

**Entrepreneurs see opportunities.
Are we encouraging our students to see opportunities?**

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Ireland has gone through a period of phenomenal change over the last two decades. The country has developed from a period of high unemployment in the 1970s / mid 80s to economic success. In the last year the country has found itself in the midst of a recession that transcends many industries. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, (GEM), 2007, the percentage of people who were either thinking of going into business or had just started a new venture slid substantially in Ireland, Europe and the US last year. Rebecca Harding, executive director of GEM, said the fall in house prices had a particular impact in the US because people felt they had less of a financial cushion to support a business risk. "It has been difficult for people to think that they have the freedom to borrow a bit of money off their house to start a business", she said. The report, which analyses levels of entrepreneurship in 42 countries, found substantial declines in the proportion of people involved in early-stage start-up activity in several of the world's richest nations.

Enterprise education is a process involving a series of stages and a number of stakeholders who need to be an active part of the process. The central stakeholders are students, teachers (trainers), the educational institution, the awarding bodies, and employers within the business community.

Enterprise education should encourage the growth of new businesses. De Faoite et al. (2003) found that entrepreneurship education provided for the integration of a variety of business subjects, the promotion of improved decision-making skills and an increase in technology transfer between education establishments and the market place, thus creating improved synergy and added value between both entities and the potential to add value to other non-business and technical programmes. The need to broaden enterprise education outwards has also been endorsed by the European Commission (2003) and Galloway et al. (2005). Galloway et al. (2005) suggested that a "cross disciplinary approach" to enterprise education can influence a range of industry sectors, including the arts, science and technology disciplines. Hytti and O'Gorman (2004) in their assessment and evaluation of a number of entrepreneurship programmes found that the better or more

successful programmes were those that had the ability to integrate learning across the general educational experience of the student and those introducing enterprise education into other courses. Enterprise education should contribute to the development of a range of skills, including the ability to innovate and to provide leadership, which pays dividends for the individual and the economy in any employment context.

This research paper was exploratory in nature. Observation and systematic interviewing, case study methodology was the most suitable for this research in order to understand the relationship between entrepreneurship education and enterprise development. The sample included lecturers, heads of faculty, and college presidents across the entire island of Ireland to examine the method in which educators are teaching their students to think entrepreneurially.

INTRODUCTION

The negative ramifications for many businesses over the past decade are serious because investors are looking for opportunities in ‘new economy’ firms. These firms will be deemed to create value by delivering products and services that customers want to buy, at prices that yield a healthy profit. The enthusiasm for new economy firms is projected to come from entrepreneurial start-ups as a result of innovation and technological discovery, unsaddled with the historical burdens of more mature firms. Paradoxically, if these start-ups are to realise their potential, they will have to face the prospect of taking on the features of established enterprises. This raises important questions for enterprise students:

- ❖ Is it innovation that brings competitive advantage to old economy firms?
- ❖ Can new economy start-ups avoid the growing pains that entrepreneurial ventures encountered in the recent past?

The argument over what constitutes an “entrepreneur” has been ongoing in research literature. Initially, it was thought that to be an entrepreneur required an inherent set of personality traits, but this has shifted recently towards the idea that it is possible to learn the behaviours and actions associated with entrepreneurship. Hay (2004) indicated that the motivation to become an entrepreneur cannot be taught perhaps, but the ability to identify and assess an opportunity can. So too can the skills to put together a convincing

business plan, the merits of different kinds of finance and the types of challenges to expect in start-up situations. Gibb (2002; 2005) views entrepreneurship as skills and attributes that can be applied in an individual or organisational context to deal with innovation, change and high levels of uncertainty and complexity. The implication is that it may be feasible to teach people these behavioural patterns and therefore, facilitate entrepreneurship. The case for discussing entrepreneurship, even in the current economic climate is strongly supported by The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report (Fitzsimons and O’Gorman, 2007; 2008).

A comparison of entrepreneurship activity by education level is produced in Table 1 below. The effect of education levels in Ireland on a willingness to become entrepreneurs is difficult to gauge. Early stage entrepreneurship tends to increase as general education levels increase across the EU and OECD regions. There is, however, a coincidence of eight per cent of the lowest and the highest and a comparatively weak level at the end of secondary stage. According to the GEM report, (2008) there is a marked difference with the USA where 13.3 per cent of early stage education level people become entrepreneurs. This is a multiple of 1.5, a marked difference – a possible reason for this is that social welfare provisions in the EU act as a disincentive compared to the relatively low level of social welfare provision in the USA.

