BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE STARTUP AND INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM FOR STUDENTS IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES WILL BE A DRIVING FORCE TO PROMOTE LOCAL SOCIO – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE ERA OF VIETNAM'S GROWTH

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Vietnam is gradually rising strongly in the era of digital transformation and global integration, building a sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem in private universities has become an urgent requirement and an important driving force to promote local socio-economic development. In the era of Vietnam's strong rise, transforming from a developing economy to a knowledge-based economy, innovation and comprehensive digitalization, higher education - especially private universities - is becoming one of the strategic pillars to realize the nation's aspirations for strength. This article has raised a problem of profound contemporary significance: Building a sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem for students in private universities - as a strategic lever to promote local socio-economic development, where potentials are still waiting to be awakened. The article has deeply analyzed the unique role of private higher education institutions in training young, flexible, creative human resources - the central subjects in the sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem. With an autonomous governance mechanism, close to the labor market and businesses, private universities have great potential in implementing startup support programs for students.

With their youth, flexibility and ability to quickly adapt to market needs, private universities are gradually affirming their role not only in training human resources but also as a cradle to nurture generations of young entrepreneurs, bold innovators, those who dare to think - dare to do - dare to be different. The sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in the private university environment does not stop at supporting students to start businesses, but is also a vibrant, multi-layered ecosystem, connecting Schools - Businesses - Investors - Government - Community. The article emphasizes that students are the potential innovation force to create technological solutions and creative business models to solve local development problems effectively and sustainably. The sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in private universities, when built systematically and closely linked to local needs, will not only contribute to improving students' competitiveness but also create a ripple effect on the community, create jobs, promote new professions and nurture the entrepreneurial spirit in the whole society. The article also emphasizes that investing in and developing the sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in private universities is not only to create startup products but more deeply, to create people with innovative

thinking, action capacity and social creative spirit.

The article also proposes key solutions such as: Integrating entrepreneurship education into training programs; Improving the capacity of lecturers on entrepreneurship and sustainable innovation; Mobilizing social resources and local authorities; Applying digital technology to optimize the startup ecosystem and proposing specific support policies for private universities in this field. The article has affirmed the strategic role of the private university startup ecosystem as an important link in developing the knowledge economy and enhancing national innovation capacity. Finally, the article has made important recommendations such as: Perfecting policies to support the ecosystem on startups and sustainable innovation for private universities; Promoting the connection of "4 Houses": School - State - Business - Scientists; Strongly applying digital technology and artificial intelligence to startup education; Building regional startup alliances to create a nationwide innovation network. Thereby, the article not only proposes a new development model for private higher education, but also inspires and inspires confidence in a generation of students: Pioneers - Courageous - Creative - Aspirational - Contributing to making Vietnam an innovative nation in the new era.

Keywords: *Sustainable Startup and Innovation Ecosystem; Students; Private universities; Driving force for Local Socio-Economic Development; Vietnam's Rising Era.*

1.Introduction

1.1.Global and national context

In an era of great change and transformation of humanity, the world is witnessing a "change of throne" in knowledge, technology and creativity. The Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0) - with breakthrough achievements in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Blockchain, Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data, Biotechnology and Smart Automation - has created an earthquake in all areas of life, from production to education, from national governance to startup business. This is not only a revolution in technology, but also a revolution in thinking, development models and social structures.

In the context of globalization and deep integration, countries no longer compete purely on resources or cheap labor, but on creativity, adaptability and innovation speed. Countries with strong startup-innovation ecosystems will dominate the new economic game. In this wave, startups are no longer a secondary choice, but have become a vital strategy for economies that want to break through, especially developing countries like Vietnam. Facing this wave, higher education - especially domestic higher education - cannot stand aside. Universities are now not only places to impart knowledge, but must become "factories" for producing creative human resources, people who dare to think, dare to do, dare to take risks, dare to make mistakes and dare to start over. The value of learners no longer lies in their degrees, but in their ability to create new values: creative products, startups, solutions to practical problems. Students today not only study to work, but also to start a business, to be a boss, to become a leader in a world full of competition and opportunities.

Recognizing that trend and opportunity, the Vietnamese Government has identified innovative startups as one of the strategic driving forces for socio-economic development, enhancing national competitiveness and building an independent and self-reliant economy. Resolution No.52-NQ/TW on proactively participating in the 4.0 industrial revolution, Project 844 on supporting the national innovation and startup ecosystem, the National Program on digital transformation, along with a series of policies at the ministerial, sectoral and local levels... show a strong determination of the State in creating an innovative startup environment, especially at the local and regional levels.

In many localities, especially dynamic provinces and cities such as Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, Binh Duong, Can Tho, Lam Dong, the government has considered innovative startups as a strategic pivot to develop the digital economy, build smart cities, improve labor productivity, develop small and medium enterprises and create high-quality jobs for young people. In that picture, universities - especially dynamic private universities - are expected to become "launching pads" for the startup dreams of the young generation, a place to nurture startups with the ability to break through, connect with local specialties and serve the land where they live and study. Innovative startups are not only an economic issue, but also a way to create the future, where the young generation is empowered, encouraged and challenged to break through. And in that journey, the strong development of the startup and innovation ecosystem in private universities is not only an internal need, but also a major strategy for localities to develop breakthroughs, for Vietnam to rise strongly and confidently stand shoulder to shoulder with developed countries in the new era.

1.2.The growing role of private universities

In the flow of modernization and international integration, the Vietnamese higher education system is witnessing a breakthrough movement: the strong and courageous rise of private universities. Once considered the "backyard" of public education, private universities have now gradually affirmed

their independent, dynamic and creative position in the national higher education ecosystem. The rapid development in both scale, training quality and innovation capacity has changed society's view of this group of universities, turning them from "sidelines" to central agents for educational innovation and local development.

Private universities are growing rapidly in both size and quality. In just the past two decades, Vietnam has witnessed a sharp increase in the number of private higher education institutions, spread from urban to rural areas, from developed to disadvantaged areas. Many private universities have continuously invested in modern infrastructure, high-quality teaching staff and pioneered the application of international training models, global joint programs and advanced educational technology.

Typically, FPT University, Hoa Sen University, Van Lang University, Nguyen Tat Thanh University, Hong Bang International University, Duy Tan University...have developed into prestigious training institutions, highly appreciated by society. These universities not only achieve domestic quality accreditation standards, but also aim for regional and international standards, becoming a reliable choice for thousands of students each year.

Flexibility and high adaptability to market needs. One of the outstanding advantages of private universities is their flexibility in organization, operation and quick response to labor market needs. Not bound by heavy administrative mechanisms like the public system, private universities are able to:

•Quickly update training programs according to new trends of the digital economy.

•Closely cooperate with businesses in building output standards, internships, practical learning and practice.

•Introduce new majors into training such as: Artificial Intelligence, Digital Business, Interactive Media, Creative Management, E-commerce, Startups and Innovation...

•Boldly experiment with new learning models: project-based learning, experiential learning, in-university creative incubators, "learning through startups" programs...

Therefore, students from private universities are often equipped with good soft skills, practical thinking, high entrepreneurial spirit and the ability to flexibly adapt to future job trends. Opportunities for private universities to become centers to promote local startup and innovation ecosystems. While public universities often focus on academic research and serve national goals, private universities have more conditions and motivations to connect more deeply with the socio-economic development needs of the localities where they are located. By connecting closely with businesses, organizations and local governments, private universities can quickly take on the role of "Regional Innovation Hubs" where:

Incubate and support start-up projects of students, lecturers and local people. Provide technology solutions, new production models and services for local businesses, especially small and medium enterprises. Organize activities to transfer knowledge, technology, business consulting, trade promotion and market connection. Form "University - Business - Government" alliances to create a comprehensive, cohesive and effective start-up and innovation ecosystem. In reality, in many localities, private universities have become an indispensable strategic, resource in the effort to innovate the growth model. In Ho Chi Minh City, Nguyen Tat Thanh University has developed a Center for Creative Start-ups in association with nearly 200 businesses. In Da Nang, Duy Tan University actively cooperates with the government to develop programs to promote technology startups. These models not only provide students with a playground and career opportunities, but also contribute to restructuring the local economy in a sustainable and knowledge-based direction. From being "newcomers" in the higher education system, private universities are now emerging as pioneers in creating an innovative startup ecosystem locally. With their agility, flexibility, closeness to the market and strong desire for development, private universities not only train global citizens but also create future innovators – those who can "change the game" with their own intellectual strength, technology and persistent entrepreneurial spirit. This is a historic opportunity for private universities to accompany the country on its journey of transformation, breakthrough and international reach.

1.3.The urgency of the topic

In the context of Vietnam's strong transformation to affirm its national position in the digital age, startups and innovation are no longer an optional choice, but have become a development imperative, a strategic pivot of the knowledge economy. However, for startups to truly become a driving force for sustainable development, the decisive factor does not lie in a few individual pioneers, but in the formation and effective operation of a synchronous, connected and widespread startup ecosystem. In that big picture, universities - especially private universities - play a central role but are being overlooked, falling into a state of "Lack of connection - Lack of resources - Lack of support

mechanisms". The startup and innovation ecosystem in private universities is still fragmented, lacking connections and limited influence. Currently, in Vietnam, although many private universities have begun to build innovation centers, open labs, or organize startup competitions, most of these efforts are still fragmented, isolated, lacking a system and long-term strategy. Many universities still consider startup and innovation as a movement activity, lacking systematic investment in finance, human resources and policies. Startup training programs mainly focus on communication and short-term competitions, lacking continuous support models from ideas - testing - commercialization - market expansion.

In addition, private universities often lack close links with businesses, local authorities and social organizations, while these are the "backbone" components that create a true startup and innovation ecosystem. The situation of "each doing their own thing" and "each university doing its own thing" leads to the ecosystem being unable to expand its influence beyond the campus and even less able to spread into the production, business and creative life of the local community. Meanwhile, if startups and innovation only stop at schools, it will be difficult to create real value. Developing a startup community associated with the locality is a prerequisite for startups to become the driving force of the economy. A strategic approach is needed to develop a startup and innovation ecosystem at private universities in conjunction with local development

The above reality poses an urgent requirement: private universities cannot continue to follow the old path, but need a strategic approach - innovation - integration and extensive cooperation, to develop a truly vibrant, sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem that is capable of creating a positive impact on the local economy and society.

