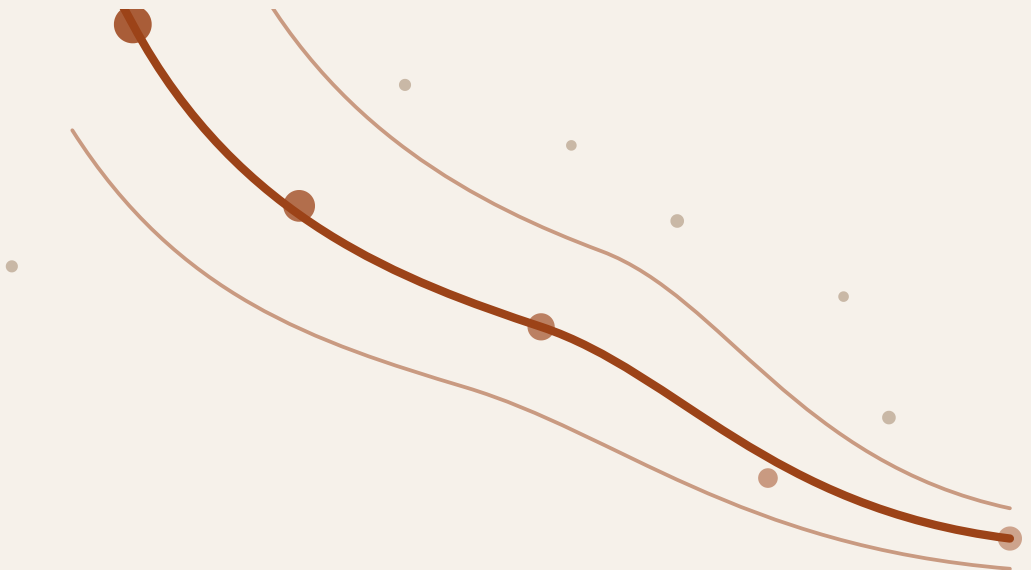


Innovation Management

From scattered initiatives
to a sustained organizational capability

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Chapter 20

20 The university innovation ecosystem: from scattered initiatives to an integrated system

In this chapter we gather the book's threads in a single applied setting, the university, and we argue for a specific thesis: that a university innovation ecosystem is built from within, starting from the university's own strengths, needs and distinctive character. We then trace what this thesis demands: a strategy that is understood and shared, integration among the parallel systems within the university, the everyday environment of classroom and administration, motivation and recognition, the continuity of initiatives, the contribution of faculty researchers and staff, and the governance that brings all of this together.

Introduction

Opening case: an ordinary teaching day (composite case)

On the morning of an ordinary teaching day, the fab lab at a university stands quiet: state-of-the-art equipment that cost millions of riyals, a single technician sorting materials, and two engineering students working on a graduation project. Two hundred meters away, in a crowded lecture hall, one

hundred and fifty students from various majors are reviewing for a midterm exam. Most of them have never set foot in the lab; no course has ever asked them to, and many do not know it exists. That same week, at a meeting of the university council, a proposal was presented to establish a new entrepreneurship center modeled on one at a leading international university, complete with performance indicators lifted from that university's report.

This university has both the resources and the ambition. What it lacks is a connection between what it has built and what its students experience day to day, and a way of thinking that starts from its own needs. We believe this situation recurs in many universities, and that the path from it to a functioning ecosystem runs through a review of the logic by which the ecosystem is built, before any new entity is created.

Learning Objectives

After studying this chapter, the reader should be able to:

- 1 Explain why borrowed models fail in university innovation ecosystems.
- 2 Diagnose a university's strengths and needs, and formulate from them an innovation strategy that is understood and shared.
- 3 Analyze why innovation units, gifted-student services and formal education become disconnected, and design connection points among them.
- ε Evaluate the everyday environment of classroom and administration in terms of how far it supports initiative.
- 0 Design forms of motivation and recognition suited to students, faculty and staff.

- 7 Plan for the continuity and institutionalization of initiatives, and extend the ecosystem to include faculty researchers and staff.
- v Design governance responsible for integration, and chart a phased roadmap whose content is determined by diagnosis.

