

Four key aspects of the incMTY 2025 entrepreneurship festival



Entrepreneurs seek to transform their reality with new and innovative solutions, and **Tec de Monterrey** encourages the entrepreneurial community to achieve this through incMTY.

This year, **incMTY Festival**, the innovation and entrepreneurship platform for Mexico and Latin America, reflected on the **use of artificial intelligence (AI)** in startups, ideas on entrepreneurship, global perspectives on innovation, and raising capital.

The 2025 edition featured national and international speakers, as well as representatives of Silicon Valley investment funds.

CONECTA presents the four key takeaways of this year's incMTY Festival.

- **Artificial intelligence**
- **Entrepreneurship**
- **Global perspective on innovation**
- **Investment and capital**



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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- Integrating AI with people

Horacio Marchand, consultant at Marchand & Asociados, stressed the need to integrate AI through a people-centric, strategically aligned approach that ensures operational coherence.

During the “AI Leverage for your Business Strategy” panel, the Tec graduate pointed out that for an AI strategy to be innovative and successful, it needs to emerge from and reinforce a company’s distinctive **competitive advantage**.

“People are the most powerful enablers of strategy (...) Let’s create a monopoly on the value of relevance because it’s not about being different, it’s about being relevant,” said the former EGADE Business School professor.



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- Accelerating innovation with the use of AI

Arturo Benavides, Director of Presales at Dell Technologies Mexico, identified five key pillars from which organizations are rethinking their strategies to accelerate innovation during his presentation “Technological Innovation for the Business Future.”

The first area focused on the transformation of modern workspaces. Currently, 82% of these already plan to use generative AI to boost productivity and improve their employees’ experience.

In the second pillar, the speaker highlighted the role of modern data centers and how “multi-cloud” plays into this, noting how organizations agree that the use and protection of clean data is critical to any generative AI strategy.

“While analytic AI has been around for many years, the focus now is around generative artificial intelligence, which really demands new strategies and enhanced capabilities,” he said of the third pillar.

Finally, the speaker emphasized that aspects of security, resilience, and sustainability, which form the fourth and fifth pillars, are considered part of the new technological strategy framework for the coming years.

- Cyber threats with AI

Thiago Crote, strategic advisor for AI cybersecurity at Google, explained how advances in artificial intelligence, alongside other technologies, have also driven the evolution in cybercrime threats.

“Companies are making use of artificial intelligence, and with it, new solutions are being developed across evolving technologies (...) but all of this comes with a dark side that we need to

understand.”

According to the advisor, some of the key motivators of this new era of cybercriminals involve areas of interest such as: hacktivism, espionage, financial gain, pursuit of challenge/recognition, and retribution.

*“If we simplify it, looking at the cybersecurity market and what it entails, we often find the same motivation (...) **83% of cyberattacks are economically motivated,**”* he said.

In light of this, the expert added that creating a cyber resilience framework is imperative when facing such attacks, since cybercrime, in addition to economic losses, can irreparably damage trust in an organization.

Similarly, Crote recommended investing in protection software since one of the most vulnerable areas is customer and employee private data and information, which can be used for **phishing purposes**.

- **AI: a transformative technology for society**

Íñigo Fernández, Meta’s Director of Public Policy in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, gave a talk on what artificial intelligence is and how its use is transforming society.

*“**Technology is neither good nor bad.** It depends on the use that human beings want to give it. AI is having its moment, with large language models, image generation, and empowered creation tools,”* he said.

He added that artificial intelligence is currently experiencing a boom, but a time will come when it becomes complicated due to how it’s used, ultimately leading to stability.

*“**Artificial intelligence is not apocalyptic; it’s transformative.** It’s going to help us in our day-to-day work, and it’s going to transform every aspect of life as we know it,”* he said.

He said that artificial intelligence is the ability of computer systems to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP - Winners of the Accelerator Pitch Competition

Eight entrepreneurs attended the Accelerator Pitch Competition, where they presented their projects to a jury of investors and industry leaders.

The three ventures recognized during incMTY were:

Venero: A platform that uses AI to automate processing, making it possible to streamline microcredits with the best rates.

Zumma: A platform with different services that help entrepreneurs take control of their finances with the help of its digital financial assistant, Zummi.

ESM Industries: A company dedicated to implementing energy-saving and energy efficiency projects.

In addition, a talk was given by **Andrés Díaz**, who last year won first place in the final of the Early Stage Entrepreneurship World Cup 2024, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

To motivate participants, Andrés shared the same pitch he gave during the event in Saudi Arabia with his company, which was accelerated by incMTY, and urged them to prepare as thoroughly as



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loading="lazy"> - Tips to advance in entrepreneurship

Martín Quirós, Managing Partner of Quirós Consultores, a firm specializing in family businesses and SMEs, discussed four key stages in the growth of a business and offered specific advice to overcome the challenges each one faces.