Instead of just being a place to teach, private universities need to become "local innovation centers", places to incubate businesses, spread the entrepreneurial spirit to students, youth and communities; places to provide technological solutions for farmers, small businesses and cooperatives; places to connect capital - ideas - markets - policies. That is, private universities are no longer "on the sidelines" but must play a constructive role, "understanding real needs" and providing solutions to accompany local development.

This becomes even more urgent when many localities – especially emerging economic zones, satellite cities, rural and mountainous areas – are yearning for a new growth engine, moving beyond the old development model based on resources and cheap labor. The sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem from private universities with its dynamic, creative, flexible and practical characteristics, is the key to "awakening" local potential, especially in the fields of digital economy, smart tourism, high-tech agriculture and OCOP startup products.

This topic has high theoretical and practical significance in Vietnam's journey of "rising up"

This topic not only has theoretical significance in clarifying the role and model of developing the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem in private universities, but also has high practical significance in proposing solutions and policies to activate local startup potential through the synergy between University - Businesses - Government - Community. This is a new, radical, inspiring direction and can create a "silent revolution" in the approach to developing education associated with the locality.

If Vietnam is striving to stand shoulder to shoulder with the world powers, then that journey needs to be nurtured from small innovations but with great resonance - and developing the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem in private universities is a "lifeblood" that needs to be opened, nurtured and strongly developed.

2.Theoretical basis and concepts

2.1.What is the startup and innovation ecosystem?

Startup and innovation are not just about an individual or a group of people setting up a new business. It is a dynamic, complex and interdisciplinary process where new ideas are formed, tested, developed and brought to market, aiming to create new values for society, from products, services to business models, technology and organizational methods. For this process to be successful and widespread, a comprehensive ecosystem is needed, where all key elements are connected, supported and resonate with each other - that is the startup and innovation ecosystem.

2.1.1.Concept of startup and innovation ecosystem

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the startup ecosystem is understood as:

"A network of individuals, organizations and institutions interacting with each other in a business and innovation environment, aiming to promote the formation and development of new businesses with the potential for growth."

According to the Ministry of Science and Technology of Vietnam, in Project 844/QD-TTg, the startup and innovation ecosystem is defined as:

"The totality of relationships between individuals,

organizations, policies, facilities, financial resources and knowledge, creating conditions for creative startup activities to be deployed, developed and commercialized." Thus, the Startup and Innovation Ecosystem is not a mere physical space, but a comprehensive environment - a place where resources, mechanisms, organizations and people converge and interact to provide continuous support from the time an idea is formed until the startup develops into a successful business.

2.1.2.Components of the Startup and Innovation ecosystem

A strong and sustainable Startup and Innovation ecosystem often includes the following main pillars:

1) Creative human resources (Talent):

- Students, lecturers, technical experts, researchers, designers, inventors, etc.

- People with critical thinking, problem-solving skills, entrepreneurial spirit and innovation ability.

2)Technology and Knowledge:

- Digital infrastructure, laboratories, research centers.

- Intellectual property rights, inventions, applied technology solutions.

3)Finance:

- Venture capital funds, angel investors, banks, KN funding programs.

- Financial support for the idea, incubation and growth stages.

4)Policy and institutions:

- Startup support mechanisms, tax exemptions, streamlined procedures, protection of intellectual property rights.

- The role of the State in orientation and protection.

5)Creative spaces and incubators (Incubators – Accelerators – Makerspaces):

- Co-working spaces, startup incubators, innovation centers.

- Support for training, consulting, technical, networking.

6)Market Access and Networks:

- Business networks, public-private partnerships, startup associations, media.

- Investor connection events, innovation fairs, idea exchanges.

7)Startup culture:

- Risk-taking spirit, innovative thinking, supportive community and mutual learning.

- Open environment, respect for creativity and allowing failure to be valuable learning.

All of the above components do not operate independently, but interact and support each other, forming a dynamic ecosystem, capable of self-adaptation and development according to the needs of the market and society.

2.1.3.Model of startup and innovation ecosystem in university environment

In that context, universities - especially private universities - are not only places to train theoretical knowledge, but are gradually transforming to become the center of the startup ecosystem - innovation. The model of startup ecosystem, innovation in university environment often includes the following specific elements:

1)Innovation Hub:

- Be the focal point for operating and managing startup and innovation activities in the university.

- Coordinate with businesses, startup support organizations, investors, and the government.

2)Startup incubator and creative space (Incubator - Makerspace):

- Provide workspace, equipment and technical resources for students to test ideas.

- Organize incubation and startup acceleration programs.

3)Training and Mentorship Program:

- Integrate startup and innovation content into the main and extracurricular training programs.

- Invite experts, entrepreneurs and consultants to provide practical guidance to students.

4)Startup student clubs and communities:

A place to inspire passion, connect project teams, organize competitions, share experiences of failure and success.

5)Connect with businesses and external ecosystems:

- Cooperate with businesses to implement real projects, find product outlets and expand markets.

- Create a bridge between student ideas and investors, funding funds, and domestic and foreign start up support organizations.

6)Legal - financial - intellectual property support:

- Legal advice, support for trademark registration, copyright and investment capital calling.

- Accompanying startups in all stages of development.

2.1.4.Why is a startup and innovation ecosystem needed in universities?

Because students do not just study for exams, but need to learn to become value creators. A modern educational environment needs to encourage:

•The ability to dare to think, dare to do, dare to make mistakes and dare to start over.

•Opportunities for students to see their ideas turned into specific products - solutions - business models.

•A safe but challenging experimental space to inspire a spirit of persistent creativity.

And the startup and innovation ecosystem itself will be a solid launching pad for startup dreams starting from university.

2.2.What is the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem?

2.2.1.Concept of sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem

The sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem is a network of closely interacting and mutually supportive entities – including individual entrepreneurs, businesses, support organizations, investors, research institutes, universities, government agencies and communities – that together create a dynamic and effective environment to incubate, develop and expand new, innovative business ideas that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. Not only does it simply support startups and innovation, this ecosystem also focuses on long-term sustainable values, meaning that startups not only bring profits, but also create positive impacts on the community, protect natural resources and promote social equity.

2.2.2.Core elements that make up a sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem

•Human Capital: Founders with entrepreneurial mindset, scientists, innovators, consultants, mentors, experts in related fields. This is the "seed" for every startup process.

•Financial Capital: Includes startup capital sources (seed capital, venture capital funds, banks, state support programs, etc.), especially green finance for sustainable development projects.

•Knowledge and Technology: The system of universities, research institutes, digital platforms, open data, etc. plays a role in providing knowledge platforms and technology tools for innovative startups.

•Policy and Governance: Open legal mechanisms, programs to support startups - innovation, preferential policies on tax, land, intellectual property, help create a favorable environment for startups to develop sustainably.

•Infrastructure and Physical Environment: Co-working space, innovation center, high-tech park, virtual connection network, modern logistics and e-commerce system.

•Culture and Networks: Startup culture encourages creativity, risk-taking, learning from failure and the community is willing to share and support each other for the common development goal.

2.2.3."Sustainability" in the startup and innovation ecosystem

•Economic sustainability: Enterprises develop stably, have long-term growth, have high competitiveness and financial autonomy.

•Social sustainability: Addressing community issues such as poverty reduction, education, health, employment, gender equality and capacity building for the disadvantaged.

•Environmental sustainability: Applying green technology, circular economy, reducing emissions, protecting natural resources, aiming for "zero waste" and "net-zero".

2.2.4.The role of sustainable innovation and startup ecosystems in national development

This ecosystem acts as a "trigger" for knowledge-based economic growth, is the foundation for a startup nation, helps to utilize local resources, discover young talents and create new value chains in the green economy - digital economy. It promotes the shift from growth based on resource exploitation to growth based on innovation and social responsibility. The sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem is a progressive and comprehensive model that not only nurtures innovative startups but also ensures harmonious, responsible development towards the environment and community – opening a new path for a prosperous and humane future.

2.3.The role of universities in the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem in the knowledge era, where every idea can become the driving force for economic breakthroughs and every person can become a future creator, universities are not only places to "transfer knowledge" but must become "innovation centers", a core part of the national startup and innovation ecosystem.

Especially in the context of the 4.0 industrial revolution and widespread digital transformation, the role of universities - especially dynamic private universities - is being repositioned as the "heart" of innovation, the "launching pad" for startups and the "strategic link" connecting businesses - the state - the community.

2.3.1.Universities are places to incubate ideas, transfer knowledge and technology

For hundreds of years, universities have been the place to conceive great ideas, the place to form inventions that change the world. Nowadays, in a globally competitive environment, universities are increasingly becoming "giant incubators" of creative thinking, innovation and daring spirit.

University students, with their youthful spirit, not yet constrained by conventional thinking, are potential "seeds of innovation". However, without a suitable incubation environment, those ideas will be stunted.

2.3.2.Universities are the places that transform potential into action through:

•Applied research rooms, open labs for students to test their ideas.

•Incubators, accelerators to support students from the idea stage to completing business models.

•Technology transfer, bringing research results of lecturers and students to the market.

•Support for patent registration, intellectual property rights and intellectual product protection for startups in the university.

2.3.3.Characteristics and roles of private universities in the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem

While public higher education still bears a strong traditional imprint, the private university model has become a new symbol for flexible management thinking, quick market access and nurturing the spirit of creative startups. The strong rise of private universities in the past few decades not only reflects the shifting needs of society, but also affirms the special mission of this university sector in the process of building an integrated - creative - prosperous Vietnam.

1)Flexibility in organization, quick decision making, close to businesses and the market

One of the most outstanding features of private universities is their high autonomy in organization, finance and academia. Not bound by cumbersome administrative apparatus, private universities can:

•Make quick decisions on opening new majors, updating training programs, international cooperation or implementing startup initiatives in universities.

•Design flexible training models, combining academic knowledge and practical skills, quickly responding to the constantly changing human resource needs of the market.

•Be close to businesses, entrepreneurs, the market and the community, thereby building "tailor-made" training programs according to the requirements of businesses, creating a sustainable bridge between the classroom and reality.

This flexibility is the "golden key" that helps private universities easily implement innovative educational models, university startup models, creative incubators... without having to wait for cumbersome administrative approval procedures.