20.1 The borrowed-model trap

When a university sets out to build an innovation ecosystem, the easiest route seems to be to look at successful universities and copy what they have: an accelerator like theirs, a lab like theirs, indicators like theirs. DiMaggio and Powell explained this tendency through what they called **mimetic isomorphism**: when goals are ambiguous and the environment uncertain, organizations tend to imitate those they regard as successful or legitimate, and so over time they come to resemble one another in form, whether or not this improves their efficiency (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Government innovation labs offer one illustration: some were established in imitation of other agencies and in pursuit of legitimacy (Tönurist et al., 2017).

Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock went further, describing a phenomenon they called **isomorphic mimicry**: an organization adopts the forms of successful organizations, their structures, programs and titles, without the capability that makes them work. From the outside, the organization appears to possess what successful organizations possess; on the inside, it remains unable to perform its function. Mimetic isomorphism, then, is a tendency to imitate under uncertainty, while isomorphic mimicry is what results when form is transferred without function. As an alternative, they proposed what they called **problem-driven iterative adaptation**, built on four principles: local solutions to local problems, a search for successful attempts within the system itself, continuous experimentation, learning and adaptation, and scaling through diffusion (Andrews et al., 2013).

This literature explains what happens in many universities. An accelerator transplanted from another university presupposes students who arrive with ready-made projects, an entrepreneurial culture in the colleges, and a network of investors around it. Where these conditions are absent, the accelerator remains form without function. The same holds for transplanted indicators: a number of startups appropriate for a university in a mature entrepreneurial ecosystem may push another university to inflate figures that do not reflect its reality. The problem is not learning from others, which is essential, but allowing imitation to take the place of diagnosis.

20.2 A strategy from within, understood and shared

In this book we propose the opposite logic: that a university's innovation strategy begin with a **diagnosis of its strengths, needs and distinctive character**; that the strategy then be designed; and that the system of ideas and initiatives that puts it into effect then be built, step by step, adapting to what is learned along the way. This logic draws on what strategic management calls the **resource-based** view, which holds that sustained advantage comes from an organization's resources and capabilities that others find hard to imitate (Barney, 1991). Whatever sets a university apart, whether its strong disciplines, its region and that region's problems, its relationships or its students, is what its ecosystem should be built on.

Self-assessment tools are available to help universities with this diagnosis. Among the most prominent is a framework for entrepreneurial universities developed by the European Commission and the OECD, which allows a university to assess itself in areas including leadership and governance, organizational capacity and incentives, entrepreneurial teaching and learning, support for student entrepreneurs, knowledge exchange and collaboration, internationalization, and impact measurement (European

Commission & OECD, 2012). The value of this framework lies in its being a tool for self-reflection that helps a university see itself by its own standards; it loses much of its usefulness when used for comparison and ranking.

Diagnosis also needs to hear directly from students and faculty. In a study published in 2023 of one hundred and one faculty members at a Saudi university, participants viewed the needs of students with creative characteristics along three dimensions: developing the creative personality, a stimulating university environment, and support for the creative process and product development. This support could take the form of training linked to students' interests and awareness of opportunities aligned with Saudi Vision 2030 (Alsamani, 2023 [Arabic]). This kind of local knowledge is precisely what cannot be borrowed from another university's report. Table 20.1 presents the core diagnostic questions.

Table 20.1 Questions for diagnosing a university innovation ecosystem from within

Domain	Diagnostic questions
Distinctive strengths	Which disciplines are strong? Which problems are characteristic of the region? What relationships exist with agencies and companies?
Students	What are their interests and needs? Where do they spend their time? What do they know about the innovation units, and what keeps them from reaching them?
Faculty	Who actually practices creative teaching? What do they need? Which of their efforts does the evaluation and promotion system count?
Existing units	What does each unit offer? Who actually benefits from it? How is it connected to courses and to other units?
Successful attempts	Where within the university itself, in a course, a department or a student club, are there successful experiences that can be built on?
Researchers and staff	Do faculty research partnerships with external organizations count? Is there a channel for staff ideas on improving university services?

Domain	Diagnostic questions
Cost and sustainability	What is the total cost of each unit? And what does it deliver in return?

