

Incubation, innovation, and entrepreneurship

Twenty-two participants, including four local ones, gathered in Taipei, ROC, for the APO workshop on Innovation, Incubation, and Entrepreneurship: Identifying and Commercializing New Opportunities, organized in collaboration with the China Productivity Center (CPC), 12–16 August. They were joined by a chief expert and three resource speakers from Australia, Canada, Japan, and the host country. The 22 individuals were from NPOs, academic institutes, innovative SMEs, and agencies involved in innovation or encouraging entrepreneurship.

Workshop participants were aware that entrepreneurship can stimulate national economies by embracing innovation, technology, and creativity and that SMEs can be at the forefront of such activities. However, the road from an innovative idea to actual commercialization can be rocky. Technology incubators therefore play a crucial role in guiding entrepreneurs to commercial success. This workshop combined the three concepts of innovation, incubation, and entrepreneurship to show how new business ideas were tried, tested, and supported in incubation centers.

After the resource speakers detailed basic concepts and real-life examples of innovation and entrepreneurship incubated in centers in different locations, a panel discussion allowed the participants to question them and each other on practices that could potentially be adopted by regional SMEs to commercialize new ideas. The following day, participants divided into groups to devise action plans for entrepreneurship development in their countries in the morning session. The afternoon saw them at the National Taiwan University of Science and Technology (NTUST) Innovation & Incubation Center, BIC Co., and the Micro-Garage of the NTUST absorbing concrete information on how incubators can point entrepreneurs on the path to successful commercialization.



Panel discussion on innovation, incubation, and entrepreneurship.

The action plans were presented on the final day of the workshop. Chief Expert Dr. William D. Beynon of the University of Waterloo Conrad Centre for Business, Entrepreneurship and Technology, Ontario, Canada, commended the presentations and the agreement that the groups would hold quarterly virtual meetings on the progress of implementation. Dr. Beynon stressed the need to set specific times before departing for home to maintain momentum. It was “an encouraging sign,” said Dr. Beynon, that a webportal for this was arranged before the workshop’s end.

An ambitious plan was developed by Pakistani participant Kashif Mohammad Khan of Iqra University Islamabad campus. He planned to make presentations to colleagues, publish an article, and visit an entrepreneurial institute/incubation center to discuss how the findings of the workshop could be applied in its circumstances. 🌐