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BUENAS PRÁCTICAS

Actuaciones Cofinanciadas

INCUBATOR HiTech SPORT&HEALTH INNOVATION
HUB (Murcia)

INCYDE Foundation

**Programa Operativo
Plurirregional de España**

Año 2022

Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional

GOOD PRACTICE OF CO-FINANCED ACTION PRESENTED BY THE INCYDE FOUNDATION HIGH-TECH INCUBATOR HITECH SPORT&HEALTH INNOVATION HUB (MURCIA)

The INCYDE Foundation participates within the European Regional Development Fund (FEDER) Operational Program for Spain 2014-2020, as a financial entity, in the implementation of the High-Tech Incubators project to promote innovation and technology transfer to small, medium, microenterprises, and entrepreneurs. The High-Tech Incubators project involves an initial deployment of infrastructure across the entire national territory.



As a proposal for best practices, the INCYDE Foundation presents **UCAM HiTech Sport & Health Innovation Hub**, a center for technological innovation and business acceleration, recognized in the Region of Murcia for supporting innovative entrepreneurial projects in the fields of health, nutrition, and sports. It brings together its educational and research capabilities while leveraging the business and investor network.

UCAM HiTech Sport & Health Innovation Hub is an initiative promoted by the **University Foundation San Antonio (Murcia)**, with an investment of **€2,104,582.13**, 80% of which is funded by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (FEDER), with FEDER support amounting to €1,683,665.70, within the Multiregional Operational Program of Spain 2014-2020.

Its main goal is to establish a collaborative ecosystem of research, innovation and entrepreneurship involving different actors, including companies, entrepreneurs, researchers, investors, etc. in the field of health, sport and food, as well as to provide SMEs, entrepreneurs and researchers in these areas with technical advice, knowledge transfer and technological support to boost their growth and facilitate their efficient adaptation to market demands.

Almost two years after its official inauguration, we consider UCAM HiTech to be a good practice for the following reasons:

1. HIGH DISSEMINATION AMONG BENEFICIARIES AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

This initiative has gained significant visibility among the general public, thanks to the dissemination and communication efforts through social media, press, television, and the website. UCAM HiTech has also actively participated in various fairs, conferences, workshops, and activities that have allowed it to showcase the incubator not only at a regional level but also nationally and even internationally. Since its official opening in October 2021, this high-tech center has received different visits to introduce visitors to its facilities and all the activities of the incubator. Visitors have come from various regions, including Italy, the United Kingdom, France, Saudi Arabia, the United States, among others.

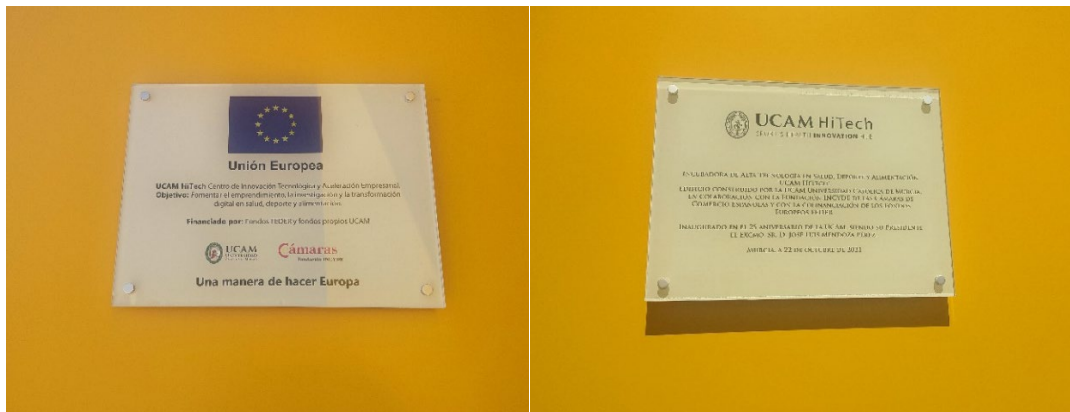
In addition, a wide range of actions oriented towards entrepreneurship and research have been carried out, including innovation training programs, high-impact workshops, Work Experience days, meetings with companies, funding events, and, ultimately, everything necessary to create a thriving business ecosystem in the fields of health, sports, and food.

