

## STUDENT-COMPANY FAIR IN ITS 3RD YEAR

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It has become custom already to conduct student-company fairs within BSc (top-up) studies since 2011; this year we celebrated the third anniversary of this venture. Unfortunately this year the event did not coincide with the Valentine's Day as it did in the previous years (it took place on Feb 11), the spirit however remained.

The aim of the student-company fair is to generate semester project opportunities for

the bachelor students by engaging them in a direct dialogue with the entrepreneurs and local communes; in other words at the fair we bring together BSc students from the International Business Centre (IBC, [www.ibc.aau.dk](http://www.ibc.aau.dk)) and companies from Northern Jutland with the help of SEA ([www.sea.aau.dk](http://www.sea.aau.dk)) and Solution Hub.

A total number of 50 students representing 20 nationalities and 8 companies took part in the fair. The students were placed in groups of four or five and had to pitch their team to each company in order to get selected for the 'job', i.e., to engage in solving a real company problem with an international scope during their semester project. The duration of the pitch was seven minutes. The groups and the companies had scorecards that they used to score each other. The groups and

the companies were matched based on the scored preferences. The quotes below from the students who took part in the fair speak for themselves:

*"We had the opportunity to talk to CEOs who most of the time had very interesting proposals and were willing to work with the students"*

*"Discussing with real world businessmen, and understanding actual real life problems companies have and would like us to solve"*

*"We had the chance to choose the most attractive company for our semester project"*



*"The fair made us more motivated to put more efforts into studying, as well as learn more about the entrepreneurs and how small ventures can be creative"*

*"We found out that the companies we were not interested in before the fair were actually quite interesting"*

Picture:  
Students and companies in action



When asked to reflect on their experience at the fair, this is what the entrepreneurs had to say:

*"What were most attractive at the fair were diverse nationalities within the groups, students were quite engaged, and well prepared; good group CVs"*

*"Very motivating students, with strong background in the field of business, and strong communications skills with clear focus on the semester project"*

*"We had a real good discussion with the groups about the project and our product, and during these discussions we have already learned something we can take from the fair, even without starting the project – this was great experience"*

*"Each team had a comprehensive introduction of the team, and each member individually; personally I found very hard to evaluate, score each team because I felt each team was able to provide, at least to our company, a lot of inputs"*

This student-company fair is within the tradition of the Aalborg PBL model that has been recognized worldwide as a powerful tool that allows students, faculty members, industry practitioners, and public servants engage in multi-disciplinary, collaborative and geographically distributed activities. With this enterprise, we bridge the gap between the educational experience and the implementation of the international entrepreneurial behavior. In a way, we have created realistic and engaging international entrepreneurship experiences for our students and companies from Northern Jutland and beyond.

This enterprise is also part of a larger project called "Region as Incubator". The aim of this project is manifold; it aims to contribute to i) fostering entrepreneurship, business development and SME growth in the Northern Jutland region of Denmark, ii) furthering the lifelong learning in the region, and iii) nurturing wider participation of local communes in the university-business co-operation initiatives.

For more information about the student-company fair you may contact Morten

Dahlgard Andersen ([mda@adm.aau.dk](mailto:mda@adm.aau.dk)) or Marie Fallgaard ([mf@adm.aau.dk](mailto:mf@adm.aau.dk)) from SEA who administer and coordinate the project, or Anrim Decker ([decker@business.aau.dk](mailto:decker@business.aau.dk)) who is BSc program coordinator. To learn more about the project "Region as Incubator", please contact Romeo V. Turcan ([rvt@business.aau.dk](mailto:rvt@business.aau.dk)).

Pictures:

Left: Entrepreneurs/CEOs presenting their companies

Top: Students and companies in action

Bottom: Multinational BSc (top-up) class

