NIKOS is ten years old and this was celebrated with ten Posters featuring the institute's many facets: People, Professors, Publications, Policy, Promoting entrepreneurship, Partners, Pupils, Projects, Prizes, and Progress. Finally, another poster was added, Party, as well as additional interviews, highlights and Facts & Figures supplementing each poster theme. Now NIKOS is ready for a new decade of engaged scholarship in entrepreneurship at the University of Twente.

NIKOS (Netherlands Institute for Knowledge Intensive Entrepreneurship), the University of Twente’s expertise centre for technology-based entrepreneurship, is committed to research, teaching, consultancy & training and business development support. It consolidates the UT’s expertise and experience from the chairs of Innovative Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Strategic Management and International Management. The University of Twente’s mission to develop “high-tech with a human touch” is what drives our activities. NIKOS is an expertise centre in IGS, Institute for Innovation and Governance Studies. NIKOS is part of the School of Management and Governance (SMG).
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ENHANCING THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

“In Europe, universities like the UT, Warwick and Strathclyde are examples of the idea of the entrepreneurial university. A recent Communication by the European Commission on the modernisation of higher education presents a set of ideas that have been commonplace at the UT for decades, including the encouragement of entrepreneurship, the teaching of innovation skills, and the collaboration with business and industry. These principles have been at the heart of the various activities by NIKOS for many years now. In addition to these activities, one of NIKOS’s missions has been to support fellow institutes to make entrepreneurship at their universities more effective.

From my European perspective, the future challenges for NIKOS are twofold. On the one hand, NIKOS needs to remain at the heart of the UT’s entrepreneurial profile. The EC’s recent smart specialisation strategy offers some guidance and inspiration here, advising regions to set a limited number of strongly integrated priorities in their research and innovation strategies. For example, the UT’s focus on fields such as nanotechnology and technical medicine should be reflected in strong ties with the regional industry.

On the other hand, NIKOS should enhance its international dimension, following the principle of ‘global-local connectedness’. It is crucial for NIKOS to demonstrate its knowledge of high-tech entrepreneurship to an international audience and to forge stronger connections with similar organisations worldwide. This will not only create a stronger profile for NIKOS but will also contribute to regional economic growth in the Twente region.”

Frans van Vught, the president of the European Centre for Strategic Management of Universities and the former president and rector of the University of Twente

MASTER-APPRENTICE: INVESTIGATING KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER STRATEGIES

“Our research is focused on strategic knowledge and information management. Kasia’s PhD project was concerned with scientific productivity. She investigated strategies of university management for making researchers more productive, measured in terms of scientific publications. Because of her sociological background and profound knowledge of social-scientific methods, Kasia was a good match within our chair.

As we are generally interested in interactions between the university and society, a next PhD candidate is now studying the mechanisms of external scientific productivity, in terms of starting alliances with external parties and finally leading to product development, to applications. This subject perfectly fits an entrepreneurial university and NIKOS.”

Hans Roosendaal, Professor of Strategic Management, NIKOS

“My PhD research was concerned with the factors that influence the ‘production’ of scientific knowledge. I learned a lot from working with Hans and I benefited from his experience in scientific publishing (within Elsevier Science). We had long discussions on the behaviour of scientists and the choices they make, and he always read my work with great care. This experience was one of the reasons I stayed in Twente after obtaining my PhD.

We decided to set up a research programme and hire a new PhD candidate to address knowledge transfer, which brings the focus of the chair closer to NIKOS. And next year, with colleagues from the Faculty of Management and Governance, I will be organising a conference on university-industry interaction.”

Kasia Zalewska-Kurek, assistant professor, NIKOS
"The joint effort of many has made NIKOS a success"

"Back in 2001, inspired by the so-called pragmaticist philosophy, we wanted to add a new dimension to the concept of the entrepreneurial university by combining practical and scientific knowledge to promote entrepreneurship and to solve societal problems. NIKOS was to lay the scientific foundation that would help the UT and fellow universities become more effective entrepreneurs. The combined effort of many organisations in Twente has made this a success. Entrepreneurial universities have a strong regional orientation, while regions with strong international links by way of their knowledge institutes, for example, have demonstrated above-average economic growth. So, NIKOS's challenge is to further strengthen its international profile."
THE INTERNATIONAL ECOSYSTEM OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP RESEARCH

“A central topic in my research is the internationalisation of knowledge-intensive companies. I focus on questions such as: How do entrepreneurs make one move after another in their international strategy, define their marketing mix, and set their boundaries, i.e. what is their core business and what will they outsource? I see a shift in research focus from the individual company to global innovation ecosystems. As a 3TU professor in the Netherlands, I address the role of high-tech entrepreneurship in determining global competition.