The question of **successful attempts** deserves particular emphasis. Every university has faculty members who turn their courses into spaces for creativity without anyone asking them to, student clubs that run real projects, and departments with living relationships with outside organizations. These are the seeds that the iterative adaptation approach advises looking for and building on, because they have already proven that they work in the university's own context.

It is not enough for the strategy to be written from within; it must also be **understood and shared**. In a survey of more than eleven thousand managers in more than four hundred companies, only about a third of senior managers could correctly name their organization's top three priorities (Sull et al., 2015). If this is the case among managers, the gap is likely wider for the faculty member in a department, the staff member in an office, and the student in a classroom. A strategy these people do not know does not guide what they do each day, however well crafted its document may be.

A university innovation strategy therefore needs to be expressed in a few priorities, in language a non-specialist can understand; it needs to be built with the participation of those who will work with it; and it needs to persuade them of what it means for each of them: for the student on their journey, for the faculty member in their course and research, and for the staff member in their service. Taking part in building a strategy is the first thing that creates commitment to it, and shared understanding is what makes the many small decisions scattered across departments and offices move in a single direction.

20.3

Parallel systems that do not connect

Several systems operate within a single university, each with its own logic: innovation and entrepreneurship units with their competitions and programs, gifted-student services with their criteria and offerings, formal education with its study plans, courses and exams, and administrative offices with their procedures. Often these systems simply sit side by side: the gifted-student unit does not know what the accelerator offers, the faculty member in the classroom does not know what goes on in the lab, and the academic system does not count what the student accomplishes outside it. The student thus lives in separate worlds and has to connect them alone, if they can.

Weick offered an early explanation of this phenomenon, describing educational organizations as **loosely coupled systems**: their units respond to one another, yet each retains its identity and independence, so that what happens in one carries over to the others only to a small degree (Weick, 1976). Weick did not see this as a pure flaw; loose coupling allows each unit to experiment and adapt without bringing the whole organization to a halt. Its cost for innovation, however, is clear: an initiative succeeds in one unit, fails to travel to others, and its value remains confined to whoever happened upon it.

This explanation converges with what Clark found when he studied five European universities that had successfully transformed into entrepreneurial universities and identified five elements they shared (Clark, 1998), as shown in Figure 20.1.

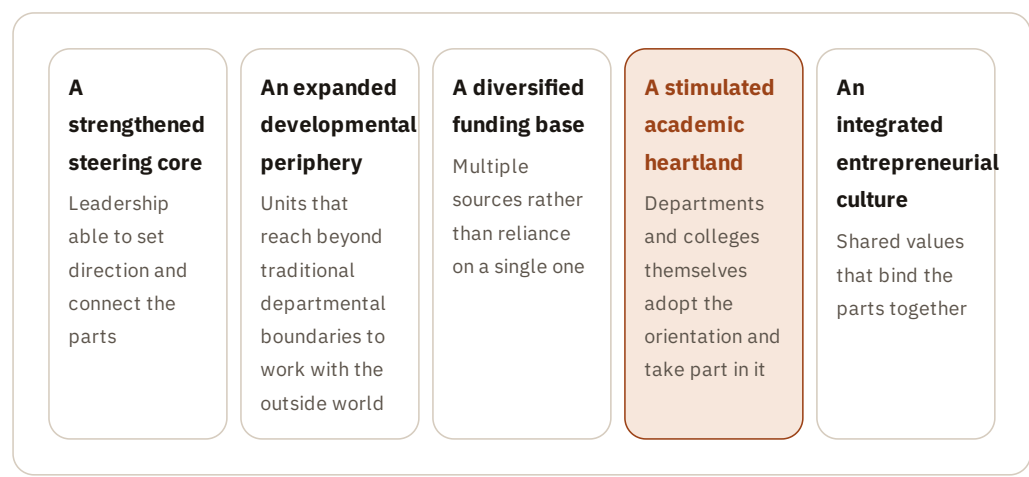


Figure 20.1 Elements of the transformation into an entrepreneurial university, adapted from Clark (1998).

