



Program curator  
**Daria Stazharova**

# HOW TO DEFEND YOUR THESIS AS A BUSINESS PROJECT AND LAUNCH A STARTUP?

БИЗНЕС—ТЕЗИСЫ  ФТМИ

# HOW CAN THE UNIVERSITY HELP YOU LAUNCH YOUR PROJECTS?

# THESIS DEFENSE OPTIONS AT ITMO



## A CONVENTIONAL THESIS



**STARTUP**



**BUSINESS PROJECT  
AS THESIS**



**ENTREPRENEURSHIP**



**ART  
& SCIENCE**



**ART PROJECT  
AS THESIS**



**FUTURE LABOR  
MARKETS**



**НАУКА**



**SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE  
AS THESIS**



**ACADEMIC LABOR  
MARKET**



**CHARITY**



**SOCIAL PROJECT  
AS THESIS**



**NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION**

The Business Project as Thesis program allows students to work with leading experts in the field of technological entrepreneurship on various aspects of their projects



**PRODUCT**



**BUSINESS MODEL**



**MARKETING**



**SALES**



**IP**

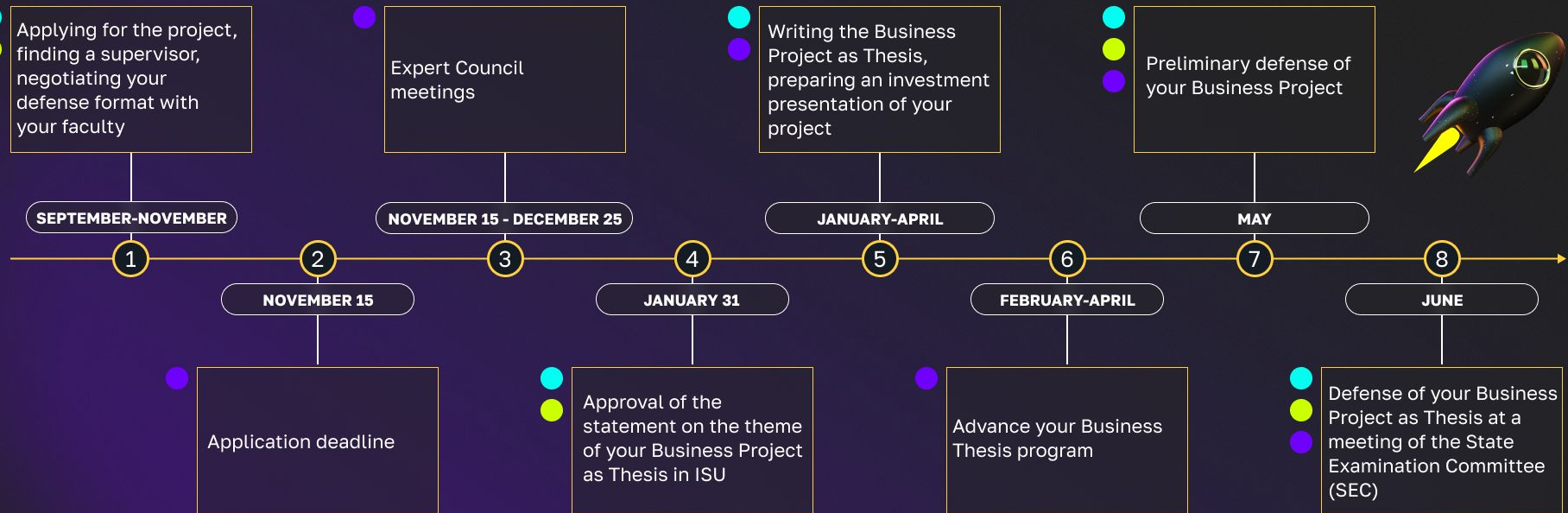


**RISKS**

**OUTCOME: INVESTOR PRESENTATION**



# BUSINESS PROJECT AS THESIS TIMELINE



- thesis supervisor
- head of educational program
- FTMI

## Project investment value:

### TEAM:

- team members and their skills
- consultants

### FINANCE:

- funding strategies
- necessary funds (to reach the nearest point of growth in value, enter the market, and/or break-even point)

### BUSINESS VALUATION:

- payback period
- investment NPV and IRR
- suggested exit strategy

### RISK MANAGEMENT:

- key risks and proposed actions to manage them

**MATERIALS FROM PAST YEARS**



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**MATERIALS FROM PAST YEARS**



## WHAT DO I GET FROM IT?

The program offers a unique opportunity to develop your project from an idea, a study, or a prototype to a commercially successful innovative product in a short period of time



Putting your skills and competencies into practice



Networking and the possibility to defend your thesis in a team of students from different fields



Participation in Russian and international startup competitions and acceleration events with support from ITMO's corporate partners



Consultations with leading experts in the field of technological entrepreneurship on the subject of your project



Packaging the project to attract your first investments



Launching your own startup

WHAT DO I GET FROM IT?

222

Business  
Projects as  
Theses in 2025

303 **million rubles**

Volume of attracted  
investments

The program became an ideal environment for such a "stress test" for us. We got access to unique expertise: scientific supervisors helped us systematize our research, mentors from the industry asked the right, sometimes uncomfortable, questions about the market and clients, and pitches to experts taught us to clearly formulate the value of the product. "Business Thesis" is not just an academic work, it is a real accelerator that makes you look at your project from different angles and turn the idea into a viable business. And we must pay tribute to the organizers of the program, who created this unique, supportive and at the same time demanding environment, which allowed us to achieve such a result.