For example, with NIKOS I study nanotechnology, medical devices, and the video game industry. Talking about games, at NIKOS, innovation becomes a collaborative global game that inspires entrepreneurship. I like working with NIKOS because of the variety of people, the mix of social sciences, business and engineering, and the seamless movement between different theoretical frameworks. And in their outreach activities, they are closer to the field than most of their colleagues. They add richness to their research through interviews, field work, and case studies.”

Shaker Zahra, Robert E. Bucck Chair of Entrepreneurship, Carlson School of Management, USA, and 3TU professor of International Entrepreneurship

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

“Up to now, there have been three phases in the evolution of the concept of the entrepreneurial university. It started over thirty years ago with opening up to the outside world, engaging in relationships with companies and redefining the university’s role in society. Later, the focus shifted to stimulating the entrepreneurship of students and staff for valorisation of academic knowledge. And now, a university can be entrepreneurial in its own right, determining its own strategy, and not having to completely rely on government policy, but proactively raising part of its own funding.

The UT has been a pioneer in promoting high-tech entrepreneurship, and I was very happy to play a part in this. Now that I have retired, my wish is that the next step made be about the connection with sustainability. It would be nice if the UT, once again, were the pioneer. In my opinion, NIKOS is the right party for putting entrepreneurs on the ‘green’ track and supporting them in practising sustainable entrepreneurship. An entrepreneurial institute like NIKOS will follow market trends, but at the same time lead the way. That’s the NIKOS vibe: confidently searching for new opportunities, taking on the challenge to be useful in both an academic and a practical way.”

Wim During, retired Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Twente
"It's about combining sound research and societal engagement"

Wim During, retired Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Twente

"Since the eighties, the UT has seen a variety of 'entrepreneurial' niche activities, e.g. encouraging spin-off companies, lecturing in entrepreneurship and management, and transferring knowledge to society and industry. Combining these at NIKOS has created a fruitful interaction, which has turned knowledge-intensive entrepreneurship into a mainstream topic at the UT. Simultaneously, NIKOS has consolidated the UT's expertise and experience from the chairs of Innovative Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Strategic Management and International Management. Over the years, NIKOS has demonstrated that it is possible to conduct sound scientific research while engaging with interested parties in society at large at the same time."

"It's about combining sound research and societal engagement"
INNOVATING THE ORGANISATION OF ACADEMIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP

“The UT continues to build on the success of the concept of the entrepreneurial university. Innovative by definition, it keeps questioning the organisation of its academic entrepreneurship. In the early years, the entrepreneurial UT mainly operated in isolation and aimed primarily to convert knowledge into new activity. We have now reached the stage where we demand more of the way in which our academic entrepreneurship is organised, which is now mainly about valorisation. For instance, in the context of Kennispark Twente our emphasis has shifted to working together with relevant partners, such as municipal, regional and provincial authorities, as well as businesses, our own NIKOS institute and other knowledge institutes, like Saxion. This is called the triple helix or golden triangle and the organisation has become markedly more professional as a result.

Furthermore, our focus now is on growth acceleration, in view of the fact that many of our university spin-offs only grew to a modest size. With its VentureLab Twente, NIKOS significantly boosts growth acceleration and related knowledge development, making it a fine example of a highly entrepreneurial scientific group that can also serve as a part of the Kennispark concept.”

Ed Brinksma, the rector of the University of Twente

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

“IGS was set up as the UT’s social sciences institute for management and governance in the public and private sectors. Some four years ago, we broadened our scope and NIKOS was incorporated. Now, NIKOS is a crucial group within IGS, as it covers the management of innovation in the private sector. Moreover, it connects us to the UT’s technological institutes and provides us with important links between academia and the outside world. Yes, NIKOS has made IGS more entrepreneurial.

At the same time, IGS helps NIKOS to keep up and even raise research quality standards. There is a natural tension between fundamental research and valorisation. And that’s OK. Because, if we were to focus exclusively on research, we would not be tapping our full potential as an entrepreneurial university. On the other hand, were we to restrict ourselves to valorisation, what sustainable knowledge, what top scientific publications, would we have to offer in the long run?”

