

## Entrepreneurial Competence: The Experience of iNNoVaNDiS

**Asunción Ibáñez-Romero\***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7238-8740>

Departamento de Estrategia y Sistemas, Deusto Business School, University of Deusto

**Jon Mikel Zabala-Iturriagagoitia\*\***

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1975-2555>

Departamento de Economía, Deusto Business School, University of Deusto

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### Abstract

In this article we describe the profile of an entrepreneur, according to the literature, which is then compared with the way these competences are trained in the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Specialization Programme (iNNoVaNDiS) of the University of Deusto in San Sebastian (Spain). This program develops and encourages an entrepreneurial behavior among all students in this campus, by working on knowledge, abilities, attitudes, values and emotions. We share the basis and philosophy of the program and check with alumni what has meant for them being part of iNNoVaNDiS. The gathered answers, which come from individuals who are now working all around the world in different sectors and with different positions, allow us to identify which of the competences trained in the program are the most appreciated by the labor market.

### Key words:

Innovation; Entrepreneurship; High Education; Competences; Interview.

## Competencia emprendedora: la experiencia de iNNoVaNDiS

### Resumen

En este artículo describimos el perfil de la persona emprendedora desde una perspectiva académica, para su posterior contraste con la forma en la que dichas competencias son desarrolladas en el Título Propio de Especialización en Innovación y Emprendimiento (Programa iNNoVaNDiS) de la Universidad de Deusto en su Campus de San Sebastián (España). Este programa desarrolla y promueve ese comportamiento emprendedor entre todos los estudiantes de dicho campus, trabajando en conocimientos, habilidades, actitudes, valores y emociones relacionadas con el mismo. En el artículo compartimos las bases y la filosofía del programa, y contrastamos con antiguas y antiguos estudiantes del mismo qué ha supuesto para ellas y ellos participar en iNNoVaNDiS. Las respuestas obtenidas de personas que actualmente se encuentran trabajando en diferentes países, sectores y puestos nos permiten identificar cuáles de las competencias que se trabajan en el programa son las más valoradas por el mercado de trabajo.

### Palabras clave:

Innovación; Emprendimiento; Educación Superior; Competencias; Entrevista.

## Competência empreendedora: a experiência de iNNOVaNDiS

### Resumo

Neste artigo descreve-se o perfil da pessoa empreendedora desde uma perspectiva acadêmica, para contrastá-la com a forma em que as suas competências são desenvolvidas no Título Próprio de Especialização em Inovação e Empreendimento (Programa iNNOVaNDiS) da Universidade de Deusto em seu Campus de San Sebastián (Espanha). Este programa desenvolve e promove o comportamento empreendedor entre todos os estudantes do campus, através do trabalho centrado em conhecimentos, habilidades, atitudes, valores e emoções relacionadas com tal comportamento. No artigo compartilham-se as bases e a filosofia do programa, e contrasta-se com estudantes antigas e antigos (48 estudantes, 54% homens e 46% mulheres) sobre o que significou para elas e eles participar em iNNOVaNDiS. As respostas obtidas por parte de pessoas que atualmente trabalham em diferentes países, setores e postos permitiram identificar quais das competências que se trabalham no programa são as mais valorizadas no mercado de trabalho.

### Palavras-chave:

Inovação; Empreendimento; Educação Superior; Competências; Entrevista.

### Introduction

Learning to know, to do, to live together, to be and to become an entrepreneur (added later by Federico Mayor Zaragoza<sup>1</sup>) are the characteristics of the new education system, as discussed by Retequi (2001) when citing the Report of the International Commission on Education (Delors Report, 1996). The evolution of the context that education institutions are trying to respond to is leading the education system to set new goals: promoting a holistic development of the person and educating responsible, informed, and committed citizens that will seek for a better future for the society (UNESCO, 1998). The sense of initiative, understood as an attitude towards life and defined as a person's ability to transform ideas into actions, is also something that the European Union (2006) emphasizes in its Official Journal.

Entrepreneurial behavior is increasingly being demanded in the current context. Therefore, developing entrepreneurial competences among university graduates is a function that higher education institutions as well as the business sector and other types of employers should consider

(Gibb, Haskins & Robertson, 2009).

The number of schools and higher education institutions trying to develop these competences is increasing, and the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Specialization Program (hereinafter iNNOVaNDiS) of the University of Deusto in San Sebastian is one example of this type of initiatives. iNNOVaNDiS started in 2005 as a result of the collaboration between the University of Deusto (Deusto Business School and Deusto foundation), the Public Administration (the SPRI Group of the Basque Government and the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa) and the private sector (Ibermática and the Bankinter Innovation Foundation). iNNOVaNDiS consists of a three-year-voluntary-program that is complimentary for all the students in such campus, regardless of the degree or double degree they are studying. The program believes that being an entrepreneur implies a way of thinking, of acting, and a personal identity. With a clear action-oriented approach it aims to develop the adequate conditions throughout different contexts that take students out of their comfort zone, so they are faced with uncertainty and change. The ultimate goal is that students feel capable of changing the realities around them and experience failure as soon as possible, and not that they end up implementing a business idea.

As clarified by Ibáñez-Romero & Zabala-Iturriagoitia (2016) the philosophy behind the program is that the business development and innovation are not goals or disciplines to be "lear-

<sup>1</sup> Professor Federico Mayor Zaragoza, former Director-General of UNESCO, added this fifth aspect during his speech at the Regional Conference on Policies and Strategies for the Transformation of Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (Havana, November 1996).

ned” (see Alda, 2010), but rather attitudes to be internalized in order to reinforce behaviors, and that its effects transcend the creation of businesses. Therefore, the program does not aim to lead students to end up with a start-up, which is how entrepreneurship is usually understood by both higher education institutions and public institutions, but to stimulate an entrepreneurial and innovative behavior in day-to-day life in an ethical manner.

