NEOLAiA

Entrepreneurship Charter

Preamble

NEOLAiA is a European University Alliance consisting of nine higher education institutions, widely spread across Europe – Bielefeld University (Germany), University of Jaén (Spain), University of Nicosia (Cyprus), Örebro University (Sweden), University of Ostrava (Czech Republic), University of Salerno (Italy), Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava (Romania), University of Tours (France) and Šiauliai State University of Applied Sciences (Lithuania). As an alliance of universities rooted in small and medium-sized, non-metropolitan cities, NEOLAiA is uniquely positioned to drive innovation and regional development, fostering entrepreneurship that leverages local strengths while contributing to European and global progress. In this line, NEOLAiA, with its role in small and medium-sized cities as a unique opportunity to drive bold, bottom-up transformation of the European higher education system, bringing sustainable innovation for societal and economic prosperity not only to our regions but to the EU as a whole and beyond.

We see our role in small and medium-sized cities with the potential to boldly transform the European higher education system and society from the bottom up, bringing sustainable innovation for societal and economic prosperity not only to our regions but to the EU as a whole and beyond.

Entrepreneurship is a driving force for economic growth, social progress, and regional transformation. In an increasingly interconnected and technology-driven world, fostering a culture of innovation and business creation is essential to building resilient and sustainable societies. Recognising the role of higher education institutions as incubators of talent and innovation, NEOLAiA is committed to equipping students, researchers, teachers and enterprises with the necessary skills, resources, and networks to thrive in a competitive and rapidly evolving global economy.

The NEOLAiA Entrepreneurship Charter is a strategic framework designed to promote entrepreneurial thinking, support knowledge transfer and drive impactful collaboration between universities, businesses, and policymakers. It serves as a guiding document to enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem and entrepreneurial education across European universities and their regional communities, ensuring equal opportunities for participation and sustainable development. It is important to clarify that the provisions outlined in this Charter are not to be treated as formal commitments but rather as shared aspirations and guiding principles. Our approach is framed in terms such as **"we share a common approach," "we**

strive," and "we envision" to reflect our collective efforts toward fostering entrepreneurship within our alliance. By uniting efforts and embracing a transnational approach, NEOLAiA seeks to empower individuals and institutions to contribute meaningfully to societal progress through entrepreneurship.

Vision

NEOLAiA envisions a dynamic and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem within European universities and their regional communities. By fostering innovation, research, and collaboration, we aim to empower students, researchers, teachers and enterprises to contribute to economic and societal transformation. Our vision is rooted in sustainable, digital, and globally interconnected entrepreneurship that supports inclusive economic growth and regional development.

NEOLAiA envisions an interconnected, innovation-driven, and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem with the following key components:

- **Dynamic and Innovative Ecosystem**: We strive to create an adaptable and responsive environment that evolves with changing market trends and technological advancements. The Taskforce for Entrepreneurship (TAFE) will encourage creativity and out-of-the-box thinking to develop unique solutions and business models.
- **Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs**: We aim to create the tools and structures that will provide entrepreneurs with the resources, knowledge and support needed to succeed.
- **Transforming Visionary Ideas and Structures**: We aim to establish new structures and strengthen existing ones to support ideas capable of significantly impacting industries or transforming societal norms, while assisting emerging entrepreneurs in converting their ideas into viable and successful businesses.
- **Sustainable and Impactful support measures within NEOLAiA Universities**: we aspire to promote support structures and practices that will not only be economically viable, but also environmentally sound and socially responsible.
- **Driving Economic Growth and Social Progress**: we strive to contribute to the economic development and social challenges of the home communities and regions through successful entrepreneurial activities.

Mission

Our mission is to create a supportive and collaborative environment where entrepreneurship thrives by:

- Enhancing the entrepreneurial mindset and skills among students, researchers, teachers, and entrepreneurs;
- Bridging the gap between academia and business environments to foster innovation and research valorisation;
- Promoting diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunities in entrepreneurship;
- Encouraging digital transformation towards sustainable business practices;
- Strengthening transnational collaboration to build a more resilient European innovation ecosystem.

