# Academic entrepreneurship at BFH-TI: The case of module offerings and student attraction

Entrepreneurial activities at the Universities of Applied Sciences are becoming increasingly important to accelerate economic growth and support local communities. This research focuses on supporting the BFH-TI in improving entrepreneurial activities targeting three dimensions of academic entrepreneurship: module offering, student attraction and, the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

## Introduction and Objectives

Google, Netflix, WhatsApp and Airbnb are names that we hear frequently, but do you know what these companies have in common? They belong to the most successful start-ups created by university graduates. Academic entrepreneurship holds an immense potential in transforming educational institutions into dynamic hubs of innovation, enabling students to stay ahead in a fast-changing and evolving economy. To bring new technologies from research to the market innovative ways must be explored to take academic entrepreneurship to a new level. The objectives of this research are to analyze universities of applied science(UAS) activities targeting academic entre-preneurship from a systemic perspective, create an attractive environment for BFH-TI students interested in entrepreneurial careers, and identify patterns and factors that influence the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

## Research Design

The research design follows a qualitative and quantitative research method using surveys, interviews, and website analysis to address the research questions. The model built (Figure 1, left side) provides a holistic view of the universities' academic entrepreneurship landscape and identifies areas that can be recommended to improve and support the growth of entrepreneurial activities at BFH-TI. Mayring's method is used to analyze the interviews, supporting a systematic and structured approach to extracting valuable insights. Four main categories are defined: the UAS/University, student attraction, IP and spin-off regulations, and the ecosystem. Below the main categories, over twenty sub-categories are defined.

## Results

BFH-TI offers classes that cover several entrepreneurial skill sets, and compared to the other UAS, the number of offerings is approximately equal or higher. A major difference is seen in the ECTS assigned to the modules. Based on the conducted interviews, having the same culture and vision shared among lecturers contributes to creating an attractive environment for students. In the student survey with 112 responses, it was revealed that entrepreneurial skills are highly valued by BFH-TI students, and word-of-mouth is the most common source of information used when choosing modules. The survey also revealed that 43% of the students are and may be interested in taking entrepreneurial modules if there is the possibility to learn a new skill set. It's important to note that 39% of the respondents did not complete this question in the survey.

## Implications and Recommendations

The research concludes that potential growth is possible by improving marketing strategies, as 39% of the students either just heard or do not know about the offerings and benefits available. The recommendation is that lecturers within BFH-TI align to spread information about offerings, support, and benefits available. Another conclusion drawn from the interviews defines the importance of building inter-departmental collaboration to foster an entrepreneurial culture. Further work should review the progress of the new entrepreneurial minor available and explore partnerships with external universities for the accreditation of entrepreneurship modules to increase flexibility for students with time constrains.

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Figure 1: Ecosystem Model used to analyse Universities & Universities of Applied Science, BFH-TI Student survey results