As Ibáñez et al. (2014) describe, entrepreneurship, and more precisely the image of the entrepreneur, is approached from different disciplines: economic theory, poverty eradication, economic development, business development, or psychology to mention a few. Its importance lies in the role of the entrepreneur as a generator of social wealth (creation of jobs, integration, distribution, etc.), economic wealth (reinvestment of profit, economic development), and environmental wealth (support of environmental sustainability) (p. 22). These authors cite Schumpeter (1942) when explaining that the entrepreneur must be understood as an agent of change that brings about innovations (changes) that generate wealth, emphasizing that such innovative process is not limited to the introduction of new products, services and/or processes (technological innovation), but that it can also take the form of innovations aiming for social and environmental impact, the opening of new emergent markets, and even organizational change within already existing organizations. Additionally, citing Yunnus (2006), they highlight the key role of the entrepreneurial individual in social and economic development, pointing out the human capacity to bring about change for themselves and their surroundings.

Change generating individuals have a critical vision and their attitude towards life involves a great deal of initiative, overcoming their fears, and taking over their personal and professional development. Taking into consideration Cubeiro's definition (2008), they could be considered talented people. This author defines talent as the capacity to profit from what you know, want, and are able to do. Talent, as approached by Cubeiro, is the result of combining “capacity” (*aptitude*—knowledge and abilities—and *atti-*

*tude*—behaviors) and “commitment” (turning potential energy into kinetic energy). Hence, an entrepreneur would be an agent of change that makes things happen and does so by challenging the *status quo* (Schumpeter, 1942). In this regard, Kirby (2007) states that the education system must create people that can innovate—people that can find opportunities, take on the responsibility to seize them, and, during the process, bring about change. The Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) defines entrepreneurs as those with the capacity to discover and assess opportunities, gather the necessary resources to seize them, and act suitably to succeed. It can thus be claimed that entrepreneurs, and hence entrepreneurship, are not limited to the business sector, but are also present in different areas such as arts, sports, business, or politics.

iNNOVaNDiS follows the definition provided by Timmons (2000), according to which an entrepreneur has the ability to create and build something practically out of nothing, which implies starting, doing, gathering, and building. To that end, entrepreneurs require competences and abilities that will allow them to identify opportunities where others only see chaos, contradiction, and confusion. Other definitions supporting this vision are shown in Table 1.

Based on the previous definitions, iNNOVaNDiS proposes that the first step to motivate students in any discipline to be entrepreneurs is to clearly state that being an entrepreneur does not necessarily mean starting a business, but carrying out a project of any kind (Ibáñez et al., 2014: 23). These authors propose a paradigm change in traditional entrepreneurship education, mainly oriented towards business creation, seeking instead to educate to be innovative, take on the responsibility of their own lives, and have a positive attitude towards actions, transcending a mere business context.

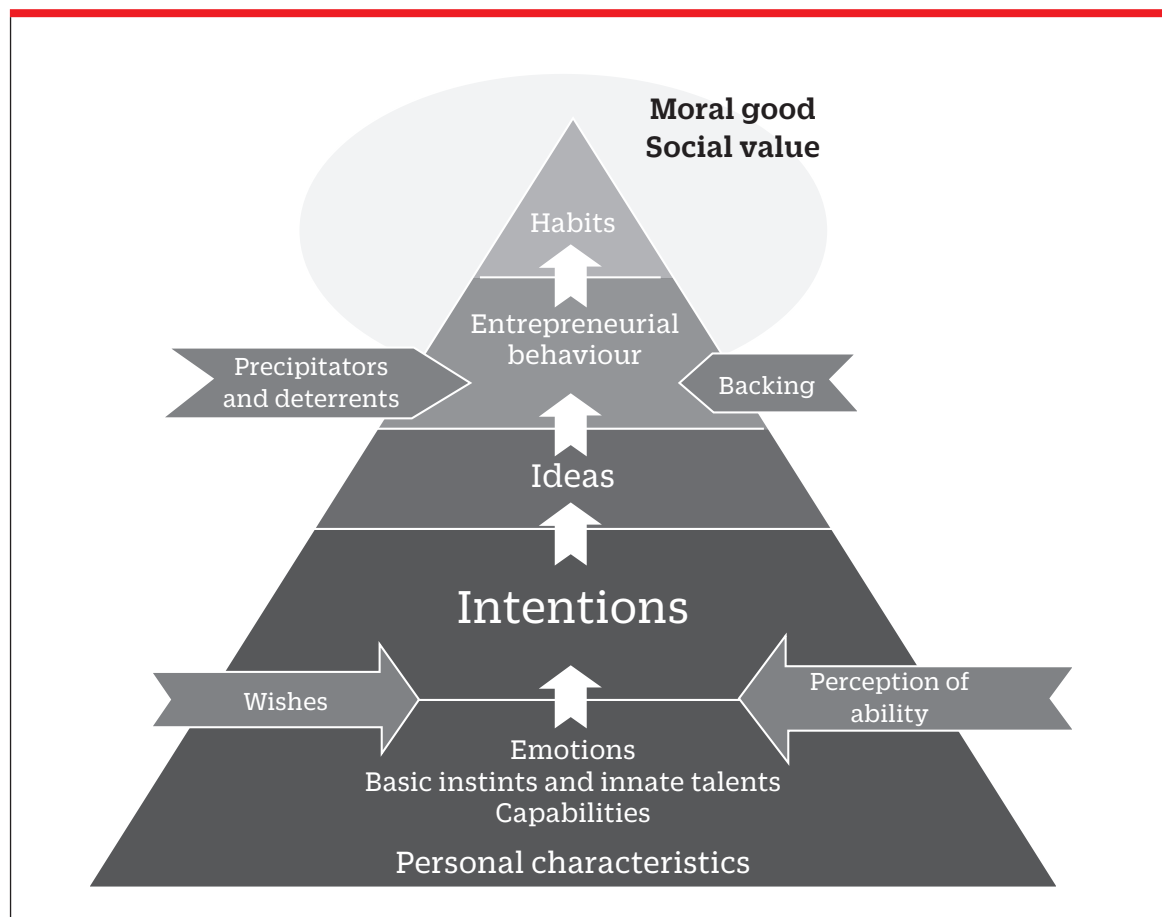
Ibáñez et al. (2014) argue that the entrepreneurial habit is an asset that is achieved only if other conditioning factors are previously in place, a claim that is in line with Getley<sup>2</sup> (1979) and Florin

