

Via Vinci expertise Science Parks and the Via Vinci Campus

Science & Technology Parks (STP's) and Business Incubators are considered the most suitable venue to stimulate the development of entrepreneurial skills and new business. They both can play a pivotal role in the new global economy. Science & Technology Parks promote the economic development and competitiveness of companies, regions and cities by:

- Creating new business opportunities and adding value to mature companies
- Fostering entrepreneurship and incubating new innovative companies
- Generating knowledge-based jobs
- Building attractive spaces for the emerging knowledge workers
- Enhancing the synergy between universities, companies and governments.

Often a mutual relationship between the city/region and a specific science park can be found. This indicates that STP's are a powerful way to increase productivity and competitiveness in the 21st Century, because of their flexibility and their effectiveness in taking advantage of all the tools offered by the modern digital era.

Via Vinci is a member of the International Association of Science Parks (IASP), a global network organisation with more than 150,000 companies in 600 highly-innovative Science & Technology Parks members in 75 countries. Their purpose is to connect Science Park professionals from across the globe and provide services that drive growth and effectiveness for its members. IASP members enhance the competitiveness of companies and entrepreneurs of their cities and regions, and contribute to global economic development through innovation, entrepreneurship, and the transfer of knowledge and technology. Being part of this network provides Via Vinci access to both know-how for the fast development of highly-innovative science parks and a network of over 150.000 companies worldwide, which results in a great source for business activities and knowledge exchange.

In cooperation with IASP and IASP members, Via Vinci has conducted various projects related to the creation, development and growth of STP's. Via Vinci can provide the full range of activities for the development and creation of STP's, including the following:

- Feasibility study
- Design of the STP
- Development of a business model
- Development of a marketing strategy
- Education, training & development for STP managers and entrepreneurs
- Consultancy and supporting the implementation process
- Management and implementation of the STP

With the experiences of working in close cooperation with IASP and being involved in various projects in all parts of STP development, Via Vinci has decided to develop its own STP concept based on current global trends in entrepreneurship and innovation: the Via Vinci Campus, with a high focus on combining entrepreneurialism and innovation with sustainability in every aspect of (business) life.

Sustainability has become a worldwide trend in the largest sense of the word: the concern for the preservation of our earth and her ecological richness, and building a stable international society. These concerns have a huge impact on people's drive to learn, work and act. Producers, consumers, service providers and governments worldwide have become aware that there is a need for:

- A new generation of entrepreneurs strongly focused on synergy between care for the environment and economical success. The recent Cradle to Cradle philosophy illustrates that higher goals can be achieved in combination with business growth than what is captured in the Kyoto Agreements.
- Sustainable innovations of products, processes and business operations

- Maximum integration of education and business practice as developments in both science and technology need to feed each other permanently. Obsolete knowledge in both higher education and business practice needs to be avoided.
- Fast exposure and implementation of new developments in higher education and business practice towards the worldwide society. A shift in collective awareness and behaviour is urgently needed.

These trends summarise what Via Vinci stands for and why we feel so strongly about our concept of new education. Creative leadership is one of the intrinsic pillars of our organisation. Creative leadership is the skill and attitude of leading to develop new solutions for problems, to find new ways and think of alternatives, and to motivate the people within the group or organisation to follow the new paths of the leader. The fact is that we are faced with enormous global issues that affect us all. We need creative leaders to cope with these issues. The second intrinsic pillar of Via Vinci is innovative, sustainable entrepreneurship: gaining knowledge, skills and attitudes to start and lead (a part of) a company innovatively and successfully, in which diversity, sustainability *and* economic return are important criteria.

Via Vinci is strongly motivated to provide an answer to these two societal developments. We can provide a fundamental contribution to the new awareness in relation to our environment, our society and our worldwide economy for the following reasons:

1. the content of our education programmes is focused on pro-active and creative leadership, on sustainable entrepreneurship, and on building competencies for innovation and quality improvement.
2. our education didactics are based on, among others, embedded or constructive learning, which allows our students (mostly executives) to focus on improving processes in their own company, school, hospital, office, science park or other organisation from the start of their study.
3. as a member of the International Association of Science Parks (IASP), this enormous network enables us to identify opportunities in a global perspective and be involved in innovative projects worldwide.
4. Via Vinci further has a large worldwide network of professors who are highly committed to contributing to fundamental improvements for our society. We can deliver professors, teachers and experts in all disciplines for conducting research and executing education and training programmes.

The combination of the worldwide trend for sustainable entrepreneurship and our education, research and development concepts has led to the development of our unique campus concept. The "Via Vinci Campus" is an environment for learning, research and development fully tuned to the ecological landscape. Although each campus is tailor-made for each location, all will capture the following functions:

Education

- Higher education programmes aimed at acquiring a Bachelor, Master or Doctorate degree, offered by Via Vinci in cooperation with professors, universities and other national and international education institutes. Via Vinci currently offers higher education in five major fields: Business Development, Human Resources, Cleantech, Health Care and Education. New major fields may be developed in the future.
- Chairs: professors who will be responsible for knowledge increase and exchange in their field of expertise, in cooperation with student researchers, governments and business practice. The professors will also be promoter for promotion candidates in DBA programmes.
- Courses, seminars and Master Classes covering topics from the current five major fields or any other topic that may be of interest for those involved in the campus.