Table 1: Entrepreneurship activity rates by education attainment level in Ireland

Higher educational attainment level	Early stages entrepreneurial activity Percentage of adults in each educational category
Primary and/or some secondary	8.5
Secondary (Leaving Cert or equivalent)	3.9
Third level (degree, diploma or certificate)	8.1
Postgraduate	8.3

Source: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2008

GEM policy reflects a broadly held perception that academic institutions have the potential to do more in terms of entrepreneurship. Extracts from policy reviews serve as the final source of evidence for considering academic entrepreneurship. For example, the Forfas Enterprise Strategy Group (2004) identified two issues requiring attention: the need for more effective interaction between higher education and business; the need for academic institutions to address internal structural/management systems to better facilitate increased interaction:

Higher education should be underpinned by a coherent policy approach that includes universities, institutes of technology, colleges of education and private higher education colleges. ...
(Forfas Enterprise Strategy Group Report, 2004, p. 74)

The structures and management of higher education are no longer adequate to meet the complex demands of society in general ...”
(Forfas Enterprise Strategy Group Report, 2004, p. 75)

The policy perspective in Northern Ireland implicitly suggests the need for government-industry-higher education to be re-assessed and developed in order to be more responsive to the needs of modern economies:

Government will have to learn to do more to support business - university collaboration.
(Lambert Review of Business-University Collaboration, 2003, p. 2)

Literature Review

The launch of a new organisation or business venture is generally agreed to be at the core of entrepreneurship (Gartner 1985, Low & Abramson 1997, Katz & Garner 1988, Aldrich 1999, Delmar & Shane 2004)). Kuratko (2005) highlights two contributions that entrepreneurial activity makes to a market economy- firstly they are an integral part of the renewal process that pervades and defines market economies. Entrepreneurial firms play a crucial role in the innovations that lead to technological change and productivity growth. In short, they are about change and competition because they change market

structure. The market economies are dynamic organic entities always in the process of “becoming,” rather than an established one that has already arrived. They are about prospects for the future, not about the inheritance of the past (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004).

Second, entrepreneurial firms are the essential mechanism by which many enter the economic mainstream. Entrepreneurial firms enable millions of people, including women, minorities, and immigrants, to access the pursuit of economic success. ...In this evolutionary process, entrepreneurship plays the crucial and indispensable role of providing the “social glue” that binds together both high-tech and mainstream industries (Kuratko 2005). Kuratko suggests that the creation of business alone does not give the full picture of entrepreneurship of what entrepreneurship is about. He uses the term ‘entrepreneurial perspective’ to describe the characteristics of taking risks beyond security, seeking opportunities and the tenacity to push through ideas. This perspective can be exhibited, he argues in any type of organisation- whether commercial, or not for profit. In support of this view Galloway et al. (2005) suggest that a “cross disciplinary approach” to enterprise education can influence a range of industry sectors, including the arts, science and technology disciplines. New organisations or new capabilities, however, do not mystically appear within an organisation. Winter (2000) argues that they are the outcome of a deliberate learning process.

Current research evidence is shifting our understanding of entrepreneurship away from the idea that entrepreneurs are born towards the idea that there are certain skills and behaviours that can be learnt and that, therefore, can be taught. Hay (2004) suggests that one of the critical characteristics of entrepreneurship is the ability to identify and assess a business opportunity and that this can be taught, as can the skill to write an effective business plan. Gibb (2002, 2005) supports this view and identifies some of the skills of entrepreneurship as the ability to deal with innovation, change and high levels of uncertainty and complexity. As individuals can be taught these skills, by implication it should be possible to encourage and enhance entrepreneurship.

From a handful in the 1970s, there has been an explosion in number of colleges and universities that offer courses related to entrepreneurship (Katz 2003). Katz (2008) seeks to paint a picture of a field which is mature but not stagnant, marginally legitimate but with a long way to go to full legitimacy, and is increasingly central to the new burst of entrepreneurship education and practice on campuses. His article seeks to demonstrate that the field of entrepreneurship/small business can be characterized as fully mature, a view contrasting one proposed by Kuratko.