2 “[My aim] is to generate ideas on how we can increase the valuable combination of qualities, skills and attitudes which I have called entrepreneurial drive. I have

**Table 1**  
*Definitions of entrepreneurship and/or entrepreneur and/or entrepreneurial process adopted by iNNoVaNDiS*

AUTHOR	DEFINITION
iNNoVaNDiS	Entrepreneurs as generators of change, both for themselves and their environment, which leads to the generation of social, economic, and environmental wealth.
Timmons (2000)	Ability to create and build out of nothing, constantly identifying opportunities.
Kwiatkowski (2004)	Capacity to identify opportunities and profit from them by exploiting the necessary resources.
Kuratko (2005)	Dynamic process of vision, change and creation that requires the use of energy and passion to come up with new ideas and creative solutions
Bolton & Thompson (2004)	People that alter certain conditions aiming to create value around opportunities perceived, both within an existing business or with a new business venture. Value can be financial, social, or aesthetic capital.
Collins, Smith & Hannon (2006)	The ability to manage uncertainty and deal with chaos and the ambiguity associated to change.

Source: Ibáñez et al. (2014).



**Figure 1.** Pyramid of entrepreneurial behavior and scheme of action. Source: Ibáñez et al. (2014).

et al. (2007), for whom entrepreneurial behavior is preceded by intentions<sup>3</sup>, which are in turn originated from other entrepreneurial drivers<sup>4</sup> (see Figure 1).

According to Ibáñez (2002), every person, before deciding to start a new project, goes through a maturation stage, partly determined by their own personal characteristics, but also modulated by the environment, as it is being proved by new approaches that, from the field of molecular biology, provide evidence of the epigenetic character of both human and organizational evolution (see Gómez-Uranga et al., 2016). In this first stage, there are three different underlying concepts: basic instincts and innate talents, emotions, and competences, the latter including knowledge, standards, techniques, procedures, skills, dexterity, attitudes, and values<sup>5</sup>.

Starting from the innate talents and basic instincts, there is a part of the person on which we have no influence because, according to Krauss (2008), citing Freire (2004), we all have unmodifiable talents that would be determined by our genotypic and phenotypic basis. Emotions are important because we cannot forget the emotional relationship that exists between entrepreneurs and their businesses (Tracey and Phillips, 2007). In fact, according to Southon and West (2005), for entrepreneurs, work becomes something that allows them to “do what they like” more than “just do what they want.” According to Damasio (2005), emotions and feelings influence our decisions,

leading to the reproduction of pleasant behaviors and the omission of those that are unpleasant or painful. For this reason, Goss (2008) proposes a social interaction between cognition and emotion to encourage the entrepreneur to take action. It is well known that *during the entrepreneurial process a person deals with some basic emotions* such as disappointment, enjoyment, fear, love, sadness, surprise, embarrassment, and repulsion, which they must be able to perceive, understand, control, and modify. Therefore, the development of entrepreneurial behaviors must start considering the emotions, values and interests of every person (Gibb, 2002). In that sense, Ibáñez et al. (2014), in agreement with Lebre (2007), Obermair (2008), and Cardon et al. (2005), highlight the importance of enthusiasm and passion, advocating a learning process involving not only cognitive development, but also one that is affective (likes and dislikes, feelings, emotions and moods) and behavioral (motivation, commitment, drive and effort).

Last, regarding competences, if we use the definition provided by Villa and Poblete (2007, p. 24) a competence can be understood as a good performance in different contexts based on the integration and activation of knowledge, standards, techniques, procedures, skills and dexterity, attitudes<sup>6</sup>, and values<sup>7</sup>. This set of basic instincts and innate talents, competences, and emotions will make up the profile of the entrepreneur, who

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used this term because I cannot think of a better one to describe the drive that some people have to create things, the determination that they have to achieve real progress, and the tenacity which is shown by them to change things despite massive opposition” (Getley, 1979: 19).

- 3 Ibáñez et al. (2014) clarify that intention is not just an expectation, but a proactive commitment to materialize it.
- 4 “Entrepreneurial drive is an individual’s perception of the desirability and feasibility to proactively pursue opportunities and creatively respond to challenges, tasks, needs, and obstacles in innovative ways. Individuals with high levels of entrepreneurial drive are generally high achievers, possess high self-efficacy, question the status quo, and have a preference for innovative solutions” (Florin et al, 2007: 26).
- 5 See Villa and Poblete (2007).