Values

At NEOLAiA, we uphold a set of core values that define our approach to entrepreneurship and innovation. **Innovation and Integrity** serve as baseline expectations across all our initiatives, ensuring that entrepreneurial activities are grounded in creativity, ethical standards, and academic excellence. In addition, we champion **Collaboration, Diversity and Inclusion, Sustainability, and Empowerment**, fostering an environment where individuals and organisations can collectively contribute to economic and social progress. By embedding these values into our practices, we strive to build a resilient and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports long-term growth and societal well-being.

- **Collaboration**: Success in entrepreneurship is built on strong networks and cooperative efforts. NEOLAiA promotes synergies between universities, enterprises, public institutions and its ecosystem, ensuring knowledge-sharing and mutual growth. International Research Collaboration will facilitate cross-border research partnerships with industry and academia, encourage researchers to participate in global innovation challenges and EU-funded start-up projects.
- **Diversity and Inclusion**: Entrepreneurship should be accessible to all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic background or ability. We strive to remove barriers and create equitable opportunities for participation and success in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

- **Sustainability**: Our entrepreneurial efforts are committed to long-term environmental and social responsibility. We support businesses that integrate sustainable practices and ethical decision-making, ensuring that innovation contributes positively to future generations.
- **Empowerment**: We equip individuals and organisations with the knowledge, tools, and support necessary to realise their entrepreneurial ambitions. By building confidence and resilience, we nurture leaders who drive economic and social transformation.

Shared Aspiration and Principles

As part of the NEOLAiA Alliance, we all share a common approach to fostering a strong, inclusive and innovation-driven entrepreneurial culture. We envision an interconnected ecosystem where universities, businesses and policymakers collaborate to create sustainable opportunities for entrepreneurial success. By working together, we strive to nurture talent, encourage knowledge exchange and inspire innovative solutions that address societal and economic challenges through:

- **Bridging Academia and Regional Business Ecosystem:** Establishing NEOLAiA as a central hub for joint research and impact assessment, connecting academic research with local entrepreneurship initiatives, ensuring a strong linkage between all the stakeholders of the Regional Ecosystem including start-ups and policymakers;
- **Structured Support Mechanisms:** Implementing the Taskforce for Entrepreneurship (TAFE) as a leadership group in each partner university, dedicated to driving entrepreneurial excellence through expertise-sharing and regional collaboration;
- **Enhancing Entrepreneurial Competencies:** Improving the quality of entrepreneurial education through knowledge-sharing and a structured training toolkit;
- **Fostering Inclusivity and Economic Participation:** Supporting aspiring entrepreneurs in overcoming barriers to economic inclusion, ensuring that entrepreneurial opportunities are accessible to student, researchers and staff, regardless of background;
- **Integrating Entrepreneurship Frameworks:** Mapping existing resources, fostering best practices and enabling cross-border collaboration to build a resilient, regionally integrated entrepreneurial specialisation.

Strategic Pillars for Entrepreneurial Excellence

To foster a dynamic and impactful entrepreneurial ecosystem, NEOLAiA has identified key strategic pillars that serve as the foundation for its initiatives. With these pillars as a basis, we aim, among other objectives, to strengthen entrepreneurial governance, enhance digital innovation, expand entrepreneurial networks and promote sustainable and inclusive business practices. By aligning our strategies with these focus areas, we seek to empower students, researchers, and entrepreneurs while ensuring a long-lasting impact on regional and global innovation landscapes.

Education and Skills Development

- Providing comprehensive training programs to develop entrepreneurial skills and knowledge.
- Equipping trainees with essential entrepreneurial skills through a dynamic blend of structured education, hands-on experience, mentorship, and access to resources, ensuring they develop the mindset, resilience, and innovation necessary to build and sustain successful ventures.
- Offering workshops and seminars that address key topics such as business planning, financial management, and effective marketing strategies.

Entrepreneurial Mobility and Internationalisation

- Implementing exchange programs that allow students and researchers to gain entrepreneurial experience in different European regions.
- Facilitating cross-border collaborations between universities to share best practices and jointly develop new business ideas.
- Encouraging start-ups to expand internationally through market entry programs and strategic partnerships with foreign enterprises.