Kees Aarts, Professor of Political Science, and Scientific Director of the Institute for Innovation and Governance Studies (IGS)
It is important for the University of Twente and its School of Management and Governance to have both the academic and the entrepreneurial side of NIKOS. Its research and publications on innovation models are central to the school's Business Administration discipline and can be viewed as one of the calling cards of our entrepreneurial university. That said, given its field of work, NIKOS organizes its own knowledge transfer to put its management theory of innovation into practice. Thus, by virtue of its participatory research, NIKOS is a kind of test bed for innovation models and also a fine example in its field of an academically leading, yet highly entrepreneurial group.

“NIKOS is a kind of test bed for innovation models”

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PhD candidate Tiago Ratinho admires the legacy left by his fellow PhD candidates. Tiago defended his thesis on 13 October 2011.

“Nikos - 10 Years of Enterprise at the University of Twente in 10 Posters

Ed Brinksma, the rector of the University of Twente

The HTSF (High Technology Small Firm) conferences have inspired an edited book series entitled New Technology Based Firms. Launched in 1993 and now publishing its 15th volume, the series presents the latest research on various aspects of the formation and growth of HTSFs from a range of interdisciplinary perspectives. The series encompasses both theoretical and empirical developments worldwide, drawing evidence from a range of national contexts.

This article has achieved the highest impact factor to date: 3.7.


The first of 9 publications on spin-off support, featuring results, infrastructures, best practices and much more, published at Twente University Press between 1997 and 2002.

PhD candidate Tiago Ratinho admires the legacy left by his fellow PhD candidates. Tiago defended his thesis on 13 October 2011.

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“Within the framework of decentralised regional economic policy, Overijssel has defined four main policy objectives: reduction/simplification of regulations and fast authorisation of permits; a competitive business and work climate; an appealing business policy; and education-employment matching. In short: the province will focus on its core business and leave more responsibility to companies and research institutions, with trust as a starting point. Powerful organisations for promoting innovation in Twente include Kennispark and the UT, the province’s partner in the two Centers for Research and Innovation, on bio-energy and health.

As part of its relationship with the UT, Overijssel has supported NIKOS initiatives such as ‘Successfully Your Own Boss’ (Kansrijk Eigen Baas), which helps unemployed people start their own business, and VentureLab Twente, for supporting high-tech start-ups. About ten percent of the fast-growing technological companies in the Netherlands originate from the UT / Kennispark.

Now that Overijssel has adopted the recent national top sectors economic policy, new opportunities have started emerging. For example, within the topsector High Tech Systems & Materials (including medical devices), Twente can reinforce its ties with Eindhoven on high-tech and with Nijmegen and Groningen on medical technology. One of the challenges lies in human capital: the imminent shortage of technically skilled people demands that new investments be made in technical education.”

Theo Rietkerk, Economy, Energy and Innovation representative for the Dutch province of Overijssel

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**Funded project value**

2001-2011

European: k€ 1,075  
National: k€ 1,898  
Regional: k€ 442
We applaud the ambition to double start-up growth

"One of the key drivers of our province’s policy supporting start-up and existing companies is innovation and, as such, it is no wonder the University of Twente is a prominent partner, for converting knowledge into know-how and, ultimately, into cash. The performance of UT institutes like MESA+, MIRA and CTIT is impressive, as is their large number of spin-offs. There is no doubt that the entrepreneurial university contributes to the sustainable reinforcement of the economic structure of both the region and the province. Therefore, the province has an enduring relationship with NIKOS, supporting programmes such as for high-potential ventures, aimed at doubling the size of newly established companies.”

Innovatieplatform Twente (Twente Innovation Platform) brings businesses into contact with representatives from the worlds of regional government, education and research. They join each other on the Innovation Route with the aim of speeding up innovation processes.

Kennispark Twente is the heart of knowledge valorisation at the University of Twente. Its aim is to create the best possible climate for innovation and enterprise by combining, completing, coordinating and communicating activities.

Regio Twente (Regional Authority) has drawn up the Twente Agenda. Its aim is to create a productive and prosperous region with pleasant living and working conditions.

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"We applaud the ambition to double start-up growth"
THE REGIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT ECOSYSTEM

“The really innovative thing in our region is that we have an ecosystem that supports high-tech entrepreneurship and business development in a collaborative way. TKT (Technology Circle Twente) aims to connect high-tech entrepreneurs, for collaborating with respect to innovation and growth but also to enable them to learn from each other and share knowledge and experiences on HR matters, for instance, as our strategic focus is on high growth ambition companies.

NIKOS, as an academic collective that is entrepreneurial in its own right, is an important player in this regional business development support ecosystem. TKT and NIKOS have been liaising closely for a long time and we are now considering the initiative of a Master’s track in High-Tech Venturing.