- 6 According to Morales (2000: 24), attitude refers to an acquired, not innate, and stable predisposition to favorably or unfavorably assess an object (individuals, groups, ideas, situations, etc.). Nunnally (1978: 590) describes them as feelings towards objects and they would exist with reference to something. The structure of the attitudes is usually thought to have three components: cognitive (information, beliefs), affective (likes-dislikes, esteem) and conative (tendency to action). Attitude is less stable than personality traits, changing through time and through interaction with the environment (Robinson, 1987).
- 7 According to Elexpuru and Yanis (2001: 2), following Hall’s model (1995), values are to be understood as ideals that make every person’s life meaningful, that guide, direct, and motivate their decisions and actions. Depending on the way each person sets their value priorities, unique combinations arise, which reflect their views of the world and determine their attitudes.

would be affected by two main drivers of the entrepreneurial process: the perceived personal and social desire, and the perceived feasibility or perception of the own entrepreneurial capacity. These drivers will boost the person's intention to act in an entrepreneurial manner. Entrepreneurs must perceive that being an entrepreneur is an asset appreciated by the environment in which they are embedded, they must perceive themselves as such, and must also perceive that it is feasible to become one (Azjen, 1991; Shapero & Sokol, 1982; Getley, 1979; Florin et al, 2007). Regarding the importance of these dimensions, the literature provides evidence on how the perceived feasibility and credibility, as well as the tendency to act, account for almost fifty percent of the variance of entrepreneurial actions (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994, cited in Urban, 2006).

Hence, it is necessary that the person develops the desire to be an entrepreneur in order to eventually become one, acting as one, and laying the foundations so others can follow such path. And, as discussed by Damasio (2005), we will tend to behave as entrepreneurs if we find this behavior pleasant. This "desire", one of the two drivers mentioned by Florin et al. (2007), would be the actual motivation that, according to Trías de Bes (2007), encourages will and endurance, two fundamental aspects of the entrepreneurial process.

The other driver is the "perception of the own ability" to be an entrepreneur. For that purpose, we must possess the necessary tools<sup>8</sup> and enough self-esteem to feel capable of enduring through the whole process. Ibáñez et al. (2014) explain the perception of the own capacity and the desire to behave as one, stimulate entrepreneurs to develop a first intention of entrepreneurial behavior. Once this stage is reached, the person is ready and alert to tackle any opportunity that may arise. Naturally, there are precipitating events and deterrents that will encourage or keep them from making decisions and seeking external support such as financial support, legal advice, a

favorable environment of social, economic and political stability, or the availability of resources and infrastructure, for example. These authors clarify that once this stage is reached, if we are to have a process that is sustainable over time and not a one-time event, it cannot be a one-off behavior but it must rather be internalized and become a habit, a way of life.

Last, the process comes to an end when we do what we are good at aiming for the common good (moral intelligence). Or, what is similar, the concept of make meaning that Kawasaki (2004) claims every entrepreneurial process must comply with: do something meaningful, seeking social value and moral good as a means to attain economic and social stability for the new project and its environment (Ibáñez et al, 2014, p. 34).

In that sense, and according to Alda (2010), we consider that it is necessary to distinguish between raising awareness (to become aware and to understand), considering entrepreneurial options as career choices (motivation), promoting personal qualities related to entrepreneurship, developing specific competences for entrepreneurship, and creating value. Alda (2010) places each of these goals in a stage of the curricula, all of them converging at higher education. All of the previous elements have been identified and are included in the iNNVaNDiS program, as it is born out of experimentation, trial, search of ways to make students interested in other ways of doing (Ibáñez et al., 2014). As Ibáñez-Romero & Zabala-Iturriagoitia (2016) remind us, this experimentation also has a stage of observation and trial through the line of research on entrepreneurship at the University of Deusto, which helps enrich the previous activities with new scientific concepts and findings.

The program has a practical approach, based on reflection-on-action and learning-by-doing. iNNVaNDiS is a voluntary three-year program additional to the degree or double degree undertaken in which students actively participate in different workshops and activities (see Table 2).

To sum up, the basic principles identified by Ibáñez-Romero & Zabala-Iturriagoitia (2016) in iNNVaNDiS can be summarized as follows:

- The person
- Emotion and entertainment

<sup>8</sup> Perception of the own capacity can be understood at the same time as the knowledge, standards, techniques, procedures, skills and dexterity, attitudes and values that would be part of the five domains of emotional intelligence according to *Goleman et al. (2002)*.

**Table 2.**  
Structure of iNNoVaNDiS. Source: Prepared by the authors.

1st year	2nd year	3rd year	
2nd semester	Whole year	Summertime	2nd semester
9 ECTS	9 ECTS	12 ECTS	
Workshop on Network Environments – DOIT – (1 ECTS)	Innovation Workshop – THE NEW LANGUAGE OF INNOVATION – (3 ECTS)	Company Internship – MISSION IMPLOSION – (6 ECTS)	Project Development II – GO FOR IT – (6 ECTS)
Workshop on Searching for my own entrepreneur – WANTED – (3 ECTS)			
Workshop on personal orientation/coaching – SUPER TOP – (2 ECTS)	Workshop on project idea generation – INNOVATION 360 – (3 ECTS)		
Creativity Workshop – SHAKE AWAY – (1 ECTS)	Project Development I – YES, U CAN – (3 ECTS)		

- Action, behavior and performance
- Values
- Multidisciplinarity and transversality

The best example of how the program addresses the importance of the person is the personal orientation workshop and the coach that accompanies the students through this three-year program to help them look within themselves, know themselves and gain confidence, as this is fundamental in those uncertainty and risk-driven environments where they will probably have to work in the future. Authors such as Lankard, (1995), Brown (1999), Siemon & Otter (2007), Van Burg et al. (2008), Römer-Paakkanen & Pekkala (2008) or Garand (2009) highlight the importance of coaching for entrepreneurial processes. Here is where the previously mentioned attitudinal elements, such as purpose, self-knowledge, assertiveness or positive communication become relevant. The purpose is that they assess themselves in order to analyze their capacities and attitudes to identify their weaknesses and boost their strengths.

