STARTUP
EUROPE

http://www...

My web business

D3.2 Set of best practices

STARTUP
EUROPE

Project no.	644367
Project acronym:	MY-WAY
Project title:	Strengthening the web entrepreneurship ecosystem and the services offered across the chain of actors by actively engaging student networks and student entrepreneurship centres
Instrument:	Horizon 2020 ICT-13-2014
Start date of project:	01.01.2015
Duration:	24 months
Deliverable title:	D3.2 Set of best practices
Due date of deliverable:	Month 9
Organisation name of lead contractor for this deliverable:	NACUE (P7)

Author list:

Name	Organisation
Till Spanke	NACUE

Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	X
CO	Confidential, restricted under conditions set out in Model Grant Agreement	
CI	Classified, information as referred to in Commission Decision 2001/844/EC	

History			
Version	**Date**	**Reason**	**Revised by**
First Version	28/09/2015	Sent to Partners	PMB
Final Version	08/10/2015	Sent to PMB for approval	Approved by PMB

Partnership

PROJECT COORDINATOR:

Europa Media Non-profit Ltd. (EM)

PROJECT PARTNERS:

Bar-Ilan University (BIU)

The London Association of Enterprise Agencies Ltd. (trading as Capital Enterprise) (CE)

Sabanci University (SABU)

AEGEE –European Students' Forum

EU-Startups.com (EU-S)

National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs (NACUE)

European Confederation of Young Entrepreneurs (YES)

EUCLID Network (EUCLID)

H-Farm S.p.a. (H-FARM)

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

This best practices report (D3.2) of the MY-WAY project identifies best practices among student support centres in web entrepreneurship ecosystems across Europe. Overall, this report examines 24 novel case studies that were composed specifically for the purpose of this report. The case studies cover various student support centres as well as a wider range of other initiatives that offer activities to support students and young adults, which can ultimately be utilised by student support centres to enhance their services. Moreover, these best practices can be utilised to identify commonalities and to provide potential solutions for specific issues and service gaps that student support centres and young entrepreneurs may face. Thereby, the MY-WAY project will enhance current provisions and components of entrepreneurs support that can be altered for the appropriateness of different countries with alternating levels of student web entrepreneurship activity.

The best practice report examined 24 case studies for commonalities in their web entrepreneurship services and challenges they face. This report shows that student support centre challenges can be categorised into enterprise awareness, promotion of student support centre activities, access to enterprise skills, access to finance and confidence. Most student support centres tailor their services in such a way, that it helps young entrepreneurs to overcome the challenges they face. The support provided by student support centres and individual initiatives can be split into entrepreneurship awareness and entrepreneurship support. Entrepreneurship awareness focuses on ensuring that entrepreneurship is promoted as a visible and attractive option for TYAs, whereas entrepreneurship support targets entrepreneurship skills and mentoring support for young and prospective entrepreneurs.

Moreover, the analysis of the case studies provides targeted solutions for problem areas and capability gaps (as identified in the deliverable 2.4 Synergy Report) in young entrepreneurship support across Europe. The capability gaps include installing student support centres as key actors, increasing student support service awareness, caution in regards to the name and location of student support centres, lack of coherent information, strengthening partnerships with similar organisations and networks, creating networks in cities and universities, offering stage specific support, expanding mentoring support, providing financial support, teaching tech skills and providing hands-on entrepreneurial knowledge. One of the main findings of this report is that student support centres can position themselves as key actors within the web entrepreneurship ecosystem if they are connected with other actors within the ecosystem. By positioning themselves as central information points for TYAs in their regional ecosystem, student support centres can also provide more coherent information and services that will help the prospective entrepreneurs to take the first step of their entrepreneurial journey.

Competitions can be an effective tool to increase student support awareness on entrepreneurship and social media should be utilised to have a far reach across the ecosystem. In addition, networking events, one-to-one advice or mentoring, financial support and Entrepreneurs Boot Camps should be provided to young entrepreneurs to offer stage specific support. This report shows the significance of teaching young prospective entrepreneurs with hands-on entrepreneurial knowledge and to create a safe haven in which TYAs can excel as entrepreneurs.

I. Introduction

The MY-WAY project research established that student support centres present a considerable potential for targeted young adults (TYAs) on their path towards building their own enterprise. At the same time, the synergy report (D2.4) of the MY-WAY project identified eleven capability gaps that stand in the way of a successful enterprise support system that provides young entrepreneurs with the help that they require.

Henceforth, this best practices report will examine a unique set of best practice case studies of student support centres and individual initiatives in order to identify best practices among student support centres in web entrepreneurship ecosystems across Europe. The expected impact of this report is twofold: Firstly, the identification of best practice provisions allows student support centres to address specific problems in a structured and previously tested way, by utilising the experience of other student support centres that face similar challenges. Secondly, sharing the full set of best practice solutions can improve the services that student support centres provide by offering a wider range of services that were successfully employed by other student support centres or individual initiatives.

By assessing commonalities and specific approaches to solve common problems, this report will develop examples for student enterprise centres and networks to utilise in addressing specific issues and service gaps. Thereby, MY-WAY will help inform targeted solutions for the development of student enterprise centres and networks as they encounter problems with each stage of their development and represent a practical integration of best practice dissemination. The best practice documentation set will focus on enhancing current provisions and will come with flexible components that can be altered for the appropriateness of different countries with differing levels of student web entrepreneurship activity.

A. Definitions

Targeted young adults (TYAs) are aged around 20-30 and are students within or still close to a higher education institution, young researchers at research universities, higher education alumni networks and members of young entrepreneurs' networks.

Web Entrepreneur is an umbrella term covering "startup founders who build innovative and often disruptive businesses on top of the internet, mobile and various cloud-based technologies, programming

interfaces and platform"[1]. Web entrepreneurs are those who create new digital services and products that use the web as an indispensable component.

Web entrepreneurship ecosystems represent the environments in which web entrepreneurs operate. The ecosystem can consist of a multitude of actors, such as web entrepreneurship initiatives, web or business experts, educational actors and targeted young adults (TYAs) as the final beneficiaries. In regards to student support centres, which the MY-WAY project addresses in particular, a well functioning web entrepreneurship ecosystem provides these centres with access to information and opportunities that TYAs can access accordingly.

Stakeholders of web entrepreneurship ecosystems are web entrepreneurship initiatives (hubs, projects, accelerator networks, contests etc.), web and business experts (accelerators, mentors, etc.), educational actors (business teachers and trainers) and the young adults as the final beneficiaries.

Social Entrepreneurs "seek to serve the community's interest (social, societal, environmental objectives) rather than profit maximisation. They often have an innovative nature, through the goods or services they offer, and through the organisation of production methods they resort to. They often employ society's most fragile members (socially excluded persons). They thus contribute to social cohesion, employment and the reduction of inequalities"[2].

Student Support Centres are providers of information and services for targeted young adults (TYAs) and aspiring web entrepreneurs. The term student support centre includes organisations such as student networks, student entrepreneurship centres and student centres at universities.