2)Suitable for testing new private university models

In the private university ecosystem, innovation lies not only in technology, but also in the approach, operating model and educational philosophy. And this is the ideal "playground" for private universities – where they are ready to experiment, fail, adjust and succeed at a pace that the public sector finds difficult to keep up with.

Private universities can:

•Test curriculum integrating startups into all industries, including seemingly unrelated fields such as education, culture, arts, tourism.

•Build incubators and creative spaces right in universities, where students are free to come up with ideas, manufacture, commercialize and find investors.

•Organize "co-creation" cooperation programs between students – businesses – lecturers, turning lecture halls into places that produce practical solutions for the locality.

•Applying digital technology, big data, artificial intelligence to learning - teaching - management activities, thereby forming a digital ecosystem for startups, innovation and creativity within the university.

•Academic freedom, along with the spirit of encouraging creativity and risk-taking, makes Private Universities a real laboratory for pioneering startup models.

3)Potential role in creating momentum for local socio-economic development

Not only being human resource training centers, Private Universities today are playing an increasingly important role in "activating" development potential in the localities where they are present. This is a global trend: universities not only serve learners, but also become local development partners, through the following main axes:

•Providing high-quality human resources for local businesses, especially in emerging industries such as information technology, logistics, digital business, creative media, tourism - food - entertainment services, etc.

•Solving practical problems with academic

knowledge: from improving production processes, consulting on business models for SMEs to developing OCOP products, building regional brands, digital transformation for cooperatives, etc.

•Becoming a center for creative services - technology consulting - startup development for people, youth and local businesses.

•Cooperating with the government to form startup and innovation policies suitable for the locality, training civil servants, organizing regional startup and innovation forums.

Thanks to its "closely connected to the locality" position, the University of Information Technology has the conditions to promote its role as a "local growth engine", helping provinces and cities – especially suburban, rural and midland areas – access the spirit of innovation and the national startup wave. The development of private universities is not only an inevitable trend in the modern higher education system, but also opens up a new creative space, where the entrepreneurial spirit is aroused, takes flight and spreads strongly into practical life. With flexibility, proximity to the market, open-mindedness and a desire for innovation, private universities have all the conditions to become an important foundation in creating a local startup and innovation ecosystem - an indispensable link in Vietnam's digital economic and creative society development strategy. When universities are no longer places to "train for the market" but to "create new markets", the private university sector is a breakthrough resource that each locality needs to awaken and invest properly.

3.Current status of the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem at private universities in Vietnam

3.1.Initial achievements

Although the concept of a sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem in universities is still quite new in Vietnam, in recent years, many private universities have proactively pioneered, boldly implemented and achieved initial fundamental achievements, creating the premise for the formation of an increasingly professional startup and innovation ecosystem with real influence in the student community as well as the locality.

3.1.1.Forming dynamic innovation centers and startup incubators

Some typical private universities have pioneered in building and operating innovation centers (Innovation Hub), startup incubators (Incubator), open creative spaces (Makerspace), playing a core role in developing entrepreneurial thinking for students, supporting the realization of ideas and connecting with businesses - investors:

•Hoa Sen University (HSU): Established the Startup - Innovation Center very early, organized many startup competitions at university and city levels and connected with international startup networks. HSU stands out with highly practical projects such as clean food technology, learning sharing platforms, AI-based healthcare products, etc.

•FPT University: One of the first universities in Vietnam to include the Entrepreneurship subject in the main curriculum. FPT has F-Venture - a comprehensive startup support system including incubators, advisory networks, venture capital and creative workspaces. Many FPT students have successfully raised capital and brought products to the real market, especially in the fields of digital technology, mobile applications, blockchain, etc.

•Van Lang University (VLU): Investing heavily in creative spaces - manufacturing rooms (Innovation Lab), organizing large-scale startup events such as Startup Wheel, Hackathon, Startups Demo Day, attracting students nationwide. VLU also builds a business connection network to help students practice business while still studying.

The formation of innovative infrastructures right in universities, regardless of scale, has affirmed an important step forward in the thinking of startup education, demonstrating the determination to create a dynamic, creative and integrated university environment.

3.1.2.Promoting business connections, organizing competitions and training startup skills

Not stopping at physical infrastructure, private universities have proactively built a network of connections with businesses, experts, investors, and startup support organizations, creating a learning environment and "living" experience for students:

•Organize university-level and inter-university startup competitions such as "Startup Race", "FPT Edu Hackathon", "Innovation Challenge", "Business Ideas Pitching Contest"…to help students practice creative thinking, presentation skills and fundraising.

•Invite successful entrepreneurs, investors, young CEOs to share practical experiences, mentor students, thereby inspiring and motivating "dare to do – dare to start a business".

•Coordinate the organization of startup skills training programs (design thinking, financial planning, risk management, business model development…) in the form of project-based learning, learning by doing, motivating students to step out of their "theoretical knowledge comfort zone".

•Cooperate with international organizations such as Swiss EP, USAID, JA Vietnam, UNDP… in startup support projects at universities, creating international exchange opportunities for student startups.

These rich, continuous and expanding activities have contributed to forming a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation among students, helping them see that "career path" is not only about applying for a job, but also about "creating jobs for themselves and for others".

3.1.3.Some student startups have achieved outstanding results at the national and international levels

From the initial ecosystem in the university, many private university student startup projects have broken out into the real market, achieved impressive results and were highly appreciated by investors and the social community:

•The project "ELSA Speak" - co-founded by a former FPT University student - has expanded globally, entered the Top 5 AI startups in education in the US, successfully raised millions of USD from international funds such as Google Launchpad, Monk's Hill Ventures...

•"Logivan" - a technology truck coordination platform of an FPT alumni - was named at Tech in Asia, Forbes Under 30 and raised millions of USD from investors in Singapore and Korea.

•A group of Van Lang University students won the second prize in the national "StartUp Student Ideas" competition with a model of producing biodegradable packaging from sugarcane bagasse - a solution towards a circular economy and environmental protection.

•The startup project "Instant Brown Rice – Mang Den" by Hoa Sen University students won a high prize in the "National Creative Startup" competition in 2023, contributing to promoting local OCOP products to the market.

These initial achievements, although still modest, have affirmed that the startup ecosystem model in private universities is completely feasible, if there is a right investment strategy, system connection and a strong spirit of openness from the university.

Vietnamese private universities, with their first steps full of courage and creativity, have been creating promising "green shoots of innovation". The formation of innovation centers, organizing a series of exciting startup activities, connecting a network of businesses - consultants - investment funds...are important foundations to create a generation of students who not only "know how to work" but also "dare to start, know how to be creative and have the ability to solve practical problems."

This is not only an educational achievement, but also a practical contribution to the socio-economic development of the locality, gradually realizing the aspiration to rise up in the global innovation revolution that Vietnam is actively participating in.

3.2.Current limitations and challenges

Despite remarkable progress, the startup and innovation ecosystem at private universities in Vietnam is still facing many practical and structural challenges, requiring a more strategic, synchronous and systematic approach. Although the green shoots of startups have sprouted, they do not have enough environment and nutrients to grow into sustainable creative forests.

3.2.1.Lack of a systematic strategy at the university and local levels

One of the biggest obstacles today is the lack of a systematic, in-depth, and long-term visionary strategy for developing a startup and innovation ecosystem:

•In many private universities, startup activities are limited to sporadic competitions and seminars, which are of a movement nature and have not been integrated into the overall development strategy of the university.

•There is no clear roadmap for building a culture of innovation, integrating startup skills into formal training programs, or forming a network of professional advisors for students.

•At the local level, policies to support startups and innovation at universities are still fragmented, lacking specific incentive mechanisms and private universities are not considered a strategic pillar in developing the local economy through innovation.

As a result, many student startup initiatives and models lack sustainability, do not have a long-term supporting ecosystem and are easily lost after the competitions end or when students graduate.

3.2.2.Lack of infrastructure to support startups and innovation: creative spaces, support centers, venture capital, etc.

•An innovative ecosystem needs to be nurtured with appropriate infrastructure, from physical to digital. However, at many private universities today, basic infrastructure elements are still lacking or not synchronized:

•Lack of co-working space, invention rooms, design rooms, open labs for product testing and business model development.

•Lack of official incubators, specialized startup support centers that can support students from the

idea generation stage to the fundraising stage.

•Lack of venture capital or investment fund connections, making it difficult for student startups to access finance to develop products, even potential ideas cannot "blossom".

•Digital technology facilities are not yet modern, not qualified to integrate innovation platforms such as AI, IoT, blockchain or tools to support simulation and market testing.

This makes the startup and innovation ecosystem at many universities only at the "embryonic" level, lacking the driving force to transform ideas into practical products and solutions.

3.2.3.Weak level of connection between Universities - Businesses - Local authorities

An ecosystem is only truly strong when its components are connected, resonate and support each other. However, at many private universities, the relationship between Universities - Businesses - Authorities is still loose, lacking a sustainable cooperation mechanism:

•Universities have not really proactively sought out businesses to jointly build startup training programs, implement practical projects, or find outlets for student ideas.

•Businesses still do not consider private university students as potential resources, lacking companionship in consulting, funding or testing products from student projects.

•Local authorities do not have specific policies to integrate the role of private universities into the provincial/municipal innovation system, causing universities to be left out of the "development game".

As a result, start-up activities in universities lack practical output, lack opportunities to access the market and especially lack "sponsors" to go further after initial achievements.

3.2.4.Students still lack skills, practical experience and a reserved spirit of innovation

Students are the center of the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem, but reality shows that:

•Most private university students today have not been properly trained in startup skills, such as: business planning, financial management, market research, risk management, etc.

•Lack of practical experience, lack of opportunities to practice and work in real-life teams causes many projects to stop at the initial idea level.

•The fear of failure, reluctance to take risks and lack of confidence are still major barriers that make many students choose the safer path of starting a business. On the other hand, the learning environment in some universities is still heavily theoretical, lacking open spaces to encourage creativity and debate, causing the spirit of innovation to be "framed" within a stereotype.

It can be said that the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem in private universities in Vietnam is entering an important transitional period: from infancy to professionalism, from spontaneous activities to long-term strategies. However, to truly thrive, this ecosystem needs to overcome many "bottlenecks" that hinder it, from within the university to society.