Regarding *emotions*, an intrinsic characteristic of any person, we have already highlighted why they are important and why the program includes them, not only by working on participants' emotional intelligence, but by making the program an exciting and entertaining experience through

the use of symbols, rituals, speech, language, memories from pictures and videos, etc. iNNoVaNDiS believes that rigorous work and learning can be enjoyable (Ibáñez-Romero & Zabala-Iturriagaitia, 2016, p. 202). And iNNoVaNDiS does so in accordance with other authors who also advocate enjoyable entrepreneurship education (Tracey & Phillips, 2007; Southon & West, 2005; Gibb, 2002; Lebet, 2007; Obermair, 2008; Cardon et al, 2005), which is not in conflict with rigor, also included in several of the workshops included in the program. There is not however only room for pleasant emotions in the program, but also for negative ones such as fear, fright, insecurity or embarrassment, which participants will also have to experience in any process they are engaged in, whether it is entrepreneurial and unstable—as these processes of change are associated with uncertainty, or in processes aiming to maintain the status quo. For that purpose, iNNoVaNDiS generates situations that takes participants out of their comfort zone, offering them tools and training to perceive, use, understand and regulate their emotions (i.e. emotional intelligence).

As we have previously explained, action is an intrinsic element of iNNoVaNDiS. If the program aims to encourage iNNoVaNDeRS (people who have undertaken the iNNoVaNDiS program) to

**Table 2***Values that should be targeted when developing entrepreneurial attitudes*

<b>Self-improvement:</b> implies developing a proactive attitude, locus of inner control, self-motivation for achievement, etc. (linked to entrepreneurial attitudes).
<b>Belonging to the community (in a broad sense):</b> implies the development of empathy and social intelligence (integration and contribution to society, and the ability of emotional intelligence).
<b>Sense of social justice:</b> aiming for the moral good through my actions (linked to the entrepreneurial habit in the entrepreneurial process).

Source: Ibáñez-Romero & Zabala-Iturriagoitia (2016), citing Morris and Schindehutte (2005).

promote and manage change in their respective environments, then it must also train them to achieve such a goal. In this regard, students face real challenges with the support of local organizations, in contexts that intend to get them out of their comfort zone, so they experience uncertainty and change and face failure as soon as possible, so they can learn from it. Attitudes such as perseverance, resilience, or team work find here an actual space for their training.

By the end of the entrepreneurial process, we have already referred to the importance of the ethical, social and environmental values. The program wants students to take responsibility for their own actions and prioritize values of social justice. It is expected that they can have a positive impact both on the organizations where they will eventually work, and on society as a whole (Ibáñez-Romero & Zabala-Iturriagoitia, 2016, p. 202). This philosophy leads them to work on attitudinal elements such as humbleness, harmony, or empathy. In Table 2 we can see the values to be targeted when developing entrepreneurial attitudes, according to Morris and Schindehutte (2005), following the scale proposed by Hall and Brian (1995).

Ibáñez-Romero & Zabala-Iturriagoitia (2016) explain that the philosophical foundation of the program is that neither entrepreneurship nor innovation are disciplines per se and that their effects transcend the creation of businesses. For that reason, the program is offered to all the University of Deusto students at the San Sebastian campus, regardless of their field of study. In response to such multidisciplinary among stu-

dents, the program also gathers a team comprised of people with usually antagonistic disciplinary backgrounds, whose profiles are also very different, but who are put together systemically and intentionally (e.g. consultants, researchers, academics, coaches, artists, engineers, entrepreneurs, actors, etc.). This combination of profiles among students and professors is one of the enriching elements of the program. This way of understanding entrepreneurial education is in accordance with the fourth model of integration of entrepreneurship programs in education, as proposed by Heinonen and Hytti (2008), Frank (2007), the European Commission (2008) or Lloyd-Reason et al. (2009), among others.

Ibáñez-Romero & Zabala-Iturriagoitia, 2016 (p. 205), based on the works of Alcaraz (2011), Krauss (2008) and Ibáñez (2002) on the entrepreneurial profile, enumerate the characteristics that the entrepreneur has according to iNNoVaNDiS, which are also shown in Table 3.

This study aims to check with alumni what has meant for them being part of iNNoVaNDiS. Out thesis is that iNNoVaNDiS is a program that aims to develop the competences entrepreneurs require through action. To address such hypothesis, the article tries to respond to the following research question: What competences are most valued by the iNNoVaNDeRs? This study aims to determine if the program is actually having the impact it aims to have in the medium term, once the iNNoVaNDeRs are in the labor market and, therefore, are able to appraise the competences the program worked on them during their university stage.



