

Lab to Market journeys: innovation and impact stories

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Challenges, opportunities and inspirations to transform research into an enterprise

The event **“Lab to Market journeys: real stories of innovation and impact,”** held on November 26 at FBK, offered an opportunity for stimulation and inspiration dedicated to researchers and staff. Organized by **Fondazione Bruno Kessler** with the support of **HIT – Innovation Hub Trentino**, the meeting brought together experts from academia and business to share experiences and reflections on **the process that transforms research into successful initiatives on the market.** The event was moderated by **Luca Barbieri**, who highlighted the value of the connections between science, business and investments to create a real impact on society.

Tech Transfer Panel

The first panel focused on the dynamics of **technology transfer**, offering a privileged look at the experiences of Olivia Nicoletti and Alessia Gennaro. **Olivia Nicoletti – PwC Italy and former Cambridge Enterprise** – described her journey from research to investment: *“here I support startups in fundraising, because I believe in the value of connecting innovative ideas with the resources they need in order to grow. A crucial aspect is also to help teams understand the importance of the market: it is not enough to have advanced technology, you need to be able to identify a real problem and demonstrate that the solution advanced is really applicable. This, together with a motivated and skilled team, is what makes a winning project”*.

Alessia Gennaro – Eureka! Ventures – on the other hand, told how her academic experience has evolved towards the technology investment sector. *“It pushed me to change my will to have an impact on society and combine personal and technological interests,”* she shared, stressing how important it was for her to actually see the results of her work. Both emphasized the crucial role of the team and the ability to understand the market as fundamental

elements to grow an innovative project.

Startups: ideas for real impact

The second panel explored the realm of **startups**, telling stories that embody different stages of a startup's lifecycle. **Simone Rebeschini** from **Mobisec** shared his vision on what it means to bring an idea from the lab to the market, offering useful insights to the audience. *"To have a real impact, an idea must turn into something real. It is essential to constantly work on development and maintain a practical approach, capable of facing the challenges of the market. Research, alone, is not enough: it must translate into applicable solutions, otherwise it risks remaining a missed opportunity,"* he explained, stressing the importance of transforming innovation into tangible change.

Chiara Mongiovì, on the other hand, recounted the genesis of **BI-Me: Bio-based Materials for Energy**, and shared valuable advice for researchers who want to approach the business world. *"It is essential to talk with companies to understand the practical limits and real needs of the market. This comparison allows us to develop more concrete and applicable solutions,"* she explained, adding that it is equally critical to maintain a flexible vision right from the lab phase. *"Adapting technologies on a large scale and considering economic and environmental sustainability from the outset are key steps in turning research into something useful for society."*

Giovanni Rossi shared his personal and professional journey, which led him to work at **Electra Vehicles**, a startup that applies artificial intelligence to the battery and mobility industry. He explained how his philosophy background has profoundly influenced his approach to innovation. *"Philosophy teaches you to ask yourself the right questions, even the deepest and most complex ones, that push you to understand the reason of things. This is key both in research and in business: both require finding unexpected connections and new solutions."*

During the event, crucial issues were addressed such as the scarcity of women in the **stem** sector and in the positions of responsibility of startups and companies and the importance of a **cultural change to promote greater inclusion**. The appetite for risk, which is often limited particularly in the Italian context was also discussed, as well as the importance of developing an entrepreneurial mindset that combines technical skills with a strategic and adaptive vision.

The meeting ended with a networking session and the presentation of the **PoC call**, a concrete opportunity to **support the development of innovative ideas through financial resources and training courses**. *"Lab to Market journeys,"* organized by FBK with the support of HIT – Hub Innovazione Trentino, has highlighted how the transition from research to the market is not only a challenge, but also a stimulating experience for those who are ready to embrace it. This event is part of FBK's activities dedicated to innovation and the enhancement of research, promoting an entrepreneurial culture in line with the objectives of the 2024-2027 **Strategic Plan**,

which underlines the importance of **increasing patents, startups and strategic agreements with companies**, thus strengthening technology transfer and cooperation between research and industry. In this sense, “Lab to Market journeys” represented a key moment to foster exchange of views and the sharing of experiences, contributing to the development of a dynamic, sustainable and future-oriented innovation ecosystem.

LAB TO MARKET JOURNEYS

REAL STORIES OF INNOVATION AND IMPACT



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