The main idea of the talk How To Take My Company/Business To The Next Level was for entrepreneurs to know what the next step is to move forward, according to the stage.

These are the tips he shared, according to each stage:

Entrepreneurial stage: the advice Quirós shared included falling in love with the product or service, prioritizing business over ego, not seeking immediate recognition but focusing on invoicing, and not over-planning before beginning sales efforts.

Expansion stage: do not let yourself get carried away and be strategic.

Structuring stage: do not fight with partners, implement processes without losing agility, and

define structures without stifling innovation.



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- Seeing “power skills” as the differentiator

According to former LinkedIn executive **Borja Castelar**, a specialist in leadership, talent, and personal branding, “power skills” such as communication, creativity, and empathy are essential to stand out in the workplace.

Another key point of the presentation was the need to adopt a mindset of “eternal learner,” since for Borja, **learning needs to be continuous.**

He also talked about the relevance of personal branding. Reputation and a network of contacts will be decisive for **professional success.**

*“We’ll be hired because of our network and **our personal brand.**”*

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON INNOVATION - Silicon Valley specialist shares vision in the Trump era

Sean Randolph, Senior Director at the Bay Area Council Economic Institute, explained how three elements of President Donald Trump’s administration stand out for the innovation sector amid a

shifting U.S. economic landscape.

These elements are:

- The political landscape, with Congress and the Republican party consolidating Trump's control
- Trade policies under a protectionist vision
- An anti-immigration stance

"We're facing a scenario in which alliances, multilateral organizations, and restrictive international agreements are being reconsidered (...) Trump's approach is transactional."

While the expert acknowledges challenges such as tariffs and distancing from the bloc with Mexico and Canada, Randolph believes that the adverse effects are largely limited to physical goods and not so much to software and services.

"Uncertainty around rules and a potential recession inhibits financing (...) however,

clarified.



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loading="lazy"> - **Challenges and opportunities in regional innovation**

Diplomatic representatives from **Chile, Argentina, and Switzerland**; government officials from Baja California, Nuevo Leon, and the federal Ministry of Economy shared their region's innovation success strategies, challenges, and opportunities.

Panelists featured included:

- Emmanuel Loo, from the government of Nuevo León.
- Beatriz Sánchez, Chile's Ambassador to Mexico.
- María Gabriela Quinteros, Argentina's Ambassador to Mexico.
- Yves Dominique Reymond, Deputy Head of Mission at the Swiss Embassy in Mexico.
- Kurt Ignacio Honold, Secretary of Economy and Innovation of Baja California.
- Lizzeth Pacheco, Deputy Director of the federal Ministry of Economy.

The ambassadors of Chile and Argentina talked about the need to create more strategies to foster regional perspectives, promote joint flourishing, invest in the educational sector, and promote the use of technological tools.

Dominique Reymond also expressed how important it was to understand innovation as something more than just an invention, explaining that it always needs to reach people and be built with them in mind.

“Innovating is imagining, believing, and improving what we have on the planet to improve the lives of everyone,” he said.



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loading="lazy"> - The Mexico-Texas economic relationship

During the “The Texas-Mexico connectivity: Building the most competitive” panel, participants explored how cross-border collaboration, infrastructure, and innovation can strengthen economic development and enhance competitiveness in the region.

The economic relationship between Texas and Mexico is one of the most dynamic and strategic in North America.

The speakers were:

- Humberto Hernández Haddad, Consul General of Mexico in Austin, Texas.
- Glenn Hamer, CEO of the Texas Association of Business.
- Rogelio de los Santos, President of Dalus Capital.
- John Cowen, Mayor of Brownsville, Texas.



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loading="lazy"> **Entrepreneurship beyond borders**

To **connect across borders**, particularly between Mexico and the United States, Kevin Koym, CEO and Founder of Tech Ranch, talked about what it takes to enter the international market.

At an event held at the Autonomous University of Nuevo León Theater, Mederos unit, Kevin Koym explained that five aspects need to be taken into account if you want to work across borders.

- Embrace disruptions.
- Recognize cultural differences.
- Focus on niche markets.
- Evaluate client readiness.
- Understand market entry modes.

In addition, he shared three considerations when starting a business abroad.

Cultural perspectives: Review how cultural differences impact business decisions, especially in the context of individualism versus collectivism in the United States and Mexico.

Market strategies: It is important to target smaller markets to gain traction before expanding.

Global connectivity: Leveraging technology and connections to solve global problems, fostering collaboration across cultures.

