

Deep Dive in Innovation & Entrepreneurship Intensive Course 2025

Design a sustainable bench for your neighbourhood

Instructors, Topics & Meetings



Konstantinos-Alketas Oungrinis

His expertise is in the application of modern technologies and the development of methodologies that create a participatory, human-centered research and application framework, aiming to enhance everyday life and to change the paradigm in contemporary society. Modern technologies are understood as an interface between man and space, at all levels, from concept to experience. He has developed two specific approaches for the successful

implementations of IT in design titled Spatial Economy and Sensitive Architecture. His thematic areas of study are interdisciplinary, rooted in the field of architecture and from there on branching out mainly into the domains of psychology, neuroscience, interactive media, robotics, and computer science.

In particular, in the field of applications in education and the educational space, his work investigates the participatory process of improving the spatial imprint of social activities, the integration of new technologies in every-day living, and the interdisciplinary synergy in social innovation, promoting the enhancement of the experiential impact of the “space”, transforming it to “place”. Its contribution to applied research is presented through the implementation of 51 main and 31 pilot research projects, completed or in progress. He is the author of 2 books, has edited 4 books and has 86 scientific publications. He has 17 national and international awards, including the Europe 40 under 40 Architecture Award (2008).

He holds a Diploma in Architecture and Architecture, a Master's Degree in Architecture and a Master's Degree in Architecture. He holds a PhD in Architecture and Engineering from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (1994) with a PhD thesis at the same University on Structural Morphology and Mobile Structures in Changing Spaces (2009). Between 2004-2006 he was a Visiting Research Associate at the Harvard Graduate School of Design [GSD].



Marianthi Liapi

Marianthi Liapi is an architect and a researcher specializing in the creative combination of design thinking, participatory learning and the contemporary maker culture. Since 2014, she has been the Research Program Director of the Transformable Intelligent Environments Laboratory (TUC TIE Lab) at the Technical University of Crete, running private, state-funded and institutional research programs. She developed an interdisciplinary methodology titled Educational Pla(y)ces (Εκπαιδóτοποι in Greek) influenced by her long-term collaboration with developmental psychologist Edith Ackermann. Her research projects are rooted in architecture and technology and branch out from there into learning places and maker spaces, transformable intelligent environments, extreme environments, cultural settings and projection mapping technologies, as well as in visual-spatial communication. Since 2002, she has received 16 awards for her projects in architecture, technology and education. Marianthi holds a Diploma in Architecture and Engineering from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and a MSc degree in Design and Computation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Since 2021, she is a Fulbright Greece Outreach Ambassador.

Welcome & Introduction Workshop: A human-centered approach to the creation of a sustainable community bench

In this seminar we introduce the design thinking mindset from the perspective of architecture, participatory practices and maker spaces. The focal point of the seminar is to help you engage in a meaningful exploration of a real-world case study and ultimately guide you to redesign the typical neighborhood bench in ways that better meet the contemporary needs of your community, considering design issues, materials, durability and social impact. Together we will explore how a human-centered point of view can nurture your ability to be observant, to intuitively interpret what you collect and to develop functional, sustainable ideas that are meaningful to those you are designing for.

Monday, April 28th, 12:00-14:00 (CET)



Andre Uhlmann

Andre Uhlmann is head of the start-up network SAXEED at the TU Bergakademie Freiberg and is responsible for business model development and start-up financing. He coaches the start-up projects on their way from idea generation, business model development and business planning to the founding of a growth-oriented start-up. He uses several methods like design thinking, lean startup and business model generation and has access to a large network of business angels, VC investors (pre-seed, seed, series A), business promoters and technology-oriented startups. Andre Uhlmann has a degree in business administration, is a certified SCRUM Master and Design Thinking Coach and looks back on more than fifteen years of experience on corporate, consulting and start-up side.

Creating Ideas with Design Thinking

Design thinking is an agile innovation approach that helps you generate business ideas that work in the real world. Problem space and solution space with their corresponding phases and tools are easy to learn. The key to design thinking lies in the mindset and in the personal attitude of those involved. In contrast to many other workshops, the focus is on practice. After a short introduction we will help you to go through the design thinking process with your challenge.

**Wednesday, April 30th, 12:00-15:00 (CET), and
Wednesday, May 7th, 12:00-15:00 (CET)**



Remo Taferner

Dr. Remo Taferner is an expert in entrepreneurship, startups, and innovation. He holds a PhD in Business Administration from Karl-Franzens-University Graz, where he also worked as a research associate. In addition to serving as the Managing Director of the Center for Applied Technology (ZAT) in Leoben, supporting technology-driven startups, he is the founder of Aniveri.com, a platform for innovative pet health solutions. He is also actively involved as a mentor at Gründungsgarage, helping early-stage entrepreneurs develop their ideas.

Lean Startup & Minimum Viable Product (MVP) – From Idea to Validated Innovation

In this interactive lecture/workshop, participants will learn the principles of the Lean Startup Approach and the importance of the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) for successful, iterative product development. The Lean Startup method transforms how new products or services are created by emphasizing rapid experimentation, customer feedback, and continuous adaptation.