The fourth element is the key to the opening case. Clark stressed that peripheral units, such as centers and incubators, are not sufficient on their own, and that transformation is complete only when the academic heartland, the departments and colleges where teaching and research take place, embraces it. The university in the opening case built its periphery and neglected its heartland: a lab in the middle of campus, and classrooms with no connection to it.

What is needed, then, is the design of deliberate **connection points** among these systems while each retains its own identity, since merging them into a single unit would strip them of their flexibility. Connection points mean that each unit knows what comes before it and what comes after; that formal education counts some of what the student accomplishes outside it; and that units share information about the student with the student's consent. One possible form of such connection is to view the scattered units from the student's own vantage point, as stations along a single **journey** the student travels, as Figure 20.2 illustrates.



Figure 20.2 One possible picture of the student innovator journey across university units. Prepared by the author.

The stations and their names vary from one university to another, but the journey rests on three principles. First, **the ecosystem goes to the student** wherever the student is, in the classroom, the course, the residence hall and the club, rather than waiting for them in its own buildings. Second, **each station knows what comes before and after it**: the faculty member knows where to refer a student who has an idea, and the accelerator knows which courses its projects come from. Third, **the journey accommodates different**

stages of maturity: a student at the stage of thinking needs something different from one who has reached the stage of practice, and the first is not asked for what is asked of the second.

20.4

The everyday environment: classroom and administration

A university may have well-integrated innovation units, yet its students spend most of their time in an environment that does not invite them to think: a lecture delivered, an assignment that measures memorization, an exam that rewards the single right answer. A staff member may have an idea for improving a procedure and find no one in the office willing to hear it. It is the everyday environment, in the classroom and the office, that ultimately determines whether people experiment or stop trying.

This environment begins with the faculty member. In a study of students at several Saudi universities, faculty support in day-to-day teaching was associated with students' confidence in their creative abilities and with their innovative behavior (Alsamani & Alqahtani, 2026). The faculty member in the classroom is the point in the ecosystem closest to every student, and the course is the gateway through which everyone passes.

A systematic review of creative learning environments, mainly in school education, identifies recurring features: flexible use of space and time, availability of materials, learning outside the classroom, play-based approaches that give learners a degree of autonomy, respectful relationships between teacher and learner, opportunities for peer collaboration, partnerships with outside organizations, awareness of learners' needs, and planning not bound by rigid templates (Davies et al., 2013). Most of these features require neither buildings nor budgets; what they require is a faculty member who sees students as partners in learning.

This environment is most visible in **student assignments**. Research on high-impact educational practices has shown that practices such as undergraduate research projects, service learning, internships and capstone projects are associated with deeper engagement and better learning (Kuh, 2008). By contrast, a qualitative study with teachers of the gifted found that a focus on grades and standardized tests narrows the space available for creativity (Alsamani, 2019), and an assignment that measures memorization alone may reproduce this barrier at the university. Turning some assignments into projects that address real problems makes the course a channel for capturing problems and ideas, and makes the innovation unit an extension of the classroom. This can take many forms, from a project within an existing course to a common course in creativity and entrepreneurship assessed through a project; diagnosis determines which of these suits the university.

This support also needs to accommodate differences among students. The high academic achiever differs from the student who is creative in a performance domain such as the arts, design or programming, and both differ from the innovator who produces a tangible project or prototype. The most likely to be overlooked is the gifted student whose abilities are not reflected in their GPA, because systems that see nothing but grades do not see them. An environment that treats everyone by a single standard loses some of them without knowing it.

Administration is part of this environment. A decision delayed for no reason, a response given without explanation, a procedure that requires the person with an idea to obtain one approval after another: these are messages that teach students, faculty and staff that initiative is a burden. A university that celebrates innovation at its events and then obstructs it in its procedures teaches more through its procedures than through its rhetoric.

Motivation and recognition in the university system

People learn what an organization values from what it counts and rewards, more than from what it proclaims. One reason students are slow to take up what innovation units offer is that their effort there appears nowhere: not in their academic transcript, not on a certificate, not in what they present to employers.