While the UT has a lot of spin-offs with a technological foundation, NIKOS focuses on the other side, i.e. entrepreneurship, with their programme VentureLab Twente (VLT). Yes, it’s true the average growth rate is not high, and it’s a shame if the potential is not fulfilled, but low growth in itself is not a problem. And to put things into perspective, 10-20% of the total of 750 UT spin-offs do exhibit fast growth. If a venture capitalist scored a 10-20% success rate on 750 companies, then he’d boast a very nice portfolio.”

Jaap Beemink, co-founder of B&M Business Development and the chairman of TKT

TWENTE’S MAGNIFICENT OFFER

“Next year, BTC-Twente – the initiative of Prof. Harry van den Kroonenberg, the spiritual father of the entrepreneurial university – will be celebrating its 30th anniversary. All those years, we have operated on a commercial basis, much to the surprise of the world’s incubator community. Our tenants are mostly technologically innovative start-ups and university or company spin-offs, as well as companies from elsewhere that want to conquer the European market. We offer high-grade office, lab, and production facilities, organise network events and lectures and provide individual coaching. Over the years we have housed some 600 companies, of which only five percent were unsuccessful.

We have strong ties with NIKOS and its VentureLab Twente (VLT) incubator programme. For example, students of the Minor Innovation & Entrepreneurship come to hear our story, some of our tenants participate in VLT or the TOP programme, and VLT is a BTC tenant itself. Currently, we are working with partners to develop a new facility, The Gallery, on the university campus, on the interface of science and business in Kennispark Twente. VLT and perhaps even all of NIKOS will find new housing there. Twente boasts a magnificent offer of entrepreneurship support, including VLT, Kennispark and BTC.”

Rob de Koning, director of the BTC-Twente incubator
"It makes sense to train competencies for entrepreneurs starting out."

"Anyone wanting to become an entrepreneur should have some basic personal characteristics. They should be enterprising, headstrong, performance-driven and risk-taking to some extent. But they can also grow as an entrepreneur by undergoing competency training in strategy, finance, marketing, HRM and product development. And with lots of technological spin-offs popping up, it helps that NIKOS addresses these competencies of entrepreneurship both in curricula and programmes. That's why NIKOS projects such as VentureLab Twente and 'Successfully Your Own Boss' come in. In addition, high-tech entrepreneurs starting out may learn by joining their fellow entrepreneurs in networks facilitated by the likes of NIKOS partner TKT (Technology Circle Twente)."

"TOP, a spin-off support programme for temporary entrepreneurial positions, started life in 1984. In 2011 NIKOS transferred the programme's management to Kennispark Twente. Kansrijk Eigen Baas [Successfully Your Own Boss], ran in the Achterhoek region, the Province of Overijssel and the City of Eindhoven between 2003 and 2010. Initiated by Rabobank Achterhoek, it was a project to help people discover their entrepreneurial potential. Since its launch in 2009, VentureLab Twente has provided business development support for high-tech, high-growth companies. It combines the expertise of the University of Twente with SKIO, the Saxion Knowledge Centre for Innovative Entrepreneurship."
DOUBLE DEGREE MASTER’S PROGRAMME ‘INNOVATION MANAGEMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP’

“Before I went to the TU Berlin in 2009, I had been working in the Netherlands for eleven years and I got to know NIKOS quite well. When it comes to entrepreneurship support, coaching, business incubators and the large number of start-ups, we have a lot in common. So, when we at the TUB decided to start a dedicated two-year Master’s programme that included one year abroad, NIKOS was the logical choice for a partner. Moreover, NIKOS has a Master’s in Business Administration, which we do not have. This in particular attracts German students, who have to do a two-year programme anyway and now, with the double degree programme, have the option of going abroad and obtaining their MBA. So far, some forty students a year have enrolled in the programme, with 80-90% going to Twente for the second year. We are currently working on a European Master’s programme, within the Erasmus Mundus framework, in which other universities, including those in Moscow, Taiwan and Istanbul, also participate.”