Evidence of the achievement of full maturity and marginal legitimacy is given based on benchmarks in the development of the field. Using entrepreneurship as an example, Katz (2008) develops a theoretical life cycle model for the growth of disciplines. The major consequence of entrepreneurship's full maturity is identified as the growing centrality of the business-school based discipline of entrepreneurship in relation to the emerging entrepreneurship efforts across campuses. Binks *et al's.* (2006) paper examines entrepreneurship education and the links that need to be created between teaching and research. Binks argues that there is increasing focus on the general utility of entrepreneurial skills and aptitudes (that is creativity, independent thinking, opportunity recognition and exploitation), and contends that entrepreneurship education offers an innovative new paradigm for business school education that answers some of the criticisms regarding lack of real world relevance that are currently levelled against the MBA. According to Binks, by its very nature entrepreneurial activity occurs in response to changing and uncertain conditions. The pervasive dynamism of the entrepreneurial environment raises considerably the need for contemporary 'live' approaches to learning rather than an over reliance upon historical observation. While many past experiences of the entrepreneurial process and the various contextual characteristics that may emerge can be learned with reference to and through discussion of historical and existing knowledge and understanding, there is also a strong need to give learners access to the tacit as well as explicit elements of entrepreneurial behaviour.. This suggests that one important design principle for entrepreneurship education should be to incorporate an application that the learners choose based upon their own existing activities in order to generate their own 'live' case study.

Similarly when considering how best to enable the learning of context based operations such as financial management, entrepreneurial marketing, human resource management, as well as providing access to generic principles of knowledge and understanding, it is important for the learners to engage with 'live' case studies in real time. Anecdotal evidence from teaching such courses over many years suggests that students engage far more enthusiastically with 'real life' problems and solution suggestions than with historical case studies. The fact that the problem is as yet unresolved and the solutions require careful but real, not simulated, analysis introduces a level of uncertainty that is intriguing to learners arousing both their curiosity and their commitment. In short the dynamic nature of entrepreneurial activity adds an important dimension to the learning experience in terms of the need for contemporary engagement with live issues. The emergence of entrepreneurship education may indeed provide the catalyst to fundamental changes to the role of business school teaching and research.

De Faoite *et al.* (2003) found that entrepreneurship education provided for the integration of a variety of business subjects, the promotion of improved decision-making skills and an increase in technology transfer between education establishments and the market place, thus creating improved synergy and added value between both entities and the potential to add value to other non-business and technical programmes.

Kuratko (2005) is an advocate of the notion that entrepreneurship can be taught, and in support of this contention he quotes Peter Drucker (1985) "*The entrepreneurial mystique? It's not magic, it's not mysterious, and it has nothing to do with the genes. It's a discipline. And, like any discipline, it can be learned*". Kurakto (2005) goes on to cite some of the future challenges he sees that lie ahead for entrepreneurship education- firstly the Maturity/Complacency trap- he is concerned that the successes achieved in including entrepreneurship on the curriculum of business schools will lead to a complacency. Secondly, the Faulty Pipeline shortage- this refers to the lack of faculty at every rank with expertise in entrepreneurship. Thirdly, the Technology Challenge refers to the concern about the lack of the use of new technologies in the delivery of these programmes.

Fourthly, the 'Dot-Com' legacy may have damaged the notion of true entrepreneurship as individuals pursued the quick pursuit of wealth. Fifthly, the Academia vs Business incongruence refers to the gap between actual entrepreneurs and academics. Sixthly, the Dilution Effect refers to the dangers of over-using the term entrepreneurial. Seventhly the Security-Risk dilemma concerns the risk-averse attitude of many academics as they strive for tenure, which contrasts with the nature of entrepreneurship that they are teaching. Eighthly, the Administrative Leadership Revolving Door Problem refers to the sporadic administrative support that the teaching of entrepreneurship enjoys and finally the Power of One Challenge refers to the fact that many programmes in entrepreneurship relies on the enthusiasm and passion of one individual rather than it being incorporated into mainstream curriculum.