Recognition holds a special place for the gifted and for innovators. Saudi innovative entrepreneurs described a supportive community as one that begins by acknowledging the innovator's distinctiveness and valuing their talent, then invests in them, enables their initiatives, and offers them a flexible environment in which to build their innovative identity (Alsamani, 2026 [Arabic]). The aim is for students to feel that innovation is an integral part of their university journey: that they are invited to it, welcomed in it, and valued for it.

Forms of recognition are many, and they need not be costly: a record issued by the university documenting the student's participation in projects and challenges alongside the academic transcript; micro-credentials recognizing specific competencies acquired in a short program (OECD, 2021); a minor that complements the student's major; and an annual day on which students showcase what they have accomplished with their supervisors. Each university chooses from these, or from others, whatever fits its own regulations.

Recognizing faculty effort matters no less than recognizing student effort. A faculty member who turns a course into a space for innovation and supervises real projects puts in more effort than traditional teaching demands. If the evaluation and promotion system does not count this effort, the orientation remains dependent on the enthusiasm of a few individuals, and it ends when they move on or burn out.

One possible form of motivation here is for faculty members to enter student projects as partners, in addition to their role as assessors: co-supervising a team, bringing along a problem from their own research area, and sharing in whatever results, whether a publication, a patent or a prototype. The student gains a mentor close to their work, and the faculty member gains live research questions and junior colleagues from whom they learn as much as they teach. This is completed by details that cost little: naming the supervisor alongside the team when projects are showcased, counting the supervision in the faculty member's performance file, and granting protected time for this work.

20.6 Continuity: from enthusiasm to institutionalization

Many initiatives in universities begin with enthusiasm: a successful competition, a program that draws strong participation, a faculty member who turns a course into a space for innovation. Then, after a year or two, they decline: the person in charge moves on, the initial funding runs out, or priorities shift. Continuity does not follow automatically from initial success. Wiltsey Stirman and colleagues reviewed one hundred and twenty-five studies on the sustainability of programs and innovations after implementation and found that few of the studies that measured it recorded full continuation of the programs, and that sustainability is shaped by the characteristics of the innovation itself, the organizational context, the capacities available to it in funding, staff and champions, and the processes and interactions among the parties involved (Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012).

This means that continuity must be designed from the start. An initiative that rests on one person ends when that person leaves, and one that rests on exceptional funding ends when the funding stops. An initiative that enters the regular systems, however, by being written into study plans, having the effort of those who work on it counted in evaluations, receiving a line in the recurring budget, and being measured among the university's indicators,

survives the departure of its founders. This is what **institutionalization** means: the initiative becomes part of the normal way of working, and so it continues after its founders' enthusiasm has cooled.

Institutionalization does not mean keeping every initiative forever. Some initiatives are better stopped when they do not achieve what they were meant to, and this is part of portfolio management. The question that distinguishes healthy continuity is this: does the initiative continue because it produces value, or because no one has decided to stop it?

20.7

Faculty researchers and staff

In the preceding sections we considered the faculty member as teacher and the staff member within their administrative environment; this section addresses the faculty member as researcher and the staff member as innovator in university services. The university has three missions, teaching, research and community service, and each is a source of innovation. Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff described the university in the knowledge economy as one of three parties, alongside government and industry, whose roles overlap in producing innovation (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000). An ecosystem confined to students overlooks two other parties within the university itself: the faculty member as researcher, and the staff who run its services.

Faculty researchers: from research to impact

Many universities tend to measure their contribution to innovation by patents and by startups spun out of their research. A broad review of the literature on university–industry relations shows that this picture is narrow. What researchers call **academic engagement**, such as joint research with external organizations, contract research, consulting and informal relationships, is more widespread among faculty than commercialization, and closer to their regular research work. Faculty engage in it mostly to obtain resources and questions that serve their research agendas (Perkmann et al., 2013).

This means that a university that sees nothing of research innovation but patents overlooks most of what its faculty actually contribute. The shortest route to research impact may be a real problem that an organization in the region brings to a research team ready to take it on. Ways of supporting this include counting joint research and consulting in evaluation and promotion, simplifying contracting procedures with external organizations, and linking the university's research priorities to the problems of its region.