Innovation and Research

- Encourage research and development activities to drive innovation and support new venture creation.
- Foster partnerships with academic institutions to leverage research capabilities and expertise through the European programmes and European funding opportunities.

Strengthening Entrepreneurial Governance

- Support entrepreneurial-friendly values within universities to support entrepreneurship, including dedicated entrepreneurship units or task forces.

- Establish a network of experienced mentors to guide and support entrepreneurs through various stages of their ventures.
- Developing recommendations and procedures that make entrepreneurship a natural part of the existing curricula, where applicable aligned with regional economic strategies.
- Encouraging institutional leaders to actively participate in entrepreneurial initiatives and Entrepreneurial-minded processes.

Digitalization and Technological Innovation

- Promoting the use of digital platforms, artificial intelligence and data-driven decision-making to enhance entrepreneurial activities.
- Acknowledging challenges related to intellectual property rights and data storage, and striving to implement secure, ethical and transparent frameworks to protect innovation while fostering open collaboration.
- Supporting start-ups, researchers and students in leveraging emerging technologies to develop innovative solutions with commercial and societal impact.
- Enhancing access to entrepreneurship education and mentorship by fostering digital transformation and ensuring inclusive and flexible learning opportunities.

Strengthening Entrepreneurial Networks

- Contribution in establishing regional and international entrepreneurship clusters that connect universities, start-ups, corporations and investors.
- Creating innovation hubs where students, researchers and entrepreneurs can collaborate on interdisciplinary projects.
- Expanding public-private partnerships to provide start-ups with financial support, market access and business development expertise.

Give information and facilitate access to fundraising

- Facilitating alternative funding mechanisms where applicable such as impact investing, crowdfunding, and corporate venture funds.
- Facilitating seed funding and grants for early-stage start-ups where applicable, especially those emerging from university research and spin-offs through relationship nurturing.

Sustainable and Social Entrepreneurship

- Supporting the development of sustainable business models that align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals).
- Enhancing accessibility of funding by creating opportunities for meetings and dialogue between funders and those seeking financing
- Promoting the creation of incentives for start-ups and enterprises that demonstrate strong environmental, social and governance (ESG) impact.

Areas of Action

Expanding upon the Strategic Pillars for Entrepreneurial Excellence, the Areas of Action reflect our common goal towards fostering an environment where entrepreneurship will flourish. By emphasising the interconnected nature of research, education, and collaboration, we seek to cultivate a culture of innovation that resonates within universities and extends to the wider community. These efforts aim to create a dynamic and inclusive entrepreneurial landscape that supports creativity, sustainability and long-term impact.

1. Research and Knowledge Transfer

NEOLAiA emphasises research as a fundamental pillar for fostering innovation and economic growth. The main initiatives include:

- **Support for Applied Research**: Supporting initiatives with direct entrepreneurial applications, ensuring that research contributes to economic and societal development.
- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration**: Encouraging development across different fields to address complex societal challenges through entrepreneurial solutions.
- **Research Centres**: striving to establish specialised centres and/or collaborate with the existing ones for entrepreneurship, technology transfer and regional development of each partner university.
- **Knowledge Transfer Programs**: Strengthening the link between academic research and industry, facilitating the commercialisation of research outputs.

2. Entrepreneurial Education and Training

NEOLAiA outlines structured efforts to integrate entrepreneurship into academic programmes through various initiatives in each university such as:

- **Entrepreneurial Curriculum Development**: Developing recommendations and procedures that make entrepreneurship a natural part of the existing curricula.
- **Practical Learning Experiences**: Implementing **project-based learning, case studies and business simulations** to provide students with real-world entrepreneurial exposure.
- **Mentorship and Networking**: Connecting students with **experienced entrepreneurs, industry professionals and successful alumni** to guide their entrepreneurial journeys.
- **Digital and Lifelong Learning Tools**: Using **e-learning platforms, MOOCs and hybrid teaching models** to make entrepreneurship education more accessible.
- **Global Mobility Programmes**: Supporting student exchanges, internships, and study-abroad programmes focused on entrepreneurship, promoting international collaboration and exposure.

