

New business opportunity for applications of biotechnology in chemical manufacturing: An innovative educational programme

At the Zurich University of Applied Science (ZHAW) an innovative educational programme, under the brand “**New Business Opportunity (NBO)**”, was launched in the year 2010. Its concept, based on cooperation between **lecturers, students** and **industry** partners, may culminate in launching joint academia-industry partnerships in research as well as implementing innovative technologies for new products.

The semester programme concludes with an oral presentation and a written report summarising the particular business case for possible investment. Such a NBO-analysis offers industry the opportunity:

- to have an idea assessed by a committed and enthusiastic student team
- to coach and mentor the next generation of biotechnologists



- Do you have an idea that may benefit from critical business assessment, but lack resources and time to carry this out?
- Do you look for an opportunity to incorporate modern biotechnological approaches in your current business strategy?
- Do you have the experience and motivation to coach a student team?



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Within the framework of this programme, as a result of brainstorming with lecturers, industry representatives have the opportunity suggest a **new product or process idea**, which would then be comprehensively analysed by Master's students in Pharmaceutical Biotechnology, for its feasibility as a **new business opportunity**.

Students are encouraged to acquire and practice new skills (entrepreneurial, advanced life science, and specific specialisations); in particular to assess the technical, commercial, legal, and social issues associated with initiating a biotechnologically-based business opportunity as well as to develop and present a **compelling business case**.

Industry partners are offered a multi-aspect analysis, performed by the coached students in a careful approach, and may become inspired by opportunities to substitute traditional production technologies with more competitive and sustainable biotechnological processes. Students experience **practical interactions with industry** that will ultimately enhance their career prospects.