Jan Kratzer, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management, Head of the IME Master, Technische Universität Berlin

“For years, we have had a popular Master’s track on ‘Innovation and Entrepreneurship’. As it only covers one year and our ambition was to train PhD candidates, we wanted to have a two-year, more in-depth programme. In my capacity as the director of education of the UT’s School of Management and Governance, I met Jan Kratzer, who was then about to start at the TU Berlin. Putting two and two together, we decided to launch the double degree Master’s programme. We both contribute courses on management, innovation and entrepreneurship, several of which are provided by NIKOS. In addition, the TUB contributes courses on technology management, project management and law, while we offer HRM and finance courses, for example. The programme promotes student mobility, adds new talent to our pool of candidates for PhD positions, and enhances international research collaboration. It all started with Jan and me, but without Aard Groen’s NIKOS – their courses and VLT (for Master’s thesis work) – it would not have worked.”

Petra de Weerd-Nederhof, Professor of Organisation of Innovation at the University of Twente

THE HIGH-TECH ENTREPRENEURAL REGION

“Founded by an entrepreneurial university five years ago, Kennispark Twente (KP) was intended as the next step towards a high-tech entrepreneurial region. KP is a joint initiative between the UT, Saxion University of Applied Sciences, the province of Overijssel and Twente Network City (represented by Enschede, the UT’s hometown).

As part of the UT, NIKOS has played a key role in drawing up a complete agenda, by providing research, teaching and business development support. For example, the TOP scheme (Tijdelijke Ondernemers plaatsen, Temporary Entrepreneurial Positions), developed by NIKOS predecessors and until recently managed by NIKOS, has successfully promoted UT spin-offs for 25 years. Now, KP is in charge of TOP, and the scheme is more widely available to all entrepreneurs starting out on our KP innovation campus.

Using the VentureLab Twente’s results, we want to learn how training high-tech entrepreneurs can become even more effective, because – as we have found out over the years – it’s the entrepreneur’s talent and training that drive the company. So, our challenge for the future is to use this training to provide companies starting out with good management.”

Kees Eijkel, the director of Kennispark Twente
NIKOS is a partner in the “soft Landings” programme of the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA), the world’s leading organization advancing business incubation and entrepreneurship.

“VentureLab Twente helps us become more successful”

Kees Eijkel, the director of Kennispark Twente

“NIKOS trains entrepreneurs starting out, while we at Kennispark Twente (an innovation campus) take care of the infrastructure: venture capital, business development, patenting and housing. That is, roughly speaking, the ‘cast’ for promoting knowledge-intensive entrepreneurship in the region. The VentureLab Twente programme helps us become more successful. I don’t know of any other training programme anywhere else that is as comprehensive as VentureLab’s. NIKOS also studies how high-tech, high-growth entrepreneurship works in practice. In that respect, Kennispark is a living lab for their activities. For example, we can benefit from their research into the effectiveness of business incubators when designing our new facilities.”

Prof. Jan Kratzer heads the Chair for Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management at the Technische Universitaet Berlin. He is in charge of the German side of the two-year double degree Master’s in Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship, run since 2010.

Alexander Chepurenko is Professor of Sociology and Entrepreneurship at the prestigious Higher School of Economics National Research University in Moscow, widely regarded as Russia’s top university for Economics and Management. Prof. Chepurenko initiated the HSE-NIKOS summer school, organized for the first time in 2011, in Enschede and Moscow.
THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP LEARNING CURVE IN ACADEMIA

“Student entrepreneurship is encouraged at the UT. Teachers, for example, are open to your ideas and are ready and willing to connect you to the people who can help you further your plans. I enjoyed my time as a student entrepreneur, working with friends in our start-up, BlueCommerce. We developed a Bluetooth device that can send commercial messages to mobile phones within a short range. This ‘narrowcasting’ was intended for applications at trade fairs and in shops.

We learned a lot in practice and from the courses at the UT. Following my positive experience of the minor in Entrepreneurship, I decided to do the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Master’s track at NIKOS and an MSc in Innovation, Knowledge and Entrepreneurial Dynamics at Aalborg University, Denmark. This was before the double degree programme with TU Berlin was introduced.

After my friends and I graduated, we all found ourselves full-time jobs and quit entrepreneurship. I opted to continue my entrepreneurial learning curve in academia, having gone from a minor to a Master’s and now to a PhD. As a PhD candidate at NIKOS, I am focusing on entrepreneurship decision-making during the very uncertain stages of the opportunity creation phase. Once I have finished my PhD project, I may very well become an entrepreneur again myself.”

Arjan Frederiks, NIKOS PhD student and former student entrepreneur

In the past 10 years 32 PhD candidates successfully defended their dissertation.