3. Leadership and Entrepreneurial Management

NEOLAiA is striving to develop robust governance frameworks to promote entrepreneurship:

- **Entrepreneurial Leadership Development**: Training programmes aimed at equipping students, faculty and administrators with the skills to lead entrepreneurial initiatives.
- **Encouraging an Entrepreneurial Culture**: Encouraging universities to embed entrepreneurship into governance and strategic policies.
- **Faculty Training Programs**: Helping educators incorporate **entrepreneurship into teaching methods and research activities**.
- **Cross-sector Collaboration**: Supporting and becoming an active part of networks between academia, government and industry to create a **thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem**.
- **Institutional Policy Integration**: Working for entrepreneurship becomes a priority within institutional leadership, guiding **resource allocation and decision-making processes**.

4. Technology Transfer and Innovation Commercialisation

NEOLAiA outlines strategic actions where applicable to bridge academia and industry:

- **Strengthening Academia-Industry Collaboration**: Encourage and support partnerships between research institutions and businesses to **enhance technology transfer**.
- **Intellectual Property Management**: Develop guidelines for patenting, licensing and start-ups, e.g. based on university research according to the existing rules of partners universities.
- **Open Innovation Models**: Encouraging knowledge-sharing to **accelerate innovation and facilitate market entry** for new technologies.
- **Scaling Research-Based Start-ups**: Assisting **spin-offs and research-driven businesses** in expanding beyond local markets into the global economy.
- **Encouraging the non-profit valorisation of research outputs**, ensuring that knowledge generated within universities is accessible and beneficial to society.
- **Promoting open science principles** by supporting transparent collaboration, open-access research dissemination and shared innovation practices that enhance the collective impact of research-driven entrepreneurship.
- **Global Innovation Hubs**: Fostering the development of international collaboration, with regional centers that encourage cross-sector and cross-border cooperation.

5. Funding and Investment for Start-ups

NEOLAiA aims to introduce financial mechanisms to support entrepreneurial ventures:

- **Venture Capital and Angel Investor Partnerships**: Strengthening entrepreneurs' collaboration with investors to **scale high-potential businesses**.
- **Investment Readiness Programs**: Educating entrepreneurs on how to attract and manage investments effectively.

6. Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainability

NEOLAiA aligns its entrepreneurial vision with global sustainability goals:

- **Support for Sustainable Business Models**: Encouraging the development of enterprises that align with the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
- **Social Entrepreneurship Initiatives**: Fostering business models that address pressing social issues such as **climate change, healthcare and digital inclusion**.

- **Green Entrepreneurship Programs**: Providing targeted support, including **funding, mentorship and specialised training**, for businesses focused on environmental sustainability.

7. Entrepreneurial Mobility and Internationalisation

NEOLAiA highlights the importance of cross-border collaboration and mobility:

- **Entrepreneurial Exchange Programs**: Facilitating mobility opportunities for **students, researchers and entrepreneurs** to gain international experience.
- **Cross-border University Collaboration**: Encouraging joint ventures and **knowledge-sharing between partner universities** to strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems.
- **Support for International Expansion**: When possible, helping start-ups **access global markets through market entry programs** and strategic partnerships.

Course of Action for Different Target Groups

Recognizing the diverse needs and potential contributions of different stakeholders, NEOLAiA tailors its entrepreneurial initiatives to specific target groups. A particular focus is placed on students, equipping them with the knowledge, skills and practical experiences needed to foster an entrepreneurial mindset. Through interdisciplinary curricula, hands-on learning opportunities, mentorship programs, and facilitating access to funding, NEOLAiA seeks to empower students to innovate, take initiative and actively engage in entrepreneurial activities. By cultivating this culture of innovation, we believe that students are not only prepared for the evolving job market but also positioned to become future leaders and changemakers in their communities.

