

PRESS RELEASE

The HEPTech Symposium: An Entrepreneurial Perspective to Research

(This article is to be published in the July/August 2015 edition of CERN Courier)

The CERN fostered High Energy Physics Technology Transfer Network (HEPTech) brought together young researchers with entrepreneurial and technology transfer potential at its second annual symposium, which was hosted by Inovacentrum at the Czech Technical University in Prague from May 31st to June 6th 2015.



The event was attended by 17 participants - early stage researchers in the first four years of their research activity (full-time equivalent, including the period of research training) from 9 countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, and UK). A panel of HEPTech experts performed a careful selection of 27 applications both in terms of eligibility and entrepreneurial potential.

The five-day program, opened by Ian Tracey (the HEPTech Co-ordinator), addressed the needs of the young researchers as potential entrepreneurs introducing them to issues relating to patent law and intellectual property protection, how and where to find help when starting a new business, what ideas work best for incubation, how to promote and market their research results, and how to attract an investor amongst other topics. Best practices on successful start-ups and products were presented such as the story of the creation and growth of the Raspberry Pi (an affordable, credit-card sized computer for educational purposes) and the lessons young entrepreneurs could learn from it. The participants were also introduced to the infrastructure and market potential of the unique European laser centre – the ELI facility hosted by the Institute of Physics at the Czech Academy of Sciences.

The topics were presented by commercially experienced professionals and technology transfer experts such as Pete Lomas (Raspberry Pi Foundation, UK); Markus Nordberg (CERN) who spoke about the use of cross-disciplinary teams in creating ideas for new products; or Stephen Blake, a European Patent Attorney (Marks&Clerk LLP) who ran a practical workshop discussing the best intellectual property protection for a particular case.



marketable product.

Jean-Marie Le Goff, the HEPTech Chairman (CERN), addressed the multi-faceted relationships between research, innovation and industry. He discussed the context of these relationships and explored possible routes for setting up R&D collaborations with industry.

An expert team (The Imagination Factory Co., UK) on innovative product design inspired the young researchers and made them realize that they were creative and could come up with practical applications for their technology. In one day, the participants went through the main phases of the process of conversion of the research results into a

All experts acknowledged the mutual benefits of networking with young researchers and declared their intention to continue the communication with them.

On the last day of the symposium, the participants learned the lesson that finding the right investor was like finding a life partner and were introduced to the top ten for attracting investors. They gave 3-minute pitch presentations on their technologies and received recommendations for marketing and commercialization from two business investors.



Two special awards provided by the Raspberry Pi Foundation (UK) were given: for the project that attracted the investors' attention and for the participant who had progressed the most over the week. The first one went to Dr. Eng. Florina Tuluca (Research Assistant at the Institute of Geodynamics, Romanian Academy, Bucharest) for her prototype of a soil pollution testing device, thus giving her confidence in the market potential of her research.

The other award went to Lyubomir Stoyanov (Faculty of Physics, Sofia University, Bulgaria) who in one week managed to take physics out of the Lab and place it at the market.



The overall opinion of the participants was that they attended a unique format that introduced them to knowledge they had never accessed before, provoked their creativity and gave them a different perspective to research. They qualified their new experience as "life changing" and "brilliant combination between theory and practice".

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