DOUBLE DEGREE MASTER PROGRAMME

In 2010 the double degree master programme ‘Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship’ was introduced. This master is a cooperation between the University of Twente (UT) and the Technische Universität Berlin (TUB) with regard to the topic Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Completing the master programme (120 EC) will result in two master degrees:

- MSc in Business Administration from the UT (60 EC)
- MSc in Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship from the TUB (60 EC)

The double degree programme consists of four semesters (two at UT and two at TUB). There are different profiles with regard to the four semesters. Below you find an example for a student who started in September 2010 at UT with the master track Business Administration - INN&ENT:

Term 1 (September-January) 30 EC Twente

(a) Business Development from a Network Perspective (5 EC)
(b) Entrepreneurial Finance (5 EC)
(c) HRM, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (5 EC)
(d) Supply Chain Management and Innovation (5 EC)
(e) Principles of Entrepreneurship (5 EC)
(f) Advanced Technology Venturing Group Project (5 EC)

Term 2 (February-July) 30 EC Berlin

(a) Strategic Innovation Management (6 EC)
(b) Entrepreneurship Research (5 EC)
(c) Technology Management (6 EC) (or) Strategy Simulation Game (6 EC)
(d) Regulating Innovations (6 EC) (or) Innovation Policy (6 EC)
(e) Group Project (6 EC)

Term 3 (September-January) 30 EC Berlin

(a) Human Side of Innovation (6 EC)
(b) Innovation Marketing (6 EC)
(c) Strategic Management, Knowledge-based Organization and Organizational Change (3 EC)
(d) Innovation Economics (6 EC)
(e) Business Research Methods (3 EC)
(f) IP Management (6 EC) (or) Strategic Standardization (6 EC)

Term 4 (February-July) 30 EC Twente

Masterclass (5 EC) and Final Thesis Assignment with joint supervision (25 EC)
"As a student, I learned entrepreneurship through practice"

Arjan Frederiks, NIKOS Ph.D. student and former student entrepreneur

"As a student of Industrial Engineering and Management, I was drawn to the minor in Entrepreneurship offered by NIKOS. I found that subjects such as finance, marketing or writing a business plan were very practical and the real-life examples incredibly interesting. Moreover, I felt encouraged to start my own business together with my friends. Of course, you need theory, but it was through practice that I learnt how to deal with customers or to convince suppliers. And now, as a Ph.D. student, I want to find out how this entrepreneurial process fundamentally works. I love talking to entrepreneurs, who are inspiring people, to investigate how they manage to make their dreams of new products and their company come true."

In 2005, Student Solutions Twente - a company founded together with two friends - won the prestigious SHELL LiveWIRE Young Business Award. Today the company has its offices at Kennispark Twente.

Between 2008 and 2010, NIKOS offered master classes entitled Onderneem den je zo (the ultimate guide to entrepreneurship) to senior high-school students (5th year). These master classes taught students how to think and act like entrepreneurs. The classes culminated in the participants presenting their own business ideas.

In 2011 NIKOS ran two international summer-school programmes for different target groups: (aspiring) entrepreneurs and business development professionals. The programmes attracted 17 participants from 7 countries.
EIT ICT LABS

EIT ICT Labs is a new initiative designed to turn Europe into the global leader in ICT innovation. It is one of the first three Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) selected by the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) to accelerate innovation in Europe. EIT is a new independent community body set up to address Europe’s innovation gap. It aims to rapidly emerge as a key driver of EU’s sustainable growth and competitiveness through the stimulation of world-leading innovation. The project was launched in 2010 and will run until 2018.

EIT ICT Labs aims to fulfill its mission by establishing a new type of partnership between leading companies, research centres and universities in Europe. The initiative focuses on the sections Education, Research and Business and is operating from five European main nodes: Berlin, Helsinki, Eindhoven, Paris and Stockholm. Its partners consist of a large number of renowned European scientific institutes, top universities and successful companies.

In the Business section, business catalysts foster innovation on both the entrepreneurial and the industrial path. NIKOS is the catalyst for the project: the Entrepreneurship Support System. The system supports and nurtures SMEs and academic entrepreneurs, enabling them to grow at European level. Its main goals are to increase the volume of successful start-ups and to help SMEs achieve more rapid and international growth. The system employs a variety of mechanisms to support these companies in capturing new business opportunities and reducing time to market, as well as in expanding their business growth internationally.

EIT ICT Labs enables NIKOS to capitalize on and further develop its VentureLab Twente training program as well as increase European-wide cooperation with other leading institutes active in the field of ICT and entrepreneurship.

