

Chapter 2

Early Days and Further Development



We present here the key people supporting the university development, the legacy of Russian educational system combined with the novelty of the project. The past and the future live in Innopolis in a unique blend. As a private university, there are also challenges.

2.1 The Foundation

Innopolis University has been registered on December 10, 2012. At the early stage, it operated in Kazan downtown and moved to Innopolis city during the period April-September 2015, after the completion of the new campus.

The foundation of the university was announced in February 2012, when negotiations were held with Carnegie Mellon University on the creation of an IT personnel training center in Tatarstan. In July 2012, the president of Tatarstan Rustam Minnikhanov met with Gil Taran, head of the iCarnegie Global Learning, subsidiary of Carnegie Mellon University. The parties agreed to create a new IT university.

As administrative director of the university was appointed Dmitry Kondratyev, candidate of physical and mathematical sciences, entrepreneur, and founder of the network of educational centers for schoolchildren “Unium”. As a rector was appointed one of the authors of this volume: Professor Alexander Tormasov, Doctor of Physical and Mathematical Sciences (Fig. 2.1).

On December 10, 2012, the initial legal registration as an autonomous non-profit organization of higher education was completed. On December 21, 2012, iCarnegie and “Innopolis University” signed a memorandum of understanding.

At the end of 2013, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev approved the construction of the Innopolis University in the city of Innopolis.

The plan was to enroll about 40–50 students, with only 26 actually selected out of about 300 applications. They began their studies in the summer of 2014 at the Kazan site of the university. In August 2014, Innopolis University received a license for higher education and postgraduate programs. In May 2015, the university signed a cooperation agreement with CERN.

2.4 The New Campus

The city was inaugurated in June 2015. During 2015, according to the results of the selections, which took place from May to July, more than 350 students from 45 regions of Russia and 10 foreign countries were accepted. In August 2015, the training of students began in the buildings of the university in the city of Innopolis. Figure 2.2 shows a night picture of the university building, while Fig. 2.3 presents a moment of work for early movers into the university building (Spring 2015).

Figure 2.4 represents an introductory event held at the construction site in August 2014.

On October 1, 2015, Kirill Semenikhin, a member of the board of directors of Microsoft in Russia, replaced Dmitry Kondratyev as director of Innopolis University.



Fig. 2.2 The university building

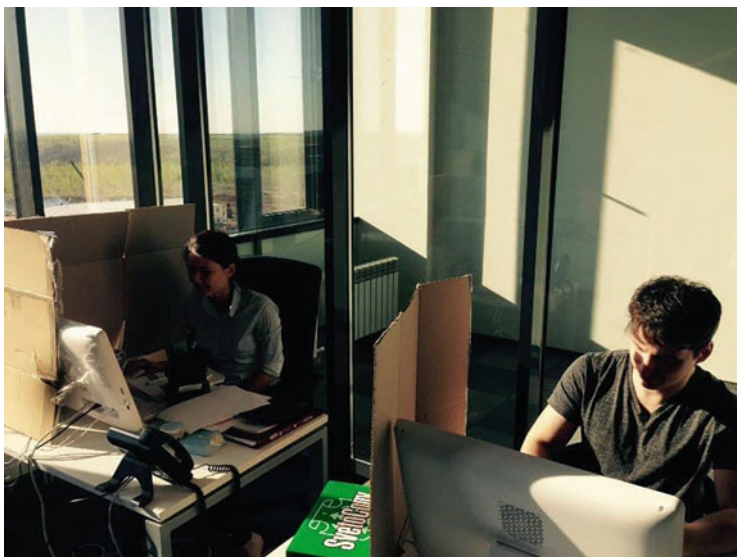


Fig. 2.3 Work of early movers into the university building



Fig. 2.4 The construction site

2.5 The Recruitment of Students

In 2016, the university accepted 313 new students from 46 constituent entities of the Russian Federation and 10 foreign countries; in 2017, 255 people from 42 constituent entities of the Russian Federation and 29 foreign countries were

enrolled; and in 2018, there were 254 people from 38 regions of the Russian Federation and 33 foreign countries. In 2020/2021, 823 students study at the university.

2.6 The Competence Center: Robotics and Mechatronics

On May 10, 2017, the university announced winning a grant competition for the creation and development of the NTI Competence Center in the direction of “Technologies of Robotics and Mechatronics Components”. In June 2018, the NTI Competence Center was officially opened in the direction of “Technologies of Robotics and Mechatronics Components”.

The consortium of the center includes 56 partners among leading universities and academic institutions of the country, large industrial enterprises, and foreign partners: Sberbank, Aeroflot, Russian Railways, Gazprom Neft, RUSAL, KAMAZ, ITMO, FEFU, VolgGTU, and IzhSTU. In May 2019, the center’s specialists, together with members of the consortium, presented a roadmap for the development of robotics and sensorics in Russia until 2024.

2.7 The Chief Data Officer Training Program

At the end of 2019, Innopolis University, within the framework of the federal project “Human Resources for the Digital Economy”, trained 2150 Russian civil servants under the “CDO (Chief Data Officer)-data-based management” program. The IT university conducted training for 41 CDO managers from the constituent entities of Russia with a trip to Singapore and Barcelona. Also, at the initiative of Tatarstan President Rustam Minnikhanov, 79 deputy ministers and municipal leaders of the republic passed the CDTO-Head of Digital Transformation program at the university.

2.8 Leading Research Center for the Digital Economy

In January 2020, Innopolis University received the status of a leading research center for the digital economy in the field of blockchain winning a competition from the Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation. By 2021, the center’s specialists plan to create a fully verified blockchain platform. The project partner is Aeroflot.

2.9 The Rankings

The university reached the 87th place in the ranking of Institutions Active in Technical Games Research becoming the only Russian university in this list. The ranking is compiled by Mark Nelson, professor of computer science at the American University in Washington.

In 2020, Innopolis University took the eighth place in the category “Joint international scientific publications” of the U-Multirank rating, founded with the financial assistance of the Erasmus + program of the European Commission. The Russian IT university became the first Russian university to enter the top 25 of this category. In total, the rating compilers evaluated 1700 universities from 92 countries in 10 categories.

2.10 2020 and Beyond

In December 2020, Innopolis University received a federal subsidy of 6.4 billion rubles. As a consequence of this, the Reference Educational Center and the Unified Methodological Center started their operations. Within this framework, the qualifications of teachers of higher and secondary vocational education will be upgraded, thanks to new programs for IT specialties and other subject areas. By 2024, the university should train 80 thousand Russian teachers, which is 30% of the total number of teaching staff in secondary and higher education in Russia.

In December 2020, Innopolis University created the first Institute of Artificial Intelligence in Russia, within the framework of which it combined existing laboratories and existing developments and research in the field of Artificial Intelligence.

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