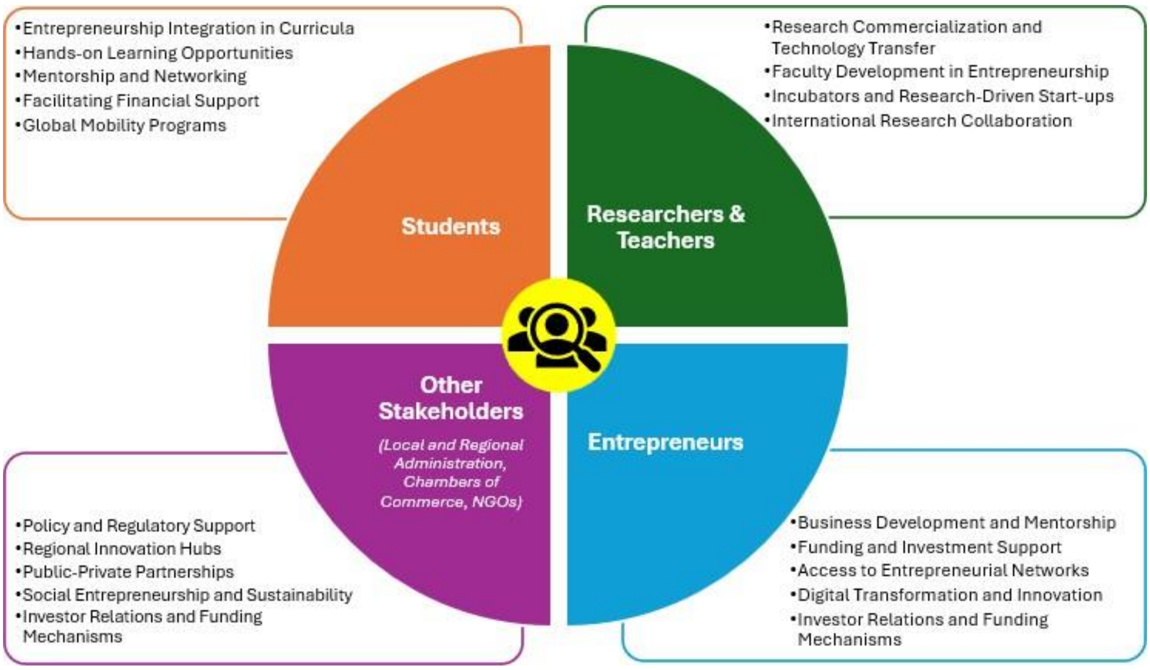

Figure 1. NEOLAiA WP6 Course of Action for Different Target Groups

1. Students

NEOLAiA focuses on **entrepreneurial education, skill development and start-up support for students** through the following measures**:**

- **Entrepreneurship Integration in Curricula:** Universities will develop interdisciplinary entrepreneurship courses embedded into various study programmes, including STEAM, social sciences and business.
- **Hands-on Learning Opportunities:** Start-up incubation programs providing students with mentorship, workspace and financial support, where applicable; Entrepreneurial boot camps and hackathons focused on developing real-world business ideas, where applicable; Project-based learning and simulations to expose students to entrepreneurial problem-solving, where applicable.
- **Mentorship and Networking: W**e aim at establishing structured mentorship programs where students are guided by successful entrepreneurs, industry professionals, and alumni; we aim to

facilitate participation in entrepreneurial conferences, pitch competitions and networking events.

- **Facilitating Financial Support:** Facilitating seed grants, start-up competitions and early-stage investment opportunities; Connecting students with angel investors and venture capital funds through university-led investment networks.
- **Global Mobility Programs:** Enabling international internships and exchange programs focused on entrepreneurship; Supporting students in joining cross-border start-up initiatives within the NEOLAiA University Alliance.

