

International Students Told about Being in the Role of Technological Entrepreneurs

A few days ago, an international online intensive course, the final course of the [International Polytechnic Summer School 2020 ended at the Higher School of Technological Entrepreneurship \(HSIE\)](#) of the [Institute of Advanced Production Technologies](#) (IAPT) of the [SPbPU NTL Center](#). Its participants were international students from 10 countries. Two of them - Nina von TRECKOW from Hamburg University of Applied Science (Germany) and Jack GILLMAN from Bangor University (England) - met with the SPbPU International Office employees online to tell how they felt about the role of technological entrepreneurs. About the stages of business development, building a unique environment of technological and harmonious development, read in our interview.



- Nina, Jack, good to see you! Tell us how you found out about the Entrepreneurship and Technology Leadership course and why you decided to take it?

Nina: Last year my friend took this very course and recommended it to me. And I studied a similar course in Moscow during my exchange studies. I was interested in

comparing teaching styles not only between Germany and Russia, but also between Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Jack: Initially I was supposed to go to an international course in Japan, but it was canceled. My university offered me a scholarship so that I could study at any summer school around the world. The International Polytechnic Summer School of SPbPU was the only one where I was interested in the course, so I chose Polytechnic University.

- You have participated in similar projects before?

Nina: Yes, last year I studied at Lomonosov Moscow State University for a semester. It was a wonderful experience - I studied economics and business management. After Moscow I really wanted to visit Saint Petersburg - unfortunately, because of coronavirus it proved to be impossible to do it, but I plan that in the future I will be able to come here in person.

Jack: Last year I received a scholarship to study in the Netherlands. It was a summer school course at the University of Utrecht, for a week I studied marketing and entrepreneurship.



- What did you study in the course “Entrepreneurship and technological leadership” at Polytechnic University?

Nina: The course has two parts. The first one is theoretical, where we learned basic information necessary for our work. In the second part, we had to apply all this in our own project. For example, teachers told us about the theory of the value proposition, how it works, and what we needed it for. Then we had to develop a plan with all the information we needed to narrow down our target audience. This way, all theoretical knowledge was immediately put into practice.

Jack: I want to add that we worked in teams. Each team was given code words and we had to try to come up with a business idea based on them. And then we started to study marketing, promotion, and advertising. We also learned about different business models that we could use. Later on, the teams made presentations of their ideas, talked about market features, tools that can be used to bring a company to market, and so on.

- Is it easy for you to study online??

Nina: I am not a big fan of online learning, but I understand that at the moment there is simply no other option. I am impressed with how well Polytech has organized online training. Before that, I had no experience working with MS Teams.

Jack: In the UK there are many schools that work only online - personal meetings are not provided there in principle. I don't like this approach too much, I like live communication and prefer to study in person. But now I am quite satisfied with the online format.

- What are your impressions of Polytechnic University teachers?

Nina: They have deep knowledge and are happy to share it, especially if you ask the right questions. Of course, it's not easy for them now, because we are all online, and this has an impact on communication. But at the same time, teachers have done everything they can to support students. We could contact them almost any time, and they would give us advice and answer questions.

Jack: They are just amazing! I emailed many people and discussed course topics. Some of the models I learned about at Polytechnic University were not told about to us in the UK. And one of the organizers of the program studied in Cambridge, where I have many friends. She shared her study and work experience with us, and it was very good.



- How do you plan to use the knowledge gained in SPbPU in your future career and life?

Nina: It depends on what career I choose. But just having a theoretical basis in the field of entrepreneurship is very useful. For example, if you know your target audience, you can certainly offer them what they want and need. This knowledge can be applied in different spheres of life.

Jack: I already use it: I have consulted about 20 companies so far. I give recommendations on the choice of business models and also am implementing several marketing projects.

- Would you like to visit St. Petersburg and SPbPU and take part in the Summer School in real life?

Nina: Absolutely, yes! It was my dream. We wanted to come to St. Petersburg with friends, get a lot of emotions from studying, the city, Russian culture. So I would really like to come to Russia.

Jack: That would be fantastic! Unfortunately, this year the trip is impossible because of the coronavirus, but in the future I plan to come to Russia.

- In your opinion, what is the value of summer schools for students??

Nina: It is a unique experience, a great way to get acquainted with other cultures, teaching methods, educational materials, and the opportunity to work with people from different countries. I would certainly recommend that everyone take this chance!

Jack: I would say that two key points are the knowledge and experience we get when we communicate with different people. Summer schools create a multinational community, which creates an absolutely incredible exchange of knowledge. Many people have experiences that you would never have thought of. It allows you to think about what you've been through yourself and how you're developing as a person. Also, summer schools help you implement your ideas based on both unique experiences and new information provided at lectures.

- Nina, Jack, thank you for an interesting interview! We wish you success and new achievements!

Prepared by SPbPU International Office

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