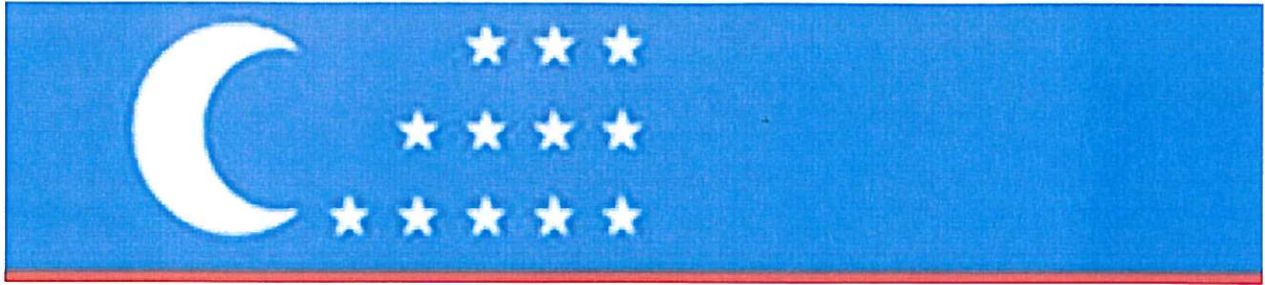# dgil.uz

venture capital in unusual geographies

Techgarage Calabria has its winners!

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It was a hard trip back from the finals of StartCup Calabria, a University business plan competition we've advised this year. Someone at Linate Airport slipped through the security check, was caught on camera and the airport got shut down for most afternoon blocking all incoming flights. We finally landed at 2 am, devastated.

Calabria is one of the most beautiful and troubled lands in Italy (think Sicily on steroids...much worse), so when we decided to go for this challenge at our firm, we thought that if we were to break it here it would have worked anywhere. While the external context is hard, the University of Calabria (Unical) however, is just a great campus, with 26.000 students, and a strong scientific and engineering drive. Some of the best software engineers in Italy come from this campus.

Two hundred students enrolled in the competition, we worked through a selection process and 20 teams where selected for a 2 week bootcamp. They then had the summer to finish and polish the work and pitched in Cosenza this week.

It has just been fenomenal to see the progress all of these guys have made in just a few months, and I believe that anybody who partecipated at the final event, perceived the hard work they all have put in their startup project.

Doing venture capital is an hard job, but days like Techgarage 2011 in Cosenza just make up for it.

Techgarage 2011 had its winners and frankly, for what I've seen they are all the finalist teams. We clearly saw in all of them a change in terms of their motivation, self awareness, vision and ability to act as entrepreneurs. This is stuff that really makes my day. Six months of hard work, well worth!

Here is what could be a **different** future for Calabria and Italy. Check it out.