Staff: a university that innovates in its own work

The university is also an organization that delivers services: admissions and registration, housing, libraries, e-services, and financial and administrative procedures. What this book has said about managing innovation in organizations applies to it as it does to any service organization: capturing problems from beneficiaries, managing ideas, piloting, and measurement. The staff members who live these procedures daily know best where the waste lies, and the students who pass through them know best what they suffer from them.

It is a paradox for a university to call on its students to innovate while processing their requests through procedures that have not been reviewed in years. A university that practices innovation in its daily work teaches by example what its courses teach by explanation. What was said about motivating faculty holds for staff as well: what motivates them most is inexpensive, such as crediting an idea to its originator, involving them in implementing it, and showing its effect on student services.

20.8

Governance that moves people and ideas between units

To turn this approach into practice, the university needs a unit responsible for integration. One possible form is a **strategic innovation unit** reporting directly to the university president, whose task is to build the innovation

strategy from within using the approach set out in this chapter, to connect the scattered parts, and to monitor and adjust implementation. This unit leaves initiatives to their owners and to existing units; its value lies solely in direction and integration. The initiatives it may support differ from one university to another according to their strengths and needs. Here we gather, from tools presented in the book's chapters, what makes an orchestrating unit effective, whatever its form:

- **A strategy from within:** search fields that arise from the university's strengths and the problems of its region, are aligned with national priorities, and are expressed in language everyone understands and helps to build.
- **A shared portfolio:** a single entry point for ideas, shared gates, movement of an initiative between units according to its stage, and a reasoned response by an announced date.
- **Measuring flow:** indicators that track the movement of students and ideas between units, the courses that include innovation projects, and students' confidence in their creative abilities; these say more about the state of the ecosystem than the number of events each unit holds on its own.
- **Total cost:** calculating what each unit costs and what it delivers, before any new unit is established.
- **A clear policy on ownership of student ideas:** one that encourages students to develop their ideas within the ecosystem.
- **Partnerships that bring in real problems:** with government agencies and companies in the region.

The most important characteristic of this governance is that it be **dynamic**: that it review itself periodically, adjust what does not work, and expand what succeeds, as the iterative adaptation approach suggests. A strategy written once and implemented unchanged for years reproduces the logic of the borrowed model, even if it was written from within.

Principle

A university innovation ecosystem is measured by the number of people, students, faculty and staff alike, who found their way from problem to idea to experiment, and by what they felt along the way, more than by the number of units the university has created.

20.9**A roadmap**

An ecosystem is not transformed all at once. Figure 20.3 proposes a three-phase logic that applies phased scaling and pull-based scaling. What is fixed in this logic is the order of the phases and the question each phase asks. The initiatives that fill them, and the duration of each phase, are determined by each university's diagnosis. The initiatives mentioned in this chapter are examples to aid thinking, and each should be adapted to what the diagnosis reveals.