2. Researchers and Entrepreneurship Teachers

NEOLAiA emphasises bridging academia with entrepreneurship by encouraging researchers and educators to integrate entrepreneurial thinking into their work:

- **Research Commercialisation and Technology Transfer:** Encouraging knowledge and innovation commercialization through partnerships with technology transfer entities and by offering legal and financial assistance for research-based entrepreneurial initiatives; Providing legal and financial support for faculty-led spin-offs and start-ups; Encouraging researchers to collaborate with industry partners on applied research projects; Promoting non-profit valorisation and open science by ensuring that research findings are widely accessible, fostering knowledge-sharing initiatives, and supporting socially impactful innovation beyond commercial applications.
- **Faculty Development in Entrepreneurship:** Offering training programs for university educators on how to integrate entrepreneurial thinking into their teaching and research; Creating knowledge-sharing platforms for educators across NEOLAiA universities to exchange best practices; Facilitating access to funding and incentives for faculty to engage in entrepreneurial projects and industry collaborations. While integrating entrepreneurship into research and teaching is valuable, the researcher's perspective on entrepreneurship is just as essential in providing a critical lens and assessing what truly works, ensuring that initiatives are grounded in both academic order and practical applicability.
- **Incubators and Research-Driven Start-ups (existing or new):** Supporting research-based start-ups by offering access to labs, prototyping facilities, and business development support; Encouraging faculty to participate in university start-up incubators.

- **International Research Collaboration:** Facilitating cross-border research partnerships with industry and academia; Encouraging researchers to participate in global innovation challenges and EU-funded start-up projects.

3. Entrepreneurs

NEOLAiA recognises the importance of supporting both **new and established entrepreneurs** by providing access to knowledge, research facilities networks and funding:

- **Business Development and Mentorship**: Aiming to offer structured **entrepreneurial mentoring programmes** that connect start-ups with industry leaders; aiming to provide **one-on-one coaching for business planning, market analysis, and financial management.**
- **Funding and Investment Support**:
  - Aiming to implement **alternative financing models** including **Crowdfunding platforms; Impact investing initiatives; Corporate venture capital funds**.
  - Striving to provide structured **seed funding, micro-grants and investment readiness programs.**
  - Encouraging collaborations with **angel investors and venture capital firms** to scale promising start-ups.
- **Access to Entrepreneurial Networks**: Cooperation in creating and joining existing **regional start-up clusters that bring together universities, companies and investors; Cooperation in establishing public-private partnerships to facilitate market access and financial support; Cooperation in organising industry roundtables, networking events, and start-up accelerators for knowledge exchange.**
- **Digital Transformation and Innovation**: Encouraging start-ups to leverage **emerging technologies such as AI** (Artificial Intelligence), **blockchain, and IoT** (Internet of Things); Providing training on **digital entrepreneurship and e-commerce platforms**. We acknowledge the challenges that these technologies present in relation to intellectual property and data storage, recognising the need for balanced approaches that ensure both innovation and security in digital transformation efforts.
- Facilitate, when possible, access to **state-of-the-art research facilities and infrastructure**, including if possible specialised laboratories, cutting-edge equipment and collaborative workspaces.

This enables businesses to **leverage academic expertise, accelerate innovation and develop new technologies** in a dynamic research environment.

- Providing assistance where possible in technology evaluation to support the patent process.
- Aiming to providing services such as research methodology support to enhance business modelling, research network to sustain enterprise innovations, piloting process and MVP launch with the student's target.

4. Other Stakeholders (Local and Regional Administration, Chambers of Commerce, NGOs, Investors, Regional Representatives Committee)

NEOLAiA promotes collaboration between universities and external stakeholders to create a more robust entrepreneurial ecosystem according to local and regional conditions:

- **Policy and Regulatory Support:** Encouraging local and regional governments to integrate entrepreneurship into economic development strategies; Creating entrepreneurial-friendly policies to facilitate start-up creation, tax incentives and regulatory support.
- **Regional Innovation Hubs: W**e aim to establish entrepreneurial hubs and technology parks in collaboration with municipalities; Strengthening the role of chambers of commerce in connecting entrepreneurs with funding and market opportunities.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Encouraging corporations to invest in university-led start-ups and engage in open innovation models; Developing industry-university collaborations to co-develop technologies and commercial solutions.
- **Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainability:** Providing if possible financial and operational support for impact-driven start-ups and the third sector companies; Establishing funding mechanisms for green and social enterprises aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Investor Relations and Funding Mechanisms: Strengthening** current and future investment networks to include local and international investors focused on early-stage and high-growth ventures; Facilitating entrepreneurial funding events, such as pitch competitions, to attract potential investors.

