

Coding and digital skills vital to entrepreneurship in students

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Knowledge and experience of coding and digital skills have a positive impact on students' interest in entrepreneurship, finds research from UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School (<https://www.smurfitschool.ie/>).

Computer science, digital, and entrepreneurship departments in higher education should collaborate to design courses that bridge the gap between technology and entrepreneurship.

Giuliano Sansone, Assistant Professor in Management from UCD Smurfit School, alongside colleagues from POLIMI Graduate School of Management and Politecnico di Torino, investigated the influence of coding and digital skills on students' entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurship.

From a survey of more than 2600 university students, the researchers found that coding and digital skills have a statistically positive influence on students' entrepreneurial engagement and entrepreneurship.

This includes students expressing an interest in entrepreneurship in their future, those in the process of creating their own businesses, and those who already own or run their own businesses.

Therefore, students with greater knowledge or experience of coding or digital skills are more likely to express interest in founding, or had already founded, their own company.

"The results recommend supporting coding and digital knowledge and experiences in all university activities that aim at fostering students' entrepreneurial engagement and student entrepreneurship," says Professor Sansone. "It is important that students have access to the necessary resources for the coding and digital world. Future entrepreneurship courses, for instance, may consider incorporating coding and digital aspects."

The researchers also recommend mentorship programmes that pair students with mentors experienced in coding and the digital world. This would incentivise university-industry partnership, specifically for tech and digital companies to provide students with access to real-world technology and experiences.

These findings were published in IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management.

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