**Table 3**  
*Characteristics of the entrepreneurial profile that iNNoVaNDiS works with*

1. They must be persistent, committed, resolute, end energetic in order to work hard and endure the many hardships they will be facing.
2. They must show initiative, flexibility, tolerance to change, will to take moderate risks, and fearlessness of failure in order to deal with situations of uncertainty, which are in the increase in high velocity environments as the current ones (Eisenhardt, 1989).
3. They must be innovative and visionary, market and growth-oriented in order to identify opportunities.
4. They must show high motivation for achievement and optimism that encourage and help them develop the desire for entrepreneurship.
5. They must show high self-esteem levels and perceived internal control that allows them to overcome the possible failures and take on new challenges.
6. They must show a proactive disposition, initiative, and a great deal of commitment, perseverance and will to start their project (Baum y Locke, 2004).
7. Personal values such as honesty, sense of duty, responsibility, and ethical behavior should also be considered (Saboia & Martin, 2006; Quintero, 2007).

Source: Ibáñez-Romero & Zabala-Iturriagoitia (2016, p. 205).

## Method

### Participants

The number of students annually accepted for each generation or cohort of the iNNoVaNDiS program is 20. In the 2017-2018 academic year, the program reached its 14<sup>th</sup> edition and so far, 292 people have completed the program. Out of that target population, and for the purpose of this study, 48 iNNoVaNDeRs were contacted. The sample used in the study thus represents 16.43% of the total population. Table 4 offers descriptive statistics of the 48 interviewees, including the sample distribution according to the generation they belong to, the number of year since they finished the program until they were interviewed, the year they were interviewed, and their gender.

The previous table comprises the people that make up the sample according to the type of job they had when they were interviewed. For that purpose, the following job categories were considered: dependent entrepreneur, independent

entrepreneur, seeking a job, own family firm, government or public administration, multinational corporation, small and medium-sized enterprise, or volunteering. Similarly, a distinction is made according to the location of the job, depending on whether the activity is undertaken at a local (in Guipuzcoa), or at national, or international levels.

### Data collection instruments

Dialogues with alumni took place in different moments. That is to say, the information has been collected during various years and not at a specific time frame. All the data collected has been published on the program's blog, where the activities carried out are constantly shared with societal actors<sup>9</sup>. During those dialogues the questions listed below were asked:

- Professional experience: What have you been up to after iNNoVaNDiS?
- Motivation: What activities are you most

<sup>9</sup> Here is the link to blog of the program: <https://blogs.deusto.es/innovandis/>

**Table 4**  
Descriptive statistics of the study sample

Cohort			Number of years since they finished the program until they are interviewed			Year of the interview			Gender			Type of work			Place of work		
	#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%		#	%
1G	5	10	1	6	13	2012	4	8	Man	26	54	Dependent entrepreneur	16	33	International	14	29
2G	5	10	2	6	13	2013	11	23	Woman	22	46	Independent entrepreneur	8	17	Local	25	52
3G	3	6	3	10	21	2014	8	17				Seeking a job	1	2	National	9	19
4G	12	25	4	12	25	2015	8	17				Own family firm	1	2			
5G	6	13	5	5	10	2016	10	21				Government	1	2			
6G	8	17	6	3	6	2017	7	15				Multinational corporation	12	25			
7G	4	8	7	1	2							Small and medium-sized enterprise	8	17			
8G	4	8	8	3	6							Volunteering	1	2			
9G	1	2	9	2	4												
TOTAL	48	100		48	100		48	100		48	100		48	100		48	100

Source: Prepared by the authors.

passionate about?

- Next steps: What are your plans for the future?
- Reflective thoughts on the impact of the program: How has iNNOVaNDiS contributed to your professional development?

With this last question, we seek to know if the years of experience in the labor market allow the iNNOVaNDerRS to identify the competences achieved in the program, even if they may not have been aware of their utility or the competitive advantage they would provide them with in an increasingly accelerated and changing world.

**Process**

To compliment the previous table and using the text mining, a syntactic analysis of the interviews was carried out, highlighting the main ideas collected from them. For that purpose, each answer was tagged using the concepts related to the 19 key ideas that had been collected from all those

comments and are listed below next to the words that summed up every idea:

1. Action, practice, setting out, experience, proactivity, initiative (making things happen)
2. Positive attitude (positive attitude)
3. Dealing with challenges and complications, fighting, discomfort, leaving the comfort zone (dealing with challenges)
4. Open-mindedness, curiosity, restlessness, perceptive (curiosity)
5. Better self-knowledge, conscious (consciousness)
6. Uncertainty, new, different, adventure (deal with uncertainty)
7. Nonconformism and not giving up, failure does not exist (nonconformism)
8. Innovation and creativity, out of the box (innovation)
9. Motivation, illusion and desire (motivation)

10. Networking, contact, conversation (networking)
11. Discovering, opportunity (seize an opportunity)
12. Passion, illusion, satisfaction, and fun (passion)
13. Critical thinking, questioning things, and reflection (questioning the status quo)
14. Taking control of your own life, believing in yourself and being yourself (protagonist)
15. Teamwork, being part of a team, participating, family, friends, (team)
16. Work, effort, perseverance, rigor (perseverance)
17. Courage, facing fears, insecurities, prejudices and embarrassment (facing fears)
18. Valuing things more, thankfulness, giving

back to society, contributing, changing the world, building a better a world (social awareness)

19. Flying, imagination, dream, inspiration (inspiration)

Therefore, each of the 48 people interviewed could make reference with their answer to more than one key idea and, in that way, we worked with 222 statements.