B. Context of the Best Practice Report

In recent years access to information, support services, training and networks in the web entrepreneurship ecosystem is becoming increasingly fragmented. Particularly young adults, such as students, find themselves overstrained by the lack of clear guidelines and the sheer number of services. The MY-WAY project addresses this issue by enhancing and improving the collaboration and efforts of web entrepreneurship initiatives (hubs, projects, accelerator networks, contests etc.), web and business experts (accelerators, mentors, etc.), educational actors (business teachers and trainers) and the young adults as the final beneficiaries (through student networks, their alumni and student entrepreneurship centres, hereinafter referred to as student support centres). This coordination will create synergies and

---

[1] European Commission (2011). Open Platforms for web-based applications and services in Europe, enlarging the stakeholders community, p.11

[2] European Commission (2015). Social Entrepreneurship. Retrieved on 11th September 2015 from:
http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/social_business/index_en.htm

find ways to embed flexible and cost-effective services based on the existing best practices to be sustained by the student centres in any European country.

The project is implementing support actions boosting the entrepreneurial spirit, especially changing the mindset, confidence and readiness of young people for starting their own business. MY-WAY will focus on young adults (aged around 20-30, students within or still close to a higher education organisation, young researchers at research universities, higher education alumni networks and members of young entrepreneurs' networks). The project will on one hand help TYAs in accessing and using the relevant information and services and provide motivational support as well as access to the available educational and training materials. This access aims to increase their commitment to being an entrepreneur and help them become more knowledgeable and skilled so that they will be able to start their own web business. In addition, the more representatives of the students (student support centres: student networks and student entrepreneurship centres) will be actively engaged and better integrated into the web entrepreneurial ecosystem.

This report will identify best practices and commonalities among a variety of student support initiatives across Europe. Best practices allow student support centres to address specific problems and service gaps, that were previously identified by the synergy report (D2.4) of the MY-WAY project. By providing student support centres with best practice solutions and approaches, this best practices report plays an important role in strengthening the support provided by student support centres to young prospective entrepreneurs. Ultimately, this will also strengthen the ecosystem as a whole and will increase the visibility and effectiveness of web entrepreneurship initiatives and services. A network of student support centres, that follows best practice principles, can act as multipliers and successfully represent the TYAs' boosting web entrepreneurship in the long term.

The main sources for this report are 24 case studies of student support centres and individual initiatives, that were composed by all MY-WAY partners. In addition, the MY-WAY survey results and in-depth interviews with student support centres (both D2.3)[3] , the synergy report (D2.4)[4] as well as the ecosystem mapping of entrepreneurship support in individual European cities (D2.1)[5] were utilised to write this report.

NACUE, the National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs, received support from all MY-WAY partners to compose the case studies and write the final best practices report. The Action Plan Report (D4.2) of the MY-WAY project will utilise the findings and suggestions of the Best Practices Report to establish a concrete action plan for student support centres on the basis of capability gaps (identified in deliverable 2.4) and best practice solutions (identified in this best practice report). In addition, the Best

---

[3] MY-WAY Project (2015). Deliverable 2.3 - Report on the Survey Results. Retrieved from
http://www.mywaystartup.eu/assets/content/document/D2_3_Report%20on%20the%20survey%20results.pdf
[4] MY-WAY Project (2015). Deliverable 2.4 - Synergy Report.
[5] MY-WAY Project (2015). Deliverable 2.1 - Mapping the Ecosystem.

Practice Report will provide input for Stakeholder Meetings that will be organised in November 2015 and January 2016 (Work Package 3).

C. Statement of the Problem

Digital and web entrepreneurs represent a talent pool that has the potential to create jobs and growth of the future; however, research has shown that TYAs are not always motivated or suitably educated to start their own business when they leave or still are within the education system. In addition, young adults may lack the relevant entrepreneurial skills and experience and may even lack the digital skills needed to create web startups. According to the Digital Agenda Scoreboard 2012, only 27% of Europeans aged 16-74 have high ICT skills.[6]

Within this context, the role of student support centres becomes crucial, and learning experiences best practices from other European organisations can lead each student support centre to improve its own services, at the ultimate benefit of TYAs.

The strategy behind this report was, therefore, to analyse current offerings of web entrepreneurship support centres and to what extent these organisations offer targeted solutions to common capability gaps. Each MY-WAY partner composed case studies of leading student support centres and individual initiatives in their web entrepreneurship ecosystem in Europe to understand their practices and strategies to solve capability gaps. Only by closing current capability gaps in the support services, can student support centres provide better services to TYAs.

D. Objectives

The aim of the MY-WAY project is to strengthen the web entrepreneurship ecosystem in Europe for young people by creating a pan-European network for actively engaged student networks and student support centres. These student support centres will be analysed and commonalities among the organisations will be identified. In addition, this report will highlight targeted solutions for common problems among student support centres and ways to improve the current provision of services. Thereby, MY-WAY supports student support centres in the process of offering more effective and useful services to young entrepreneurs.

---

[6] Digital Agenda Scoreboard (2012). Digital Competences in the Digital Agenda. Retrieved on 17th September from https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/scoreboard_digital_skills.pdf

Because there are fewer available and widely known examples of good practices, role models and case studies in Europe, an additional layer of support is needed to inspire and enable the next generation of businesses. Therefore, the objective of this Best Practice Report is to provide student support centres with a wide array of best practices across Europe, which forms a set of useful insights into the functioning, challenges and activities of student support centres. Thereby, this report aims to develop a set of best practice solutions that can close or minimise capability gaps in the current entrepreneurship support provision.

E. Expected Impact of the Study

This best practices report will complement the previous deliverables of the MY-WAY project and contribute to a topic that is under-researched in the academic sphere. By examining case studies of student support centres and individual initiatives that were composed specifically for this report, this report unveils novel findings on commonalities between student support centres and provides targeted best practice solutions to common problems. Furthermore, student support centres can utilise the report to enhance their current support provisions.

In addition, the report will initiate discussions at local and international levels on the usefulness and applicability of these best practices, particularly across borders and various stages of student support. Thereby, this report will offer initial suggestions as to how these best practices can minimise the capability gaps identified in the synergy report and in what ways young entrepreneurs can access the most effective support from entrepreneurship support services.

Finally, this report will provide ideas for potential ways to improve the current level of support in form of following suggestions and ideas from other MY-WAY best practice case studies. The MY-WAY project believes that student support centres can improve their services considerably by taking these suggestions on board and collaborating with other organisations in the ecosystem, in order to be integrated better into the web entrepreneurship ecosystem.

II. Methodology

This best practices report not only utilises the findings of the Mapping the Ecosystem Report (D2.1), the Report on the Survey Results (D2.3) and the Synergy Report (D2.4), but most importantly analyses the novel best practice case studies that were specifically composed for the MY-WAY project in the context of Work Package 3.

All MY-WAY partners were asked to prepare at least two case studies of student support centres, student networks, entrepreneurship centres or individual initiatives in their respective web entrepreneurship ecosystem. In order to guarantee coherence among all the case studies provided by the partners, NACUE created two best practice case study templates - one for student networks and the other for student support initiatives (Appendix) - that all project partners could utilise to write their case studies.

The best practice case study template was divided into five major sections: Background, challenges, actions taken, results and a summary. The 'background' section contextualises the case study by providing information about the student entrepreneurship network and its significance for young entrepreneurs. In addition, it covers aspects such as programmes on offer, infrastructure, resources, key players involved in the student entrepreneurship network, location and relevant partnerships. Furthermore, the background section outlines the overall journey of the student support centres and the organisations providing individual programmes including specific projects and initiatives they have been working on.

The 'challenges' section of the best practice case study template provides a brief summary of the challenges faced by targeted young adults, as perceived by the organisation under analysis, and possible ways such challenges can be identified by the student entrepreneurship network. The 'actions taken' section examines the steps that were taken to resolve the previously identified challenges (e.g. further consultations, initiatives or changes in policy). It also offers insights into the processes as well as the relevance of individual initiatives.

