



Centre for  
**Entrepreneurial  
Learning**



**CAMBRIDGE**  
Judge Business School

## Success so soon for Vidal thanks to Ignite

The Ignite summer school at the University of Cambridge lit the touchpaper to an exciting new business venture in the thrusting arena of bioinformatics.

Meeting an experienced entrepreneur at Ignite in June proved the catalyst for take-off for Judge Business School MBA graduate Abel Ureta-Vidal.

And it completed a lightning fast transformation from PhD researcher to Cambridge MBA to entrepreneurial 'Eagle' in under a year.

Inspired and motivated by the Cambridge MBA, Abel co-founded Eagle Genomics within a year of starting his MBA degree.

Eagle Genomics is a bioinformatics software company that sits at the heart of Cambridge's biocluster, bridging a niche gap between academic research data output and its application to commercial industry.

The Eagle board has collectively over 20 years combined experience of developing and supporting bioinformatics databases and software in institutes



Abel Ureta-Vidal

around the world.

Eagle Genomics aims to productise open source applications developed mainly, but not exclusively, at the European Bioinformatics Institute and the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, adding value by developing business-oriented functionality and providing commercial support and maintenance for these applications.

Eagle also produces appliances based around these appli-



cations and can integrate them into custom workflows. The company works with any organisation requiring technical solutions to their clinical and non-clinical bioinformatics challenges using any combination of public and/or private data.

The Cambridge MBA and Ignite summer school were instrumental in developing Abel's business acumen and enabled him to network with leading business founders in Cambridge's vibrant entrepreneurial community. Judge Business School's Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (CfEL)

helped Abel to foster his entrepreneurial talent through a range of collaborative activities.

Abel said: "Choosing the Cambridge MBA was an easy decision. Cambridge is home to the largest biocluster in Europe and I wanted to stay in touch with the field of biology I had been researching.

"And of course the University has an unrivalled reputation for excellence. The entrepreneurial environment of Cambridge enabled me to build confidence in my abilities as an entrepreneur. I learnt new business skills and the vital importance of networking and collaboration in the business world."

It was through networking at the Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning's Ignite programme in June that Abel found the chairman for his company, Professor Alan Barrell, Entrepreneur in Residence at the School's Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning.

Ignite is an intensive, one week training programme for aspiring entrepreneurs and corporate innovators to trial and prepare business ideas for the commercial environment.

It is comprised of a blend of practical teaching sessions, expert clinics, mentors' sessions and experienced advice and support from leading entrepreneurs and inno-

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vators that will give you the tools, contacts and confidence to transform your idea into a successful business project or venture.

Dr Shai Vyakarnam, director of CfEL, which runs the enterprise, said: "Our vision is to develop into a globally recognised and unique learning programme for innovators to turn new technology ideas into world-beating business propositions."

The next Ignite programme will take place from June 28 to July 4, 2009.

The programme is aimed at researchers and managers from established organisations with business ideas for:-

- Diversification of products and markets
- An internal venture or a spin out from your company
- Determining the best business model and marketing strat-

egy to commercialise a new idea

- Developing commercial proposals to the company board in order to secure resources and internal support for your team

- Students, graduates or academics considering your own venture.

- Directors of existing young businesses that are seeking to commercialise a new product or service.

Leading global organisations, many of whom have attended previous Ignite programmes, are again queueing up to engage with the 2009 event and Business Weekly will be bringing readers a series of case studies on Ignite attendees and their objectives over the coming weeks.

**To learn more about the next Ignite programme, contact Frances Bycroft at [f.bycroft@jbs.cam.ac.uk](mailto:f.bycroft@jbs.cam.ac.uk)**



The one week, intensive training programme for aspiring entrepreneurs and corporate innovators

- Fast-tracking your business idea
- Tailored support specific to project needs
- Effective partnership for business growth
- Access to the Cambridge Entrepreneurial Network

Next programme:

**28th June to 4th July 2009**

For further information, please visit

**[www.cfel.jbs.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cfel.jbs.cam.ac.uk)**

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## Time has come for Eagle to soar

by Professor Alan Barrell

"There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come," wrote Jules Verne many years ago.

The quote could apply to Abel Ureta-Vidal, a young man with origins in both Spain and France and a well developed intellect; a PhD who has worked as a dedicated scientist in genomics and related areas.

Personalised medicine and what the big pharmaceutical companies wanted to do about it interested Abel and his colleagues. Connecting the results (both good and bad outcomes) of clinical trials with the genetics profiles of the subjects undertaking the trial seemed to make a lot of sense.

"Was there a connection between a certain therapeutic outcome, a side effect etc, with the genetic make-up of the subject?" Why not run genetic profiles alongside clinical trials?

To do so needs complex software – something Abel and his PhD colleagues were able to work on and work out. They had to decide how to disseminate the knowledge and market the developed software to a wider audience in Big Pharma.

Was it an opportunity to start a business? Abel wasn't sure.



Equally, he wasn't sure he wanted to start the business or could do it.

Even though he had his PhD, he enrolled for the much valued Judge Business School MBA programme and during that experience it became clear that there was a business in this field. Eagle Genomics was formed to exploit the idea.

The next issue was whether the team could find experienced mentors and non-executives to help them. The solution arrived when Abel participated in the Ig-

nite summer. There I spent time with the team and we hit it off. I was recruited as non-executive director and chairman of Eagle Genomics and it was all done and dusted by October.

Now I have chaired three board meetings. The company is growing and contracted work from Big Pharma is paying the bills and supporting the growth; no external finance has been required so far. The plan is to try and keep it that way, although it is flexible enough to accommodate equity financing if growth becomes so rapid that it demands it.

Eagle is now looking to recruit a second non-executive director and is maintaining a growth trajectory while continuously developing its strategy.

The time had indeed come for Abel's idea to become reality – and with the true spirit of enterprise acting as the wind of opportunity – the Eagle soars with wings outspread.

See for yourself at [www.eaglegenomics.com](http://www.eaglegenomics.com)

**For more information about Enterprise Tuesday, the 2009 Ignite summer school and other enterprise initiatives organised by the Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning, please contact:**

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