

The Key Roles of Universities

Research, Transfer, and Innovative Entrepreneurship

Moderated by

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Universities and Startups

Do you know any location with a vibrant startup scene without strong universities?

NO !

--> Universities foster economic growth

Universities and economic growth?

- Is there a link? Yes if you believe USI website

USI Università della Svizzera italiana

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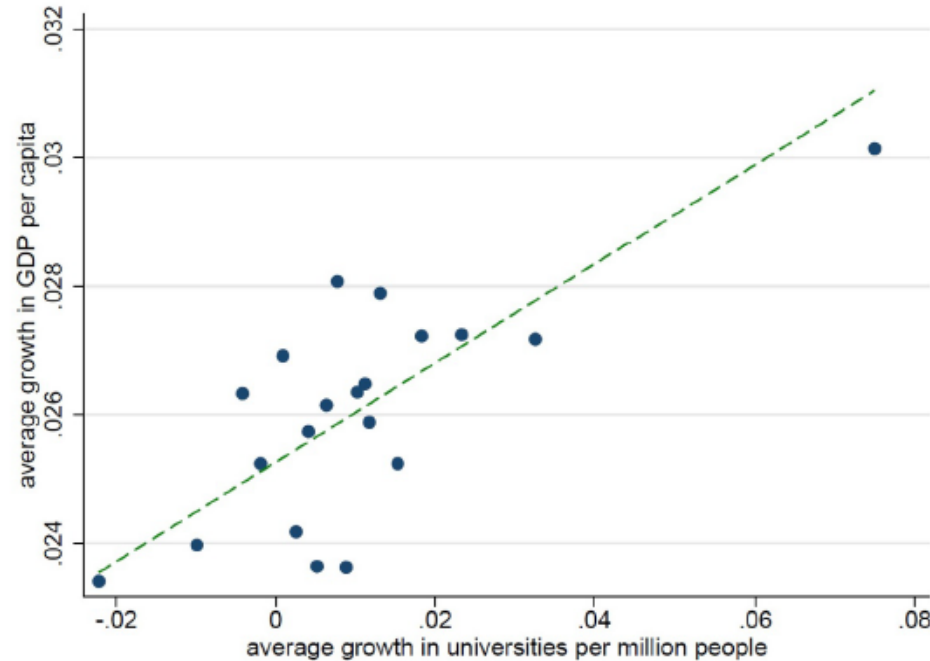
In uno sguardo

Qualità svizzera, ambiente internazionale Perché l'USI	3350 studenti da quasi 100 Paesi Dati e cifre	93.2% di laureati impiegati a 1 anno dal diploma Formazione
21 milioni di CHF di ricerca competitiva Ricerca	Ogni CHF investito ne genera 3,2 Sul territorio	60 start-up sostenute Innovazione

source: www.usi.ch/en (bottom of entry page)

Do universities affect economic growth?

- Big YES (academically non-contested)



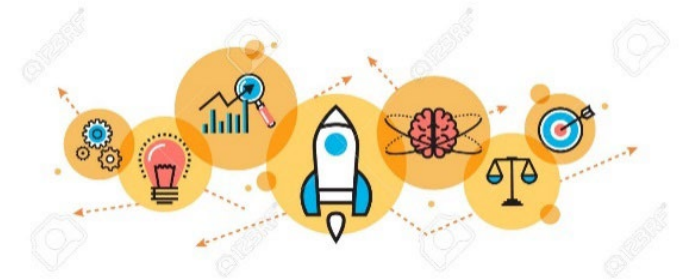
Source: Valero and Van Reenen (2019) based on 15,00 Universities in 1,500 regions between 1950 and 2010

Through which economic channels?

- Greater supply of local human capital
 - Skilled workers are more productive than non-skilled workers
 - Local bias (i.e., people study close to home and typically stay where they studied)
- **More innovation (and startups)**
 - **Direct effect: University researchers produce innovation (and good ideas)**
 - Indirect effect: Human capital and management practices
- Support democratic values
 - Platforms for democratic dialogue and sharing of ideas
- Demand effect (mechanical)
 - Students and staff consume locally

From University to Startups?

- University research provides the “seed” for startups (new ideas, technology, or applications)
- Many key ingredients are needed to succeed
 - Business acumen
 - Network (ideas and peer effects)
 - Financing
 - Access to specific human capital
 - Advising (e.g., legal advice)
 - Community and idea sharing (e.g., feedbacks)
- **Startup centers within Universities try to fill the void**
 - **Small scale: USI Startup Centre**
 - Larger scale: business schools (e.g., MIT, Stanford, Oxford,...)
- Strong innovation incentive effect
 - Knowing that structure/help exists --> more innovation



Our panelists

Let's explore the role of universities through real experiences



Greta Guarda

Vice-dean and Associate Professor
Faculty of Biomedical Sciences
USI



Ivo Kwee

Co-founder and CTO
Bigomics Analytics
(c/o USI Startup Center)



Luca Gambardella

Prorector (Innovation & Corporate
Relations) and Professor
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