The 'results' section of the template outlines the impact of the actions taken by the student support centre and the organisation that runs support activities. In particular, the section identifies what issues were resolved with the help of specific initiatives of the student entrepreneurship network. The final 'summary' section of the case study template summarises the overall progress of the student entrepreneurship network/organisation including objectives, challenges and actions taken. It also highlights any aspects that could be done differently or actions and outcomes that could be replicated in other societies (best practice examples). In addition, possible next steps could be discussed to maintain the momentum, monitor success and create new initiatives.

Each template section included a set of potential questions that the interviewers could ask the subject of the case studies. The questions in the template were regarded as guidelines for semi-structured interviews with student support centres, rather than a strict framework that needs to be followed by the partners. Subsequently, the answers to the questions were utilised to write comprehensive case study sections, that present a detailed overview of initiatives and student support centres.

The MY-WAY partners were given a variety of possibilities to ask questions to the student support centres and organisations providing individual initiatives. While some partners decided to meet and interview interviewees in person, others preferred to call or Skype organisations instead. In some cases, interviewees were asked to answer the questions themselves in written form. In these cases, partners sent the template to interviewees by email. In essence, partners and organisations were given freedom and flexibility to compose the case studies in order to receive the highest quantity and quality possible. Overall, the approach that partners chose to contact interviewees did not impact the quality of the case studies. Nonetheless, there remains a potential bias if interviewees decide to write the case studies themselves.

Once NACUE received all the case studies from the partners, NACUE started the analysis of the case studies by scanning the case studies for commonalities and particularly helpful support initiatives for TYAs. Overall, NACUE received 24 best practice case studies from the MY-WAY partners including student-led accelerator programmes, professional enterprise support centres within universities, entrepreneurship societies/clubs at universities, non-profit organisations and tech programmes.

III. Commonalities of Web Entrepreneurship Support Services

This section will examine the 24 best practice case studies that were composed by the MY-WAY partners. In particular, commonalities of web entrepreneurship support services will be highlighted in order to assess the kind of services student support centres provide and what kind of challenges student support centres as well as young entrepreneurs face.

General Structure

The selection of case studies has shown the wide variety of student support centres and organisations present in web entrepreneurship ecosystems across Europe. Each case study is unique and portrays a different organisation with a specific organisational structure and focus. The student support centres/organisations highlighted in this report take the form of student-led accelerator programmes, professional enterprise centres within universities, entrepreneurship societies/clubs at universities, non-profit organisations, tech programmes etc. Hence, it is difficult to make generalisations about the basic structure of student support centres, organisations and individual initiatives. Nonetheless, this report can highlight commonalities of web entrepreneurship support services in the areas of challenges and services provided.

The majority of organisations are situated within a higher education institution. This does not necessarily mean that they are directly associated with the institution. Being situated at a university has the advantage of being exposed to a large group of potential young entrepreneurs and potential funding from the higher education institution. Nearly half of organisations that were located at a university were at least partly funded by the institution. However, organisations stressed the importance of applying for alternative funding sources as well in order to avoid reliance on one financial source. The remaining organisations existed independently within cities or regions. In some cases these independent organisations were located in the same office buildings as other actors within the entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Challenges

The analysis of the best practice case studies provided insightful results in regards to the challenges faced by both TYAs and centres/organisations/individual initiatives themselves. Some student support centres/organisations/individual initiatives in this study have existed for more than 10 years, whereas others performed their activities for less than a year. Despite the differences in experience, student support services nonetheless come across similar challenges. Overall, the challenges of student support centres can be classified into 5 groups: enterprise awareness, student support centre promotion, access to enterprise skills, access to finance, and confidence. In the next section, possible best practice solutions will be presented to tackle these challenges successfully.

The Enterprise Team of the University of Huddersfield (Appendix) highlighted several challenges that focus particularly on enterprise awareness and reducing the barrier to entrepreneurship. In other words, many students do not consider or are not aware that entrepreneurship or self-employment is a viable career option for them. A potential reason for this perceived barrier is that some students may be put off by the term entrepreneur, preferring other self-definitions, such as freelancer or business owner.

The student support centre Excitera (Appendix) identified the promotion of their services as one of their biggest challenges, because students on campus come and go and there is a limited amount of time to reach out to them. Moreover, with many events and initiatives taking place on campus, it can sometimes be difficult to gather people for events if there is no proper incentive for people to show up. It is apparent that the size of the campus as a whole with all its initiatives, networks and activities makes it hard to reach out to students at times. In addition, some companies already have a foundation, and are more likely to continue their growth in an accelerator or co-working space rather than a student support centre.

Manchester Entrepreneurs (Appendix) stated that within their student society, the key challenges that appear include access to technical talent and lack of core enterprise skills. Furthermore, students often find themselves with ideas and the ability to write a basic business plan, but lack the ability and resources to turn it into a viable business. This shows that student entrepreneur support centres/organisations/ individual initiatives need to tackle a number of areas when it comes to supporting students effectively. First and foremost, student entrepreneurs require the technical knowledge and skills set to put their ideas into practice. This includes financial, legal and tech/web advice as well as skills development such as pitching and business plan writing. Similarly, Excitera (Appendix) stated that most students lack knowledge in different aspects of business administration like marketing, corporate finance and business development.

The biggest challenges the student support centre JADE (Appendix) identified is the fear of failure, access to finance, red tape and bureaucracy. JADE believes that there are many financing opportunities from the European Commission itself, but those options are not disseminated enough.

Bridge Budapest (Appendix) identified that even though the conditions for successful entrepreneurial work are given, a persistent lack of confidence is the main reason why young entrepreneurs are not trying to pursue their dream or are failing in their endeavours. Adding to this, the regulation related to starting a new company is complex and sometimes inconsistent, thus discouraging many young people who lack the legal knowledge or are not motivated enough. Excitera (Appendix) also states that students' lack of confidence in their idea or the belief that they cannot afford to put aside time and money from their studies to start a company are key challenges of TYAs.

Services

Most student support centres tailor their offering in such a way, that it helps young entrepreneurs overcome the challenges they face. The services of student support centres can be broadly classified into entrepreneurship awareness and entrepreneurship support. While the former focuses on presenting entrepreneurship as a viable and attractive option, the latter focuses on providing entrepreneurship skills and mentoring.

The Enterprise Team at the University of Huddersfield (Appendix) puts great emphasis on increasing enterprise awareness at the university and providing practical entrepreneurship support to aspiring entrepreneurs and self-employed students. Depending on the institutional context and needs, student support services can offer a mix of external or in-house business advisors and mentors to cater for the demands of young entrepreneurs. The case studies show that many support centres focus on providing practical business and entrepreneurship support in form of mentoring and business plan workshops. Enterprise support can take place in form of in-house business advisors and the possibility to apply for micro finance. Some universities employ full time business advisors that guide the young entrepreneurs through their set up of the business and provide advice on seeking investment. Moreover, some student support centres have arrangements with a range of professional services for pro bono support and work with chartered accountants and provide investor ready workshop.