This is not just the story of each university, but an urgent problem for the entire private higher education system - if it wants to become a true source of innovation for the local and national economy. It is in this challenge that the greatest opportunity is also taking shape: the opportunity for private universities to pioneer in model innovation, reposition their roles and affirm themselves as not only a place to "train working people", but also a place to "nurture job creators – people who create new values for society."

3.3.Causes

Although there have been encouraging green shoots of startups at private universities, the reality shows that the startup and innovation ecosystem in this sector has not yet reached the depth, breadth and sustainability as expected. The identified challenges are not random phenomena, but originate from a system of deep-rooted causes, both objective and subjective. Of which, the three key groups of causes below stand out:

3.3.1.Lack of specific support policies for private universities in ecosystem development

One of the biggest "bottlenecks" today is the lack of policies with specific orientation, encouragement and support for the private university sector in its role of creating an ecosystem of startups and innovation.

•National policies on startups and innovation are still mainly focused at the central level, tending to support businesses and key public universities, while private universities - although accounting for a large proportion of the higher education system - are rarely mentioned in national projects on developing the innovation ecosystem.

•There are no incentive mechanisms, financial support, or investment incentive packages for private universities to build creative spaces, incubation centers, or connect with businesses to organize startup activities for students.

In addition, some local authorities have not truly recognized the role of private universities

in regional socio-economic development through innovation, leading to a lack of coordination and strategic companionship. This policy gap has reduced the motivation for long-term investment of private universities in startups and innovation, while also causing the ecosystem here to lack a solid institutional support.

3.3.2.Investment in sustainable startups and innovation is still scattered, lacking focus and depth

Even in universities that have shown interest in startups and innovation, the issue of resource allocation – both financial, human and time – is also an important internal challenge.

•Many universities still invest in a "follow the trend" style, organizing discrete activities such as seminars, competitions, bootcamps without a synchronous development strategy, lacking connection between training – practice – transfer.

•Limited financial resources and dependence on tuition fees force private universities to balance between investment in basic facilities and innovation activities – which are high-risk and difficult to measure immediate results.

•Building a startup and innovation ecosystem requires large and long-term costs, including costs for creative spaces, paying consultants, connecting with investors, operating incubators - something that many private universities do not have enough potential to maintain stably. Therefore, the presence of startup activities in these universities is still a movement, lacking depth, lacking specialized staff and has not really become the "internal force" of the university's education system.

3.3.3.Lack of inter-regional, inter-university connections and a network of accompanying experts

Startups cannot be successful without companionship, sharing and spreading in a large creative community. However, many private universities are still developing their sustainable startup and innovation ecosystems in the direction of "each place has its own style", "each university has its own direction", lacking strategic connections and a common support network.

•Lack of inter-regional connections: Private universities in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi and Da Nang may have better conditions, but universities in remote areas and small localities do not have access to the national startup ecosystem and lack playgrounds and forums to connect ideas.

•Lack of inter-university connections: There are very few forums, alliances, or startup cooperation programs between private universities. Meanwhile, sharing resources – from consultants, investors to creative spaces – will help save costs and increase operational efficiency.

•Lack of a network of experts, consultants and angel investors who accompany students for a long time. Many young startups fail not because of bad ideas, but because of a lack of guidance, a lack of connection with the market and insufficient resources to continue.

Without an "open ecosystem" and an "innovative gene" being exchanged, sustainable startups and innovation in universities are just like isolated "saplings", finding it difficult to take root deeply and grow sustainably. The above-mentioned underlying causes have been and are hindering the comprehensive development of the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem in private universities. It is not only a budget problem, but also a problem of institutions, strategic vision, and lack of system cohesion.

To develop sustainably, there needs to be change from the root:

•From policy - create a transparent legal corridor, encourage private universities to accompany local development.

•From universities - proactively develop long-term strategies, invest in depth, build specialized teams.

•From networks - form a system linking universities - businesses - localities - internationally.

Only when these causes are solved at the root, can the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem at private universities grow strongly, becoming a strategic driving force for the knowledge economy, innovation and sustainable development of each locality and the whole country.

4.The role of the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem at private universities in local socio-economic development

4.1.Creating high-quality human resources and entrepreneurial spirit

In the era of digital transformation, breakthrough technology and deep global integration, human resources are not only a key factor - but also a "strategic capital" that determines the competitive position of each country and each locality. Private universities, with their dynamism, flexibility and open-mindedness, are playing a pioneering role in the mission of training high-quality human resources, rich in entrepreneurial spirit and innovation, becoming the main force in the modern startup and innovation ecosystem.

4.1.1.Providing creative, proactive human resources with digital skills and the ability to solve practical problems

Different from the previous period - when higher education mainly trained "followers" - now, society needs people who are masters of knowledge, self-oriented in their careers and have the ability to respond quickly to change. Universities are no longer places to "transmit knowledge", but must become places to nurture creative human resources – a force that can create new knowledge, new business models and solutions to social, economic and environmental problems. Private universities – thanks to their ability to design flexible training programs, connect with businesses and apply technology early – are able to:

•Equip students with critical thinking, systemic thinking, and creativity, instead of just training in single operational skills.

•Integrate modern digital skills such as: using online management tools, data analysis, digital product design, programming, basic AI… from first year to final year.

•Train students to solve practical situations through Project-Based Learning (PBL), case-based learning and startup-based learning.

•Promote self-learning, lifelong learning and learning to lead – essential qualities of global citizens in the 21st century. With a learner-oriented training strategy, students of private universities will not only be "job seekers" but "job creators" – a generation of human resources who know how to think differently, do differently and create differently.

4.1.2.Nurturing entrepreneurial mindset and market adaptability

In the context of a volatile market and constantly redefining business models, equipping students with an entrepreneurial mindset is no longer a "should" thing – but a "must" thing to ensure the survival and development of individuals and the community. Entrepreneurial mindset does not mean that all students must become "start-up founders", but more broadly, it is the ability to:

•Detect opportunities from problems.

•Accept risks and learn from failures.

•Be flexible, persistent and adaptable in uncertain environments.

•Always seek to innovate to create higher value for society.

Private universities are the ideal place to nurture this spirit through:

•Organizing startup competitions, demo days, idea acceleration programs, where students have to "collision" with market pressure, criticism from investors and practical needs.

•Connecting students with successful entrepreneurs, consultants, investment funds and real business models, helping them approach the "think big – do real – learn fast" approach.

•Integrating subjects on creative economics, startup management and business model innovation into the basic training program.

•Encouraging students to start their own projects while still in university, creating conditions for trial – error – correction – success as part of the growth process.

From there, forming a generation of students with the spirit of "intrapreneur" – that is, the owner in the organization, capable of leading a team, innovating at work and promoting improvement in all areas they participate in.

4.1.3.Linking training with local needs and global markets

Creating high-quality human resources cannot be separated from the actual needs of the locality and the context of global integration. Therefore, private universities need to:

•Training linked to regional strengths: such as eco-tourism, high-tech agriculture, logistics, medical services, cultural industry, etc. to create stable output for local students.

•Designing specific programs to solve practical problems of the locality, for example: digital transformation for individual businesses, applying technology in cultural preservation, developing OCOP products, e-commerce for agricultural products, etc.

•At the same time, training students with a global mindset - remote working skills, technology proficiency, international communication to participate in the cross-border labor market - which digital transformation is facilitating.

This close connection will help the university not only be a training place, but also become a development partner of the government and the community, a "life force" promoting innovation at the local level.

In the journey of developing the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem at private universities, high-quality human resources and entrepreneurial spirit are the core foundation, the "fuel" for all ideas, models and breakthroughs. Not factories, not investment capital, but people who dare to think - dare to do - dare to take responsibility are the "heart" of the innovation ecosystem. And private universities, with the advantage of flexibility, close to the market, easy to change according to new needs, have all the conditions to become "university of the 21st century", the

birthplace of young entrepreneurs with aspirations to get rich - for themselves, for their homeland, for the country.

4.2.Encouraging technological innovation and developing local products

In the context of each locality trying to reshape the driving force for sustainable development, linking start-up and innovation activities with local strengths not only helps to enhance the value of local resources but also opens up a large creative space for students - a generation of young intellectuals full of aspirations and potential. This is the "meeting point" between the entrepreneurial spirit in universities and the practical development needs of the community.

4.2.1.Students can research and develop products from local resources

Local resources - including agricultural products, cultural heritage, natural resources, indigenous knowledge, traditional products and specific industries - are "creative gold mines" that have not been properly exploited in many localities.

Private universities can absolutely play a focal role, organizing for students:

•Researching the application of technology to improve local products: for example, applying freeze-drying to enhance the value of preserving medicinal herbs in mountainous areas; applying biodegradable packaging for OCOP products; combining blockchain technology to trace the origin of coffee, cashew nuts, pepper, etc.

•Designing new products with high aesthetics and commercial value, from traditional materials: such as brocade fashion, herbal cosmetics, souvenirs from natural materials, creative fusion cuisine from local dishes, etc.

•Developing smart tourism platforms, telling regional cultural stories using AR/VR technology, building digital tourism maps, gamifying heritage experiences. In particular, bringing students to the "field" in rural, remote, and ethnic minority areas will help them approach real-world problems, thereby developing solutions that are both creative – socially meaningful – and open up opportunities for startups associated with the identity of their homeland. This is the way to "turn students into local innovation engineers", who do not leave their homeland to start a business, but make their homeland richer through creativity.

4.2.2.Transferring digital initiatives and solutions to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) – accounting for more than 97% of businesses in Vietnam – are a key force in the local economy, but often lack technological capacity, lack R&D teams and are slow to adapt to digital transformation.

Therefore, private universities can become "innovation intermediary centers", connecting:

•Young intellectual resources (students, lecturers)

•University technology infrastructure

•And the practical needs of local businesses

Specifically:

•Students can build e-commerce Websites for small businesses, optimize SEO, design logos, product packaging, etc.

•Develop order management software, warehouse management, customer consulting chatbots, etc. for local businesses in a cost-effective and efficient way.

•Apply AI, customer data analysis, digital marketing to improve business performance, expand markets for traditional production and business establishments.

•Cooperate with cooperatives, craft villages and trade promotion centers to co-create smart agricultural - service - tourism business models.

