Workshop

From Energy Research to Bankable Power Practice

25/1/2018

National University of Lesotho

Introduction

Workshop aims

- Provide a platform for discussion on how to make research more relevant/ fit for practice
- Enable matchmaking and establishing paths for further joint work

Agenda

- A few words from those who have been there (30 min):
    - Prof. Dr. Dieter Meissner (researcher, entrepreneur)
    - Michael Feldner (banking expert)

- Interactive exercise (90 min)
- Closing thoughts / remarks (as much time left)

Stage 1: Topic Selection (30 min)

- Please form groups of 5- 6 people.
- Pitch research topics to each other. Keep in mind that the expected outputs from the research project should be relevant for practitioners. Ideally a business could be developed from them.
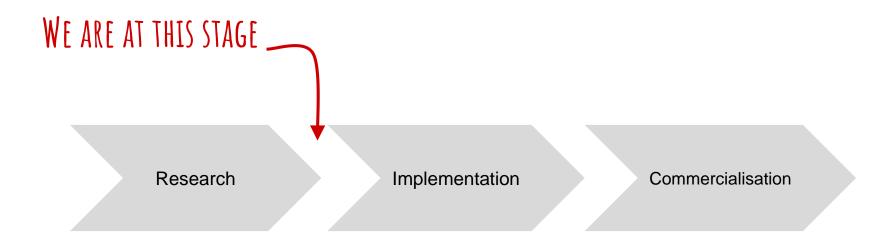
  Example: Energy solutions for refugee camps

- Choose one of the topic pitches.
- Name the outputs of your research project.

  Example: A portable solution that can be attached to the tents would be necessary

  Development of Portable Solar Sails in the implementation phase

Time Context

We are at this stage

Research

Implementation

Commercialisation

A few terms to clarify

Research
Topic

Research
Project

Research
Output

Stage 2: Role Play Discussion (30 min)

- Every group member receives a role card with a short description of the character & a few lead questions to fill out the role.

If you are a researcher and your real-life topic was chosen for the simulation, please pick the role of the researcher as well. OtherWise: Try NOT to choose a role that resembles your real-life background.

- Thoroughly review your card & get familiar with your character.
- Present yourself in your role to your group.
- Participate in a discussion on **how the outputs of the research project chosen could be implemented.**
- *Try to stay in your role and participate in the discussion*

- Setting - stakeholder discussion, HOSTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF THE RESEARCHER.

Stage 3:
Preparation of Discussion Outputs (10 min)

Prepare for a 2 min pitch:

- What is the idea / product / service? Who will implement it? Who will fund it? Who is the end-user?
- How did the discussion go? What are the takeaways?

Guiding questions:
- Does the research project need to be reshaped to make it more fit for practice? Or is further research needed before the implementation?
- What should the researchers do to make the research implementable/ fit for the needs of practitioners? When should this happen?
- What were the surprises/ challenges/ insights that your group identified through the exercise?

Stage 4:
Presentation & Discussion of Results (30 min)

2 min pitch:

- What is the idea / product / service? Who will implement it? Who will fund it? Who is the end-user?
- How did the discussion go? What are the takeaways?

Conclusions

- Step-by step stakeholder engagement is critical yet different for the development of implementable products and services.

- Having a multidisciplinary team ("it's not the idea, it's the team behind it that matters in the end")

- Communities / end-users need to be targeted / engaged/ studied early on in research (i.e., move beyond theoretical to practice-oriented research) in order to ensure implement ability .

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