Organisations such as Bridge Budapest (Appendix), on the other hand, focus on entrepreneurship awareness in particular by supporting young entrepreneurs in confidence building. There are a variety of ways to increase enterprise awareness among TYAs and the student support centres in the case studies offer services such as workshops, inspirational lectures, networking events and one-on-one meetings with business start-ups and advisors. Furthermore, the Enterprise Team of the University of Huddersfield (Appendix) also stresses the importance of using the terms freelancer or business owner instead of entrepreneur and business start-up, social enterprise, freelancing, self-employment instead of entrepreneurship. Excitera (Appendix) stated that many students are interested in entrepreneurship, but the startup process seems overwhelming. Excitera takes action against these issues by hosting different

informative events, addressing the common doubts and questions and social media (website, Facebook) to share the knowledge and opportunities of entrepreneurship.

Student support centres as higher education institutions can also utilise the education system to raise enterprise awareness. Lecturers at the University of Huddersfield (Appendix), for example, are involved in enterprise education by embedding enterprise education (having ideas and making them happen) in the curriculum. Moreover, the University of Huddersfield offers enterprise placement years, game industry placement years, an entrepreneurship top up degree in digital entrepreneurship and a new venture creation degree at undergraduate level (BA Enterprise Development).

IV. Targeted Solutions for Problem Areas

This section will address the capability gaps that were identified in the Synergy Report (D2.4) and highlight potential solutions to these problems by utilising best practices from the student support centre case studies. Student support centres offer a variety of services to TYAs and some of them can be employed by other student support centres to fill capability gaps or offer targeted solutions for some of the problem areas.

The Synergy Report identified eleven capability gaps in the current provision of web entrepreneurship support services. These eleven capability gaps can be broadly categorised into three groups. First, the structure, role and perception of student support centres need to be reconsidered. In its current form, student support centres do not represent key actors within the web entrepreneurship ecosystem and young entrepreneurs are oftentimes not aware of their services. Second, the organisation of web entrepreneurship ecosystems needs to be improved by providing easily accessible and coherent information as well as establishing and strengthening partnerships among similar support centres and networks. Third, student support centres need to provide services that are stage specific and in demand among young entrepreneurs. Particularly, mentoring, pre-acceleration or idea-acceleration, financial and tech skills support are required to support young entrepreneurs effectively.

1. **Student Support Centres as Key Actors:** Most student support centres are currently not among the key actors in the web entrepreneurship ecosystems across Europe. This is one of the reasons why students do not seek funding or information primarily through student support centres, but prefer to access information from other sources such as the internet or friends and family.
   One of the most important findings of this Best Practices Report is that student support centres/organisations/individual initiatives can position themselves as key actors within the entrepreneurship ecosystem if they build and exploit cooperation channels with other actors within the ecosystem. Thereby, student support centres often become the first point of contact for their target audience, such as young entrepreneurs and students. NEWEXIST (Appendix), for example, is the entrepreneurship initiative of the Technische Hochschule Ingolstadt and collaborates closely with the university, the entrepreneurship centre of Ingolstadt (EGZ), an entrepreneurship network called Baystartup and an organisation which provides financial help for startups. Thus, NEWEXIST has established itself as the first point of contact for entrepreneurs at the university. The initiative answers students' questions and connects them with professors or coaches who can provide them with relevant and appropriate advice.

2. **Student Support Service Awareness:** The MY-WAY survey showed that only 62% of respondents are aware of programmes or services that support entrepreneurs in their countries. Moreover, student support centres stated repeatedly in the in-depth interviews (D2.3) and the best practice case studies that they struggle to identify programmes that are suitable for a large number of people and can convince young adults to pursue the entrepreneurship route. Concurrently, the aim of student support centres should be to diversify the target audience and not solely focus on students with business backgrounds. The Bar-Ilan University Entrepreneurs Club (Appendix), for example, believes that many of the students at the universities are wannabe entrepreneurs, regardless of their subject. Typically, club members come from an engineering, computer science and law background, but other departments are also represented as the club aims to include more students from other departments as well.

Competitions can be a possible way to engage with a wide group of people and attract young students to entrepreneurship. Excitera (Appendix) offers competitions such as the Swedish Game Awards, which is the leading competition for student driven startups involved in the gaming industry and the Excitera Innovation Challenge, which is an innovation challenge for students that aim at setting up new companies and collaborations. Furthermore, Excitera promotes entrepreneurship through events and competitions where students can develop products, business plans, marketing strategies and network.

In order to be visible to large groups of students, ITU GINOVA (Appendix) chose its location to be in the central area of the main campus (beside the central library), where student traffic is very high. It also uses social media channels very actively to involve more students. In addition, ITU GINOVA organises open office hours on Monday evenings which allows students to meet, increase their network and ask questions.

3. **Location and Name of Student Support Centres:** 73% of MY-WAY survey respondents indicated that they would want to go to an entrepreneurship centre to get support, while 41% prefer an entrepreneurship centre at their university and 21% of young entrepreneurs would rather go to a student support centre. This shows that the majority of survey respondents is in favour of an inclusive entrepreneurship support centre that is not located at a higher education institution.

The University of Huddersfield (Appendix) stated that many students do not consider or are not aware that entrepreneurship or self-employment is a viable career option for them. A potential reason for this perceived barrier is that some students may be put off by the term entrepreneur. Therefore, the Enterprise Team at the University of Huddersfield prefers other self-definitions, such as freelancer, founder or business owner.

4. **Lack of Coherent Information:** The analysis of web entrepreneurship ecosystems across Europe identified a lack of coherent information within individual web entrepreneurship ecosystems. Oftentimes, responsibilities and activities of organisations and initiatives within ecosystems overlap and in certain cases even compete with each other.

START Berlin (Appendix) attacks this problem by positioning itself as the central information point for young entrepreneurs in Berlin, which can provide coherent information to TYAs. START Berlin is a student-led initiative, affiliated with all Berlin-based universities, that introduces students to entrepreneurship. The initiative is dedicated to support its members in their career and personal goals by providing them with unique opportunities to engage with representatives from all aspects of Berlin's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Students can thereby access information from one central source, which makes it easier to understand for young entrepreneurs to understand and utilise the potential of the ecosystem. START Berlin collaborates with many different organizations from the ecosystem, which is an essential feature of their work. Some of the partners are the German Startup Association, Startup Safary, Gründermagnet, Entrepreneurship centres of all universities in Berlin, the COMAS college in Israel and many startups, incubators and accelerators that START Berlin is in contact with to organise initiatives and events together. Furthermore, the initiative aims at supporting students if they have concrete requests. START Berlin does that by forwarding them to the right contact person or with workshops and brainstorming sessions.

5. **Strengthening Partnerships with Similar Organisations and Networks:** The Survey Results Report (D2.3) identified that student support centres express a strong need for more connectivity and synergies with other support initiatives that could ultimately help the improvement of their services for TYAs. The student support centre case studies demonstrated the potential of cooperation channels between individual student support centres. The Enterprise Team at the University of Huddersfield (Appendix), for example, not only puts great emphasis on increasing enterprise awareness at the university and providing practical support to aspiring entrepreneurs and self-employed students, it has also been cooperating with other Yorkshire universities in the context of the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project (GEP) which connects students with a wider network of entrepreneurs and enterprise support. The large number of universities in the project allows students to resort to enterprise support services at their university as well as to some regional events. The universities primarily cater for their own student population, but the collaboration with other Higher Education Institutions serves the greater goal of enhancing and developing the region's student population. Each university in the GEP framework operates in different ways and provides different services to their student population. On an individual basis, the University of Huddersfield is immensely proactive in entrepreneurship, but the framework of the GEP allows universities to exchange ideas and draw upon wider resources, such as best practices.

