Annija Apsīte has been working in startups for 7 years, currently is PhD student and teacher, academic and research area is related to organizational behaviour, social media strategy development.

Topics: working and communicating with trainees from different cultures, working with non-EU interns, Trainee selection process.

Annija Apsīte: *When it comes to collaborating with people from different cultures, what is the thing you should start with? What is the first step?*

Ilona Baumane-Vītoņa: The first essential thing is to start to be aware of your own culture, your own cultural values. We usually stick to what we are used to and seeing that others are different might cause some problems. We have to understand that we are judging them from our point of view. Sometimes, maybe it's our own upbringing, our culture that makes us think others are different or hard to collaborate with. That is basically our opinion. It is important to understand that we are biased because of our own culture. We think some things should be like that and not any other way. We have to understand it is bias and we think we are somehow better than others, which is not true. That's kind of the basics of cultural intelligence to understand what we feel and why we feel such things.

Annija Apsīte: *Basically, it's being aware of your own cultural conditioning. When you are aware of yourself, you can try to see the other person in a different perspective.*

Ilona Baumane-Vītoņa: Yeah.



Annija Apsīte: *And usually, when we make some kind of decisions we are basing them on our values. We have to understand that the other people are probably not wrong, they just have different cultural conditioning. So, maybe you can point out some particular issues or things that people usually have problems with?*

Ilona Baumane-Vītoņa: Yeah, I think the topic here is on the collaboration within startups. I think currently it is a given that you are going to collaborate with people from other countries. First of all, people who come from these cultures have a different understanding of status. In Asia, status is much more important and it is based on your age and family credentials. Whereas in the West, we are used to status being based on our own knowledge and achievement. This brings us to a problem in intercultural communication, at least what I've heard from some of my colleagues in startups, they encounter people from Asia often. But sometimes, Westerners think that they are lying. But it is based on what is seen as appropriate in certain cultures. They are very reluctant to say no and show you disrespect. And in fact, not only showing you disrespect, but also losing their face, so to say, or their incompetence. This may lead to some misunderstandings. I know a situation where a startup had a person from Asia where initially the person had said they have a certain experience, but in reality not quite so. But again, it's not because the person is unreliable, this might be a cultural issue where the person doesn't know something and they don't know how to ask. This might result in a problem if left unaddressed.

Annija Apsīte: *So, basically what you are suggesting, is to try to test the person with practical tests before you hire them in order to be sure that the employee or trainee matches the company. And, is it important to try to understand if the person really understands you? Very often, I think I understood something correctly, the other person thinks so too, but at the end of the day we are both very surprised at the result.*

Ilona Baumane-Vītoņa: Another cultural issue is that we value the context around communication differently. Certain cultures are the so-called low context cultures, so we usually are more direct. We try to say what we mean and mean what we say. Whereas Oriental cultures have the so-called high context. So, it is important to understand the whole context that you have in the conversation. Because, people from these cultures will not tell you directly or disagree with you directly. With people from Asia or Oriental cultures, we have to be very careful and notice non-verbal signals. We must not expect that they will argue with you directly. For example, in Japan, they don't use "no" much, if they don't agree with you they will say: "yeah, let's see, we'll think about it, maybe". But they will never say no. And if you say "maybe" to the Westerner, they will understand it more like "yes, there is an opportunity,



some things will be done". This is about the context we try to bring when dealing with miscommunication. So, it's not only understanding we have different perceptions, but also the way we express our thoughts can be different. This brings us to the topic of giving feedback. People might connect it with their personality. If you say that someone is not doing their job, they might relate it to themselves thinking that they are not a good person because they are not doing a good job. This is also important to learn.

Annija Apsīte: *When it comes to leadership, it is also very different among cultures. Especially nowadays, it is very typical and trendy to be open, trustful and give a lot of autonomy to your employees or trainees. And the research shows that it does give a motivational boost that you can make decisions on your own. However, it's not really the case in Asian cultures. If your leadership is very down to earth or if the power distance is not so high, you might be perceived as incompetent or weak. When it comes to leadership it's also very important to understand how it relates to cultural differences. There is no single pattern that works for every single culture of the world. Maybe you can give some suggestions, especially theoretical resources? Where should I look for more information into this and what specifically to look for?*

Ilona Baumane-Vītoņa: If I had to suggest only one source, it would be Hofstede's work. He provides very good descriptions about cultural differences. He bases his work on a lot of scientific data. He makes it simple to understand. But we have to be careful to not put people into boxes. They are all like that and we are like this. Oversimplified. I think Hofstede is excellent in explaining it much more in depth and provides us with some information that can be used as a map on how to navigate working with different people.