These models not only help students learn by doing, but also solve real problems of local businesses, thereby forming a win-win relationship: businesses are upgraded - students have the opportunity to start a business from their own practical work. More importantly, accompanying SMEs will help students understand that: starting a business does not necessarily have to start from unrealistic ideas or large capital, but can start from small initiatives - but have high applicability and solve real needs. Encouraging students to innovate technology and develop local products is not only a smart direction, but also a humane mission of private universities. This is the journey of "bringing innovation to the village", where knowledge is not only in the lab, but integrated into life, helping people to farm smarter, sell more effectively and preserve culture better.

At that time, the university was not only a place of training, but also a companion, an inspiration and an innovator for one's own homeland. And students, in that journey, not only graduated with a degree, but also brought with them a vision – aspiration – and the courage of entrepreneurial citizens in the heart of the locality.

4.3.Connecting universities with local businesses

In the journey of developing a startup and innovation ecosystem, universities alone cannot do

everything. Innovation needs land to sow, products need markets to survive, ideas need practice to test and mature. Therefore, a close - sustainable - strategic connection between private universities and businesses and local authorities is not only a necessary condition, but also a decisive condition to build an innovation ecosystem with long-term vitality and practical effectiveness.

4.3.1.Developing the model of "University - Local businesses - Government" accompanying startups and innovation

The "three-house" model – University - Business - Local government - has long been considered the solid tripod of the startup ecosystem in developed countries. But for this model to truly play its role in private universities in Vietnam, a new, flexible approach and concrete actions are needed.

•Universities are places to incubate knowledge and young talents: not only teaching skills, but also training creative thinking, leading students to explore, ask questions and take action to solve practical problems.

•Enterprises are places to test - invest - commercialize creative ideas and at the same time help students learn by doing, approach reality and rub against the market.

•Local authorities play a role in creating a favorable institutional environment, while also orienting regional development strategies - being the "policy sponsor" and paving the way for start-up initiatives and innovation to spread in the community.

When the three "houses" connect, share and resonate:

•Universities better understand the real needs of businesses and localities to adjust training programs.

•Businesses find technological solutions, high-quality human resources and innovation teams right on the spot.

•The government activates the knowledge and creative resources that are already present in the locality. This model not only creates an open and practical learning environment for students, but also promotes the formation of an indigenous creative ecosystem, where each young person starts a business not far away, but right in their hometown.

4.3.2.Private universities become centers of innovation - applied research serving localities

It is no coincidence that more and more countries are positioning universities as "regional development engines", providing not only human resources but also solutions, technology and new thinking for local businesses. And in Vietnam, private universities - with the advantages of flexibility, proximity to the market and proactive innovation - have the potential to become centers of applied innovation serving localities.

Specifically, private universities can:

•Establish multidisciplinary applied research centers associated with local characteristics: smart agriculture centers, indigenous food processing technology, creative tourism, digital culture, etc.

•Provide consulting services - solutions - technology design for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the region, helping to improve productivity, improve processes, and optimize costs.

•Organize hackathons, open innovation programs for local businesses to pose problems - students and lecturers to come up with solutions.

•Coordinate with localities to implement community innovation programs, for example: digital transformation for cooperatives, consulting on building OCOP product brands, craft village tourism, etc. The university at that time is no longer an "academic ivory tower", but a "local creative heart" - where all businesses can come to innovate, all individuals can come to learn and all students have the opportunity to turn knowledge into action. The connection between private universities with businesses and local authorities is not just a strategic choice - it is a new value system in sustainable development: development through knowledge, through creativity, through the symbiosis between academia and life. In that connection, private universities have risen from a place of "training human resources" to a place of "creating the future for the locality". And students – the budding entrepreneurs – will not only study to go far, but also study to return, to be masters – to build their homeland with their own dreams, enthusiasm and knowledge.

4.4.Promoting local entrepreneurial spirit, forming a startup community

If the startup ecosystem is likened to a continuous flow of creativity, then the entrepreneurial spirit is the spiritual current that lights up the beliefs, aspirations and actions of each individual in the community. In the context of the economy transforming towards knowledge – creativity – digitalization, spreading the entrepreneurial spirit to all youth, students and local people is not only an educational task, but also a strategy for developing people and localities in a fundamental and sustainable way. And at that starting point, private universities – with their flexibility, closeness to the market, closeness to the community – can and should become the "activating nucleus" of the local

startup movement.

4.4.1.Spreading the entrepreneurial spirit to young people, students and local communities

Starting a business is not just a story of university students. It is the story of every citizen who has the aspiration to rise from knowledge, creativity and courage. Therefore, to form a sustainable startup community, it is necessary to sow the seeds of entrepreneurship widely and earlier – starting from general universities, vocational education centers, even to craft villages, cooperatives and residential areas.

Private universities can play that spreading role through:

•Organizing programs to inspire entrepreneurship for high university students, rural youth and vocational students, with content that is close, practical, and easy to access.

•Build a network of "Young Entrepreneurship Ambassadors" who are successful students and alumni who return to exchange, tell stories about entrepreneurship and sow aspirations for the next generation.

•Organize "Local Entrepreneurship Festivals", creative festivals, idea markets and rural entrepreneurship summer camps, open to all classes.

•Bring entrepreneurship into extracurricular programs and experiential activities for high school students, thereby helping the younger generation to have early access to problem-solving thinking, creativity and the ability to act. When the entrepreneurial spirit is no longer confined to the classroom, but permeates every classroom, every village, every community group, that locality will become fertile ground for a generation of creative, autonomous and ambitious citizens.

4.4.2.Private universities are the "nucleus that activates" the local sustainable innovation and startup ecosystem

In a locality, a university is not only a place to study – but can also be a "startup reactor", where innovation energy is generated, creative knowledge is spread and resources are connected throughout the region. With its flexible, proactive and market-friendly characteristics, private universities are the most suitable entities to play the central role of connecting – spreading – creating the local innovation and startup ecosystem.

That role is demonstrated through:

•Organizing and leading the local startup network: from young businesses, creative farmers, new-style cooperatives, to groups of young people working in traditional occupations.

•Connecting the local startup community with angel investors, startup funds, and innovation support organizations at home and abroad.

•Cooperate with the government to build an economic development strategy based on innovation, in which private universities are the focal point for "transforming knowledge into products, services, and specific values".

•Create a community startup space (Startup Hub) – where students, local youth and businesses work together, learn, share ideas and test solutions. It is no coincidence that in many developed countries, creative urban areas are formed around pioneering universities. Because wherever knowledge spreads, there is an opportunity to sprout; wherever students dare to dream and dare to do, there is a future being created. In the journey to build an innovative, creative and sustainably developing Vietnam, we cannot just wait for macro miracles. We need to start from micro seeds – each individual, each small group, each local startup community. And it is the private universities that will awaken, ignite and lead the way for that movement, so that the entrepreneurial spirit does not only live in books, but burns in the hearts of young people, spreading to every village, every street corner, every countryside.

Because when all young people have the opportunity to start a business, every locality becomes a center of innovation, then Vietnam will not only "rise up" - but will "rise high" - with the intellectual capacity of the entire nation in the new era.

5.Proposed solutions to develop the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem at private universities

5.1.Solution group 1.University - level strategy: From vision to action - Building an innovative university for local startups

No startup and innovation ecosystem can be sustainable without a guiding vision and no startup movement can spread strongly without a systematic, synchronous, consistent and inspiring university-level strategy from within. With their flexible, dynamic and highly autonomous characteristics, private universities have all the conditions to not only participate, but also become the creative center - the guiding locomotive - the "power generator" of the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem inside and outside the university campus. But to do that, the prerequisite is: a clear university-level startup and innovation strategy, integrated into the overall development strategy of the university.

5.1.1.Solution 1: Build a clear vision and strategy for entrepreneurship and innovation, integrated into the university development strategy

In order for entrepreneurship and innovation to not only be a "short-term movement" but become a part of the structure of university culture, private universities need to:

•Put entrepreneurship and innovation into the core mission of the university, in addition to teaching and research.

•Build a 5-10 year strategy for entrepreneurship and innovation: identify goals (human resources, products, networks, centers, etc.), resources (finance, people, partners), coordination mechanisms and evaluate effectiveness in each stage.

•Integrate entrepreneurship and innovation into all pillars of university development: from training programs, scientific research, business cooperation to student activities.

•Institutionalize startups and innovation into internal regulations, policies and operating mechanisms, such as: prioritizing applied research, supporting student startups, rewarding innovation transfer projects, etc. The vision is not just a promise - but must be a vivid roadmap of action, where every staff, lecturer and student understands that: innovation and startups are part of the university's identity, the "fire" of development, the "lifeblood" for a sustainable future.

5.1.2.Solution 2: Establishing the Center for Innovation and Startups: The core of the ecosystem operation

To realize the above strategy, the university needs a specialized - specialized - professional apparatus, acting as the focal point for organizing, connecting, implementing, monitoring and inspiring the entire startup and innovation ecosystem. The Center for Innovation and Startups (Innovation and Startup Center) is that institution.

Depending on the conditions of each university, this center can:

•Be established independently, under the Board of Directors, or

•Integrate into existing units such as the Department of Science Management - Business Cooperation - Applied Research, but must have separate functions, personnel and operating mechanisms.

The role of the sustainable startup and innovation center is not only to "organize events", but more deeply:

•Be the focal point connecting students - lecturers - businesses - government - investors in all startup and innovation activities.

•Incubate ideas, provide legal advice, support business establishment, raise capital, develop products, access the market.

•Design an open creative space (Innovation Space), providing basic infrastructure for internal startups.

•Organize training on startup and innovation skills for students, lecturers and the community.

•Carry out research tasks - transfer initiatives to serve the locality, closely linked to the mission of "a university of the community". A strong innovation center not only helps the university improve the quality of training, but also opens up unlimited creative testing spaces, where "small ideas" can become "big impacts", where "a student" can start "a business that changes the whole community."

The university-level strategy is the foundation of all efforts to create a startup - innovation ecosystem. Without a strategy, every initiative will be just isolated sparks; without a vision, every action will be just vague steps. And when a private university dares to commit to building a systematic startup and innovation strategy, shaping the innovation center as its "strategic heart", then, startups are no longer the periphery - but the soul of a modern university, knowing how to live in the times, knowing how to contribute to changing the times.