A study by Shinnar *et al.* (2009) investigated the attitudes of students and faculty towards entrepreneurship, produced some very interesting findings. The first key finding was that faculty and students often see things quite differently. Perhaps the most glaring difference was that faculty perceived students to be significantly less entrepreneurial than the students perceived themselves to be. More than half the students surveyed rated themselves on the high end of the entrepreneurial disposition scale, whereas more than 75 per cent of faculty rated their students on the low end of the scale. The substantial difference between students' aspirations and faculty' perceptions raise questions about existing curriculum structures and assumptions. The significant differences in the ranking of motivators, according to the authors, could stem from student optimism and lack of work experience. Another explanation they posited was that faculty' respondents projected onto students their own values and motives. A further key finding of the study was that In fact, more than half of the student population who were not studying business also expressed an interest in taking an entrepreneurship course. Students of art, drama, music, architecture and law saw possibilities for themselves running or setting up their own business in the future. Hytti and O'Gorman (2004) in their assessment and evaluation of a number of entrepreneurship programmes found that the better or more successful programmes were those that had the ability to integrate learning across the general educational experience of the student.

The teaching of entrepreneurship is intended to encourage and stimulate the creation of new ventures (Vesper and Gartner 1997, Leitch & Harrison 1999, Peterman & Kennedy, 2003). Of particular significance to the research question addressed in this paper is the study by Edelman *et al.* (2008). They examined the relevance of entrepreneurship education by comparing the content of curriculum with the activities of nascent entrepreneurs. They found that there is a disparity between what is being taught in the classroom and the cited needs of entrepreneurial individuals- in academia they found there was an emphasis on research and business planning rather than actions, which led the authors to conclude that textbooks and lectures should be supplemented with as many hands-on practical experiences as possible.

Even in good times market economies need entrepreneurial activity but there are a lot of barriers to entrepreneurship. One of the major ones is perception. According to the GEM survey of entrepreneurship (2007), Ireland has been the number one country in Europe for new business start-ups, with a very high proportion of the population perceiving new business opportunities. However, that has hit downward spiral of late . . . There seems to be a perception that a downturn in economic activity means that there are no opportunities". Writing in the Sunday Times, Fitzgerald (2008) believes that one of the biggest obstacles to economic recovery might be a failure of nerve. Perhaps this is where our academic institutions can make their biggest contributions – by providing their students with the skills that will encourage them to have the nerve to create and innovate.

Cooney and Murray (2009) suggest that entrepreneurship education is still in its infancy in Ireland and that most institutions remain a long way from the cutting edge of entrepreneurship education in global terms. Their report also highlights the lack of supply of suitable academic staff to contribute to entrepreneurship modules and that there is a high dependence within institutions to depend on a single member of staff who “is championing the cause fro entrepreneurship education within that institution, and should

that individual leave there will be a question mark over the very survival of entrepreneurship education within that institution” (p83).

METHODOLOGY

This research was case based incorporating a two year period, where the was to explore the impact of entrepreneurship education on enterprise development. The usefulness of this research approach has been established in the literature (Hamel et al, 1993). The study was explanatory in nature. There were many ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions to be answered in the context of this issue. It is believed that through observation and systematic interviewing, case study methodology was the most valuable for understanding the relationship between entrepreneurship education and enterprise development. The case study method was considered appropriate as it sanctioned the investigation of contemporary phenomena within a real life context (Aaker and Day, 1990; Bell, 1993; Yin, 2003). This research application is reinforced by Brown and Duguid (1991), who suggest, impacting learning and innovation requires one to study and understand the situation in which practice occurs. While case research may be criticised for its lack of rigour, the author has followed suggestions from previous investigations (e.g. Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009) to ensure the validity of the research.

A total of 29 individuals were questioned, 17 from the Republic of Ireland and 12 from the Northern Ireland.

Questions were posed in five general areas:

- What makes an academic institution entrepreneurial?
- What does entrepreneurship mean to you as a practicing academic?
- How do students benefit from entrepreneurship?
- How do academic institutions support entrepreneurship?

- Are there any inhibitors to entrepreneurship within academic institutions? If so, what are they?

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection for this study utilised in-depth semi-structured interviews in a field setting to ensure standardisation. A case protocol, advocated by (Yin, 2009) was designed and used to guide the structured interview and data collection. The protocol included multi-diagnostic questions. While most of the data collection was qualitative in nature, quantitative data was also collected to verify the findings. This use of multiple sources of evidence enhances both the reliability and validity of the research (Voss et al., 2002; Yin, 2009).

To ensure the quality of the research design a number of validity tests were conducted as indicated necessary by previous studies (Yin, 2009). Table 2 reviews the approach applied to ensure the quality of this method. The rest of this section reviews the information collected and analyses the effects of Entrepreneurship Education on enterprise path development.