## Results

Tables 5 and 6, included below, show how many of the foundations iNNOVaNDiS intends to work on are actually valued by iNNOVaNDeRs, such as an action-oriented approach, capacity to belie-

**Table 5.**  
Cloud tag with ideas collected by interviewing iNNOVaNDeRs. Source: Prepared by the authors



**Table 6.**  
Cloud tag with key words summing up the key ideas collected by interviewing iNNOVaNDeRs. Source: Prepared by the authors



ve in oneself, questioning the status quo, social awareness, motivation, the capacity to face fears, and the uncertainty underlying any innovative process.

The competences iNNoVaNDiS aims to develop and that are most valued by iNNoVaNDeRs are above all the capacity to take the initiative and to take action (n=42). There is no doubt that the underlying practice-oriented approach of the program and the capacity to deal with real projects and challenges in organizations they can have direct contact with during their formative years is one of most highlighted and valued assets after going into the labor market. Hence, the fact that iNNoVaNDiS aims to be a training program where working on and failing at developing career-oriented competences responds to a reasoning that effects valuable contributions (n=31). This capacity to take action is, at the same time, closely related to the critical thinking competence, which is why the program intends that the participant is capable of making the right questions and thinking and reflecting rigorously on the possible answers (n=21).

Another fundamental asset of this program lies in the diversity of the social context that constitutes it, that is to say, the people participating directly or indirectly in the program, as well as the large network of agents participating in and contributing to the ecosystem of innovation (n=20). At the same time, according to the interviewees, the program gives them the opportunity to make all sort of friends, and discover a number of heterogeneous projects and experiences (n=38), which allow them to expand the view students have on life (n=16) and the world (n=12). This large network of contacts built during the program transcend its duration, as iNNoVaNDeRs, once in the labor market, feel they can still reach and even team up with such contacts, given that their former classmates, colleagues and iNNoVaNDeRs of other generations and cohorts, which may have developed different professional profiles.

The attention given during the program to the person (n=16), their personal attitudes (n=16), illusions (n=13) as well their need to overcome their fears (n=5) is also valued by students once they have completed iNNoVaNDiS. The interviewees also highlight the restlessness transmitted by the

program, regarding the capacity to seek opportunities and find ways to respond to them (n=28). This proactivity towards innovation at the local level, creating value and wealth in a way that is sustainable through time, so it can change and adapt to the new global demands (n=30), is something that iNNoVaNDeRs use not only in class. The interviewees consider iNNoVaNDiS a special program that contributes to personal and professional growth, and helps participants look for their identity and purpose, and try to change their surroundings and the personal and professional situations they find themselves in. A necessary, rigorous and fun program, with a clear goal and with a purpose and rationality that are valued in the professional sphere.

After this analysis, the goal was to analyze more thoroughly the 222 statements made by the 48 interviewees with respect to the characteristics of the entrepreneurial profile, emotions, values, attitudes, and the competences targeted by iNNoVaNDiS. To that end, each key idea was linked to a characteristic of entrepreneurial profile, an emotion, a value, an attitude, and a competence. Then, the number of statements associated to each variable was counted. Appendix A lists all tables and their corresponding frequencies.

To sum up, we can point out that the most mentioned characteristic of the entrepreneurial profile that iNNoVaNDiS targets is the one stating that "they must be innovative and visionary, market and growth-oriented in order to be able to identify opportunities" (27% of statements). On the other hand, the most mentioned emotion iNNoVaNDiS works on is fun (14% of statements). Regarding values, the most mentioned value iNNoVaNDiS works on is self-knowledge and self-improvement (55% of statements) and, within this, the sense of initiative mostly (11%). Regarding attitudes, the most mentioned attitude iNNoVaNDiS works on is motivation for achievement (31% of statements).

The most mentioned generic competence iNNoVaNDiS works on is "self-motivation: facing your own capacities and limitations, committing to develop and overcome them in order carry out the assigned tasks keenly and carefully" (17% of statements). Finally, the most mentioned specific macro-competence iNNoVaNDiS works on is "the

capacity for reflection in action, developing creative behavior, capacity for anticipation, identification of opportunities and creation of new projects" (49% of statements).

## Discussion

The results described in the last section of the article show how the impact iNNoVaNDiS has transcends the classroom and has an actual impact on the values, attitudes, competences, and the way emotions are used in professional contexts.

iNNoVaNDiS focuses on the entrepreneur as someone capable of identifying opportunities, facing uncertainty and ambiguity, creating order out of chaos, starting, developing, making, and anticipating change. There are several challenges iNNoVaNDiS is facing during these times of legislative change in universities, determined by official accreditations and their assessment of short-term results. We are confident that just as the program managed to innovate entrepreneurship education since it started in 2005, such capacity for anticipation and change will remain in the future.

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## Appendix A

*Frequency of references made by the interviewees to each characteristic of the entrepreneurial profile iNNOVaNDiS works on.*

Characteristics of an entrepreneurial profile	#	%
1. They must be perseverant, committed, resolute, and energetic in order to work hard and endure the many hardships they will be facing.	22	10
2. They must show initiative, flexibility, tolerance to change, will to take moderate risks, and fearlessness of failure in order to deal with situations of uncertainty, which are in the increase in high velocity environments as the current ones (Eisenhardt, 1989).	29	13
3. They must be innovative and visionary, market and growth-oriented in order to be able to identify opportunities.	60	27
4. They must show high motivation for achievement and optimism that encourage and help them develop the desire for entrepreneurship.	31	14
5. They must show high self-esteem levels and perceived internal control that allows them to overcome the possible failures and take on new challenges.	25	11
6. They must show a proactive disposition, initiative and a great deal of commitment, perseverance and will to start their project (Baum y Locke, 2004).	24	11
7. Personal values of the individual such as honesty, sense of duty, responsibility and ethical behavior should also be considered (Saboia and Martin, 2006; Quintero, 2007).	9	4
8. Other: networking, contacts, conversation, teamwork, family, friends, participating, belonging	22	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Prepared by the authors.