See also: www.eit.ictlabs.eu

TAKING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

“NIKOS has earned itself a global reputation in academia. It is very well-known in Europe and the United States, and it attracts a lot of talent. My first contact dates back more than ten years and I still enjoy every visit to NIKOS. I’m really interested in the things they do, such as the diffusion of research results through business development, and with VentureLab Twente (VLT) I can see their work in action.

VLT takes business development support to the next level, in terms of the resources and experiences that are provided. Participants are exposed to experts from all over the world. The level of coaching and the synergy between participants and staff are amazing. As a result, I expect they are going to hit some homeruns.

The challenge is to keep raising the bar in entrepreneurship research and innovation support. By bringing in people from other countries, even more different ideas and perspectives can be shared. And the other way around – VLT can reach out to developing countries, such as the emerging markets in Eastern Europe. In this way, VentureLab can be duplicated elsewhere, with NIKOS acting as a support structure.”

Paula Englis, Professor of Management, Campbell School of Business, USA
“Incubators are really a good way to promote born global firms.”

Dr. Paula Englis, Professor of Management, Campbell School of Business, USA

“...the EU-funded GlobalStart project, in which I collaborated with NIKOS as the coordinating party, was an amazing experience. We focused on how universities can support spin-off companies that are global start-ups right away, and we gathered best practices from across Europe. We studied the role of incubators in promoting born global firms that are international from their inception and have their resources globally dispersed, for example by outsourcing their R&D. My previous research on the subject was quantitatively driven. Working with Twente made me realise the value of qualitative research. When focusing only on numbers, you may miss the richness in the stories of starting entrepreneurs.”

Technomed Asia has its roots in Indonesia, 1997. It started life with IM consultancy embarking on a strategic agenda and a match making event, culminating in a feasibility study and a joint-venture plan in Bandung Indonesia, involving Dutch firm Technomed Europe and Indonesia’s PT Abadi Nussa Usahasemesta. With funding secured, Technomed Asia became operational in 2003. The picture shows NIKOS colleagues with the owner-directors of both joint-venture companies.

The FemStart project ran from 2006-2009, with the main goal of sparking public debate on issues connected with women from universities starting high-tech businesses. FemStart got the ball rolling by organizing a series of events at six universities across Europe, attracting experts from all relevant sectors, female scientists and representatives from universities, development agencies, politics and the public and private sector. The photograph was taken at the Enschede event.

NIKOS participated in two NENSI - North European Network for Service Incubators - projects between 2003 and 2008. NENSI fosters regional, spatial and social development by creating more (and more viable) small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
HIGH TECH, SMALL FIRMS

“My research interests centre on the problems of innovation and growth within high-technology industry in general, and High Technology Small Firms (HTSFs) in particular, at both national and international scales. Although there had been considerable government interest in HTSFs during the early 1980s, by the 1990s, the UK government began to lose interest in these firms. This lack of interest was part of a general trend that tended to emphasise services over manufacturing. The new High Technology Small Firms Conference, founded in 1993, was intended to regenerate interest in this key area of future high-technology manufacturing growth, since manufacturing will continue to play an important role in all developed nations in this new millennium. The conference was extended into a joint venture with the UT in 1996.

Over the years, Manchester and Twente universities have been prominent in promoting HTSFs in particular and technical entrepreneurship in general, with Manchester focusing on the high-tech entrepreneurship and Twente, now through NIKOS, taking a broader view on entrepreneurship. Conference themes over the years have varied slightly, where core considerations such as the raising of capital, networking, strategy and marketing have been more recently augmented by other subjects, such as the impact of a clustered location on HTSF performance.”

Ray Oakey, Professor of Business Development at the Manchester Business School, UK

NIKOS AWARD

The NIKOS Award was presented for the first time in 2008, when the honour went to Professor Wim During. Ever since, it has been awarded at irregular intervals as a token of appreciation for extra-ordinary achievements in the field of entrepreneurship and innovation. The design is by Nicole van Heeswijk, an independent artist, who built her business with help of the NIKOS business development support programme Kansrijk Eigen Baas (Successfully Your Own Boss). The award is a pin, made in silver and gold. The design represents different aspects of NIKOS. “The golden N at the centre represents light, symbolizing the fact that the recipient is being put in the spotlight for making an important difference in the field that NIKOS stands for. Innovative, with eyes fixed firmly on the future. High tech, modern and up-to-the-minute, the parabolas interlock. This interlocking also represents cooperation. Knowledge arises from the will to learn from the past, seize the present and envision the future. The powerful design incorporates the shape of three eyes which stand for: keeping an eye to the future, looking ahead and seeing opportunities, all of which are essential to entrepreneurship.”