Annija Apsīte: *Maybe there's something that's universal or something you can take away from this, that you can always remind yourself. Some suggestions?*

Ilona Baumane-Vītoņa: Yeah. We already started with the most important thing in the beginning of this interview, which is to first be aware of yourself and your cultural background. We have to pay attention to how we see the world and then we can allow others to do the same understanding that they are also acting according to their culture unconsciously. But also, each individual is very unique and when we talk about cultural differences we are speaking about how the average person from such and such culture acts. If I could give some advice to startups, I would say, when recruiting their employees or trainees regardless of the culture where a certain person comes from, I think the most important thing to look at is the locus of control. This idea comes from psychology and



distinguishes less successful and more successful individuals. It shows how a person takes responsibility for their own actions, how they see their future and what they do. People with internal locus of control think they always can affect the processes and the outcome. They really take responsibility for their actions. This is very important. Also, in my own recruiting career, this is a primary indicator. People with external locus of control, tend to think that their events are controlled by other factors and so they tend to blame others, which I would not suggest for startups as an employee or trainee.

Annija Apsīte: *So, from complaining to owning. One good quote: "If you don't see yourself as a part of the problem, then you can't be part of the solution."*

Ilona Baumane-Vītoņa: Yeah, exactly. In relation to startups, it's also important to note how people relate to failure. In startups, often things don't work out as planned. We have to look at how resilient a person is to setbacks and failures. Of course, the majority of startups will fail. So, it is of value how persistent a person is, how able a person is to stand up again, how vigilant they are. If you are able to continue to fight, it signals how much in general a person is successful and an excellent employee or trainee regardless of how that startup will do in the future.

Annija Apsīte: *Attitude towards failure is also conditioned, it's not something we are born with. Very often, we hear parents say: "Oh, you did this and you did that". We think it's normal to judge yourself doing wrong things. But, actually, if we accept and learn from this experience, it becomes an opportunity and not a threat. The second thing is that we indeed should take failures not as something that diminishes our value, but actually something that makes us richer with experience and ability to react appropriately to situations that might arise.*

Ilona Baumane-Vītoņa: Yeah. Also, if you are afraid of something you won't be able to deal with it accordingly, but if you are ready to approach it regardless of the outcome, the fear disappears.



4. Promoting Gender Equality in STEM Working Environment

a. What is Gender equality in the workplace

According to EIGE's Glossary gender equality is defined as "the equality of treatment and opportunity between women and men that must be fostered in all areas of the labour market. This includes participation in the labour market, terms and conditions of employment, and career progression. Women and men have the right to equal pay for work of equal value".

In other words, it means that employees of all genders have access to the same rewards, opportunities and resources at a company, including:

1. Equal pay and benefits for comparable roles with similar responsibilities
2. Equal opportunities for promotions and career progression
3. Equal consideration of needs (Indeed, 2021)

b. Why gender equality is needed

Women and girls represent half of the world's population and, therefore, also half of its potential. Gender equality, besides being a fundamental human right, is essential to achieve peaceful societies, with full human potential and sustainable development ([2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) Goals)

As the business world becomes increasingly competitive, organizations cannot afford to miss out on the contributions of talented women. By working to overcome biases in decision-making that harm women's outcomes in the workplace, organizations can take full advantage of the offerings of the entire population and reap the benefits of increased gender diversity. (Chang & Milkman 2020).

c. Gender Equality in Stem Education & Careers

However, women remain a minority in the digital labour market; the digital information technology, computing, physics, mathematics and engineering, the very fields that are driving the 4th Industrial Revolution and, thus, many of the jobs of tomorrow. This trend is even more problematic as there is a skills shortage in many of these very fields, such as in artificial intelligence. (Bello et al, 2021)



According to a recent report on promoting gender equality in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education and careers by the European Parliament (2021), “the EU is facing an unparalleled shortage of women in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers and education”. Although women make up 52 % of the European population and 57.7 % of tertiary graduates in the EU yet only account for 2 out of 5 scientists and engineers. Women are under-represented at all levels in the digital sector in Europe, from students to top academic positions as well as at the higher hierarchical levels in most STEM fields, even in sectors where they comprise the majority, such as education. The gap is largest in specialist skills and employment in ICT in the EU, where only 18 % are women, among STEM graduates, of whom only 36 % are women, and in the digital sector, where there are more than three times more men than women. In the EU, more than half of men earning degrees in information technology (IT) end up working in digital jobs, compared to one-quarter of women (UNESCO and Equal Skills Coalition, 2019). Similarly, based on research findings, globally, only 26% of women work in computing (Unesco,2020).