Best practices to support entrepreneurship

The universities in the NEOLAiA Alliance apply a wide range of best practices to support entrepreneurship, from formal education and dedicated infrastructure to mentorship, financing, and extensive collaborations. Each university contributes to the development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem, preparing students to become innovators and leaders in their fields. The best practices outlined in this section represent successful initiatives and strategies implemented across NEOLAiA universities. These examples of good practice have been gathered from all alliance members and are included in this Charter to provide inspiring examples that can be adapted and expanded across different academic and entrepreneurial contexts. By showcasing these practices, we aim to encourage knowledge-sharing and collaboration, fostering a more robust and innovative entrepreneurial ecosystem within and beyond our network.

The identified best practices can be classified into the following categories:

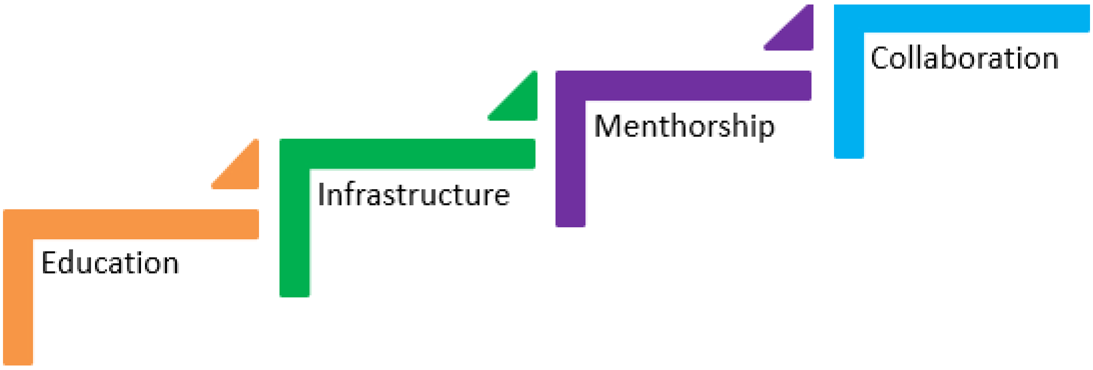

Figure 2. Categories of Best Practices within NEOLAiA

1. **Entrepreneurial Education and Skills Development:** includes courses, programmes and teaching methods that support the training of future entrepreneurs such as:
    - Developing academic programmes providing entrepreneurial training and mentoring;
    - Organizing workshops, conferences, and mentoring sessions for students interested in entrepreneurship;
    - Implementing a Business Idea and Model Development course based on Design Thinking, focusing on solving societal issues through entrepreneurship;
    - Integrating sustainable entrepreneurship into education, emphasizing innovation and social impact;

- Implemented entrepreneurship education programs with mentoring and business plan presentations before local entrepreneurs, encouraging business idea development in interdisciplinary teams;
- Including entrepreneurship courses in various programs and extracurricular activities such as business plan competitions and workshops;
- Encouraging the involvement of professors and guest entrepreneurs to enrich students' learning and training experiences;
- Offering Start-up Management courses and business plan competitions with mentoring and financial support;
- Developing active entrepreneurial centres supporting students and academic staff;
- Integrating entrepreneurship into engineering and management programs, offering specialized courses for each field.

2. **Entrepreneurial Infrastructure and Incubators:** developing innovation centres and incubators to implement students' entrepreneurial initiatives, such as:
    - Creating regional entrepreneurial hubs for the student entrepreneurial community;
    - Establishing business incubation labs for faculties and students;
    - Launching one-year programmes supporting social innovation through mentorship and collaboration;
    - Establishing Technology Transfer and Innovation Centres to support business idea commercialization;
    - Creating a spin-off incubator to support university start-ups;
    - Implementing research and innovation campuses in collaboration with companies and local administration.
3. **Mentorship and Financial Support Programs:** offering orientation support and assessment on entrepreneurial competences and mentoring sessions to support students in developing their businesses, such as:
    - Offering mentorship and financial support for the best students to develop business plans and for student entrepreneurs;
    - Offering scholarship and grants for innovative projects.