Other recipients of the award include Jaap van Tilburg (2009) and Jon Schoo (2011). Aard Groen and Peter van der Sijde received the honour as part of the NIKOS anniversary celebrations.
"Our relationship dates back some fifteen years, when I first met Wim During of the UT. I have had a long-standing interest in regional development and the role of an (entrepreneurial) university in a region as a main vehicle for technological progress. As part of a drive to achieve better regional technological change, we decided to organise the High Technology Small Firms (HTSF) conference, which I had started a few years earlier, to alternate between Manchester and Twente. Over the years, themes have included funding, venture capital, management, and intellectual property protection. A challenge for the future is to keep high-technology entrepreneurship on the policy agenda for national government throughout Europe."

"Prizes appreciate, stimulate, and help to make the invisible visible."

Ray Oakey, Professor of Business Development at the Manchester Business School, UK
Engaged Scholarship

"Over the past ten years, NIKOS has demonstrated its ability to handle the university’s three general tasks – research, education and valorisation – as a cohesive whole. The theme of entrepreneurship in a technological context has only gained ground since NIKOS was first established. NIKOS will continue to develop its position as a specialised knowledge centre focusing on technology-based entrepreneurship and business development in (international) networks, which fits in perfectly with the UT’s ‘High Tech, Human Touch’ strategy.

In line with future developments, including the plan for a University of Twente Business School for technology venturing and technology management, we will continue to do research on our current themes based on the four dimensions of the social system model: Strategy, Organisation, Efficiency/Economy, and Networks. NIKOS is, therefore, trying to shape the continued development of a productive scientific programme, which also delivers relevant practical results. In other words, at NIKOS, we demonstrate ‘engaged scholarship’ (as defined by Andrew Van der Ven). This approach is the intellectual basis to further develop research, teaching, training and support activities at NIKOS."

Aard Groen, Professor of Innovative Entrepreneurship at the University of Twente and the director of NIKOS

HighTech, Human Touch

The University of Twente is a modern research university with a decidedly entrepreneurial character, where technology and life sciences come together.

(Source: RuTe’14+ strategy memorandum, 2011)
"Showing academic as well as societal relevance remains our challenge."

Aart Groen, Professor of Innovative Entrepreneurship, University of Twente; director NIKOS

"Firmly based within an entrepreneurial university, we promote the sustained growth of SMEs as a backbone for the regional economy. Along these lines we address high-tech, high-growth as well as social innovation. In addition, NIKOS has developed an international orientation by helping partners abroad introduce proven concepts of innovative entrepreneurship. Equally important, however, is that we have created a position of our own in the academic community, as witnessed by our established Ph.D. track, positive national research rankings and international collaborations with renowned scholars. In the end, it does not make sense to be part of an (entrepreneurial) university if there is no scientific foundation."

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INNOVATIVE AND ENTREPRENEURIAL IN HOSPITALITY

“Our conference hotel started as one of the first manifestations of the entrepreneurial university. The UT privatised some of its facilities and remained involved as a shareholder. I remember it evoked a lot of discussion back then. Now, we have served the UT as well as the surrounding industry for nearly 25 years with accommodation for conferences, trainings and overnight stays in our hotel. Guests are invariably surprised to find this hotel in the heart of the beautiful and lively UT campus.

NIKOS is one of our prime ‘customers’. Here, they regularly organise conferences, such as HTSF, or summer schools, for which we have an additional budget hotel location, and various other kinds of ‘parties’. VLT lecturers stay over at our hotel, earlier this year we had a Russian delegation that visited NIKOS, and recently NIKOS hosted the annual INSCOPE conference on our premises.

Currently, we are developing plans for a new ‘experience hotel’ on campus. In line with what guests would expect in the high-tech innovative ambiance of Kennispark Twente, we want to fit out this hotel with the latest gadgets, home automation, etcetera. We plan to cut the knot soon.”

Marijke Schmand, director of Drienerburght conference hotel
NIKOS - 10 YEARS OF ENTERPRISE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE IN 10 POSTERS

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NIKOS is ten years old and this was celebrated with ten Posters featuring the institute’s many facets: People, Professors, Publications, Policy, Promoting entrepreneurship, Partners, Pupils, Projects, Prizes, and Progress. Finally, another poster was added: Party, as well as additional interviews, highlights and Facts & Figures supplementing each poster theme. Now NIKOS is ready for a new decade of engaged scholarship in entrepreneurship at the University of Twente.

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