6. **Entrepreneur Networks in Cities and Universities:** 57% of MY-WAY survey respondents claimed that their university or city has a network of entrepreneurs. 36% of survey respondents claimed that there is a student entrepreneurship centre or other type of support at their university with regard to web entrepreneurship. 33% of respondents claim that such a centre does not exist and the remaining 31% do not know the answer. These figures may be due to an actual lack of such a network, or alternatively young entrepreneurs are not aware of such a network.

The best practice case studies showed that entrepreneur networks in Stockholm, Berlin, London etc. can present a useful information and network source for young entrepreneurs. At the same time, the case studies highlighted successful examples of cooperation between student support centres and entrepreneur networks. Henceforth, it should be the aim of student support centres to work closely with these networks or facilitate their development.

7. **Stage Specific Support:** Student support centres should provide services that are specifically targeted at the stage of the enterprise. 95% of aspiring entrepreneurs indicated that it would be helpful if student networks, associations or centres support them in the first steps of becoming an entrepreneur. The Synergy Report (D2.4) of the MY-WAY project identified that student support centres need to offer stage specific support, because young entrepreneurs with initial ideas require stage specific support in particular. In the experience of !gen Budapest and !gen Debrecen (Appendix), the main challenge faced by wannabe entrepreneurs is the gap between theory and practice. In other words, young people often gained the necessary background knowledge at university, but do not know where to start off, how the legal mechanisms work and where to find funding.

   The University of Huddersfield and the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project (Appendix) welcome all young students with initial business ideas regardless of their business type or level. Most young students that access the services at the Huddersfield Enterprise Team are at the proof-of-concept stage. The services provided by the University of Huddersfield range from pre-pre-start to early stage trading support. Support services include networking events, one-to-one advice or mentoring, financial support and Entrepreneurs Boot Camps. Similarly, the Bar-Ilan University Entrepreneurs Club (Appendix) focuses specifically on young students that have an idea but do not know how to execute it. Every student that asks for the club's support has the opportunity to meet a faculty member that specifies a tailored support program for the young entrepreneur.

   The Venture Catalyst Challenge (Appendix) offers a pre-accelerator programme for present undergraduate, postgraduate students and recent graduates of Imperial College London. The VCC is designed to test the commercial viability of participants early-stage science and technology ideas. To this end, the VCC programme incorporates elements of Stanford Universities Design Thinking course, the principles of Lean Start-Up methodologies, tools such as the Business Model Canvas and Lean Start-up Canvas and the latest in Customer Development Methodologies. The format combines evening masterclasses and workshops for 6 weeks from February to March. The program culminates in an annual Showcase, at which the University gives out a cash prize.

   Similarly, Gisrim Fabrika's (Appendix) experience has shown that it is better if accelerator programmes are short. Gisrim Fabrika cut their acceleration period from 12 months to 5 weeks and still achieve considerable change among student entrepreneurs and a more structured and reflective approach.

8. **Expanding Mentoring Support:** The majority of student support centres/organisations/initiatives offers mentoring services for young entrepreneurs. However, the type of mentoring support differs from organisation to organisation. While some student support centres focus on providing mentoring support that teaches young entrepreneurs the necessary entrepreneurship skills, other initiatives focus on mentoring that enhances TYAs' confidence in themselves and their enterprise. The number of different events that focus on the engagement with experienced entrepreneurs demonstrates the demand and usefulness of such events and at the same time shows the variety of ways in which such events can be organised.

The analysis of all best practice case studies demonstrated that one of the main services and aims of student support centres is the provision of networking and connection opportunities with experienced entrepreneurs. The student support centres utilise entrepreneurs and expertise from a variety of sources. The Bar-Ilan University Entrepreneurship Club (Appendix) offers regular meetings with experienced entrepreneurs, consulting meetings with faculty members and external experts, as well as pitching events where students can present their ideas and get feedback from peers and experts.

The FIVOSZ-BossConnect Mentorship Programme (Appendix) is coordinated by two employees and comprises 90 mentors: experts, SME owners, entrepreneurs and accelerators from Hungary, who believe in the power of mentoring. The programme starts with a selection of students as potential mentees: they present their ideas and each mentor will decide which one he/she wants to support. A "master and student" type of collaboration is thus created, in which the mentor provides personal consultation and support in business decisions. The consultation takes place once or twice a month, depending on actual needs. The collaboration usually lasts half a year, but can be extended if required. The topics are not limited and the main focus is on the quality of the idea. Thereby, FIVOSZ-BossConnect's fosters one-to-one mentoring sessions with senior company leaders and owners rather than focusing on coaching.

Furthermore, the best practice case studies highlighted the variety of mentors that can support young entrepreneurs. Mentors of !gen Debrecen (Appendix) are entrepreneurs from the region who are ready and willing to tell their story, share their knowledge in different fields and mentor the teams. ITU GINOVA (Appendix), on the other hand, connects TYAs with academics who serve as mentors. The Entrepreneur First (Appendix) accelerator programme team includes 4 venture partners who are serial entrepreneurs and investors. They act as mentors during the programme and are carry partners in the fund.

In order to increase the number of young adults deciding to become entrepreneurs, it is necessary to build their confidence. Bridge Budapest (Appendix) offers the unique initiative Bridge Builders, which is an executive, invitation-based, special mentoring programme for 10 talented, young professionals to empower Hungary's future leaders. Participants are around the age of 30 and have already proven their leadership capabilities in the fields of culture, business, media, politics and NGOs. The process lasts over the course of one year, with five weekends and one journey to Sweden.

9. **Financial Support:** The MY-WAY research has shown that in its current format web student support centres do not provide sufficient support for young entrepreneurs in regards to financial matters. The reliance on friends and family for the funding of entrepreneurs presents a significant problem. The Synergy Report (D2.4) of the MY-WAY project has also shown that it is not necessarily the role of student support centres to provide funds to young entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, young entrepreneurs require some degree of financial support and student support centres need to be able to direct students to the right funds.

   Some student support centres, such as the Accelerate ME programme (Appendix), offer financial support to TYAs. Their scheme includes three key components. First, teams receive drip-fed funding. The £2,000 grant funding is split into two segments. Initially the teams will be paid £500 and subsequently £1,500. The first payment is interlinked with the task to set three measureable objectives that the teams are expected to achieve within the first three months. If these objectives are met successfully, teams will be awarded the final payment. Second, during the first phase of the programme (usually from September to December), teams meet twice per month to provide the other team with an update on their short term progress. In addition, teams publically set themselves informal goals that they should achieve before the next session. Third, for the duration of the scheme, all teams are provided with free working space in a startup incubator. This ensures they are able to work around like-minded people, both on the scheme and in the wider startup community. It also allows for teams to arrange meetings with potential clients and partners in a formal environment, before they are able to afford to pay for similar space. The drip-fed funding as part of the Accelerate ME scheme has proven successful, as it encourages teams to work efficiently and effectively in the first three months. It is crucial that the objectives are discussed with the Manchester Entrepreneurs team to ensure that the objectives are realistic but at the same time ambitious. The peer review in form of bi-monthly meetings with other teams provides teams with a benchmark of activity to work towards, incentivising them to ensure they are working at a pace that is in line with the rest of the cohort. It also provides the opportunity for each team to provide feedback and suggestions to the others, and leads to valuable ideas being generated.

10. **Teach Tech Skills:** The survey identified that 22% of web entrepreneurs stated that they do not have adequate tech skills, which shows that there is a great demand from web entrepreneurs and aspiring web entrepreneurs to develop these skills, which is not necessarily covered by the current support service system. These survey results also demonstrated that tech skills are not the most important factor at the early stages of a business. Once an enterprise is mature enough, tech skills can be very useful to scale its activities.