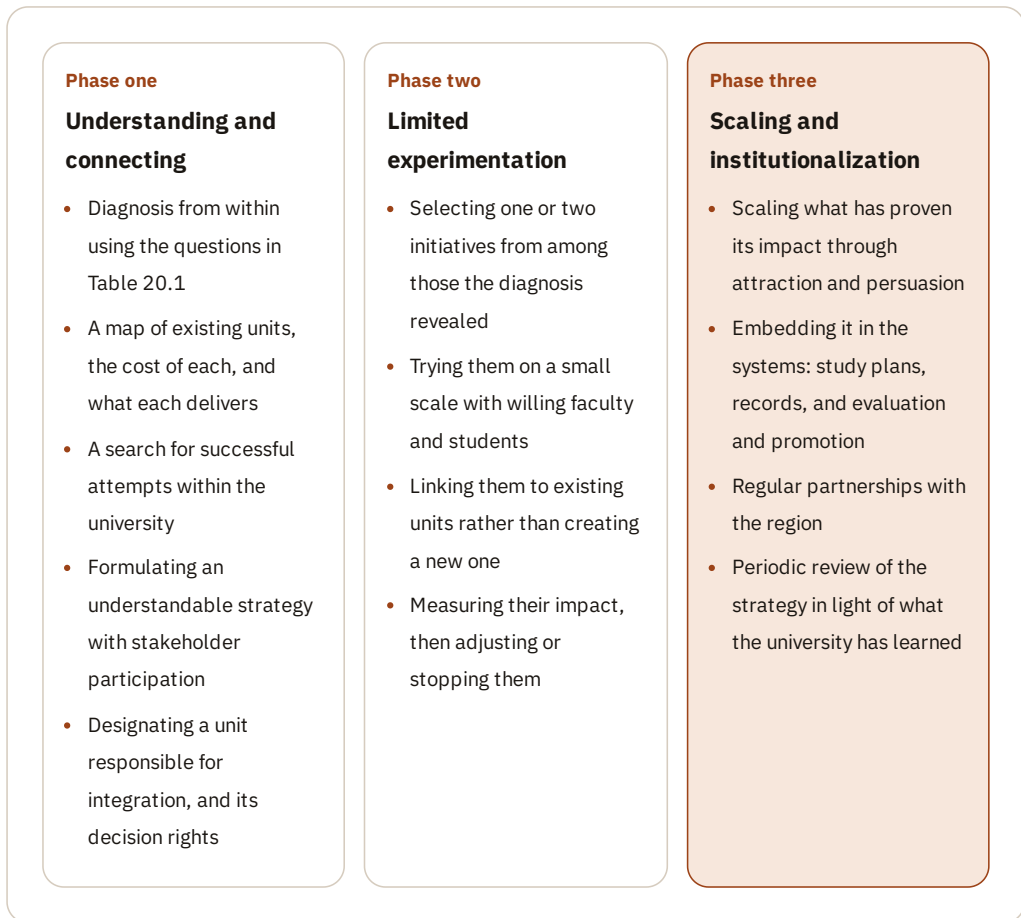


Figure 20.3 A proposed roadmap for building a university innovation ecosystem: the logic of the phases is fixed, while each university determines their content. Prepared by the author.

This roadmap means that the first thing a university does is understand what it already has and connect it, before creating any new unit. In the first phase it may discover that it has more entities than it needs, and fewer connections than it needs between those entities and its students. That discovery alone may save it millions that would otherwise have been spent on yet another isolated entity.

Here the threads of the book come together in a single institution: it starts from the problem before the model, and from people, students, faculty and staff, before buildings, and it builds the ecosystem as connections before building it

as entities. A university that does this becomes an innovative institution in its own right, not only one that graduates innovators.

Chapter tool: diagnosing the university innovation ecosystem

Use this tool with a team that includes representatives of leadership, departments, existing units and students. Rate each dimension at one of three levels: absent, partial or established. Then choose just two dimensions to work on in the first year, giving priority to those that lie in the academic heartland, that is, the departments and colleges.

Chapter tool Diagnosing the university innovation ecosystem

Dimension	Diagnostic question	Rating	Next step
Strategy from within	Do the innovation arenas arise from the university's strengths and the problems of its region?		
Clarity of strategy	Can students, faculty and staff name the university's innovation priorities? Did they take part in building them?		
Integration across systems	Do the innovation units, gifted-student services and departments know what the others offer? Does formal education count any of what the student accomplishes outside it?		
The student journey	Does the student know where to take an idea? How many steps does it take to reach someone who can help?		

Dimension	Diagnostic question	Rating	Next step
The everyday environment	How many courses include projects that address real problems? Do administrative offices respond to ideas by an announced date and with a reasoned reply?		
Faculty support	Do students feel that their professors encourage their ideas? Is faculty effort counted?		
Recognition and documentation	Does the student's innovative effort appear in a record or certificate?		
Continuity	Do existing initiatives depend on individuals or on exceptional funding? Has the total cost of each unit been calculated?		
Researchers and staff	Is faculty research engagement with external organizations counted? Is there a channel for staff ideas on improving services?		
Measurement	Does the university measure flow and impact, or the activity of each unit in isolation?		
Partnerships	Do real problems from the region reach the university on a regular basis?		

Chapter Summary

- Under ambiguity, universities tend to imitate the models of successful universities, transferring the forms without the capabilities that make them work.
- A university innovation strategy begins with a diagnosis of the university's strengths and needs, and it does its work when it is

understood, persuasive and shared among students, faculty and staff.