Research

- Laboratories and other research facilities for companies that want to have their product, service or process researched and DBA/Ph.D students carrying out their innovative promotion research for their Doctorate programme.

Conference

- Conferences and meetings around any of the areas of expertise of those involved in the campus.
- Hotel and restaurant facilities for international congresses and meetings at executive level
- Possibility to exploit the location for external usage

Exhibition:

- Commercial sales rooms for incubators and other companies
- Educational conventions and 'experience' of new products, services etc.

Entrepreneurialism

- Creation of an incubator supported by Via Vinci professors and researchers, supported and managed by Via Vinci students (executives who have acquired large experience within their own organisation) during the last phase of their MBA studies.
- Production processes based on the Cradle-to-Cradle concept

Shared Services

- Employee facilities such as child day-care and grocery services
- Other business facilities and shared services for entrepreneurs, employees and guests.

Innovation centres such as our Via Vinci Campus are specifically geared towards the needs of new and small companies, providing a facilitated environment for the incubation of firms and the achievement of high growth. As well as the close partnership with experts and researchers, companies benefit from close proximity to a range of other activities and specialised firms of similar character. Via Vinci Campuses may also house research divisions of larger or international firms, who benefit from the close links with a higher education institution and R&D labs.

Three mechanisms are identified to be important for the successful growth and evolution of our Campus concept:

Growth mechanisms: These are the factors and capabilities that sustain a science park and enable it to grow over time. First, the provision of infrastructure for entrepreneurial activities and financing of the concept are essential. By offering a unique combination of a wide variety of facilities and a highly-innovative environment, Via Vinci Campuses provide an excellent infrastructure for all its entrepreneurs, professors, researchers and students. Second, the agglomeration effects are important, which relate to the stimulation of job creation and regional growth as new firms, talented labour and investments are drawn to the region. In turn, companies can have access to a greater number and variety of suppliers, technical expertise and potential business partners, all located within close proximity of the campus. The third growth mechanism is the continual self-renewal through the creation of new businesses. The single most critical factor for a science park's long-term sustainability is its ability to foster the creation of new firms, in both existing and emerging sectors, in order to continually renew itself. By attracting both existing entrepreneurs and Via Vinci students who are starting up their own business, the Via Vinci Campus becomes an arena for continuous innovation.

Technological capabilities: This aspect is concerned with the development and strengthening of capabilities in R&D and the creation of competitive advantages in specific technology sectors. A region's technological capabilities are often indirectly addressed in discussions of a region's industrial sectors of competence. Nowadays technology is not the only factor of critical importance; the Cradle-to-Cradle concept, Corporate Social Responsibility and the strong focus on sustainable entrepreneurship and creative leadership will be the new leading advantages in the light of the rapid developments in our turbulent society.

Global role and market integration: This aspect addresses the linkages between the region and the global or national economies, the degree of integration with regional or global markets, and the creation of the region's niche in the global system. At the national level, this may concern the ability of the economy to commercialise the output of research, and to offer a viable market for its products. At the global level, this may concern the ability of a region to connect with different regions and the global value chain/

Regions that will be selected for a Via Vinci campus have great opportunities for knowledge development and stimulation of entrepreneurship as a motor for the economy. State-of-the-art knowledge of business and sustainable development are linked to the creation of new enterprises and to existing companies by supporting their sustainable development in a global perspective. Residency in a Via Vinci Campus has many advantages and provides access to a range of management, marketing and financial services. At its heart, our Campus provides organised links to our local research centre and the expertise of our university, providing resident companies with the constant access to the expertise, knowledge and technology they need to grow.

Via Vinci has identified five potential locations for the establishment of a Via Vinci Campus in the Netherlands. We are now looking for suitable locations in other countries where Via Vinci activities have started in 2007 or will be starting in 2008. These countries are Surinam, the Caribbean (Aruba, Jamaica & Trinidad), United Kingdom, Russia, Slovakia, Belgium and Bahrain. A feasibility study for the start-up of a Via Vinci Campus will be carried out for these countries later this year. We will enlarge our international partner network and expand our international activities to other countries worldwide in 2009.

Large-scaled projects such as the Via Vinci Campus, either in the Netherlands or abroad, can only be brought to life by a consortium of partners. Via Vinci is initiator and one of the main users of the campus. Via Vinci monitors the concept which is IP protected; the concept is unique in its full synergy between the various functions in the campus. Potential investors have been approached and their first reaction is very positive. Other parties, such as regional education institutes, national and international companies and NGO's can become partner in the Via Vinci Campus. Professors and entrepreneurs who have earned their credits worldwide in researching and practising sustainable entrepreneurship have shown their interest in becoming a Via Vinci partner in their field of expertise on the campus. As a member of the worldwide network organisation International Association of Science Parks (IASP), Via Vinci wants to offer all Via Vinci Campuses membership of IASP as well, thereby providing the Campus to fully profit from the huge advantages this network offers. In principal the IASP Board of Directors has given her approval to allow such a campus to become member of her knowledge- and business practice network.