Table 2. Research Validity Tests

Test	Approach Used
<p>(1) Construct Validity</p> <p>Develop sufficient set of operational measures to reduce subjective judgment</p>	<p>(a) Revised multiple sources of evidence so that the findings were based on convergence of both qualitative and quantitative information</p> <p>(b) Established a chain of evidence with sufficient citations to relevant portions of the case study transcripts</p> <p>(c) Asked participants to review draft</p>

	case interviews
(2) External validity Ensure generalisation of findings	The researchers strived to generalise a particular set of results on to a broader theory
(3) Reliability Demonstrate that repetition of the data collection procedures will result in the same conclusions	(a) Interviewed multiple subjects within institutions and responses were cross-referenced (b) Created case study notes and narratives for future reviews and analysis

FINDINGS

Several respondents commented on the need to widen the concept of entrepreneurship from a focus on small businesses and spinouts firms, to an understanding that explicitly encompassed innovation as an academic activity.

At the level of the individual academic, respondents identified entrepreneurship as a powerful way to cultivate linkages with economic partners from outside institutions and this was considered to be pivotal in enabling value creation. Several respondents commented on the structures that create inter-disciplinary rivalry and noted the need to integrate discipline-based knowledge silos.

The increasing emphasis on entrepreneurship education as a cultural and social phenomenon was seen as reinforcing the relevance of academics in the creation of new knowledge. Several respondents commented on the ability of entrepreneurship to encompass theory and practice in a holistic way. As one respondent suggested:

Entrepreneurs don't work in a vacuum; they have to fit into a much wider support environment. To be successful they have to be able to get on with and understand people in banks and various other agencies and therefore it behoves us to equip students with these skills.

Respondents reported that they perceived student benefits from entrepreneurship in the context of personal development and the synergies gained from linking entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity. Venture project activity was seen as being very demanding by students but also rewarding and of immense value in terms of career planning and employability. As one respondent put it, 'the new battle lines are between the insurgents and the incumbents and the way to win is not through scale but creativity, imagination and experimentation'.

When asked about what institutions should do to support entrepreneurship, respondents commented on the need to penetrate the command and control/Taylorist mindset of some institutions and 'reframe' attitudes to research to encompass creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. The role of the institution was seen as particularly important in this regard in terms of support and reward strategies. One respondent suggested

We have accomplished a huge amount since the mid nineties and we have a much more positive culture and environment for entrepreneurship now. We need entrepreneurship to be a new leg for our economic development strategy. Foreign direct investment has been the main driver of the strategy up until now but we can't rely on that in the long-term. We are facing competition for that investment now so we need to develop our own entrepreneurial growth drivers.

Traditional faculty structures were perceived as 'stovepipes' that create segmented analyses of developments across institutions and generate 'turf battles' and gridlock and lack uniformity of purpose. The need for organic structures and more responsive organisational units was seen as imperative to fulfilling the expectations of policy makers and the wider economic partners. It was felt that there was a need for institutions to

communicate with all academics in promoting entrepreneurship as an educational priority in terms of mission and culture. Ireland is still dependent on creating enterprise and seeking opportunities, for example a respondent commented

There are a lot of barriers to entrepreneurship. One of the major ones is perception. According to the GEM survey of entrepreneurship (2007), Ireland has been the number one country in Europe for new business start-ups, with a very high proportion of the population perceiving new business opportunities. However, that has hit downward spiral of late . . . There seems to be a perception that a downturn in economic activity means that there are no opportunities

In fast-moving, technologically complex and innovative industry domains, third level institutions' ability to keep pace with enterprise development initiatives may force a rethink of their strategies. As one respondent put it, "*it is important that brick walls which inevitably will be encountered along the way are acknowledged and addressed. When those moments of crisis occur, staff should be encouraged to develop creative and innovative solutions to surmount these obstacles*". Technology within industry has continued to develop exponentially and radical changes have resulted which have significant implications for education..

One of the institutions researched abandoned its traditional functional structure in favour of a more flexible team-based structure and a more business-process-oriented way of doing business. In the new structure, teams report directly to the senior management. As an incubation manager suggested,

People make better entrepreneurs if they have some life experience - preferable to have worked in industry and have developed invaluable networks and may have seen ways of doing things better or more cheaply that gives rise to new business opportunities.