The dissemination activities are divided into:

- a) **Compliance with the publicity requirements associated with FEDER funding:**
Anyone or any company that has benefited from the creation of the incubator and/or the provision of its services has been made aware that the initiative received support from FEDER funds.

To ensure dissemination, multiple actions have been taken:

- **Construction site sign and permanent sign:** Located prominently at the entrance to the incubator to provide maximum visibility of the source of funding.



- **Equipment and Facilities:** The incubator's equipment and facilities co-financed have the reference to FEDER funds.
- **Website:** www.hitech.ucam.edu
- **Communication Channels:** Social media (Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and recently TikTok), media coverage, the official website, and the university's website, as well as dissemination through collaborating entities.
- **Advertising Materials:** Information leaflets on the incubator both for visibility in the facilities and for the events in which it has participated. Photocalls and signage.

- b) General Public: UCAM HiTech makes significant efforts to showcase its activities to the general public, thanks to all the actions carried out in the incubator as a meeting point for the ecosystem in the Region of Murcia. These actions include programs, visits to the incubator, participation in fairs, and high-impact media coverage. As a result, we can say that millions of people are already familiar with UCAM HiTech.

From a communication standpoint, as an example, we can highlight the following actions:

- **Participation in conferences, congresses, and general trade fairs:** The incubator has taken part in more than 30 events of this nature. Regarding trade fairs, some of them have attracted thousands of visitors. For instance, UCAM HiTech and six of its startups participated in INNOVAM+, the innovation convention in the Region of Murcia, and the Forum for Innovation and Digital Transformation in Health. UCAM HiTech's presence has extended not only to regional fairs and activities but also at the national level, actively participating, such as at Startup Olé in Salamanca, among others.
- **Visits to UCAM HiTech:** Since its inauguration, there has been an intense effort to disseminate information to the general public. The facilities have received visitors every day to learn about this project. In terms of numbers, we can talk about **more than 3,000 in-person visitors**. They have been given detailed explanations of how it operates, taken on tours of the facilities, shown the functioning of various technological equipment, and explained the source of funding and the importance of research and entrepreneurship in Health, Sports, and Nutrition. The audience that has come to learn about it has ranged from students and individuals interested in participating to other entities such as universities, technology centers, companies, and institutions. Notable visitors include the President of the Region of Murcia, the President of the Chambers of Commerce of Spain, professional associations, internationally renowned researchers like Juan Carlos Izpisúa, and well-known athletes like Ilia Topuria.

In addition to the visits received, talks have been given at the faculties to introduce students to the incubator, emphasizing the importance of entrepreneurship and innovation and providing tools for the development of projects in health, sports, and food. This business acceleration and research center has organized and hosted a large number of conferences and events, some of which have had more than 200 attendees. For example, LifeTech Summit managed to bring together startups, companies, investors, and researchers, resulting in around 800 meetings in less than two days.

- **Press and Media Activities:** Since its inauguration, UCAM HiTech has achieved significant visibility in the media, thanks to all the activities conducted at the center and the considerable effort to promote the project and its contribution to society. The high-tech incubator has been featured multiple times on **television, radio**, and in national and regional **newspapers**, garnering substantial media coverage.

Next, we list different publications:



LA RAZÓN. February 16, 2023



FORBES. March 1, 2023



LA OPINIÓN DE MURCIA. November 14, 2022



EUROPAPRESS. February 18, 2022

- **Website and Social Media:** Since its opening, UCAM HiTech has had a website where visitors can learn more about the incubator's services, events, and prominent news. It serves as a visibility channel for incubated startups and a means of contact for interested entrepreneurs, companies, researchers, and investors.

