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Bringing Creativity and Innovation to Chile's Universities

Juan Andrés Fontaine, *Chilean Government*

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Chilean science professors are not used to thinking in terms of startups, says Juan Andrés Fontaine, Chile's Minister of Economy, Development and Tourism. However, through partnerships with Stanford University and other organizations, business development education is growing in Chile's universities. Minister Fontaine expresses the desire for students to take risks and learn to solve problems using an entrepreneurial frame of mind.



Transcript

Certainly, we have a room full of students here who are thinking about, "What can I learn in the classroom and the extracurricular programs that will prepare me to enter this entrepreneurial world?" What's happening in the universities in Chile to make that happen? Well, we do have good universities in terms of the training, the quality of the professors and all the curriculum. But they have been focused basically on sciences or other typical subjects, not that much on training entrepreneurship. And with your help, Tina and others, they are now focusing that. And that's a revolution that is happening in Chilean universities these days that's going to change partly the curriculum. But also the way the professors see the role, because we're not use for example, having a science professor thinking in terms of patents, of research, or engineering professors thinking in terms of startups. That's something a bit new for us. But that is changing these days. So what sort of things do you want your students to learn? What would you hope they would come out of school knowing or prepared to do? Well, that depends on the subject of course. Related to innovation and entrepreneurship. Well, basically to have this frame of mind that actually gets them to think in terms of problems that have to be solved.

And there is a value of actually finding out the way to solve the problem and to be willing to take the risks, to gradually benefits of that, and bear the costs of eventual failure. That kind of entrepreneurial frame of mind is what we want to teach, basically.