We begin with an introduction to the fundamental concepts of Lean Startup, the Build-Measure-Learn cycle, and Validated Learning. We will then explore different types of MVPs – from landing pages and concierge tests to Wizard-of-Oz approaches – and analyze real-world examples like Dropbox and Airbnb.

A key focus will be on practical implementation: participants will work in groups to develop their own MVP for a fictional business idea and receive direct feedback. Additionally, we will discuss success metrics and KPIs for MVPs to understand how product ideas can be improved using data-driven insights.

Through interactive discussions, we will reflect on challenges and common mistakes when applying the Lean Startup approach. The goal is to equip participants with the tools needed to systematically test and validate innovative ideas with minimal risk.

Thursday, May 8th, 12:00-14:00 (CET)



Panagiotis Partsinevelos

Dr. Partsinevelos is a Professor in the areas of Space Informatics including Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Satellite Remote Sensing and Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAVs) in the Technical University of Crete. He received his PhD in Spatial Information Science & Engineering from the University of Maine, part of the National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (NCGIA) of USA and in a NASA sponsored center of excellence Remote Sensing Laboratory. He holds a Dipl. Eng. degree in Surveying Engineering from the National Technical University of Athens and has worked as a postdoctoral researcher in the Academic and Research Computer Technology Institute in Greece and as a GIS expert in the public sector. Besides his scientific publications, editorial positions and research projects as a coordinator, Dr. Partsinevelos has contributed significantly to the fields of innovation and technology transfer. Notably, he has served as the national representative of the Galileo and Copernicus Masters competitions in the realm of space innovation. Dr. Partsinevelos directs the Space Informatics Research Team, SenseLab, comprising of more than 30 multi-disciplinary researchers.

Project coaching

Project coaching is designed as your opportunity to get assistance tailored specifically to your team's sustainable bench further development. To receive meaningful feedback and guidance, each team must provide a short description (~250-300 words) of the team's sustainable bench design and characteristics, the progress on development and any relevant questions in the "Ask your project coach" forum in the course's Moodle page, by Friday, May 9th (i.e., end of week 2). Then, during week 3, each team must set an appointment (days/times below) for an online session with the project coach to get direct feedback and guidance on the further development of the team's project (e.g., sketches of product, description of material, mood boards, etc.).

Monday-Friday, May 12th to 16th, 10:00-12:00 CET* (*only by appointment)



Alexander Knauer

Alexander Knauer holds the Professorship for Entrepreneurship & Future Technologies at the Applied Computer and Biosciences Faculty of the Hochschule Mittweida, University of Applied Sciences. He is also a member of the Blockchain Competence Center Mittweida and a member of the management board of the "Blockchain Showcase Region Mittweida". The professorship is

a partner of SMEs, banks and municipal institutions with regard to the evaluation and development of digital business models, especially with regard to technology and user acceptance. Alexander Knauer studied at the HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management and did his doctorate at the Chair of Financial Management and Banking on the performance effects of private equity buyouts. Professionally, he held various management positions at Invia Group / Unister Holding.

As part of his management activities for Teleskopeffekt GmbH, he is particularly responsible for the activities of the startup hub and intensively accompanies the go-to-market activities of the current startups and investments. With his background as a banker and e-commerce expert, the focus is particularly on digital business models, which suggest significant and sustainable added value in the relevant industries. Alexander Knauer is also an e-resident of Estonia and deals intensively with the digitization trends and best practice examples in and from "E-Estonia".

Pitch Like a Pro and Create Excitement

This lecture gives you the essential tools to pitch like a pro and create excitement around your startup or project. Whether you are pitching to investors, management, or a jury,

your ability to tell a clear and convincing story directly impacts your success — and your startup's valuation.

We will walk through the core elements of a strong pitch deck: problem, solution, business model, market potential, and a clear call to action. You will learn how to design a 10x story that not only informs but also inspires, helping to maximize your startup's valuation. Beyond the deck, we will focus on presentation skills: how to deliver with confidence, use body language effectively, and handle critical questions. Real-life examples and short exercises will help you apply these techniques directly to your own pitch. By the end of the session, you will have a clear structure for your pitch deck and practical strategies to present your ideas with impact. This lecture is ideal for founders, innovators, and anyone ready to level up their pitching skills.