Regarding social media, the incubator maintains various profiles:

- **Website:** In the one-year period from July 2022 to July 2023, we have had 68,000 visits, with a year-over-year growth of 205%.
- **Twitter:** The Twitter account has more than 800 followers, with 110,700 impressions in the last 12 months.
- **LinkedIn:** The LinkedIn page has more than 2,200 followers, with 132,956 impressions in the last 12 months.
- **Instagram:** The Instagram account has more than 600 followers.

In addition, UCAM HiTech has received support and visibility from UCAM's own social media platforms and other collaborating entities:

- **UCAM University.** Twitter - More than 38,800 followers, LinkedIn - More than 71,600 followers, Instagram - More than 83,100 followers.
 - **UCAM Vice-Rectorate for Research.** Twitter - More than 2,200 followers, LinkedIn - More than 950 followers.
 - **UCAM Institute of Technology in Murcia.** Twitter - More than 2,500 followers, LinkedIn - More than 1,200 followers.
- **Relationship and Contact with Collaborating Entities and Others:** UCAM HiTech has an extensive network of collaborators and a database with which it has maintained direct communication and informed them about all the activities conducted in the incubator and the value it brings to them

2. THE ACTION INCORPORATES INNOVATIVE ELEMENTS

Its 2,000 square meters of facilities are dedicated to two main areas: entrepreneurship and research. Due to the unique combination of these two areas, UCAM HiTech provides added value to startups. They not only have access to training, advisory services, masterclasses, and coworking space but also to an ecosystem that facilitates the establishment of high-quality partnerships and collaborations. Some of our incubated startups are working with research lines to develop new products.

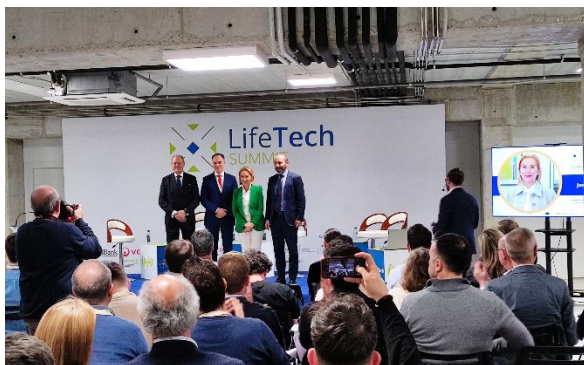
In the research area, the goal is to transfer the knowledge and technologies generated by teams of university scientists and associated R&D centers. Through these research lines, technology and knowledge are provided to incubated startups, as well as to businesses in the corporate sector, especially those in the Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia. This innovation helps companies enhance their competitiveness and promotes their growth in the market.

UCAM HiTech has rooms and laboratories for molecular modeling, data analysis, microscopy, pathological anatomy, hyperbaric chambers, chromatography, spectrophotometry, fermenters, microbiology, cell cultures, virology, molecular biology (Izpisua Belmonte Laboratory), electrophoresis, biomaterials and 3D printing, chemistry and biochemistry laboratory, sports physiology, biostatistics, bioinformatics, clinical analysis, and densitometry unit, all equipped with state-of-the-art technology.





With regard to entrepreneurship, UCAM HiTech provides co-working spaces for company incubation and meetings (Go, Growth Zones, and Flow Box) and spaces for training and events (Training Zone, Pitch Zone, Team Work, and Conference Room).



3. ADEQUACY OF THE RESULTS OBTAINED WITH THE ESTABLISHED OBJECTIVES

We can highlight that we have exceeded the expectations outlined in the established objectives:

- We have more than **110 incubated startups**, with 50% of them coming from the national sphere.
- We have had **68,000 website visits** in the span of a year, surpassing the expected 5,000 visits.