Therefore, all reports conclude that significant levels of gender segregation among STEM students and graduates lay the ground for future gender segregation in STEM-related careers. Gender imparities in technology and innovation will lead to a further imbalance in the labour market (UN ESCA, 2021).

d. Why is this happening?

Research findings across different countries worldwide (EU, 2021, Unesco, 2020, Unicef, 2020, UNESCA, 2021) conclude that there are several reasons why this is happening. First, teachers and parents embed gender stereotypes by discouraging girls from choosing and pursuing STEM studies and careers. Also gender stereotypes greatly influence the subject choices. Cultural discouragement and the lack of awareness of female role models and the failure to promote them blocks and negatively affects girls’ and women’s opportunities in STEM studies, related careers and digital entrepreneurship, and leads to discrimination and fewer opportunities for women in the labour market.

University and institutions needs to make STEM careers more female friendly and focus more on changes in policy and educational methods (Yatskiv, 2017) Emphasis should be placed on the factors that motivate girls and nurture their interest in STEM studies, related careers and digital entrepreneurship, such as promoting female role models, teacher mentors and peer group approval and developing creativity and practical experience.



But even if women graduate with a degree in STEM fields, they then struggle to find their place in the STEM job sector and they are less likely than their male colleagues to enter STEM workplace or remain in them as a result of the various barriers that exist; gender norms and stereotypes, male-dominated workplaces, discrimination and prejudice, conscious and unconscious bias, sexual harassment, a negative working environment, and a lack of female role models and mentors (EU Parliament, 2021, Unicef 2020, Yatskiv 2017).

Tech sector struggles to retain women and women are twice as likely to abandon the sector. Women are currently missing at all levels of the technology sector: from the applicant pool, technical jobs, the C-suite and corporate boards. Also, women tend to leave companies in great numbers, by the time they reach mid-career level, because they are often underpaid, less likely to be promoted and at times even actively discriminated against (UNESCO, 2020) Similar conclusions are made by Ashcraft et al. (2016) as cited in Bello, A., Blowers, T., Schneegans, S. and Tiffany S. (2021) "Women are more likely than men to leave the tech field. The most common reasons given concern workplace conditions, a lack of access to key creative roles and a sense of 'feeling stalled in their career' This correlates with women's underrepresentation in company leadership and technical roles and the findings are similar for big companies or startups (Bello et al, 2021)

In 2019, The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) conducted the study 'Supporting work life balance and addressing women's underrepresentation in the labour market: approaches and good practices in ICT sector'. Study found that harmful stereotypes and a lack of digital-confidence on the part of women are the greatest barriers to gender equality in ICT in the EU. Therefore, changing attitudes and adapting legislation to encourage women to choose a career in ICT are main suggestions for improvement.

e. Gender equality in STEM entrepreneurship

The data on entrepreneurship in the STEM and ICT sector for EU points to an even greater marginalization of women. The gender gap in start-ups and venture capital investment is similarly striking; As girls tend to study fewer ICT and STEM subjects throughout secondary school and university, far fewer women end up working in these fields and becoming founders and owners of private companies and start-ups; only 17 % of start-up founders are women; whereas on average, start-ups owned by women receive 23 % less funding than those run by men; whereas although women account for 30 % of all entrepreneurs in Europe, they only receive 2 % of the non-bank financing available.



According to Unicef, in the US, 26 per cent of tech startups have at least one female founder while in Europe, only 21 percent of tech founders are female. A 2019 study by the Silicon Valley Bank of start-ups in technology and health care in Canada, China, the UK and USA found that almost half (46%) had no women at all in executive positions. Even when women lead start-ups in tech fields, they struggle to access venture capital and other forms of financial support. Just 2.3% of venture capital is being channelled towards start-ups led by women, according to a 2020 global survey of 700 firms by Trustradius. (Bello et al, 2021)

Women STEMpreneurs face many challenges. Lack of self-confidence, networks, market access and finance are common pain points, as is lower female mentorship. Gender biases in tech incubators and accelerators pose a further barrier. Investor perceptions also reflect gender biases (Unicef, 2020).

f. What measures could be taken

There is a need to further promote policies aimed at increasing the participation of women in STEM and AI-related fields and to adopt a multi-level approach to address the gender gap across all levels of education and employment in the digital sector. What is more, there is a need to promote and support greater entrepreneurship among women and develop an enabling environment in which women entrepreneurs can prosper and enterprise is encouraged; However, as Bello et al (2021) suggest “To be truly transformative, gender policies and programmes need to transform gender relations. This will entail eliminating gender stereotypes in education but also in the workforce”.

