WHY TO IMPLEMENT INCUBATORS AND ACCELERATORS IN SCIENCE PARKS

Philippe Deléarde
Director at inno TSD

Thessaloniki, 23 May 2017
Science parks welcome innovation and research, and act as bridges between academia, research and business,

Accelerators and incubators consequently naturally have their place in science parks and are fundamental actors in boosting innovation.

There are currently **over 900 accelerators and incubators** in science parks in Europe (EC, 2013).

Science parks have existed for over 30 years. The development of accelerators and incubators in existing university and large companies is fairly recent.
Incubators and science parks in France (2016)
Sophia Antipolis, the first science and technology park to be created in Europe (created in 1969)

For 2016:
• 36,300 jobs - +1,000 jobs per year
• 4,500 researchers and 5,500 students
• 2,230 organisations – 60% of which settled in the last 10 years
• 1 incubator “PACA EST” (+20 startups)
• 2 accelerator structures (business angels network - +40 startups)
ACCELERATORS AND INCUBATORS

INCUBATORS

- 1-3 year programs
- Targeted to young companies or emerging companies
- Offer co-working space, access to a network of actors in the relevant field of the start-up, access to early finance, etc

Focused on boosting innovation and creating synergies with similar players locally.

ACCELERATORS

- Several weeks/months
- Targeted to young companies at an early stage of development
- Access to private space, finance and senior level mentoring (pitching lessons, etc)

Focused on business development and access to investment.
INCUBATORS
**Key Facts**

- Launched in 2001 by 2 universities (Université Nice Sophia Antipolis, Université Toulon Var) and 1 research lab (INRIA)
- Financed by the Government and regional bodies
- 6 permanent board members
- 6 different assistance programs
  - Assistance with projects tied to a laboratory of public research
  - Assistance with technology projects in the space domain
  - Assistance with HR in a new company
  - Assisting students with their start up projects (in partnership with business schools and the nice Sophia university)
  - Assisting projects in renewable energy
  - Accelerator program for projects in transports and mobility
Lessons learnt

The incubators have received the support of local bodies, and have been targeted to meet the needs of the three largest research institutions in the science park (life sciences, engineering, ICT, social sciences).

The members of the advisory panel are from diverse backgrounds, including local business but also research.

The support programs are varied, and target different profiles of companies. The programs have evolved over time, in order to become more attractive for the growing business climate (SKEMA Business School for example).
ACCELERATOR IN SOPHIA ANTIPOLIS

Key Facts

• The French Tech Cote d’Azur is the regional office for the French Tech national structure, created in 2013 and designed to support French start-ups in France and outside of France. The French Tech budget dedicated to accelerators is 200 million € (more than half of the total budget)

• There are currently several accelerator structures attached to large companies and research organisations in the Sophia Antipolis science park, namely the EIT ICT Lab branch of the KIC

  • Opened in 2014 and a satellite campus of EIT ICT
  • Called the « SophiaTech campus” and hosted by the University of Nice Sophia Antipolis
  • Partners include University of Nice Sophia Antipolis, INRIA, EURECOM, Orange, the SCS competitiveness cluster, Thales and SAP
  • Business programs and master class on « Internet Technology and Architecture”
The #1 accelerator in France and #5 in Europe is based in a technology park specialized in the growth of digital, data, cybersecurity and IoT industries.

The technology park hosts an incubator and accelerator but also has an auditorium and large patio (+500 events and 60 000 visitors since it was launched in 2009).

The accelerator has 60 start ups and boasts one of the best international networks and mentors in Europe - +160 million € raised since 2009.

Partnerships with local actors, national banks (Caisse D’Epargne) and international groups (KPMG).

Euratechnologies: an « independent » ecosystem.
The accelerator is part of the Allianz insurance company - 70 offices worldwide

Founding partners are the French investment banks Indinvest and Bpifrance

Focus on IT and digital industries

5 months scheme – currently 5 start ups part of the Winter Scheme of Allianz

- Free of charge
- Mentoring from leading actors in the field
- Access to the Allianz international network and financing opportunities
- Accelerators are part of **existing structures** that have a strong business or technology focus (large businesses, financing groups, technology park). Accelerators are not designed to boost innovation or create synergies with actors: they are for start-ups with an existing and stable project looking for financing.

- Accelerators, like incubators, are **focused on specific domains** that are relevant to the sector of the structure in which they are integrated: Future Cloud, Future Networking Solutions, Future Urban Life & Mobility, Privacy Security & Trust

- The members of the advisory panel are from diverse backgrounds, including starts-ups, international business and finance

- Support from regional authorities (regional bank, local chamber of commerce) has been particularly helpful in launching the activities of the accelerators
The strength of the environment is a determining factor for the successful integration of the incubator and accelerator in a science park. Access to an international network, the quality of the mentoring panel and access to financing opportunities is essential.
CONCLUDING REMARKS

› Incubators and accelerators are not independent structures. They must be adapted to a relevant organization, in order to create synergies (incubators) and attract financing (accelerator).

› The creation of incubators and accelerators in science parks is a way to bring together actors from the same domain while developing new activities. Incubators create synergies between projects in a same field. Accelerators draw the eyes of investors on the science park, and the region more largely.

› Incubators and accelerators create growth, and attract young professionals as well as students. They are also a way to keep students in the area.

› Incubators and accelerators are formidable forms of innovation and modernity: they can contribute to renovate the image of an aging science park, or a science park solely focused on research and little on business exploitation.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF INCUBATORS IN SCIENCE PARKS

Where?
- Should the incubator be in or next to a large company, an SME, a university or research center in the science park?
- The accelerator should always be in business environment

For what purpose?
- Choose the field specialization carefully of the accelerator/incubator: what fields do you want to attract? What is needed in terms of innovation at the local level? Who can start-ups work with?

How will it be financed?
- Gather the support of public regional structures, as well as public and private organisations

Who will help select, assist and mentor the start-ups?
- Choose your permanent board and selection committee members carefully, and be sure to have a varied panel. There should be people with business experience (notably entrepreneurial) and others with institutional experience. There should be members with strong local expertise, and others with international experience

Benchmarking
- Set yourself apart from other incubators/accelerators: what makes you different? What will be your impact?
THANK YOU

QUESTIONS WELCOME

Philippe Deléarde
Director at inno TSD

Thessaloniki, 23 May 2017