- In the UCAM HiTech facilities, a substantial number of programs have been developed to promote entrepreneurship, innovation, financing, networking, and mentoring. **More than 60 programs**, including over 25 focused on networking, have hosted **more than 2,500 hours of mentoring and advisory sessions**. Large-scale events, such as the LifeTech Summit, have been the meeting point for more than 800 meetings between startups, investors, companies, and researchers in just two days.
- We **have welcomed more than 3,000 individuals**, showcasing great interest in learning about the project and the numerous activities and events held at the facilities.
- In less than two years of operation, the incubator has **not only had regional but also national impact and visibility**. International promotion and participation are actively pursued, with agreements being forged with entities like ICEX. Furthermore, it's worth noting that UCAM has a strong international presence, leading to the promotion of this incubator at fairs and events outside of Spain.

On the other hand, regarding qualitative objectives, it is worth highlighting:

- Thanks to active collaboration, experience, and knowledge from UCAM's academic and research staff, solutions to technological challenges for businesses have been provided through:
 - Research and Development (R&D) contracts and agreements.
 - Collaborative R&D projects.
 - University-Company Chairs.
 - Industrial Doctorates.
- In order to contribute to the business environment, several initiatives have been developed to boost the collaborative ecosystem of research, innovation, and entrepreneurship in the fields of health, nutrition, and sports. Some of them include:
 - **HiTech Club Corporates**, focused on promoting open innovation and corporate investment in startups incubated at UCAM HiTech, as well as wealth and job creation. There are around 20 corporate members.
 - **Investors Partnership**, which comprises a selected group of strategic partners associated with investment in startups (venture capital, accelerators, incubators, crowdfunding, specialized advisory), with interests in the relevant fields, contributing value in supporting the creation and development of startups and fostering open innovation. There are currently 18 partners.
 - **Venture Studio** for scientific and technological startups in the fields of health, sports, and nutrition, an organization to rapidly create new businesses, launching and validating ideas from a central management team, with partners like Orbyn and NG Capital, corporations with extensive experience in implementing this type of model.
 - **Strategic alliances** to create an ecosystem and contribute to entrepreneurship and technology transfer. For example, with the Institute of Development of the Region of Murcia and Plug and Play.
 - Facilitating access to **funding sources** for incubated companies and projects through existing networks, linked to the organization of investor networking events.
 - Enhancing the **recruitment of talent** for startups by launching scholarship programs that facilitate student learning within these projects, promoting job creation.

- Making UCAM HiTech the **national headquarters** for major scientific and investment events. Examples include the LifeTech Summit and the National Scientific Entrepreneurship Congress.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO ADDRESSING A PROBLEM OR WEAKNESS IDENTIFIED IN THE EXECUTION TERRITORIAL AREA

Scientific and technical knowledge is undoubtedly one of the most important assets our country possesses for innovation and creating well-being and wealth for society as a whole. Furthermore, creativity and entrepreneurship, essential characteristics for ensuring the dynamism of our society and economy, are closely connected to advances in fundamental research and the activities of our scientists, who are also key players in knowledge transfer.

It is clear that the Region of Murcia has significant competitive potential due to its existing productive fabric, scientific potential, and commitment to innovation. In this context, the incubator serves as an ideal bridge to interconnect all these factors with R&D&I. UCAM HiTech combines entrepreneurship and research, fostering technological transfer, which is intimately linked to R&D&I, and nurturing latent business talents in the fields of Health, Sports, and Food.