5.2.Solution group 2.Resource development: Raising the foundation - Building roots - Unleashing sustainable creativity

A startup - innovation ecosystem can only develop when it is nurtured by quality, long-term, flexible human, knowledge, financial and connection resources. In the context of digital transformation and global integration taking place deeply, private universities - as the core of innovation - need to focus more on resource development strategies as a solid foundation to create generations of startups that are kind, creative, courageous and capable of creating positive social impacts.

5.2.1.Solution 1: Nurturing a team of lecturers and startup and innovation consultants: "The pioneers" and "the guides" for the startup journey

No one else but lecturers are the soul of academics and the ones who inspire innovative thinking in students. In order for the spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation to permeate deeply into the university culture, there needs to be a team of lecturers who:

•Not only teach words, but inspire mastery - creativity - innovation.

•Not only lead in the classroom, but also accompany in real life, in the lab, on the journey of raising capital, making products and approaching the market.

Private universities need to:

•Organize in-depth training programs on entrepreneurship and innovation for lecturers, in which lecturers learn from international experts, founders and veteran mentors on how to support startups.

•Encourage lecturers to become consultants, co-founders and academic sponsors for student startups.

•Form a team of "internal mentors" in the university connecting multiple disciplines (technology, economics, communications, law, agriculture, etc.), forming a support network connecting ideas - products - markets.

•Establish a worthy reward mechanism for lecturers who have effective startup consulting activities, technology transfer projects, or support successful student startups.

When lecturers are passionate and practical guides, students do not only learn to know, but also learn to do - do to live - live to create value!

5.2.2.Solution 2: Strengthening applied research capacity and developing startup products: Bringing knowledge "to life"

Different from academic research, the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem requires universities to have strong applied research (R&D) capacity to:

•Turn ideas into products.

•Turn knowledge into technology.

•Turn student initiatives into real business models.

Private universities need to focus on:

•Investing in innovation labs: where students and lecturers work together across disciplines, developing prototypes and startup models.

•Connect R&D with local markets: for example, developing agricultural product preservation technology, smart distribution solutions for highland products, or applying AI to indigenous education - culture - tourism products.

•Create programs "Startup projects in student scientific research", where student topics are oriented towards commercialization from the beginning.

•Encourage students to approach "minimum viable product development skills" (MVP), design - test - learn - continuously improve according to the Lean Startup method.

Because when a product is born from real needs - with real knowledge - and solves real problems, it is not just a startup, but a seed of sustainable development.

5.2.3.Solution 3: Mobilize businesses to join in financial investment - consulting - development cooperation

Social resources - especially from local businesses, angel investors, community startup organizations - are the "circulating blood" of a vibrant ecosystem.

Private universities need to be proactive:

•Sign strategic cooperation agreements with businesses, in which businesses:

- Set up topics and solve creative problems together.

- Participate in evaluating ideas, sponsor competitions and sponsor seed-funding for student startup groups.

- Assign people to be mentors, technical - market - legal - operational consultants.

•Build an internal startup support fund (University Startup Fund) with capital contributions from alumni, friendly businesses and strategic partners.

•Organize "Demo Days" to connect students with investors, call for trial capital, pitching contests and create a practical environment for learners.

•Linking with incubators, provincial/municipal startup centers and local business associations to create an acceleration corridor for startups after the idea stage. By mobilizing businesses to accompany from start to finish, the university not only "teaches students to start a business" but also "gives them a path to follow and companions to not give up". Developing resources is not just a story of investment – but a story of nurturing. When teachers are the ones who ignite the fire – students are the ones who act – businesses are the companions – knowledge is the material – and dreams are the compass – then each private university will become a "self-incubator", where talent is identified – given wings – and spread to the community. Starting a business is not the choice of a few. Starting a business must be the way a university lives, the way a locality develops and the way a generation rewrites the future with its own capacity and aspirations.

5.3.Solution group 3.Building a startup support environment: Creating space - Activating creativity - Connecting actions

A startup idea, no matter how strong, will wither if there is no place to germinate, grow, collide and spread. Just like a seed that cannot grow in a barren desert, the startup and innovation ecosystem can only truly come to life when nurtured in a dynamic, open, connected and inspiring supportive

environment. In that environment, universities - especially private universities - are not only places to study, but also "creative lands", "incubators of thinking and action" for a generation of startup students.

5.3.1.Solution 1: Building coworking spaces, creative labs and incubators: Opening the door to dreams

Space is the first physical form of the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem. A small room, a round table, a whiteboard with ideas scribbled on it, a 3D printer – all of these seem simple but are the starting point of journeys to change the world.

Private universities need to re-establish physical spaces to encourage creativity, including:

a) Coworking space:

•A place where students from many faculties and majors can sit together to come up with ideas, do projects, organize brainstorming sessions.

•Integrate high-speed internet, printers, presentation boards, sample documents, software accounts to support design, simulation, etc.

•Have specialized areas: study zone, group discussion zone, prototyping zone, creative relaxation zone.

b) Innovation Lab:

•Provide tools and equipment for product testing (3D printers, simulators, sensors, digital technology tools, etc.).

•Integrating market simulation technology, testing the MVP (Minimum Viable Product) model.

•A place where "innovation - trial - error - correction - re-do" activities take place continuously, helping students understand more deeply the actual product development process.

c) Startup Incubator:

•A specialized environment to help student projects develop from ideas to companies: strategic consulting, legal support, connecting advisors - investors, pitching training...

•Can coordinate with businesses or local innovation centers to accelerate.

•Support seed startup financing, organize trial funding rounds.

The message here is clear: startups are no longer on paper - but must have a specific address, a specific seat and specific tools. The place where students enter is not just to learn, but to start taking action, challenging and committing.

5.3.2.Solution 2: Organize regular competitions, events and seminars on startups: Inspire – Open connections – Stimulate action

The physical space is just the hardware. The software is the startup culture that is continuously nurtured through experiential activities, events, and practical connections. Private universities need to become "live startup stages", where they regularly organize:

Startup Pitching Contest:

•Topics can be expanded: digital technology, agribusiness, smart tourism, digital education, local traditional culture, etc.

•Invite judges who are experts, investors and business directors.

•Teams are supported in training, preparing business models, financial plans and fundraising presentations.

a) Seminars and conferences on startups and innovation:

•Interact with successful startups and inspiring young founders.

•Discuss technology trends: blockchain, AI, IoT, green startups…

•Connect universities – businesses – governments in developing local startups.

b) Demo Day events, idea exhibitions, innovation fairs:

•Present students' ideas and products to the public.

•Are opportunities for student startups to approach consumers, investors and get market feedback.

c) "Startup bootcamps", creative summer camps, hackathons:

•Create a space to study and work in a short time, promote team work spirit and solve practical problems in a short time.

All these activities not only enrich students' lives, but also instill in them a culture of creative living – daring to try – daring to make mistakes – daring to master the future.

It can only come to life when every corner of the university becomes an "invention room", every event becomes an "idea festival" and every student is convinced that: "You can change something with your own hands and mind". When the university is no longer a place to teach for exams, but a place to inspire to live – to act – to connect to create value, it will become the center of blooming startup seeds full of inner strength, ready to touch the market, create value and contribute to the homeland.

5.4.Solution Group 4.Connecting local and regional ecosystems: From university seeds to regional creative forests

No startup can develop if isolated. No startup and innovation ecosystem can grow if it only operates internally. And no university - whether public or private - can become an innovation center if it is not strongly connected to the entire external ecosystem.

Therefore, connecting local and regional ecosystems is the lifeblood, a solid bridge that brings knowledge out of the classroom to touch industry, agriculture, services and the community.

5.4.1.Solution 1: Connecting with national innovation centers, technology incubators and local industrial parks

Private universities need to not only think as an educational institution, but also act as a central link in the entire regional innovation ecosystem.

To do so, it is necessary to:

a) Cooperate with national and regional innovation centers:

•Such as NIC (National Innovation Center), Innovation Centers in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Da Nang, Central Highlands, etc.

•Cooperate to organize startup training programs, exchange events, investment promotion, national hackathons.

•Create conditions for students to be incubated and accelerated at regional centers - connecting endogenous startups with national and international networks.

b) Cooperate with local technology incubators, industrial parks and high-tech parks:

•Jointly deploy technology testing models, product verification (test-bed).

•Connect students to R&D projects of large enterprises.

•Develop application projects to serve small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in industrial clusters. This is not just a simple connection – but a strategic connection to "upgrade the university ecosystem into an important branch of the regional innovation ecosystem". From a small group of students in the lab, feasible ideas will be supported, spread and "take off" thanks to a strong external support system.

5.4.2.Solution 2: Signing a three-party cooperation agreement: University – Enterprise – Government

A sustainable startup ecosystem always needs a "golden triangle": University– Enterprise – Government. Each party plays an irreplaceable role:

•University: providing knowledge, human resources, ideas, technology.

•Enterprise: providing market, practical experience, consulting, investment.

•Government: creating support policies, testing space, connecting public resources.

Private universities can:

•Sign three-party cooperation agreements on local startup and innovation development.

•Participate in the provincial/municipal working group on startups and innovation and send representatives to the Advisory Council for Creative Economic Development.

•Coordinate the organization of "Innovation for the homeland" programs, in which students and startups develop specific solutions to the problems of the province: agricultural transformation, digital education, preservation of indigenous culture, community tourism, etc.

When the three parties no longer operate separately but share a common vision - act together, the startup and innovation ecosystem will not only develop in the university, but spread throughout the locality as a "stream of conscious innovation", where each initiative finds support, each solution has a place to apply.

5.4.3.Solution 3: Develop a system of advisors, angel investors and local startup investment funds

Startups cannot grow in isolation. Every step needs a companion - a guide - and someone who trusts and invests.

Private universities need to proactively form:

a) Mentor network:

•Experts inside and outside the university, successful entrepreneurs, successful alumni.

•Guide students not only in technology but also in strategy, operations, finance and startup culture.

b) Local angel investor community:

•Including local entrepreneurs willing to invest seed capital for student startups.

•The university is the intermediary to organize pitching, support verification and create trust between startups and investors.

Local startup fund:

•Can be formed from socialized sources, government support, and businesses contributing capital.