The changing business landscape is one that calls for fresh ways of thinking. One of the incubation managers interviewed believes this and has taken on challenging third-level education initiatives to help steer potential entrepreneurs through the conundrum of starting and growing businesses in contracting markets. Academics must be mentors and provide a clear direction and future focus for a business within a time span and move potential entrepreneurs from an operations focus to a customer and market focus. A

survey respondent accounts how groups of enterprise students are put through a Dragons' Den-style process where they present the case for their business venture which is then dissected by their peers.

There is much anecdotal evidence that a scarcity of resources encourages learning and unlimited resources breed waste and inefficiency. Innovation and adaptation are encouraged in an environment of shortage, competition and the struggle for relevance. As a consequence of the downturn in craft skills in Ireland, it is expected that more students will embark on third level programmes.

As noted by a prominent lecturer in Enterprise Development,

A key point is identifying or creating a need that you can satisfy with your proposition - see things from the customer perspective, Effective entrepreneurship therefore requires a marketing approach to identifying inventions or improvements. Effective marketing starts with realising that a product must satisfy a customer need and therefore students must learn how to identify and know who the customer is likely to be and what it will take to satisfy him or her.

Fitzgerald (2008) asserts that the biggest obstacle to getting the good times back might be a failure of nerve, such as to be sufficiently audacious would be a tragedy for this and future generations.

People are looking for value propositions in the market - this relates to manufacturing as well as services in sectors such as retail, leisure and so on. This offers opportunities for people to deliver value. Value doesn't necessarily mean cheap, it means quality as well. As academic entrepreneurs it is incumbent on us to be their champion but also their chief critic.

Conclusion

This research has illustrated that in the main on the Ireland of Ireland, many academics believe that entrepreneurship is being encouraged, though perhaps not as effectively across disciplines as it might. Respondents identified entrepreneurship as a powerful way to cultivate linkages with economic partners from outside institutions and that academic

institutions should develop students to be aware of the importance of absorptive capacity and how they can contribute to it in organisations.

GEM research (Fitzsimmons and O’Gorman, 2007; 2008) indicates that those providing an entrepreneurship education must ensure that it reinforces a positive culture towards entrepreneurship that it is appropriate, of a high quality and widely available.

The importance of marketing an idea and matching needs with demands is crucial to the development of an enterprise culture within any institution. This concurs with the views expressed by Kuratko (2005) and Galloway et al. (2005).

An interesting finding is the view that certain skills and behaviours of entrepreneurship can be taught in an academic setting and this view correlates with views expressed by other writers, Winter (2000), Galloway et al. (2005), Hay(2004), Gibb(2002, 2005).

There is general consensus that the method in which the concept of entrepreneurship is taught should be encouraging and stimulating so as to encourage the creating on new ventures. Edelman et al (2008) are in agreement with this and suggest that there is often a disparity between what is being taught in the classroom and the needs of entrepreneurial individuals. The importance of life experiences is highlighted in this research and its effect on the entrepreneurial nature of the student.

One other finding from this research is the relevance of having an enterprising lecturer or facilitator of entrepreneurship and the effect of the personal characteristics of the individuals at the helm of the module. This has been highlighted also by work completed by Shinner *et al* (2009) and Hytti and O’Gorman (2004) and Cooney and Murray (2008). Without the supply of enthusiastic and enterprising staff, the very concept of teaching entrepreneurship will be lost. Throughout this research, it was continually stated by respondents, that entrepreneurship is not just a module for the business faculty, but should be taught cross discipline. Ireland is “*facing competition ... so we need to develop our own entrepreneurial growth drivers*”.

In conclusion, it can be argued that Ireland is an emerging educator of entrepreneurship. We are not as proficient at this task as other countries and this may be down to a number of factors including a high dependency on foreign direct investment, a shortage of leading entrepreneurship teaching staff and the celtic tiger era that we experienced for the last 20 years. As educators, it is our duty, across all disciplines to encourage our students to identify and take advantage of entrepreneurial opportunities. This will be reflected in the manner in which we teach as well as a desire to bring the country to a new economic high where individuals can be encouraged not to be reliant on foreign direct investment, but can see and evaluate business opportunities and risks and make entrepreneurship a core element of the learning experience at all age levels.

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