Lecture: Thursday, May 15th, 12:00-14:00 (CET)

Counselling sessions: Thursday, May 22nd, 9:30-12:00 (CET)*

Friday, May 23rd, 13:30-16:00 (CET)* (*only by appointment)



Antonios Papamanolis

Dr. Antonis Papamanolis is an Architectural Engineer and a member of the Hellenic Technical Chamber. He has a PhD from the school of Architecture of the University of Patras on Digital Design Pedagogy and specializes in Digital Design and Fabrication, Participatory Design and Design Management. Besides his work as a freelance architect, he has worked at the University of Patras School of Architecture as the Prototyping Lab Administrator, an external inspector of

European Programs for the Western Greek Chamber of Commerce, adjunct professor at the Guglielmo Marconi University of Rome, and research project manager at the Athens Municipal Makerspace. Between 2022 to 2025 he was a researcher at the Project, Infrastructure and City Management Laboratory of the Civil Engineering Department of the University of Patras, working on the European Project Coordination team. In that period, he also taught under and postgraduate classes on Smart Cities, Digital Twins as well as introductory microcontroller and coding courses and supervising graduate and master theses. He is currently a Post Doctoral Researcher at the Transformable Intelligent Environments Lab of the School of Architecture of the Technical University of Crete. His research focuses on the Introduction of Computational Methods and Digital Media in Architecture, Maker Education as well as integration of Participatory Frameworks in Design.



Marios Ioannidis

Marios Ioannidis has a degree in Digital Systems from the University of Piraeus. He graduated from the School of Applied Arts "Ornerakis" with a scholarship in animation. In 2020 he finished the postgraduate degree "Design of Digital Cultural Product", with a scholarship, at the University of the Aegean. He is pursuing a PhD related to storytelling methodology in immersive Virtual Reality games. He is an external researcher at the Laboratory of TIE Lab

(Technical University of Crete) and the Laboratory of Image, Sound and Cultural Representation (University of the Aegean). He has participated in many research projects, including developing Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), Projection Mapping, etc.



Efstathios Bikos

Stathis Bikos holds a degree in Production & Management Engineering from the Technical University of Crete. He is active in the fields of prototype production, research and development, innovation, rapid prototyping, and industrial 3D design.

For many years, he has collaborated with the Spatial Information Systems research group (SenseLAB) of the Laboratory of Geodesy and Geoinformatics at the Technical University of Crete, under the direction of Professor Panagiotis Partsinevelos. The SenseLAB research team at the Technical University of Crete, in addition to scientific publications, has received European and international awards in the fields of innovation and unmanned aerial vehicle systems. Specifically, the team achieved first place worldwide in the European Satellite Navigation Competition (ESNC), organized by the European Global Navigation Satellite Systems Agency (GSA), with Drones2GNSS—a complete system capable of rapidly mapping locations even outside satellite coverage. Additionally, the team secured first place in Europe and third place globally in the "Drones for Good - International Award" competition with the SaveME Project—the first mobile phone-drone, a valuable tool for emergency situations.

Walking through a Living Lab: TUC Innovation Lab

Join us for an exciting tour of the TUC Innovation Lab, where cutting-edge technology comes to life! Experience firsthand the incredible potential of 3D printers, laser cutters, and Virtual Reality in shaping the future of innovation. Discover how these advanced tools are transforming the design and implementation of groundbreaking projects. You'll also get to see live demonstrations and explore a selection of real-world projects that have already been brought to life. Don't miss this opportunity to witness technology in action and unlock the future of innovation.

Friday, May 23rd, 12:00-13:30 (CET)



Laurent Dupont

Laurent Dupont, Eng. PhD. is senior researcher at ERPI Laboratory (Research Team on innovative Processes, Université de Lorraine, France). He is the co-founder (2014) and scientific manager of the Lorraine Fab Living Lab® (LF2L), the ERPI research platform for prospective assessment of innovative usages and innovation acceptability (recognized by ENoLL and Fab Foundation). In LF2L, he manages projects on collaborative innovation involving users, companies and territories.

Laurent Dupont is also the co-designer and scientific coordinator of “Lorraine Smart Cities Living Lab” (ENoLL member since 2010), an interdisciplinary project involving several laboratories and other public and private partners. He designs, implements and evaluates new processes for co-designing Smart and sustainable Cities. Thus, since 2009, he has supervised 20 competitively funded research projects (including projects as partner and WP leader), Examiner or invited to a thesis jury in Industrial Engineering. He currently teaches “Innovative project management in complex environments (urban or territorial)” and “engineering and application of big data for Smart Cities” (Telecom Nancy - schools of engineers).

In 2022, he is co-chair of 28th IEEE ICE & 31st IAMOT Conference IEEE (June 19-23, 2022 - Nancy, France). Laurent Dupont got an Industrial Engineering Degree from the National Polytechnic Institute of Lorraine (INPL), France, in 2003 and an Industrial Engineering PhD from the INPL, France.

Walking through a Living Lab: Lorraine Fab Living Lab®

Within the Lorraine Fab Living Lab, various activities stimulate innovation and creativity. The creation and use of “demonstrators” of new products, processes, services and organizations are encouraged, mobilizing companies, local players, citizens and academics around common issues. It offers an open, functional space for prototyping, at the crossroads of open innovation, collective creativity, the Living Lab and the FabLab. The experiments carried out are based on collaborative approaches, involving users in the design and development of concrete solutions for the territories of the future.

Friday, May 23rd, 10:00-11:30 (CET)