If we refer to its areas of specialization, it can be considered that this project is contributing to improving the quality of life for citizens:

- **Health:** It includes the evaluation and identification of risk factors for various diseases, studying different therapies and interventions to combat the various diseases that afflict humans today. The breadth of this area of knowledge encompasses everything from molecular modeling for drug design to the development of molecular technologies for genetic or epigenetic modification of different cell types, as well as the study of biomaterials for tissue regeneration or dental implants, and 3D printing for creating surgical models for certain pathologies.
- **Sports:** The development of numerous research projects is focused on areas such as high-performance sports, the design of equipment for athletes, nutritional studies for athletes, sports management and sustainability, projects to transition elite athletes into entrepreneurship and investment, as well as support for startups in the sports sector.
- **Food:** Projects range from obtaining safer and healthier primary food production to the impact of food processing on different types of foods, the utilization and revaluation of byproducts from the food industry, the design and development of functional foods, to conducting clinical trials in humans to demonstrate the health properties of certain foods or dietary supplements. Due to the significant importance and impact of this specialization area, expansion efforts are underway, including the Pre-industrial Food Processing Plant, which will provide a competitive advantage for incubated startups and real benefits to society in various aspects.

UCAM HiTech is unique in its class due to its trisectorial approach (health, sports, and food) and its strong connection to R&D&I, leveraging research experience and tools provided by UCAM.

5. HIGH DEGREE OF COVERAGE OF THE TARGET POPULATION.

Entrepreneurship training for young people with high technological qualifications is undoubtedly one of the most reliable ways to promote the creation of solid companies and thus generate lasting jobs that lead to sustainable development. On the other hand, this training in entrepreneurship also opens up alternative possibilities to the academic path for doctors who, at present, cannot be absorbed by the labour market. UCAM HiTech enables the validation and development of science-based and technology-based projects in the aforementioned areas. Those who have participated in the incubator have found at their disposal a resource that has given them a competitive advantage when facing the global market.

Health, Sport and Food encompasses a large number of projects aimed at improving health, which not only have an impact on health but also have a direct impact on the economy. Thanks to the great work in communication that has been carried out, UCAM HiTech has had a high degree of coverage both on social networks and in the media, reaching and impacting the population.

6. CONSIDERATION OF HORIZONTAL CRITERIA FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND NON-DISCRIMINATION, AS WELL AS SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.

UCAM promotes non-discrimination and equal treatment as a fundamental and cross-cutting principle in all its internal policies, particularly its hiring policy, as reflected in its commitment and adherence to the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers in its policies and practices.

https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/declaration-endorsement#show_Spain

UCAM HiTech has demonstrated its commitment to equal opportunities and non-discrimination throughout its business operations and decisions. The company has implemented equitable hiring policies that ensure all candidates have an equal opportunity to be considered for a position. Additionally, training and development programs are designed to promote an inclusive and diverse work environment.

Regarding social responsibility and environmental sustainability, UCAM HiTech has taken significant steps to reduce environmental impact. The company has invested in cleaner and more efficient technologies, established clear goals for waste reduction, and collaborated with local organizations on projects that improve environmental sustainability. The building that houses the High-Tech Incubator was created as an environmentally sustainable building that complies with current legislation. It achieves rational use of the energy required for its operation, seeking to reduce its consumption to sustainable limits, as well as a portion of the consumption comes from renewable energy sources. It is also worth noting that UCAM is committed to the environment, developing lines of action and research to improve this point and reduce impact.

7. SYNERGIES WITH OTHER PUBLIC POLICIES OR INTERVENTION TOOLS

UCAM HiTech works very closely with other public and private organizations at both regional and national levels to promote entrepreneurship and improve the business environment. We highlight the collaboration that the incubator maintains with the **Institute**

of Development of the Region of Murcia (INFO), a Public Law Entity, attached to the Ministry of Enterprise, Social Economy and Self-Employment, which constitutes an instrument for the promotion and development of the Region of Murcia and its companies, incentivizing actions aimed at economic growth, particularly in the field of entrepreneurship. Since 2022, UCAM HiTech and INFO have been collaborating jointly to develop and carry out entrepreneurship promotion activities in the community.

We have also collaborated with the General Directorate of Trade and Business Innovation, promoting innovation and visibility of innovative projects incubated in this center.

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