“This event is truly breathing life into Aalborg problem based learning model... it is problem based learning in practice... It is one of the ways to innovate our problem based learning model” – Inger Askehave, AAU Vice-Rector (Feb 14, 2014).

This year we celebrated the 4th anniversary of the student-company fair that we organize for our IBC top-up students (www.ibc.aau.dk) in cooperation with SEA (www.sea.aau.dk) with support from Solution Hub (www.solutionhub.dk). Keeping up established traditions, the fair took place on Valentine’s Day!!!

Our BSc students and companies come together to work together on identifying and solving real business problems these companies currently face. In such a way, for the duration of the semester, the students get engaged in a direct dialogue and close cooperation with the entrepreneurs and local public institutions.

The fair took place at NOVI and welcomed 10 companies (picture 1) and 46 students representing 12 nationalities (picture 2). The students were organized in groups of 5 and had to prepare a presentation of their groups (they even prepared group business cards; here are two examples: picture 3, http://goo.gl/WcQPys) and pitched their teams to each company to get selected for the ‘job’ (pictures 4–6). The pitch lasted approximately 7 minutes. The groups and companies had scorecards and evaluated each other in an attempt to generate perfect match (date!!!).

This fair is the beginning part of the semester project. After the match, the groups will work with companies as part of their semester project on the identified companies’ current business problems.
As with any product, customer satisfaction is the key to success. This year was not an exception, as the feedback from the students speaks for itself:

“I was surprised by willingness of the companies to collaborate with students and the fact that they value our opinions and ideas”

“Getting 10 interview experiences within less than two hours is a great opportunity”

“We’ve got an opportunity to try acting in a challenging and competitive working environment and realized that we have to stand out from the crowd”

“It is interesting to understand that every ‘field’ could become your business idea”

It is not the students who only learn – it is the entrepreneurs as well. The feedback from entrepreneurs is encouraging as always:

“It is an experience we could get value from...new knowledge and exciting questions”

“Do it again next year, great event”

“The students were well prepared and knew a lot about our company... and had very creative introductions”

“In discussions, going through the history, idea and aspirations of our company generated new ideas, and new possibilities for development”

If you would like to learn more about the student-company fair, please contact Romeo V. Turcan or Arnim Decker of IBC or Morten Dahlgaard Andersen or Marie Faligaard of SEA.