

Foreword

This publication presents the findings and recommendations of the HEInnovate review of the impact of higher education institutions (HEIs) on entrepreneurship and innovation in Italy. The review assesses the strategies and practices of HEIs in Italy in supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, along with the government policy context. It highlights many good practices put forward by Italian HEIs to engage with businesses and communities at the local and international level and to capitalise on cultural and natural amenities, in the country. The review further discusses the need for a strategic approach to the entrepreneurial and innovation agenda in higher education.

The review was undertaken by the OECD in partnership with the European Commission, as part of the programme of work of the OECD Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Committee. The review is part of the HEInnovate collaboration between the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture and the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities.

Investing in innovative and entrepreneurial HEIs is one of the highest return investments that we can make. Innovators and entrepreneurs are not born with all the necessary competencies. Rather, underlying attitudes, skills and knowledge are developed over time in society and through education.

More needs to be done to ensure that these competencies are developed through education, and to ensure that there are the right incentives and support structures to encourage staff and students in HEIs to get more involved in entrepreneurial ventures and engagement with business and society.

HEInnovate is a starting point for governments and HEIs to identify areas for action. It is a guiding framework for supporting entrepreneurship and innovation in higher education. HEInnovate offers an online self-assessment tool for higher education institutions (www.heinnovate.eu), available in 24 languages, a series of country review assessments, including this report on Italy, and a Policy Learning Network that facilitates cross-country exchange and peer learning amongst the countries participating in the country reviews.

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Raffaele Trapasso, Coordinator of HEInnovate, and Giulia Ajmone Marsan, former CFE staff, prepared the report under the supervision of Lucia Cusmano, Acting Head of the SMEs and Entrepreneurship Division, CFE. Andrea Capaccioli, former OECD staff provided substantive inputs and comments to the review. Maria Sobron Bernal, CFE, provided assistance. A team of experts also contributed to the drafting of this report, Professor Magnus Klofsten and Eloïse Germain of the University of Linköping Sweden, Wolfgang Polt and Maximilian Unger from Joanneum Research Austria. Professor Pedro Teixeira from the University of Porto and Maria Manatos from the University of Aveiro in Portugal. Christopher Cripps, Director, international development, Sorbonne University, France, participated in one mission as peer reviewer.

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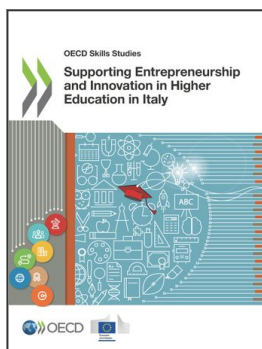
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