

FROM STARTUP TO ECOSYSTEM

Lessons from Ecuador on building a space economy in a developing country

How do you build a space economy where none exists?

A case study from Astralintu and Fundación Sideralis

ASTRALINTU

Build Ecuador's first commercial space infrastructure.

The business model was clear. The ecosystem was not.

We thought the hardest problem would be technology.

We were solving the wrong problem.

The talent problem appeared before the market problem.

We grew from a team of 3 to 10 in one year.

But then we became aware something fundamental:

There was no university offering space-related careers or courses for young professionals.

3 — 10
team team

**growth was possible.
The talent pipeline was not.**



aerospace /
aeronautical
engineer



systems
engineers

~1 year
later



space
engineers

THE PROBLEM WAS NOT TECHNOLOGY. IT WAS THE ECOSYSTEM.

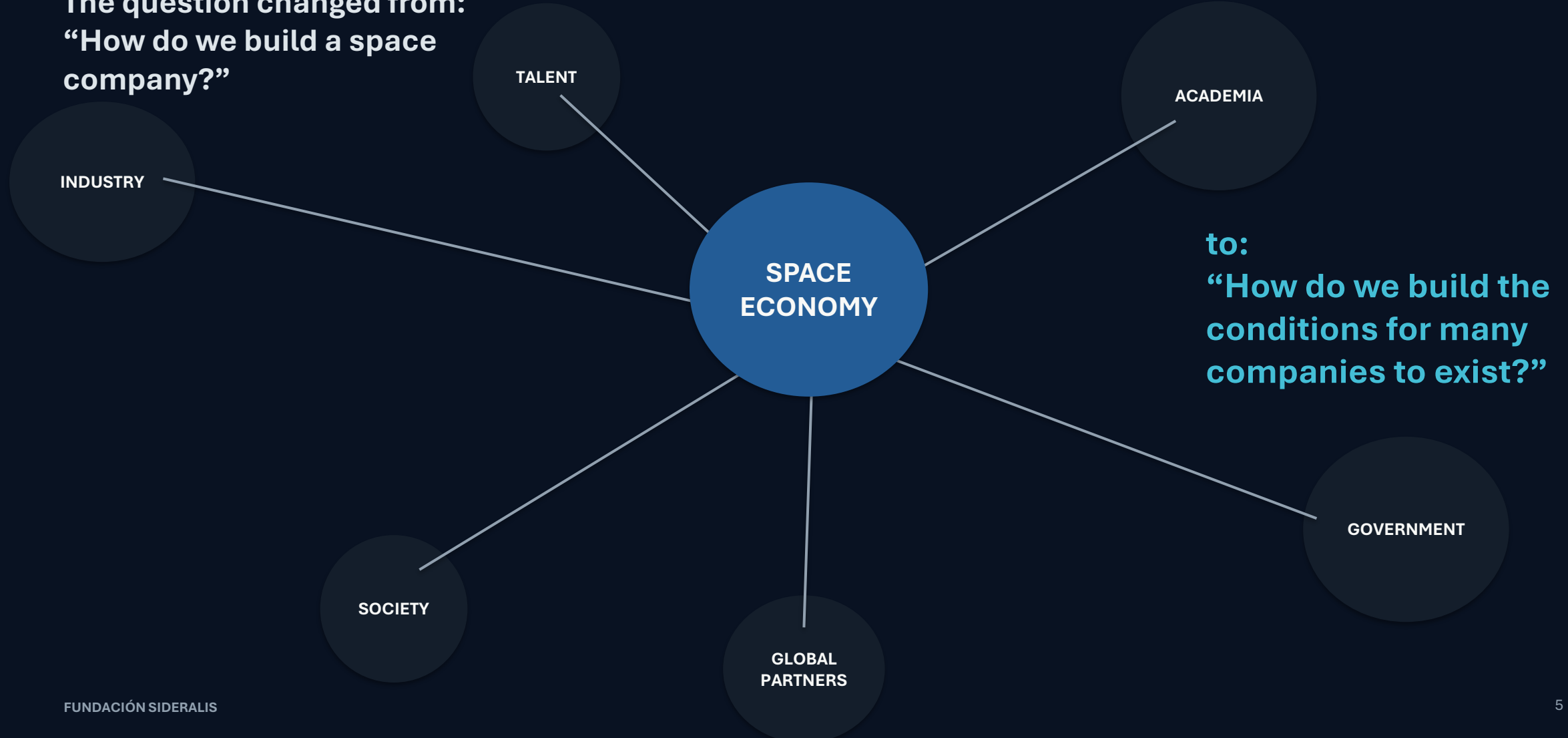
TALENT | EDUCATION | INDUSTRY | GOVERNMENT | GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

- People with space knowledge were working elsewhere or separately
- Talent leak
- Limited knowledge of the industry and local opportunities
- Limited awareness of space's local and global impact

Bring people together.
Bring people back.

