

# MANAGEMENT AND PRODUCTION ENGINEERING

## Ateneo/DIGEP - How to scale up startups: using the scientific method to make organizational design decisions

<b>Funded By</b>	Dipartimento DIGEP Politecnico di TORINO [P:iva/CF:00518460019]
------------------	--

<b>Supervisor</b>	PAOLUCCI EMILIO - emilio.paolucci@polito.it
-------------------	---

<b>Contact</b>	
----------------	--

<b>Context of the research activity</b>	Favoring the scale-up of startups is a key policy concern in Europe. Despite policymakers emphasize the importance of financial resources for the scale-up, scholars recognize that also qualified human capital is crucial. Startups face severe challenges in recruiting and retaining talents and organizing their activities. The limited research on organizational design in startups is of little help in addressing such challenges.
---	--

<b>Objectives</b>	<p>This research activity is related to the funded PRIN project “How to scale up startups: using the scientific method to make organizational design decisions (acronym: SCALE-UP!)”.</p> <p>Favoring the scale-up of startups is a key policy concern in Europe. Despite policymakers emphasize the importance of financial resources for the scale-up, scholars recognize that also qualified human capital is crucial. Startups face severe challenges in recruiting and retaining talents and organizing their activities. The limited research on organizational design in startups is of little help in addressing such challenges. To assist startups, SCALE-UP! studies the effects of the adoption of a scientific approach (Camuffo et al., 2020) (i.e. mirroring the approach used by researchers in science) in making decisions about recruitment and organization of talents for the scale-up (hereafter, organizational design decisions).</p> <p>It will first develop a theoretical framework based on the assumption that a scientific approach provides rigorous bases to predict the outcomes of entrepreneurs' decisions. Entrepreneurs may overestimate (false positives) or underestimate (false negatives) the potential outcomes of their decisions. Like in science, entrepreneurs using a scientific approach reduce false positives and false negatives. The project is built on the intuition that, as the decisions made by most entrepreneurs are not effective, entrepreneurs are more likely to face false positives than false negatives. Thus, a scientific approach that corrects these errors is more likely to reveal that a seemingly good strategy is not effective than a seemingly bad strategy is effective. Entrepreneurs adopting a scientific approach are thus more likely to change their organizational design strategies (Camuffo et al., 2024) and succeed in</p>
-------------------	--

scale-up than entrepreneurs who do not adopt this approach. This framework will be tested in a Randomized Control Trial (RCT). It will be offered to entrepreneurs from 150 startups in the pre-scale-up phase free-of-charge training on recruiting talents and organizing employees' activities. Entrepreneurs will be divided into a treatment and a control group. While it will offer to the control group standard training, the treatment group will be formed to develop and test hypotheses about decisions outcomes and discuss the results in a scientific manner. Then, the actions and performance of all startups in the 10 months after training will be monitored and analyzed. The combination of a theoretical framework, that focuses on a novel approach and develops testable implications, and rigorous empirical evidence based on an RCT, will advance the literature on organizational design in startups. Moreover, the results will have relevant practical implications; they can both inform the design of policy initiatives facilitating talent attraction in startups and help universities, incubators, and technology transfer offices design effective entrepreneurial training programs.

**Skills and competencies for the development of the activity**

1. Entrepreneurship and management knowledge;
2. Knowledge in the design and implementation of an RCT experiment;
3. Data analysis skills as knowledge in the use of statistical software as STATA;
4. Soft skills as team working.