    The Venture Catalyst Programme (Appendix) offers enterprise and tech support from Google and the majority of London's accelerator programs aligned with Capital Enterprise, Tech Stars and Entrepreneur First. In addition, the programme offers advice and one-to-one support from technology commercialisation specialists from Imperial Innovations (the university's tech transfer department), dedicated prototyping workshops with Imperial College Advanced Hackspace, an assigned mentor from the startups industry area to liaise with over the course of the programme

and a demonstration day in front of an invited audience of investors, corporates and organisations engaged in supporting entrepreneurs in London.

11. **Hands on Entrepreneurial Knowledge:** The interviews with student support centres have shown that it can be very beneficial for TYAs to acquire hands on entrepreneurial knowledge in form of short programmes at universities or case studies that explain the entrepreneurial path of other young entrepreneurs. Among the key challenges highlighted by the FIVOSZ-BossConnect Mentor Program (Appendix) is the fact that students do not have hands-on knowledge about how real life business works, such as pricing, marketing, sales strategies, operations, legal issues, etc. Young entrepreneurs are well educated and have in-depth academic knowledge but do not have much hands-on experience. Therefore, universities and schools need to offer practice-based entrepreneurship education. One possible way to motivate young students to become entrepreneurs and simultaneously provide hands on entrepreneurial knowledge is to embed enterprise education in the curriculum. The University of Huddersfield (Appendix), for example, offers enterprise placement years, game industry placement years, an entrepreneurship top up degree in digital entrepreneurship and a new venture creation degree at undergraduate level (BA Enterprise Development). Also Startup Dock (Appendix) offers a variety of university classes in order to inform students about the potential of entrepreneurship. Similarly, Holland Startup (Appendix) makes sure to create an attractive program which will be included in the master programmes of students as part of their curriculum.

An alternative way to offer mass engagement programmes without relying on the support of higher education institutions is to organise regional events such as Entrepreneurs Boot Camps, which are intensive four-day residential courses. This programme offers young entrepreneurs the opportunity to develop their business plans in a fully supported environment. The goal is to ensure business skills development by going through interactive business scenarios and talks. Specialist advisors support graduate entrepreneurs with business advice, such as finance, IP, legal requirements, networking, taxation and marketing. Moreover, student support centres can offer networking events, which cover certain aspects of the business environment. These events may also include commercial skills workshops.

The flagship project of Bridge Budapest (Appendix) is its two-way fellowship program. One part is intended for a selected number of Hungarian university students or fresh graduates (6-8 per year) to gain practical experience and inspiration at partner companies outside Hungary: LogMeIn, NNG, Prezi, and Ustream, in their headquarters in Boston, San Francisco, Israel, Japan, India, and China. The goal of these fully financed fellowships is not only to expand knowledge in a chosen field (computer science, marketing, design and sales in particular), but also to establish contacts with high-ranking mentors, to experience a different working culture in global centres of innovation, and gain valuable insight and inspiration. The fellowship is thus intended to result both in getting to know leading companies and realizing that such success can be started in Hungary and Central Europe.

Additionally, M31 (Appendix) provides a set of basic services such as accounting, legal, HR but, overall, the added value of M31 is given by the management coaching within the business strategies of the projects. Similarly, SUCool (Appendix) provides a training program of 6-7 sessions that teaches entrepreneurs all things they need to know such as market research, business models, finance, sales and marketing, product development, team management, legal issues and working with investors. Moreover, SUCool matches entrepreneurs with mentors, customer and investors locally and internationally.

Financial Support for Student Support Centres

The Synergy Report (D2.4) and the best practice case studies highlighted the limited financial resources for many student support centres. According to the best practice case studies, most student support centres rely on a mixture of academic, commercial and public sector sponsors. Similar to other student support centres, all of Excitera's (Appendix) work is pro--bono and financed through sponsorship agreements with companies interested in meeting entrepreneurial minded people. Since Excitera is a non--profit organisation all the profits are reinvested in the organization and the further promotion of Excitera. JADE (Appendix) does not lack funding from the public sector, rather from the private sector. Several universities support student support centres and often also provide them with the necessary infrastructure. Private sector support focuses mostly on training and providing speakers, whereas sponsoring and providing student support centres with money is more problematic. The Zaragoza Activa centre (Appendix) receives direct support from the Zaragoza city hall to resolve the previously identified challenges in terms of provision of infrastructure, space and budget.

V. Opportunities for Enhancing Current Provisions

This section will utilise the case studies to identify opportunities for enhancing current provisions of student support services. The best practice case studies identified two ways in which student support centres can improve the current level of support provided: Cooperation with other actors within the regional ecosystem and creating a safe haven for young entrepreneurs.

Cooperation with other Actors within the Regional Ecosystem

Besides cooperating with other student support centres, it is beneficial for student support centres to work closely with other actors within the regional ecosystem. The Bar-Ilan University Entrepreneurship Club (Appendix) collaborates with three kinds of partners: successful entrepreneurs, incubators and accelerators, and consultants. These partners can support student support centres in a number of ways. Successful entrepreneurs meet regularly with the members of the Bar-Ilan University Entrepreneurship Club to share their experiences and provide advice to young entrepreneurs. Incubators and accelerators support the club as members of expert panels that review students' presentations and business plans. Moreover, some consultants volunteered to assist students in various phases of the business setting (pitching, business plan, financing, etc.). Similarly, Holland Startup (Appendix) is working independently with private companies, external investors and by retaining a close relationship with Dutch Universities. Furthermore, M31 (Appendix) cooperates with several partners including business angels, universities (as one of its main sources of ideas), and accelerators/incubators (as partners or co-investors). Zaragoza Activa (Appendix) collaborates with a wide range of public and private entities combining different sectors such as academia with a partnership with the University of Zaragoza, the government with cooperation between the regional government of Aragon and the central Spanish government, the business sector with a partnership with the regional Chamber of Commerce, and the local youth with a collaboration with the association of Young Entrepreneurs.

Excitera (Appendix) also exemplifies the advantages of cooperating with other actors in the regional entrepreneurship ecosystem. Excitera offers the Startup Pub, which is a monthly gathering of co-working spaces, accelerators and support centre representatives to discuss future entrepreneurship events in the

Stockholm region. Furthermore, Excitera created a wholesome guide of all the entrepreneurship supports centres in Stockholm such as guidance centres, incubators, accelerators, co-working spaces, startup tax offices etc. Young entrepreneurs can benefit from this guide, as it clearly outlines the opportunities for TYAs.

Creating a Safe Haven for Young Entrepreneurs

The case studies have shown that young entrepreneurs do best, if student support centres can provide them with a safe environment in which they can excel. One of the main features of entrepreneur support centres at the KTH campus (Appendix) is that it creates a safe haven for students who want to try their wings and meet like-minded people in the sphere of innovation and entrepreneurship. Excitera arranges various pitching, activity and educational events on campus to spark the flare and attract entrepreneurial minded people to join the activities and entrepreneurial network.