Davut  
Sukhankuliev

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19 July 2024, 18:15 UTC+3 25068

## 55 ITMO Students Win 1 Million Rubles Each for Their Startups

Recently, the Foundation for Assistance to Small Innovative Enterprises has announced the results of Student Startup, a competition of technological projects. Among the winners are 55 ITMO students, who each won 1 million rubles to support the development of their projects.

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14 August 2023, 18:09 UTC+3 29342

## 25 ITMO Students Win 1-Million-Ruble Grants for Their Startups

The Russian Foundation for Assistance to Small Innovative Enterprises has awarded grants of 1 million rubles to 25 ITMO students who were chosen as winners of the contest Student Startup.

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12 February 2024, 17:23 UTC+3 16829

## AI Teaches Sberbank Employees To Speak in Public

A team of developers helmed by ITMO graduate Yulia Khlyupina has created a virtual coach that offers personalized public speaking courses. The team received a grant of 1 million rubles from Sberbank and 12 million rubles in funding at the Demo Day of the SberStudent accelerator for students and university staff. The robot is currently being trained to offer test services for the company's employees.

28 June 2024, 19:56 UTC+3 22021


## Business-Turned-Thesis: How To Defend a Startup as a Thesis and Make Your First Money

It often happens that students start looking for a job after graduation: first, they are too busy writing their papers and then, once they graduate, they are unsure about where and how to apply their newly-acquired competencies. There is, however, an alternative scenario. Instead of writing a conventional thesis, ITMO students can launch their own startups and defend them as part of the [Business Project as Thesis](#) initiative. The program welcomed 385 students over the past five years, and the most successful ones even received their first investments. Read on to find out why and how to join the initiative below.

## Irina Kozherog: "A startup diploma is the best thing that can be done to develop students' entrepreneurial skills"

May 28, 2024

Since 2021, more than 40 Russian universities have been considering graduation projects in the form of startups. The State program "Startup as a Diploma" attracts attention not only during the spring and summer period of graduation defenses — the initiative is bold and controversial. **Irina Kozherog**, a member of the ITMO Commission for Graduation Projects in the form of Business Projects and an expert in the field of digital technologies, spoke about how the new format of graduation projects affects the development of innovation and the entrepreneurial environment.



Best social practice in the direction of "Science and Education" of the state project "Social Course: Ideas of the New Time", aimed at developing social innovations in the regions of Russia with the support of the Federation Council



ITMO University in the TOP-15 universities "Leaders of "Startup as a Thesis""



## SUCCESS STORIES

### SilkInS

Spider web proteins added to creams heal cuts and eliminate skin imperfections

Dauddin  
Daudi



Polina  
Rozanova



### УлыбнисьAI

Neural network module using bioinformatics analysis for oral cavity diagnostics from photos

Danil  
Maklakov



### AIGENDA

AI assistant for meetings, tasks and communication

Evgeny  
Gutin



Ekaterina  
Grigorieva



## AEROSPACE-AGRO

A system for operational monitoring of adverse situations in the fields based on AI algorithms

Elena  
Konstantinova



## UMITER

Smart Terrariums for Exotic Animals

Inna  
Suslova



Vladislav  
Filimonov



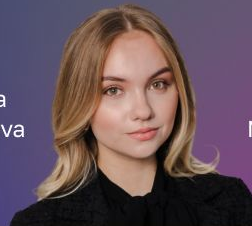
Kirill  
Abramov



## SAINTLAB

A new generation cosmetic product based on nanostructured lipid carriers

Ulyana  
Anisimova



Fidan  
Nakhmetova



**HOW CAN I APPLY FOR THE  
PROGRAM BUSINESS THESIS?**





Can I participate in the program, if I don't have an idea for a startup or a team?



If you don't have an idea, you can always join one of the already existing teams. If you don't have a team, we will help you find like-minded people

You can find the current vacancies and projects in this page



Fill in this form to look for a team or a project





Can students of the same faculty and specialization participate in the same project defense?



Yes, but your roles on the team must be clearly defined.  
The Business Project as Thesis can be done by a student:

- on their own;
- as part of a team formed by students of the same or different educational programs or faculties
- as part of a team with external participants.



How many members can there be in a team?



Your team must include at least one and no more than four members.



Can I choose a topic that is outside of my specialization?



No, because in your Business Project as Thesis (Business-Thesis) you will have to demonstrate a level of expertise sufficient for independent professional activity in the field of your educational program.



In what form should the work be presented? Do I need to do anything other than the presentation?



At ITMO University, a written thesis is **mandatory** regardless of its format. You can find more information about the current regulations for business projects as theses on the official page.





Will participating in the Accelerator or Pre-Accelerator be of help?



Yes, this way you will get to work on your project in more detail, while also getting free support from mentors. As a bonus, completing the accelerating program can be credited as practical training.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for FTMI's annual winter intensive educational program Advance Your Business Thesis!

Stay tuned for announcements on the faculty's official VK page





What stage should the project be at by its defense in June-July? Could it be a detailed business plan or do I have to submit a project that was already proven to be successful on the market?



The program welcomes projects from different fields, which means that each of them will have a different timeline for launching an MVP. For instance, a life sciences project is associated with long-term scientific developments and research, which makes it very difficult to achieve significant results in one or two years. However, if your team is working on a mobile application, then it is fairly possible to produce an MVP within the same time frame. For each project, the team presents a roadmap, demonstrating what outcomes they want to produce by the time of their thesis defense.

# WE WILL HELP YOU TURN YOUR IDEAS INTO REALITY



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