•Sponsor or provide preferential loans for feasible projects in universities and local youth communities.

When the advisor is a relative, when the investor is a local person, when the first money does not come from the outside but from internal belief, the

startup is no longer shaky, but stands firmly on its own native feet.

Connecting the local - regional ecosystem is not just a startup development strategy. It is a red thread that ties the university's intelligence to the reality of life, connecting the dreams of young people with the transformation capacity of the community.

And when pioneering private universities expand their connections – deep into the locality, widen to the region and reach out to the nation – the startup and innovation ecosystem they create will not only be a "campus incubator", but will become a "creative field that stretches with every breath of the country that is growing."

5.5.Solution group 5.Support policies from the state: Granting mechanisms – Leading the way – Sowing seeds of innovation from private universities

In the journey to develop a national startup and innovation ecosystem, state policies are the wind that creates the lifting force, the sustainable support for the seeds of ideas to take root – sprout – and turn into creative forests. In particular, for private universities – which are flexible, agile but also prone to resource shortages – the role of state support becomes even more urgent, leading the way and activating breakthroughs.

5.5.1.Solution 1: Have separate policies for private universities in implementing the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem

In the picture of Vietnam's higher education development, private universities are increasingly asserting their irreplaceable role - not only in training but also in creating innovation and startups. However, reality shows that:

•Most of the current startup and innovation support policies still favor public schools, which have been partially subsidized in terms of facilities and finance.

•Private universities - although dynamic - lack a legal corridor and specific incentive mechanisms to implement models of innovation centers, incubators, or internal funds.

Therefore, it is necessary to establish a separate policy framework for the private university sector in developing startups and innovation, including:

•Allowing and encouraging the establishment of internal Startup and Innovation Centers operating as a unit with soft legal status, with access to local startup investment capital.

•Prioritizing access to funds supporting applied research, student innovation and young talent funds.

•Supporting the connection of private universities with national incubators, high-tech zones and regional technology transfer centers.

It is not only about policy fairness, but also about the country's strategic belief in the role of the private sector in leading creative development.

5.5.2.Solution 2: Financial support, tax reduction, tuition exemption for students to start successful businesses

For students - young warriors who study, dream and start a business - every penny of capital is a dream nurtured, every mechanism is a step taken. The State needs to implement policies to encourage "by action", not just by words of encouragement, such as:

a) Financial support for student startups:

• Grant scholarships, support project development costs (purchase of materials, product design, participation in international competitions, etc.).

•Create a micro-fund for feasible ideas in universities, managed by local authorities or socialized through accompanying businesses.

b) Tax reduction for student startups and accompanying private universities:

•Successful student startups can be exempted or reduced from orporate tax for the first 1–3 years.

•Enterprises accompanying the school in training, advising or sponsoring student startups can deduct expenses or reduce financial obligations.

c) Tuition and credit exemption for students with qualified startup and innovation projects:

•Students with startup topics that pass the MVP stage and have market feedback can be exempted from some elective credits, or exempted from tuition fees for the following semester.

•Consider startup activities as part of experiential learning outcomes, integrated into soft skills training. These policies not only help students feel secure in their endeavors, but also build a generation that considers innovation as a practical action, not just a slogan in books.

5.5.3.Solution 3:Incorporate startup and innovation criteria into university accreditation and evaluation

If startup and innovation are national strategies, then the development of sustainable startup and innovation ecosystems in universities must become part of the educational quality assessment standards.

The State should:

•Incorporate startup and innovation criteria into the set of standards for accreditation of higher

education institutions, including:

- Is there a startup and innovation center?

- Is startup and innovation training integrated into the curriculum?

- Are student startup products recognized/ commercialized?

- Are there connections with businesses and local authorities on startup and innovation?

•Integrate startup and innovation content into national university ranking criteria, in addition to research, teaching and internationalization criteria.

This not only encourages universities to invest in startups and innovation, but also transforms the entire educational mindset from "teaching for exams" to "teaching for action – creativity – creating practical values."

An ecosystem cannot grow without the sunlight of policies. And policies, if they only exist on paper, will not be able to touch the hearts of learners and cannot lead to innovation.

Therefore, when the state:

•Grants separate and flexible mechanisms to private universities,

•Sows policy trust through financial support, tuition exemptions and investment fund connections,

•And integrates startups and innovation into national education quality standards, we will not only help universities become "incubators of intelligence", but also ignite a generation of creative citizens – daring to think big – doing real things – serving the homeland with the knowledge they have acquired.

6.Discussion

Private universities – a smoldering fire rising in the country's innovation and startup ecosystem. In Vietnam's strong transformation journey – from a developing country to a knowledge-based, creative economy – it is impossible not to mention the role of the sustainable innovation and startup ecosystem as a new growth driver, a "gold mine" of local traditional knowledge, youth and technology. However, to exploit that "gold mine", we cannot only rely on the government or large enterprises, but must awaken the creative engines deep in universities – places that train not only knowledge, but also the aspiration to build the future. In particular, private universities – with their dynamism, flexibility, and closeness to reality – are the "smoldering fires" rising and can completely become the nucleus to spread innovation and startup at the local and regional levels if given timely support.

6.1.Private universities - a model that should not be forgotten in the national innovation strategy

In reality, when discussing innovation in education, most reports and national strategies still prioritize the public university system and key universities. However, the movement of modern education cannot rely solely on the traditional framework. Private universities - which are born from market demand and operate according to flexible logic - are places where new models can be easily implemented, where people dare to try, dare to change and are easily accessible to the community. The article pointed out that many private universities such as FPT University, Hoa Sen University, Van Lang University, Dong A University, etc. are pioneering the construction of innovation centers, organizing startup events, creating co-working spaces and connecting businesses in a quick way that public universities may not be able to do. Therefore, not putting private universities at the center of the national strategy on startups and innovation would be a big mistake, if not a waste of non-public educational resources that are growing in both scale and quality.

6.2.Startups - Innovation is not only a goal, but also a method to restructure the role of higher education

From a philosophical perspective, startups are not just about setting up a company, raising capital, creating products. Sustainable startups and innovation are a spirit, a mindset, a method for people to face and solve problems with their own solutions. Therefore, when startups and innovation enter universities, education is no longer just about teaching - learning, but learning - doing - creating - serving. Learners are not just "receivers", but become "creators". Universities are no longer a place to grant degrees, but a "life incubator" - a place to train thinkers and action-takers, people who dare to step out of their comfort zone. Especially for local students - those who have a deep understanding of culture, agriculture and local resources - if they are approached with the right methods of entrepreneurship and innovation, they can completely create products with their own identity, "get rich without leaving their hometown", thereby contributing to retaining local intellectuals, nurturing the regional economy and spreading sustainable development.

6.3.For startups and innovation at private universities to "take off", a resonance is needed: University – Policy – Business community

The article has carefully analyzed the three pillars supporting startups and innovation at private universities:

•Universities need to develop a systematic

strategy, invest in innovation centers, train lecturers - mentors and create a real learning and working environment.

•The State needs to have its own policies for private universities, provide financial support, exempt tuition fees and include startup criteria in quality assessment.

•Businesses and local authorities need to work together, sign a three-party strategy, support consulting, invest and provide practical data.

That is, without a multi-dimensional, closely linked ecosystem that is operated in the spirit of trust – action – dedication, even with good ideas, startups and innovation at private universities will only be a small flame that lights up and then goes out on its own.

6.4.Starting a business from university – small steps, big journey

Not everyone becomes a billionaire entrepreneur. But if every student is taught how to start a business - from observing problems, coming up with ideas, trying and failing, learning and continuing - then they themselves have become "entrepreneurs" in life.

And if that starts from a small class, a competition in the schoolyard, a pitching session with a local advisor - then that seed can sprout into a forest, can create a generation that does not just look for a job, but creates a job, does not just study for grades, but studies to have ideals and actions. When private universities are empowered, when students are encouraged to start a business not for achievements, but for kindness and meaning, when starting a business is not just a destination, but a path to understand and serve one's homeland… then that ecosystem will not only "develop", but will "awaken" an entire land - with the knowledge, faith and dedication of the youth.

And then, private universities - from a supporting role in the education system - will step up as a "creative heart" that beats to the prosperous future of Vietnam.

7.Conclusion and recommendations

7.1.Reaffirming the key role of the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem at private universities

In the flow of innovation and transformation of the country, startup and innovation are no longer a trendy slogan, but have become the breath of life in all fields - from economics, education, culture to community development. In that context, private universities have emerged not only as "alternative educational institutions" but have increasingly proven themselves to be dynamic innovation centers - a lasting nucleus in forming a sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem associated with the locality, serving the country.

7.1.1.The sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem at private universities is a "strategic link" in local development

No locality can develop sustainably without an education that inspires creativity, fosters entrepreneurial spirit and creates people who dare to challenge limits. And no sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem in a locality can be formed without a core support: the university - a place that gathers knowledge, human resources, technology and youthful aspirations.

In this picture, private universities are the "strategic link":

•Closely linked to the labor market and local practical needs.

•Able to operate flexibly and adapt quickly to new trends such as digital transformation, creative economy, green technology.

•Always eager to prove it with practical actions, through innovation centers, incubators and activities connecting local businesses. Private universities are the starting point for ideas to serve the community, local startups, business models based on cultural identity, agricultural resources, tourism strengths, etc.

Without showing off, without being bound by too many mechanisms - it is the flexibility and market capacity of private universities that have helped them play the role of "pioneers" in creating startups, innovation and creativity associated with the locality.

7.1.2.This is a direction that is consistent with Vietnam's spirit of "self-reliance - creativity - integration"

In the era of globalization, Vietnam has been transforming itself from an economy based on cheap labor to a knowledge, technology and creative economy. That change requires human resources that not only have expertise, but also have the ability to think independently, solve problems, dare to initiate - dare to act - dare to accept failure to succeed.

That spirit - self-reliance, creativity, integration - is also the core of the model of developing sustainable startup and innovation in higher education and is clearly demonstrated in the private university sector:

•Self-reliance: because private universities do not rely on the state budget but operate on the intelligence, trust and choice of society.

•Creativity: because they dare to try new models,

dare to go their own unconventional path.

•Integration: because they always aim for the market, for the international, for global cooperation.