The example of Gisrim Fabrika (Appendix) shows that student support centres can function as key actors within the ecosystem if they provide a safe haven for young entrepreneurs to develop their ideas. Gisrim Fabrika offers a 5 week accelerator programme which allows entrepreneurs to test their ideas using pure start-up philosophy. Entrepreneurs transform their ideas to sustainable, scalable, and effective companies with the help of comprehensive guidance, networks, access to academics and financial support. During the 5 week programme, Gisrim Fabrika helps young entrepreneurs to experience the startup process and share the road to success. Young entrepreneurs learn what tools they can use, how to use them and where they can receive further advice.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, this Best Practices Report provided an analysis of 24 student support centres/ organisations/ initiatives in a number of European countries. The student support centres/organisations/initiatives in this study included student-led accelerator programmes, professional enterprise centres within universities, entrepreneurship societies/clubs at universities, non-profit organisations and tech programmes. Thereby, this report established a set of best practices that provided insights into commonalities that student support centres share in regards to challenges they face and services they provide to young adults. Moreover, the analysis of student support centres' services allowed for potential solutions to certain capability gaps and a wider set of services that student support centres and student networks in other regions can utilise. Finally, the report identified opportunities for enhancing student support provisions by combining the best practices taken from the case studies.

The Best Practices Report examined commonalities of web entrepreneurship support and assessed in particular the kinds of services student support centres/organisations/initiatives offer, their general structure and challenges they face. In regards to the general structure of student support centre it was difficult to make generalisations as the case studies presented a wide variety of student support centres/organisations/initiatives across Europe. Nonetheless, the report was able to identify that the majority of student support centres/organisations/initiatives are situated within a higher education institution, because this has the advantage of being exposed to a large group of potential young entrepreneurs and potential funding from the higher education institution. Nearly half of student support centres/organisations/initiatives that were located at a university were at least partly funded by the institution. However, student support centres stressed the importance of applying for alternative funding sources as well in order to avoid reliance on one financial source.

The challenges that student support centres/organisations/initiatives face can be broadly categorised into five groups: enterprise awareness, promotion of student support centre activities, access to enterprise skills, access to finance and confidence. Many student and young adults are not necessarily aware of the potential and possibilities of entrepreneurship. In addition, many of them may be put off by the terms entrepreneur and entrepreneurship. Student support centres/organisations/initiatives at higher education institutions face the difficulty of only being able to interact with students directly for a limited amount of time. At the same time, young entrepreneurs often lack the ability and resources to form a business plan into a business, as they are missing they right technical knowledge and skills such as financial, legal, marketing and tech advice as well as business plan writing skills. There are finance opportunities out there for example by the European Commission; however these opportunities are not disseminated sufficiently.

In addition, complex regulations can be discouraging for young entrepreneurs and they lack the motivation and confidence.

Most student support centres/organisations/initiatives tailor their services in such a way, that it helps young entrepreneurs to overcome the challenges they face. The support provided by them can be broadly categorised into entrepreneurship awareness and entrepreneurship support. The case studies show that many initiatives focus on providing practical business and entrepreneurship support in form of mentoring and business plan workshops. Enterprise support can take place in form of in-house business advisors and the possibility to apply for micro finance. There are a variety of ways to increase enterprise awareness among TYAs and the student support centres in the case studies offer services such as workshops, inspirational lectures, networking events and one-on-one meetings with business start-ups and advisors. Additionally, higher education institutions can embed entrepreneurship into the curriculum in order to raise entrepreneurship awareness.

The Best Practices report provided potential best practice solutions for capability gaps in the current provision of entrepreneurship support in web entrepreneurship ecosystems across Europe. One of the main findings of this report is that student networks can position themselves as key actors within the web entrepreneurship ecosystem if they are connected with other actors within the ecosystem such as entrepreneurship networks, entrepreneurship centres, universities and organisations that provide financial support. By positioning themselves as central information points for TYAs, student networks can provide more coherent information at the same time. Cooperation with other student support centres/organisations/initiatives can also improve the variety and quality of services provided to young entrepreneurs in form of organising regional entrepreneurship events.

Competitions can be an effective tool to increase student support awareness on entrepreneurship and social media should be utilised to have a far reach across the ecosystem. Competitions, as well as networking events, one-to-one advice or mentoring, financial support and Entrepreneurs Boot Camps should be provided to young entrepreneurs to offer stage specific support. While some student support centres/organisations/initiatives focus on providing mentoring support that teaches young entrepreneurs the necessary entrepreneurship skills, other initiatives focus on mentoring that enhances TYAs' confidence in themselves and their enterprise. The number of different events that focus on the engagement with experienced entrepreneurs demonstrates the demand and usefulness of mentoring and at the same time shows the variety of ways in which mentoring schemes can be organised.

The MY-WAY research has shown that it is essential to teach young entrepreneurs with hands-on entrepreneurial knowledge and to create a safe haven in which TYAs can excel as entrepreneurs. Universities should offer practice-based education and embed entrepreneurship in the curriculum. Alternative services could be Entrepreneurs Boot Camps, which offer young entrepreneurs the opportunity to develop their business plans in a fully supported environment.

Finally, the findings of this report will be the core input to the Action Plan (Task 4.1 Embedding best practices) of the MY-WAY project. This Action Plan will be developed for student networks across Europe in order to embed best practices and design models for offering new services to prospective entrepreneurs. The results will also be introduced at the stakeholder meetings of the MY-WAY project where student networks and the stakeholders of the web entrepreneurship ecosystem can define synergies and possibilities for establishing long term collaboration. In addition, the MY-WAY project team is committed to introduce the findings of this report with major European Student Networks (AIESEC, IAESTE, Erasmus networks, JEUNE, ESN, JADE and ELSA) and involve them in the project activities to ensure high impact and sustainability of all MY-WAY activities.

VII. References

DIGITAL AGENDA SCOREBOARD (2012). **Digital Competences in the Digital Agenda**.
Retrieved on 17th September from:
https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/scoreboard_digital_skills.pdf

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2011). **Open Platforms for web-based applications
and services in Europe**, enlarging the stakeholders community.**

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2015). **Social Entrepreneurship**.
Retrieved on 11th September 2015 from:
http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/social_business/index_en.htm

EUROSTAT (2012). **Information Society Statistics**.
Retrieved from:
http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/employment-and-social-policy/information-society
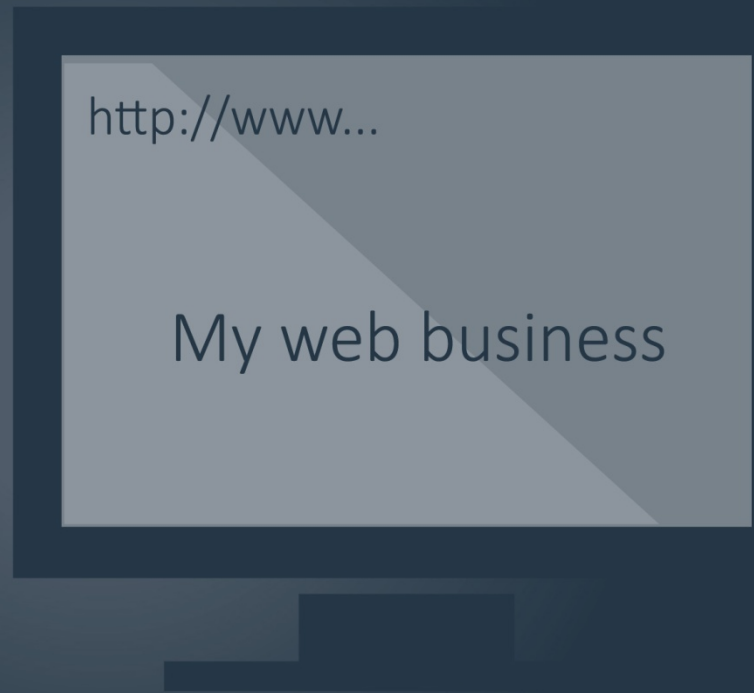
MY-WAY PROJECT (2015). **Deliverable 2.1 – Mapping the Ecosystem**.

