

# Expanding the borders of the University: ecosystem actors' engagement through extracurricular EE

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*Objectives:* Numerous studies have been conducted focusing on curricular entrepreneurship education. However, there is still much knowledge to be developed on the extracurricular initiatives that students can access and that takes place in the entrepreneurial ecosystems in which universities are immersed.

*Prior work:* Universities play a fundamental role in the outcomes of entrepreneurship ecosystems for their potential to generate innovative knowledge and provide qualified entrepreneurial human capital. One of the Entrepreneurial University's main objectives is the generation, attraction, and retention of entrepreneurs; being firmly committed to entrepreneurial training. When defining Entrepreneurial Education (EE), there is common to make a subdivision, differentiating curricular EE and extracurricular EE. This second group has room for a wide range of enterprising activities, such as mentorship or incubator programs, hackathons, workshops, or entrepreneurship clubs. Much research has been done on curricular EE activities, but many aspects that define the nature and dynamics of extra-curricular initiatives are still understudied. This is a research challenge that we take up in this study.

*Approach:* This study approaches extracurricular entrepreneurial training from a qualitative and international perspective, focusing on the activities developed around two leading European universities in entrepreneurship: Lund (Sweden) and Malaga (Spain). Semi-structured interviews with different actors of the ecosystems, organizers, or participants of diverse extracurricular activities have been conducted.

*Results:* This study is still in progress, but the preliminary results and conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of these interviews. Developing extracurricular entrepreneurial activities encourages collaboration among actors, fostering more interconnected ecosystems. They also promote a value interchange among students and the entrepreneurial ecosystem that enriches both parties. Moreover, analysing its characteristics permits the classification of the extracurricular initiatives and the identification of critical conditions or actions that foster its success.

*Implications and Value:* Extracurricularity at an ecosystemic level is a novel approach in entrepreneurial research. The study presents theoretical contributions to advancing knowledge on extracurricular entrepreneurial education, highlighting its relevance as a value-creating element for the ecosystem. Our findings are of value for educators and university managers who are involved in designing entrepreneurial education initiatives across campus.