INVESTMENTS AND CAPITAL - How to obtain financing to grow

Félix Cárdenas moderated the launch of the book “Financing the Future” and the Venture Capital panel, comprised of Luisa Alemany, Juan C. Costales, Rogelio de los Santos, and Mario García.

Co-author **Luisa Alemany** highlighted the importance of this new book, since most of the books on the market focus on the United States, while the Latin American financing ecosystem is different.

Rogelio de los Santos stressed the power of the market in determining whether an entrepreneurial venture will succeed or not.

Investor Mario García stated that “one does not invest in an idea, but in the founder and the team.” One can’t achieve success without a team of experts in the field. If a founder acts alone, alarm bells immediately go off.

- Strategies to attract investments

Four experts in financial technology participated in the Venture Ready panel, sharing strategies to help startups attract investment, structure themselves, and scale successfully.

Specialist Yanko Aguilar identified the three main areas of interest for investors this year:

1. Applied artificial intelligence.
2. Tools to improve financial health.
3. Leveraging data for strategic decision-making.

For her part, expert Verónica Covarrubias stressed the importance of having a solid corporate governance from ideation to management.

She stressed that having a clear strategy and the ability to make decisions are essential for the growth of any venture.

The other panel experts highlighted the importance of business sustainability, order, and efficient administration, as well as specialization, as key pillars for structuring a solid and successful business.



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- Innovation with a sustainability focus

Entrepreneurs need to ensure their projects are innovative but with a focus on sustainability, as explained by the 'Innovation and Sustainability: Building the Future' panelists.

Angélica Maldonado, Co-founder and Director of ESG Risk Management at Syntropia, and Xavier Valdés, Founder of Aqua et Terra Sustainable Solutions, shared their experiences as sustainable entrepreneurs.

"There's growing environmental awareness, and this means that producing and selling more will have more environmental impact," said Angélica Maldonado.

For Xavier, his company's focus centers on sustainability, which should be at the core of every venture.

*"In the **culture that I like to foster**, sustainability isn't something secondary in entrepreneurship but fundamental from the beginning. The central focus should start with sustainability.*

"We aim for it to be good for the economy, good for people, and good for the environment," he explained.

This panel, which aimed to raise awareness about sustainability and innovation, was held in the **EXPEDITION FEMSA** auditorium in the Monterrey Innovation District.



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- Investment for a better future

incMTY President Rogelio de los Santos gave a presentation at the UANL's Center for Research, Innovation, and Development of the Arts, where he discussed his entrepreneurial journey and strategies to boost investment in Nuevo León.

He said that Mexico faces some disadvantages such as low private sector investment and little access to credit for business owners.

During the talk, he offered some tips such as:

1. Investment as a key to the future:

"It is essential that there be investment to create quality, well-paying jobs.

"Without investment, neither organizations nor the country will have a prosperous future," he said.

2. Public policies:

"Public policies should be implemented to encourage investment and the creation of a favorable environment for entrepreneurship.

"This includes the creation of a regulatory framework that promotes innovation."

3. Education and training:

"It's important to prioritize entrepreneurial education in universities and build ecosystems that support innovation and entrepreneurship.

"This may include collaboration between universities and companies to develop innovation hubs."

4. Savings and investment cycle:

"Encouraging a culture of saving and investment is crucial for social mobility.

“Educating people to delay gratification and diversify investments can enhance their long-term financial situation.”

5. Collaboration and networking:

“Building collaborative networks among entrepreneurs, investors, and universities can provide access to resources and expertise, which in turn can accelerate the growth of new businesses,” he concluded.

About incMTY Festival

incMTY is an open innovation platform for entrepreneurship, investment, and talent in Latin America.

It comprises a community of more than 126,000 early adopters, innovators, business leaders, entrepreneurs, researchers, and executives.

Its high-impact events, especially the incMTY Festival, bring together players in the ecosystem with the aim to turn the mission of “inc” into “innovate,” “network,” and “create.”

Through INCmty, Tec de Monterrey drives the entrepreneurial community toward this, which is one of the ways innovation manifests itself, a core focus of the institution.

Juan Pablo Murra, Rector of Tecnológico de Monterrey, reaffirmed that since incMTY’s launch 12 years ago, its purpose has been to serve as a platform for entrepreneurs.

“We very quickly realized that entrepreneurship isn’t just about supporting a few entrepreneurs but about creating ecosystems that are conducive to supporting them,” Murra said.

The 2025 edition of the incMTY Festival was held from March 18 to 20 at Cintermex, Tec de Monterrey’s Monterrey campus, and UANL’s Mederos campus.

** With information from Rebeca Ruiz, Mónica Torres, Susan Irais, Anya Barrera, and Carolina Contreras.*

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