- Innovation units, gifted-student services and formal education generally operate as parallel, loosely coupled systems; the remedy is to design deliberate connection points among them that preserve each one's flexibility. The transformation is complete only when the university's academic heartland embraces it.
- The everyday environment, in the classroom, in student assignments and in administrative procedures, is what determines whether people experiment or give up.
- People learn what an organization values from what it counts and rewards. Appreciation and recognition hold a special place for the gifted and for innovators, and most forms of recognition cost little.
- After its initial success, an initiative needs designed continuity, achieved by embedding it in the regular systems, while stopping whatever does not produce value.
- The university innovation ecosystem extends beyond students: faculty researchers contribute through engagement with external organizations, not only through patents, and staff have a role in improving the university's own services.
- The ecosystem needs a unit responsible for integration that measures flow between units, reviews itself periodically, and is built in phases: understanding and connecting, then limited experimentation, then scaling and institutionalization.
- The initiatives mentioned in this chapter are examples whose relevance is judged by each university's own diagnosis.

Key Terms

Mimetic isomorphism Mimetic isomorphism	The tendency of organizations, under ambiguity, to imitate organizations they regard as successful or legitimate.
Isomorphic mimicry Isomorphic mimicry	Adopting the forms of successful organizations without the capabilities that make them work.
Problem-driven iterative adaptation Problem-driven iterative adaptation	An approach that builds solutions locally, starting from problems, through continuous experimentation, learning and adaptation.
Academic heartland Academic heartland	The departments and colleges where teaching and research take place, as distinct from peripheral units.
Loose coupling Loose coupling	A condition in which units respond to one another while each retains its independence, so that what happens in one carries over to the others only to a small degree.
Institutionalization Institutionalization	Embedding an initiative in an organization's regular systems so that it continues without depending on the enthusiasm of individuals.
Student innovator journey Student innovator journey	An extended pathway that connects university units around what the student needs at each stage.
Academic engagement Academic engagement	Faculty collaboration with external organizations through joint or contract research or consulting, as

	distinct from the commercialization of research.
Micro-credential Micro-credential	Formal recognition of specific competencies acquired in a short educational program.

Review and Discussion Questions

- 1 What is the difference between learning from other universities' experiences and isomorphic mimicry of them? Understanding
- 2 Ask ten students, faculty and staff at your university about its innovation priorities, and compare their answers with what the strategy states. What does the gap reveal? Analysis
- 1 Apply Clark's five elements to your university or educational institution, and identify the weakest. Analysis
- 2 Map the student innovator journey at your university as it is today, and identify the station at which most students drop off. Application
- 3 Choose a course you teach or have taken, evaluate it in light of the features of creative learning environments, and propose one change to its assignments. Application
- 4 Choose an innovation initiative at your university that began with enthusiasm and then declined, analyze the reasons for its decline in light of the factors of sustainability, and propose what might have embedded it in the regular systems. Analysis
- 5 Choose an administrative procedure at your university that students frequently go through, and apply the steps of innovation management to it: from problem, to idea, to pilot. Application

6 “The solution to a weak innovation ecosystem at a university is to establish a new center modeled on leading international universities.”

Evaluate this statement in light of the chapter as a whole. **Evaluation**

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How does an organization move from scattered initiatives that celebrate innovation to a sustained capability to produce it?

This book traces the path of innovation from the first signal to a solution adopted in practice that creates value, and analyzes the organizational foundations that make this path a settled practice: strategy, systems, culture, governance, teams and measurement, with people at the center.

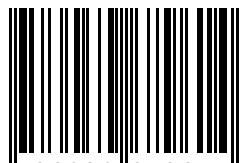
It rests on three pillars: a clear, high-priority problem; motivated people whose needs are met; and a system that connects them and turns effort into repeatable results. It combines international research evidence with the Saudi context, and pairs each chapter with a tool that can be used in a real organization.

Its twenty chapters are organized in five parts: foundations; institutional foundations and people; the initiative journey; value and the ecosystem; and an application to the university innovation ecosystem.

Innovation Management

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