

# INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP, STARTUP AND BUSINESS PLAN

**Lecturer:** Massimo Vanzi, [massimo.vanzi@edu.unige.it](mailto:massimo.vanzi@edu.unige.it)

**Duration:** 20 hours

**Credits:** 6

**Language:** English

## AIM & SCOPE

The topic of entrepreneurship is highly relevant for Italy and Europe, particularly at this moment in history, when there is finally a growing awareness of the importance of new innovative businesses—the so-called startups—for our economic system and its future development. In a mature economy such as ours, and even more so in a developing country, it is precisely the growth of new enterprises that drives employment growth and GDP expansion.

This teaching is designed to provide both theoretical and practical knowledge of the entrepreneurial model of innovative startups. It highlights the differences between this model and that of more traditional SMEs, while offering the essential tools to effectively prepare for an entrepreneurial venture. The teaching covers the key techniques and methodologies required to achieve this goal.

The objectives of this teaching are:

- **Awareness of the fundamental characteristics of a startup**, understood as a new innovative enterprise that follows a reference entrepreneurial model throughout its creation and development.
- **Acquisition of methods for market analysis and for the development and drafting of a Business Plan**, considered as the synthesis of all the elements that a prospective entrepreneur must study, refine, and master before approaching both investors and potential customers.
- **Focus on the process of creating Deep Tech startups** and the specific characteristics of technology markets, providing research engineers with the opportunity to analyse and internalize the key differences and opportunities associated with establishing a Deep Tech startup.
- **Practical application of these skills through the preparation of a draft Elevator Pitch**. During the course, we will analyse in detail what an Elevator Pitch is and examine several real-world examples to best prepare students to successfully complete this task.

Students particularly interested in this task—acknowledging that the quality of an Elevator Pitch is fundamental to the future development of their entrepreneurial ideas—will have the opportunity to prepare draft pitches for either real or hypothetical startup projects. These drafts will be analysed and discussed in class, with the aim of sharing experiences and gaining in-depth knowledge of best practices.

By the end of the course, students will be able to develop an autonomous Business Plan for their own entrepreneurial idea, with form and content adequate to capture the attention of investors and potential future customers.

## CONTENTS

1. Introduction of the lecturer and the course; the concept of innovation; Gary Pisano's model; key definitions.
2. Innovative entrepreneurship; IDE (Innovation Driven Enterprise) vs SME: what is a startup; Digital vs Deep Tech; who is an entrepreneur.
3. The rationale and processes underlying the creation of startups; the development of vision and mission statements; key principles of team building; and the essential components of a business plan.
4. The path from idea to market; analysis of the target market; assessment of competitors; development of a unique selling proposition (USP); application of the SWOT framework; key metrics and performance indicators (KPIs); and discussion of several illustrative examples.
5. Introduction to fundamental financial concepts and examples of startup financial plans; exploration of the Lean methodology; understanding and application of Minimum Viable Products (MVPs), prototyping, and proofs of concept (PoC); and the development of a product roadmap, illustrated with key concepts and practical examples.
6. An introduction to Business Models (BM) and the Business Model Canvas (BMC), with illustrative examples of business and revenue models across a variety of market types.
7. Financing models, including FFF (Friends, Family, and Fools), money-for-equity arrangements, and debt financing; valuation concepts including pre-money valuation; and an introduction to Open Innovation practices.
8. An examination of funding and exit strategies; the use of SAFE agreements and convertible notes; a detailed exploration of Business Angels and Venture Capital; and discussion of major examples and typical investment scenarios.
9. An introduction to the Elevator Pitch, covering its fundamental rules, a standard template, and illustrative examples to guide practical application.
10. A dedicated lesson will focus on the presentation and collective discussion of Elevator Pitches developed by students, providing an opportunity to share feedback and learn from each other's experiences.
11. A final dedicated lesson will feature a round-table discussion with local startup founders from Genoa and/or local investors and business angels. This session will provide

students with the opportunity to learn from real-world experiences, ask questions, and gain practical insights into the workings of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

## ASSESSMENT METHOD

Oral examination. Students will be required to answer questions on the topics covered during the course. The questions will refer exclusively to the material presented in class.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The teaching material provided by the lecturer will serve as the essential foundation for all topics discussed in class. Students may choose to deepen their understanding of specific subjects by consulting the following papers and books, from which several of the course topics have been drawn.

1. An essential article by Gary P. Pisano of Harvard Business School titled “You Need an Innovation Strategy,” published in the June 2015 issue of the Harvard Business Review.
2. The book: “Disciplined Entrepreneurship: 24 Steps to a Successful Startup”, written by Bill Aulet, Director of the Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship; Wiley Press.
3. The book: “Disciplined Entrepreneurship: Startup Tactics”, written by Paul Cheek, Executive Director of the Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship, Wiley Press.

## TIME SCHEDULE

Tuesday January 20th, 10:00am

Friday January 23rd, 10:00am

Tuesday January 27th, 10:00am

Friday January 30th, 10:00am

Tuesday February 3rd, 10:00am

Friday February 6th, 10:00am

Tuesday February 10th, 10:00am

Friday February 13th, 10:00am