In this sense, Power, the Erasmus Program for the Placement Opportunities With Entrepreneurial Reach can help female students to explore new and innovative career pathways, raising awareness of the entrepreneurship careers and business creation possibilities with a gender equality perspective.

g. How gender inequality in the workplace looks like

1) Gender pay gap

The gender pay gap continues to be a large part of gender inequality in the workplace. The pay gap is characterized by one gender being paid less to do the same job as the other gender. Usually, women earn less than men for doing jobs of equal value. women are paid less than men even if they hold the same positions, have similar work experience and educational backgrounds. Data from EU shows, the gender pay gap in the EU stands



at 14.1% and has only changed minimally over the last decade. It means that women earn 14.1% on average less per hour than men. Women in the EU even earned 36.7% less than men overall in 2018.

2) The Glass Ceiling

In addition to the pay gap, there's also a gender leadership gap. Many women are often passed up for promotion opportunities in the workplace due in part to gender discrimination. Although there might be enough qualified women to fill existing leadership positions, gender bias may be keeping women from progressing to these positions.

3) Recruiting & selection

There are several experiments that showed discrimination against women from the start of the hiring and recruiting process. Women, even if they have the same skills, experience and qualifications to men candidates, are asked different questions for reconciling work and family duties, and have less chances of getting hired if the interviewer was a man. Male employers often prefer hiring male employees, and hiring managers are more likely to click on a male application profile instead of a woman's.

4) Inclusion

Gender inclusion in the workplace varies depending on the business. However, excluding an individual from team projects, company outings, meetings and necessary decision-making because of gender are ways of experiencing gender inequality in a workplace. When an individual is not being included in tasks or events, it can prevent them from becoming successful and productive workers.

h. Benefits of gender equality in the workplace

Diversity is a core element of any successful business strategy (better financial performance, increased innovation, greater customer insights, attracting top talent) (Unesco, 2021) Company leaders should try to take a strong stance for diversity, since they set the values and culture of their company. Start up companies should strive for a more inclusive corporate culture.

There are numerous benefits for companies who are intentional about maintaining gender equality in the workplace, including the following (Indeed 2021):



- ❖ **Positive company culture.** A gender-equal work environment where all employees feel respected and valued creates an overall more positive workplace for all of your employees. In a gender-diverse environment, employees will likely notice that their coworkers have talents and strengths they don't possess themselves. The appreciation for these differences will help promote an environment of respect among the team.
- ❖ **More innovation and creativity.** People of different genders such as people of different culture or background bring unique talents, strengths and skills into the workplace, as well as they offer their alternative views or mindset which can result in a stimulating and creative environment. Often, gender diversity can lead to smooth collaboration and greater innovation within the workplace.
- ❖ **Build a great reputation.** Promoting intentionally gender equality in the workplace can foster the company's reputation with the outside world. People who have similar values will like to be part of this inclusive workplace. Moreover, happy and satisfied employees create a positive and productive culture that also attracts new talents.
- ❖ **Improved conflict resolution.** Strong communication skills among employees is essential for company-wide success. People of different genders naturally communicate differently, with some preferring to communicate problems directly and others work as peacemakers. When you combine these different communication styles in one work environment, you can more easily achieve conflict resolution.

i. How to promote gender equality in the workplace

The following steps, adapted by Indeed (2021) can be used as a useful toolkit in order to begin promoting gender equality in a workplace:

1) Increase diversity in hiring

Start by modifying the job descriptions to promote gender equality. Review the job descriptions and assess whether the job requirements need to be altered to broaden the pool of applicants. Think carefully about the language used in job postings. "Language is a reflection of the attitudes, behaviours and norms within a society. It also shapes people's attitudes as to what is 'normal' and acceptable" (EIGE, 2021). Using gender-sensitive language, among other benefits, can challenge unconscious assumptions people have about gender roles, make people (candidates and employees) feel more comfortable with



expressing themselves and behaving in ways that were once not considered 'typical' of their gender and lay the foundation for greater gender equality throughout society.