Therefore, developing an ecosystem of sustainable startups and innovation in private universities is not only a practical action, but also a perfect blend with the country's development thinking: no one is left behind – every creative flame can be lit – every locality can become an innovation center if the seeds are sown in the right place.

Therefore, we should not consider private universities as just "supplementary" to public education and even less should we consider startups and innovation as sideline activities in universities. Instead, we must see that: it is in those private universities - where the aspirations of learning, action and creativity of hundreds of thousands of students converge - that the seeds of innovation are being formed that can change the future of the locality and further, the fate of the knowledge economy of the country.

The sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem in private universities is no longer a "good idea", but a "strategic pillar" - an extension of Vietnamese intelligence reaching out from the community, integrating with the world.

7.2.Policy recommendations: Igniting startups from private universities – Sparking creativity for a rising Vietnam

Startups and innovation are not just games for large enterprises, high-tech parks or national innovation centers. They start in the classroom, in the schoolyard, from small ideas in the minds of students. And private universities – with their youth, dynamism and relentless dedication - are the places to "light the fire" for that journey. However, to prevent that fire from going out in loneliness and shortage, there needs to be a consistent, strong and encouraging policy system from the state - locality - education system.

7.2.1.The state needs to develop a national strategy on startups and innovation in the private university sector

Currently, many national startup strategies are focusing on the state sector, public universities or high-tech parks. That is necessary, but not enough. There needs to be an independent, specialized strategy to develop the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem in the private university sector with clear directions:

•Recognizing and ranking the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem is one of the criteria for assessing the quality of private universities.

•Establishing a financial mechanism to encourage business investment in startup activities in private universities, including: mentors, innovation centers, startup competitions and startup interns.

•Supporting preferential loans, tax exemptions and royalty fee reductions for student startups operating in the fields of technology, culture and smart agriculture.

•Issuing a legal corridor so that startup centers in private universities can operate independently as social enterprises, creating products - services - profits to return to nurture the ecosystem.

The national strategy needs to demonstrate confidence in the "locomotive of private education startups" – which is persistently sowing the seeds for generations of creative citizens.

7.2.2.Local authorities need to consider private universities as development partners and strategic companions

In many localities today, private universities are still considered purely "private educational institutions", instead of being companions in creating local innovation. This is a policy "blind spot" that localities need to adjust soon.

Proposal:

•Each province and city needs to build a three-way cooperation mechanism between: Government – Enterprises – Private universities, in which the university is the center for incubating ideas, providing human resources and developing creative solutions.

•Prioritize private universities to participate in local startup projects, assign applied research projects, solve specific problems such as: digital transformation of agriculture, development of cultural tourism, design of new handicraft products, etc.

•Create conditions for private universities to access local startup investment funds, rent/borrow space to build innovation centers, organize seminars and community events.

•Localities need to issue specific support policies for private universities such as: exempting/reducing land tax for building practice areas, easily licensing startup centers, or bringing startup students into the province's "community internship" program.

When localities consider private universities as "companions" instead of "land renters", the development of startups and innovation will no longer be fragmented, but will truly spread from Education - Market - Community.

7.2.3.Comprehensively reform the higher education system to unleash students' creative potential

Ultimately, any policy will only truly come to life if learners are inspired, allowed to make mistakes, allowed to try and taught how to get up after failure - that is the core spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation. Therefore, the higher education system - both public and private - needs to be radically reformed:

•Integrate entrepreneurship and innovation into the main curriculum, not only as a subject, but as a continuous educational method: project-based learning, product-based learning and practice-based learning.

•Change the role of lecturers from "teachers" to "creative leaders", idea consultants and liberators of action thinking.

•Build a learning environment that promotes discussion, debate, teamwork and product testing.

•Connecting students with businesses and the community right from their time in university through community projects and internships in local incubators.

When the higher education system "moves with innovation", students will no longer study just to graduate, but to start a business, to create the future with their own intelligence. If we consider startups as the fire of innovation, then private universities are the sensitive fire, localities are the fuel and policies are the spreading wind. Only when these three factors converge, will the sustainable startup and innovation ecosystem truly take off, carrying Vietnamese beliefs, aspirations and intelligence to the world.

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XÂY DỰNG HỆ SINH THÁI KHỞI NGHIỆP VÀ ĐỔI MỚI SÁNG TẠO BỀN VỮNG-CHO SINH VIÊN TRONG CÁC TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC TƯ THỤC SẼ LÀ ĐỘNG LỰC THÚC ĐẨY PHÁT TRIỂN KINH TẾ - XÃ HỘI Ở ĐỊA PHƯƠNG TRONG KỶ NGUYÊN VƯƠN MÌNH CỦA VIỆT NAM

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Tóm tắt:

Việt Nam đang từng bước vươn lên mạnh mẽ trong kỷ nguyên chuyển đổi số và hội nhập toàn cầu, việc xây dựng hệ sinh thái khởi nghiệp và đổi mới sáng tạo (KN-ĐMST) bền vững trong các trường đại học tư thục đã trở thành một yêu cầu cấp thiết và là động lực quan trọng thúc đẩy phát triển kinh tế - xã hội ở địa phương. Trong kỷ nguyên Việt Nam vươn mình mạnh mẽ, chuyển mình từ một nền kinh tế đang phát triển sang nền kinh tế tri thức, đổi mới sáng tạo và số hóa toàn diện, giáo dục đại học – đặc biệt là khối đại học tư thục – đang trở thành một trong những trụ cột chiến lược để hiện thực hóa khát vọng hùng cường của dân tộc. Bài báo này đã đặt ra một vấn đề có ý nghĩa thời đại sâu sắc: Xây dựng hệ sinh thái KN-ĐMST bền vững dành cho sinh viên trong các trường đại học tư thục – như một đòn bẩy chiến lược để thúc đẩy phát triển kinh tế - xã hội ở địa phương, nơi những tiềm năng còn đang chờ được đánh thức. Bài báo đã phân tích sâu sắc vai trò đặc thù của các cơ sở giáo dục đại học tư thục trong việc đào tạo nguồn

nhân lực trẻ, linh hoạt, sáng tạo – những chủ thể trung tâm trong hệ sinh thái KN-ĐMST bền vững. Với cơ chế quản trị tự chủ, gần gũi với thị trường lao động và doanh nghiệp, các trường đại học tư thục đã có tiềm năng lớn trong việc triển khai các chương trình hỗ trợ khởi nghiệp cho sinh viên.

Với sức trẻ, sự linh hoạt và khả năng thích ứng nhanh với nhu cầu thị trường, các trường đại học tư thục đang từng bước khẳng định vai trò của mình không chỉ trong đào tạo nguồn nhân lực mà còn là cái nôi nuôi dưỡng các thế hệ doanh nhân trẻ, nhà sáng tạo táo bạo, những người dám nghĩ – dám làm – dám khác biệt. Hệ sinh thái KN-ĐMST bền vững trong môi trường đại học tư thục không chỉ dừng lại ở việc hỗ trợ sinh viên khởi nghiệp, mà còn là một hệ sinh thái sống động, đa tầng, kết nối Trường học – Doanh nghiệp – Nhà đầu tư – Chính quyền – Cộng đồng. Bài báo nhấn mạnh rằng sinh viên chính là lực lượng đổi mới có tiềm năng tạo ra những giải pháp công nghệ, mô hình kinh doanh sáng tạo nhằm giải quyết bài toán phát triển địa phương một cách hiệu quả và bền vững. Hệ sinh thái KN-ĐMST bền vững trong đại học tư thục, khi được xây dựng bài bản và gắn kết chặt chẽ với nhu cầu địa phương, sẽ không chỉ góp phần nâng cao năng lực cạnh tranh cho sinh viên mà còn tạo ra tác động lan tỏa đến cộng đồng, tạo việc làm, thúc đẩy các ngành nghề mới và nuôi dưỡng tinh thần khởi nghiệp trong toàn xã hội. Bài báo cũng nhấn mạnh rằng việc đầu tư và phát triển hệ sinh thái KN-ĐMST bền vững trong các Trường Đại học tư thục không chỉ nhằm tạo ra sản phẩm khởi nghiệp mà sâu xa hơn, đó là tạo ra những Con người có tư duy đổi mới, năng lực hành động và tinh thần kiến tạo xã hội

Bài báo cũng đề xuất các giải pháp trọng tâm như: Tích hợp giáo dục khởi nghiệp vào chương trình đào tạo; Nâng cao năng lực đội ngũ giảng viên về KN-ĐMST bền vững; Huy động nguồn lực xã hội và chính quyền địa phương; Ứng dụng công nghệ số để tối ưu hóa hệ sinh thái khởi nghiệp, đồng thời đề xuất cơ chế chính sách hỗ trợ riêng cho đại học tư thục trong lĩnh vực này. Bài viết đã khẳng định vai trò chiến lược của hệ sinh thái khởi nghiệp đại học tư thục như một mắt xích quan trọng trong phát triển kinh tế tri thức và nâng cao năng lực đổi mới sáng tạo quốc gia. Cuối cùng, Bài báo đã đưa ra các kiến nghị trọng yếu như: Hoàn thiện chính sách hỗ trợ hệ sinh thái KN-ĐMST bền vững cho đại học tư thục; Thúc đẩy liên kết "4 Nhà": Nhà trường – Nhà nước – Nhà doanh nghiệp – Nhà khoa học; Ứng dụng mạnh mẽ công nghệ số và trí tuệ nhân tạo vào giáo dục khởi nghiệp; Xây dựng các liên minh khởi nghiệp vùng – miền để tạo nên mạng lưới đổi mới sáng tạo liên kết trong toàn quốc. Qua đó, bài viết không chỉ đề xuất một mô hình phát triển mới cho giáo dục đại học tư thục, mà còn khơi nguồn cảm hứng và niềm tin vào một thế hệ Sinh viên: Tiên phong – Bản lĩnh – Sáng tạo – Đầy khát vọng – Góp phần đưa Việt Nam vươn lên thành quốc gia đổi mới sáng tạo trong kỷ nguyên mới.

Từ khóa: *Hệ sinh thái khởi nghiệp, đổi mới sáng tạo bền vững; Sinh viên; Các trường đại học tư thục; Động lực thúc đẩy kinh tế - xã hội ở địa phương; Kỷ nguyên vươn mình của Việt Nam.*