

Preface

Changes in technology, labour markets, the climate, demography, and, more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic, are having a transformational impact on our societies and ways of life. Because they have a critical role to play in the development of transversal skills and applied knowledge, and can drive, innovation and entrepreneurship, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Latin American countries also have a critical role to play in adjusting to these, and indeed future, transitions.

COVID-19, in particular, highlighted the potential of HEIs to support societies facing dramatic transformations. In the wake of the pandemic, awareness of the role HEIs can, or should, play in their education, research, and collaboration missions, and in particular to address major transformations, has increased significantly, both within HEIs themselves as well as in their broader ecosystems. Many Latin American HEIs are now transitioning to new forms of teaching and learning, connecting their research to the needs of their ecosystems, and playing a more active role in their own communities and networks. Indeed, entrepreneurial and innovative HEIs have become important partners for policy makers and other stakeholders to help achieve a fast and equitable response and recovery.

The eleven HEIs that participated in this study represent a heterogeneous group of institutions that have embraced innovation and entrepreneurship in different ways. These HEIs are developing new approaches to teaching, research, and collaboration, based on partnerships between HEIs and businesses, public authorities, and the civil society. This reflects the increasing importance of opportunity-driven entrepreneurship throughout Latin America.

These institutions display a range of good practices that can inspire many other HEIs in the region, and beyond. Actions range from the delivery of comprehensive and widespread entrepreneurship education to engagement in collaborative activities with external stakeholders, including in teaching and research activities. However, Latin American HEIs can only realise their full potential if they are supported by favourable policy frameworks that enable and encourage the development of entrepreneurship and innovation in higher education. Such policy frameworks should support, in particular, funding and evaluation of knowledge transfer and incubation activities, and the development of intellectual property within HEIs.

This work is the result of a collaboration between the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), and Banco Santander. The three organisations recognise that more innovative and entrepreneurial higher education can promote skills at all stages of adults' lives and contribute to the creation of valuable jobs and the development of more sustainable communities.

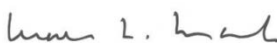
The collaboration was initiated with the organisation of an event at the OECD in Paris in July 2019 to discuss the entrepreneurial and innovation agenda of higher education institutions in Latin America. At this occasion, which gathered representatives from Latin-American and Spanish universities, the OECD, the IADB and Banco Santander presented their analytical work and approaches to entrepreneurship development. This included the HEInnovate framework developed by the OECD and the European Commission, the IADB's research on entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems in selected Latin

American cities, and the work done by Banco Santander in cooperation with MIT D-Lab, also on urban ecosystems. The event highlighted the complementarity between the three institutions' methodologies, with IADB and Banco Santander studies on ecosystems complementing OECD's work on the entrepreneurial and innovative agenda of HEIs. The event thus laid the ground for this study, which started in September 2020.

The present report is the result of that collaboration, including with the 11 HEIs involved in this study. The report illustrates a large variety of practices adopted by HEIs to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in their own communities. Above all, the report shows that several Latin American HEIs are fully mobilised to develop new functions and activities and offer new opportunities to learners and other stakeholders, in their ecosystems and networks, and reveals the significant potential that can be exploited at the national and regional levels to foster innovation, sustainability, inclusiveness, and entrepreneurship.



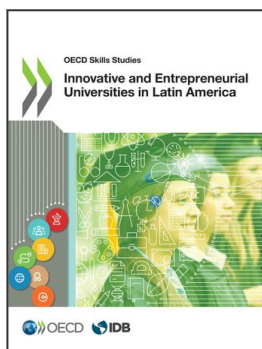
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