A space company is not a space economy.

The question changed from:
“How do we build a space
company?”



We revived Fundación Sideralis.

Not as another organization in the ecosystem —

but as a connector across it.

1

Education

2

Talent development

3

Strategic partnerships

4

Institutional engagement

Connect industry, academia, government, international partners and society.

Lesson 1 — Build the ecosystem alongside the industry.

Don't wait for the ecosystem to be “ready.”

The company exposed the gaps. The gaps told us what the ecosystem needed.

COMPANIES

creating products & services

TALENT

creating capabilities

ACADEMIA

creating knowledge

GOVERNMENT

creating enabling conditions

CAPITAL

enabling investment

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Lesson 2 — Talent is infrastructure.

You cannot build a space economy without people who can imagine themselves working in it.

- Create pathways before demand peaks
- Work with teachers and educators as multipliers
- Turn adjacent engineering and technical talent into space talent
- Make local opportunities visible

Lesson 3 — Start with what your country can contribute.

Ecuador's equatorial position became part of the opportunity.

The goal is not to copy mature space economies.

Identify a realistic capability → build talent around it → connect it to global demand.

National advantage



Talent



Global market

Lesson 4 — Connect globally from the beginning.

Emerging ecosystems do not need to build everything alone.

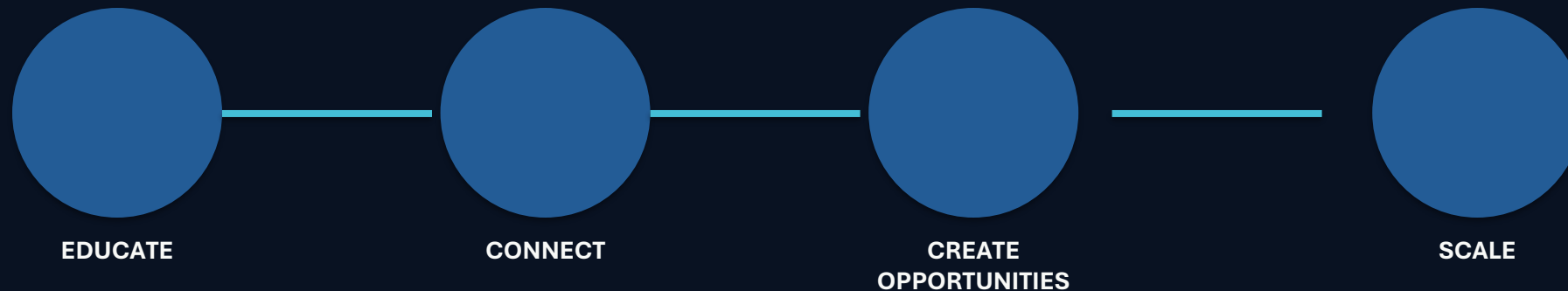
- International partnerships expand capability
- Global networks expose local talent to real opportunities
- Collaboration can accelerate credibility and learning
- The ecosystem becomes larger than national borders

LOCAL CAPABILITY ↔ GLOBAL ECOSYSTEM

Lesson 5 — Build the ecosystem before you need it.

Education, policy, partnerships and talent take time.

If you wait until the industry is large, the ecosystem will already be behind.



People need to believe the future can also be built in their own country. People need hope.

Space can become a platform for:

- new jobs and skills
- innovation and entrepreneurship
- better understanding of Earth and climate
- international collaboration
- national pride and possibility

The ambition is bigger than one company.

It is about creating the conditions for a generation to participate.

And why not see the Ecuadorian flag in space in the near future?

For other emerging nations

- 1 Map national strengths** What can your country realistically contribute?
- 2 Invest in talent** Build pathways before demand peaks.
- 3 Connect local players** Make industry, academia, government and society visible to one another.
- 4 Partner internationally** Bring global knowledge, markets and credibility early.
- 5 Enable the ecosystem** Create the institutional and policy conditions for safe growth.

A developing country does not need to have a space industry to start building a space economy.

It needs to start building the ecosystem that makes one possible.

**Because the goal is not to build the first space company.
It is to make sure it is not the last.**