Try to have a gender diverse hiring panel. Make sure that you also have fair compensation practices and use employee exit interviews to get honest feedback from employees about their perception of gender equality in the workplace.

2) Conduct a pay audit, revise pay secrecy policies & tackle pay gap

Equal pay for equal work is one of the European Union's founding principles. Employers are required to provide equal pay for equal work, which includes the same skill, responsibility, working conditions and effort. Consider conducting a pay audit to see if your male and female employees are paid comparably. This can help you identify if you offer equal employment opportunities to all employees. Try using a spreadsheet to conduct the audit and this should have sections for employment positions, education, performance and experience to help you notice gender pay gaps. In case you become aware of gender pay gaps, take steps to remedy them as soon as possible.

Pay secrecy policies may lead to discrepancies with the gender pay gap, and in some cases, may be illegal. The more employees discuss salary information, the more aware they may become of gender inequalities in the workplace. Additionally, consider publishing salary data. Recording and sharing salary information with employees can help to assure your workforce that everyone is being paid fairly and that gender pay equality is a priority.

Some companies publish pay brackets that outline the salary for each role along with the general requirements for the position. This step can help eliminate any bias.

3) Update your training with Diversity, Inclusion & Equality themes

Check your training programs to see if they're informative and detailed enough to make an impact on the behaviour of your employees. Another option to consider is to make gender inequality training mandatory once a year. This way, the information is at the forefront of your employees' minds and can more easily be reflected in their actions. Arrange regular refresher courses for management to ensure your company provides a great working environment for everyone.



4) Promote work-life balance

Successful policies to support work-life balance need to be tailored to the needs of the employees and companies, bearing in mind different situations in the life course. An organizational culture that pays attention and respects their employee's well being should take into account the possibility of successfully reconciling professional and family life for both women and men, respect their boundaries between professional and family life and show flexibility and acceptance as for the greatest burden of balancing a career with family care duties. Workplace flexibility might be appealing for parents who may need flexibility to better balance a career and raise children. Many companies are addressing this by offering employees the option to work from home part-time or full-time or by giving them the option of teleworking.

5) Create an open-minded atmosphere

Promote a culture where employees know they are appreciated based on their talent and performance. This starts at the managerial level. Get to know team members on a personal level, regardless of their gender or background. This will deepen your appreciation for differences and promote a welcoming, inclusive work environment.

6) Provide mentorship for everyone

An experienced mentor can be invaluable for helping employees navigate their careers. Consider implementing a mentorship program in your own organization and making it open to everyone. Mentoring is thought to be one of the best practices for the career advancement of women. While pairing employees of the same gender can be useful for offering insight into how to manage work-life balance — such as pairing a new mother with a mother in a leadership position — companies should also consider pairing employees with a senior manager of the opposite gender, as experiencing how different people have worked to achieve their career goals can be more beneficial.

7) Support internal growth opportunities

To address this at your company, support internal growth opportunities for all employees, widen your recruitment networks and examine your biases.



8) **Keep accurate documentation**

Lastly, document each employee's qualifications, pay, position, education and work experience. There are many times when an employee may deserve to be paid more or to be promoted, however, employers are responsible for making these distinctions based on concrete evidence.

j. A Chilean gender equality tool-kit for start-ups

In September 2021, Ms [Priyanka Srinivas](#), a Chilean co-founder and CEO of [a the food tech startup Live Green Co](#), wrote an article titled "Aiming to create a gender-equitable startup landscape? Ask yourself these 3 questions". In this, she points 3 key questions and gives practical answers – tips that also can be considered as a useful toolkit.

1) What are the systemic difficulties that women face today?

According to the author, women face obstacles based on gender assumptions as for their family life or marital status as well as subconscious bias for their skills, confidence and job commitment. Inviting more women in decision making positions and obscuring gender from the job application are good practical tips to help gender equality in the selection process.

2) How can we better support women to grow their companies?

The author also states that many groups and initiatives attempt to improve the inclusion and representation of women, however the majority of them fail to move beyond conversation and superficial resolutions. Instead, it is absolutely important, firstly, to better understand what's holding women back from growing their businesses to their full potential. *"...Women lose out time and time again when it comes to startup funding. We need to support women through the entire startup lifecycle, from seed to IPO, especially when it comes to raising external capital"*. Ms Srinivas offers some pre-acceleration programs in Chile as concrete best practices and examples. Also, she presents other initiatives that help women entrepreneurs and other women tech leaders seeking to build a support system around them and gain the skills necessary to grow their businesses through networking and access to a community of like-minded female entrepreneurs and investors through knowledge-driven programs and inspirational events.