*Frequency of references made by the interviewees to the emotions stirred in iNNOVaNDiS.*

Emotions		#	%
Fear	1. Situations or elements the emotion is oriented to: failure, risk, future, what people may say, making a fool of themselves	20	9
	2. Frustration	13	6
Enjoyment	3. Fun	31	14
	4. Situations or elements the emotion is oriented to: uncertainty	9	4
	5. Surprise	29	13
Embarrassment	6. Manage embarrassment	19	9
Others	7. There is no reference to any emotions	101	45
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>222</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Frequency of references made by the interviewees to the values included in the categories the training program iNNOVaNDiS works on.

Values		#	%	
Self-knowledge and self-improvement	1 Humbleness	6	3	55
	2 Nonconformity	14	6	
	3 Sense of initiative	24	11	
	4 Being yourself	6	3	
	5 Responsibility	9	4	
	6 Growth/expansion	22	10	
	7 Achievement/success	9	4	
	8 Self-competence/confidence	19	9	
Belonging to the community	9 Patience/endurance	14	6	15
	10 Empathy		0	
	11 Selfless collaboration		0	
	12 Commitment		0	
	13 Openness	11	5	
	14 Cooperation	10	5	
Sense of social justice	15 Unity/diversity	12	5	30
	16 Find your actions meaningful	23	10	
	17 Progress/innovation	17	8	
	18 Ethics/responsibility	9	4	
TOTAL	19 Positive attitude, flying, imagination, dream, inspiration	17	8	100
		222	100	100

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Frequency of references made by the interviewees to the attitudes iNNOVaNDiS works on.

Attitudes		#	%	
Proactive disposition	1 Proactivity	24	11	26
	2 Sense of initiative			
	3 Open-mindedness	26	12	
	4 Being energetic	8	4	
Nonconformity	5 Creativity	17	8	22
	6 Innovation			
	7 Curiosity	32	14	
Perceived internal control	8 Self-confidence	19	9	9
Motivation for achievement	9 Rigor	22	10	31
	10 Perseverance			
	11 Commitment	9	4	
	12 Self-efficiency	14	6	
	13 Passion	23	10	
Others	14 Better self-knowledge, conscious, networking, contact, conversation, teamwork, being part of, participating, family, friends	28	13	13
TOTAL		222	100	100

Source: Prepared by the authors.

*Frequency of references made by the interviewees to the generic competences proposed by the MDF applicable to an entrepreneur*

Generic Competences	#	%
1 Conflict management and negotiation: trying to work out the differences arising between people or groups in any type of organization		0
2 Reflexive thinking: mental behavior that facilitates acknowledgment and modes of thinking used to solve a problem or carry out a task.	14	6
3 Use of ICTs: using ICTs as a tool to express and communicate, to access sources of information, to store files and data, to make presentations, to learn, investigate and work collaboratively		0
4 Decision making: finding the best way to proceed, following a systematic procedure and taking responsibility for the scope and consequences of the decisions made	36	16
5 Outcome orientation: carrying out actions that lead achieving new goals successfully		
6 Self-motivation: acknowledging the own capacities and limitations, committing to develop and overcome them to carry the assigned tasks keenly and carefully.	37	17
7 Adaptation to the context: face critical situations in the psychosocial environment, remaining in a state of wellbeing and physical and mental balance that allows them to keep acting effectively	26	12
8 Interpersonal communication: maintaining positive relationships with people through empathic listening and by clearly and assertively conveying thoughts and feelings through verbal and non-verbal means.	22	10
9 Creative thinking: mental behavior that generates processes to search and find new and unusual solutions in different life scenarios	35	16
10 Creativity: dealing with and responding to situations in a new, successful and original manner in a given context.		
11 Innovation: successfully respond to personal, organizational, and social needs and demands, modifying or introducing new elements in the processes and the results.		
12 Entrepreneurial spirit: starts projects on their own initiative, using certain resources with the purpose of exploiting an opportunity, taking the risks it entails.	24	11
13 Project management: prepare, direct, assess, and follow up on a complex task efficiently, developing an idea until it materializes in the form of a service or product.		
14 Practical thinking: mental behavior that facilitates the election of the most appropriate course of action, taking into consideration the information available to determine the process to be followed to attain the goals in an efficient and efficacious way. It is the mode of thinking aimed for action.		
15 Others: positive attitude, passion, illusion, satisfaction, fun, appreciating things more, thankfulness	28	13
TOTAL	222	100

Source: Prepared by the authors.

*Frequency of references made by the interviewees to the specific macro-competences of iNNoVaNDiS.*

Specific Macro-Competences	#	%
Macro-competence 1: capacity for in-action-reflection, developing creative behavior, anticipation capacity, identification of opportunities and creation of new projects	109	49
Macro-competence 2: capacity to interact in changing environments, participate and manage multidisciplinary teams, and show will and commitment to constant dialogue.	36	16
Macro-competence 3: taking control of their own life, becoming the writer and director of their own life experience, taking responsibility for it and appealing to their inner entrepreneur	77	35
Macro-competence 4: Capacity to profit from ICTs strategically throughout the entrepreneurial process, acting in accordance with a sense of Digital "Urbanity."		0
TOTAL	222	100

Source: Prepared by the authors.