4. **Collaborations and Entrepreneurial Networks:** many universities support the entrepreneurial ecosystem by collaborating with regional and international partners:
   - Partnership with companies and local administrations in organizing job fairs and entrepreneurial workshops;
   - Developing relationship with incubators and investors, including venture capital and business angels;
   - Collaborating with chambers of commerce to support local entrepreneurs;
   - Facilitating through foundations/associations connections between academia and local economic ecosystems.

Implementation Strategy

To foster a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem, a flexible and adaptive approach is recommended, allowing universities and regional stakeholders to develop strategies suited to their unique contexts. Several key areas of focus can support these efforts:

1. Stakeholder Engagement: Encouraging collaboration between students, researchers, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and industry leaders through regular dialogue, networking events, and knowledge-sharing initiatives.

2. Resource Mobilization: Identifying funding opportunities from diverse sources, including European programs, national grants, private investment, and corporate sponsorships, to enhance support for entrepreneurial initiatives.

3. Capacity Building: Developing educational programs, workshops, and mentorship opportunities that equip participants with essential entrepreneurial skills, fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation: Promoting reflection and adaptation by gathering feedback from stakeholders, sharing best practices, and assessing progress in a way that informs future improvements rather than enforcing rigid compliance.

5. Scalability and Sustainability: Encouraging knowledge exchange among European universities to replicate and refine successful initiatives, ensuring that entrepreneurial efforts remain resilient and adaptable over time.

By embracing these guiding principles, institutions and regional ecosystems can develop more effective and inclusive entrepreneurial environments that drive long-term economic and social impact.

Monitoring and implementation

In order to monitor the implementation of this charter within NEOLAiA, the following actions will be taken by each member and also by the alliance as a whole:

- **Reporting and sharing among alliance members:** Biannually, each member of the alliance will share a summary – including student perspectives – of progress. In addition, all universities are encouraged and guided to share best practices and innovative approaches to foster a common learning environment within the alliance, involving those responsible for the various dimensions of entrepreneurship;
- **Internal monitoring process:** an internal monitoring process will take place to gather and synthesize the views of students, faculty, staff, and local collaborators on progress in the area of entrepreneurship. The internal monitoring process is conducted biannually with key performance indicators reviewed and evaluated internally. Results will be shared with stakeholders and Alliance partners via email and during scheduled coordination meetings.

Duration and Amendments

This charter is effective for a period of 3 years, subject to renewal upon agreement.
Amendments to the charter must be approved by all alliance members.

Conclusion and final remarks

Entrepreneurship is a transformatory force that has the potential to drive innovation, economic resilience, and societal progress. As members of NEOLAiA, we share a vision of an inclusive and dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem that thrives on collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and sustainable growth. Our collective efforts aim to foster an environment where ideas can be nurtured, research can be translated into impactful solutions, and individuals can be empowered to contribute meaningfully to their communities and beyond.

By embracing diverse perspectives and leveraging the strengths of each partner institution, we envision a future in which entrepreneurship becomes an integral part of academic and regional development. Through ongoing dialogue, cooperation, and shared learning, we seek to create opportunities that inspire innovation, encourage responsible business practices, and drive positive change at local, European, and global levels.

This shared vision serves as a guiding framework, ensuring that our entrepreneurial initiatives remain adaptable, forward-thinking, and aligned with the broader goals of sustainable and inclusive development.

By fostering a culture of collaboration and excellence, we envision NEOLAiA to become a catalyst for entrepreneurial success, empowering future generations to transform ideas into impactful solutions that benefit not only their local communities but also the global economy.

Ratification Timeline

20 February 2025	NEOLAiA Entrepreneurship Charta USV **First draft**
27 February 2025	Internal review comments from Partners
28 February 2025	Consolidation of the Feedback, USV will send **Second draft**
15 March 2025	Internal review final feedback from Partners
30 May 2025	**USV Finalisation of the white paper**
03 June 2025	Send for review/approval to Steering Committee
04 June 2025	NEOLAiA Entrepreneurship Charter Presentation at USV WP6 Meeting
30 June 2025	Final Document
September-October 2025	Translation of the final version into the national languages, digital availability in all relevant languages