3) **How do we fix funding?**

Ms Srivinas expresses the opinion that the [lack of diversity](#) at venture capital funds is an overwhelmingly contributing factor to the [low amount of VC funding](#) that women receive presenting data from EU, US and UK. Therefore, she suggests that in order to “...fix funding, we need investors with a gender-neutral lens, evidenced by metrics that measure their progress on diversity and inclusion”. Conclusively she also admits that closing the gender gap requires a concerted effort from all parts of the industry, from founders to investors and in order to achieve gender equality in the startup world actions to bring women into funds and encourage them as founders need to be taken.

k. Official EU gender equality toolkits

There are also some official EU toolkits to help companies and organizations to promote gender equality. Specifically:

1) **EIGE’s 6-step approach**

EIGE has developed a 6-step approach to help ICT companies integrate work-life balance measures into their organisations and get more women on board. The 6-step approach consists of the following:

1. Identify national work-life balance initiatives and partners
2. Identify potential resistance and develop solutions
3. Maximise buy-in from stakeholders
4. Design a solid implementation plan
5. Carefully measure progress
6. Highlight benefits and celebrate early wins

More on this can be found [here](#).

2) **Gender Equality Plan in Academia & Research online tool**

In the specific context of research organizations and higher education institutions, the European Commission considers a **Gender Equality Plan** as a set of actions aiming at:

1. Conducting impact assessment / audits of procedures and practices to identify gender bias;
2. Identifying and implementing innovative strategies to correct any bias;
3. Setting targets and monitoring progress via indicators.



The following areas for which concrete measures and targets must be defined:

- ❖ Work-life balance and organisational culture;
- ❖ A gender balance in leadership and decision-making;
- ❖ Gender equality in recruitment and career progression;
- ❖ Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content;
- ❖ Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

Therefore EIGE prepared and offers the **Gender Equality in Academia and Research (GEAR) online tool** which provides universities and research organizations with practical advice and tools through all stages of institutional change, from setting up a gender equality plan to evaluating its real impact. More information on this can be found [here](#).

3) **The Framework of Actions on Gender Equality**

Another successful and handy example of actions that made by European stakeholders on gender equality is the [Framework of Actions on Gender Equality](#). This framework sets out 4 priority areas for action:

- ❖ **Addressing gender roles.** Traditional gender roles and stereotypes continue to have a strong influence on the division of labour between women and men in different spheres: at home, in the workplace and in society at large. Cultural barriers and labour market segregation need to be tackled.
- ❖ **Promoting women in decision-making.** Women are under-represented in positions of responsibility in all fields. Increasing women's proportion in decision-making positions and leadership will ensure fairer and better performing labour markets.
- ❖ **Supporting work-life balance.** There are persistent difficulties to reconcile family and private responsibilities with employment. Successful policies to support work-life balance need to be tailored to the needs of the employees and enterprises, bearing in mind different situations in the life course.
- ❖ **Tackling the gender pay gap.** The gender pay gap has narrowed in the last decade in terms of average at EU level. In 2012, it stood at 16.2%. There are important variations between the Member States (from 3% to 30%). The pay gap has multi-faceted underlying causes which provides to social partners a broad range of possibilities to address it at national, sectoral and/or company level. Further progress is needed.



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In 2014, the European social partners, European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe & the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UNICE/UEAPME), and the European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation (CEEP) launched an online '[Toolkit for gender equality in practice](#)', to promote a selection of successful initiatives showing how the organizations' members aim to achieve their common goals. More information on this can be found [here](#).

I. Conclusion

Reducing the gender gap in STEM education could reduce the skills gap, increase employment and the productivity of women and reduce professional segregation, which would ultimately foster economic growth through higher productivity and increased labour; there is an official prediction that closing the gender gap in STEM careers would contribute to an increase in EU GDP per capita by 2.2 to 3.0 % by 2050. Also, closing the gender gap in STEM careers would constitute a step towards gender equality and the fulfilment of women's and girls' human rights, and would have a positive impact in reducing the gender pay and gender pension gaps. All these would contribute to making our society more human, sustainable, inclusive and peaceful.