MY-WAY PROJECT (2015). **Deliverable 2.3 – Report on the Survey Results**.
Retrieved from:
http://www.mywaystartup.eu/assets/content/document/D2_3_Report%20on%20the%20survey%20results.pdf

MY-WAY PROJECT (2015). **Deliverable 2.4 – Synergy Report**.

http://www...

My web business

Appendix I.

STARTUP
EUROPE

Table of Content

http://www...

My web business

Accelerate ME

STARTUP
EUROPE

Accelerate ME

Background

In August 2014, Manchester Entrepreneurs, the enterprise society at the University of Manchester launched the Accelerate ME programme. The overall aim of Accelerate ME is to facilitate the launch and growth of student businesses and to provide a link between Manchester's entrepreneurial students and start-up scene within the city and beyond. In order to achieve this, Accelerate ME invites students and graduates from the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University, irrespective of their academic school or age group, to apply for their accelerator programme. In the first year, 40% of businesses at Accelerate ME were general businesses, 22% social enterprises and 38% tech startups.

Based on a set of criteria, shortlisted candidates are invited to pitch in front of a judging panel, which then decides who enters the accelerator scheme. The scheme launched in 2014 and includes weekly workshops, mentor sessions and review sessions to track the progress of the young businesses. In addition, all teams are provided with free workspace in Manchester Metropolitan University's incubator 'Innospace'. Moreover, each team is awarded £2,000 grant funding to help them achieve initial business objectives. The scheme is funded through a mixture of academic, commercial and public sector sponsors. The programme is structured around a model that is often used by other startup accelerators and which ensures that businesses progress quickly and effectively. In the end teams attend a Demo Day event where they pitch to an audience of investors, sponsors and influencers.

Challenge

Tom McCann from Manchester Entrepreneurs stated that within their society, the key challenges that appear include access to funding, access to technical talent and lack of core skills. Furthermore, students often find themselves with ideas and the ability to write a basic business plan, but lack the ability and resources to turn it into a viable business. This shows that student entrepreneur support centres need to tackle a number of areas when it comes to supporting students effectively. First and foremost, student entrepreneurs require the technical knowledge and skills set to put their ideas into practice. This includes financial, legal and tech/web advice as well as skills development such as pitching and business plan writing.

Actions Taken

The Accelerate ME programme includes three key components. First, teams receive drip-fed funding. The £2,000 grant funding is split into two segments. Initially the teams will be paid £500 and subsequently £1,500. The first payment is interlinked with the task to set three measureable objectives that the teams were expected to achieve within the first three months. If these objectives were met successfully, tems were awarded the final payment. Second, during the first phase of the programme(usually from September to December), teams meet twice per month to provide the other team with an update on their short term progress. In addition, teams publically set themselves informal goals that they should achieve before the next session. Third, for the duration for the scheme, all teams were provided with free working space in a startup incubator. This ensured they were able to work around like-minded people, both on the scheme and in the wider startup community. It also allowed for teams to arrange meeting with potential clients and partners in a formal environment, before they would traditionally be able to afford to pay for similar space.

Results

The drip-fed funding as part of the Accelerate ME scheme proved successful, as it encourages teams to work efficiently and effectively in the first three months. It is crucial that the objectives are discussed with the Manchester Entrepreneurs team to ensure that the objectives are realistic but at the same time ambitious. The peer review in form of bi-monthly meetings with other teams provided teams with a benchmark of activity to work towards, incentivising them to ensuring they were working at a pace that was in line with the rest of the cohort. It also provided opportunity for team to provide feedback and suggestions to the others, and led to valuable ideas being generated.

In Accelerator ME's first year, the outcome of the scheme has been positive. All of the teams progressed through the scheme, making new contacts and learning new skills. The teams developed a range of skills across business development, pitching, networking and marketing. In addition, founders all developed their network of contacts, putting them in a stronger position for the future. The first Demo Day was attended by around 200 members of Manchester's startup scene - from investors, entrepreneurs and mentors, to academics, alumni and sponsors. Three of the teams are actively building technology since leaving the scheme, with one having raised £35,000 investment. This investment came as a direct result of a partnership between Manchester Entrepreneurs and Wayra - illustrating the impact the scheme had. Once completing the scheme, founders join the mentor pool to share their experiences and knowledge with the next cohort of students.

Summary

Accelerate ME is an excellent example of a student led organisation that supports other students to launch and grow their student businesses. First and foremost, it exemplifies that students themselves can have considerable impact on the ecosystem of their region without relying on a top-down structure. After a successful pilot year, Accelerate ME is launching its second cohort in the 2015-2016 academic year.

As a non-profit scheme, raising capital to run the scheme is the core challenge. This is approached through commercial sponsorship and public sector support (such as the NACUE Ignition Fund), and has to-date been successful. However, as this approach is not sustainable, and takes up a lot of time, it is still the key challenge are are looking to overcome.

http://www...

My web business

Bar-Ilan University
Entrepreneurship Club

STARTUP
EUROPE

A Bar-Ilan University Entrepreneurship Club

Background

The entrepreneurship club is an initiative of Bar Ilan Business School. The business school is committed to support students that are willing to start a business. Students from all university's departments are welcome to participate in the club's activities. The club's activities include: regular meetings with experienced entrepreneurs, consulting meetings with faculty members and external experts, pitch events where students can present their ideas and get feedback from peers and experts, a facility for ideas exchange, preparation for an elevator pitch and assistance with business plans.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS:

- » How did your organisation first get involved in young entrepreneurs support?
  By definition, the business School is involved in entrepreneurship training. Many of the school's students are wannabe entrepreneurs. However, the club aims at students from other departments as well. Typical members are from engineering, computer science and law, but other departments are also represented.
- » What was your motivation to support young entrepreneurs?
  The mission of the business school is to educate administrators and executives and grant them the knowledge required to successfully operate in today's business world. Entrepreneurship is a significant component in the business environment, especially in Israel which is dominated by high-tech startups. Business school should be an influential factor in the entrepreneurship ecosystem.
- » When was your organisation founded?
  The entrepreneurship club was founded less than a year ago.
- » Do you collaborate with partners, businesses, incubator centres, startups, etc? We collaborate with three kinds of partners: successful entrepreneurs, incubators and accelerators, and consultants. Successful entrepreneurs meet regularly with the club's members. A typical monthly meeting starts with a presentation of an entrepreneurs that shares his experience with the audience. In addition the club maintains a list of entrepreneurs that are willing to assist the club's members. Incubators and accelerators support the club as members of experts' panels that review students' presentations and business plans. Some consultants volunteered to assist students in various phases of the business setting (pitch, business plan, financing, etc.)

» What is the size of your organisation (employees and turnover)?
Bar Ilan business school operates with 35 faculty members and 12 administrative stuff members. The entrepreneurship club is headed by a senior lecturer with the support of an administrator. Faculty members are involved in the different activities as required.

» Are you looking to scale up over the next 24 months?
We are in the very beginning of the program, so no scaling is planned of the next 24 months.

Challenge

The big challenge of the club is to attract the right audience. With its very limited resources the club can't help all kind of entrepreneurs or wannabe entrepreneurs. At the current stage it is very difficult for the club to help with ideation. It is almost impossible to create value for students that know that they want to become entrepreneurs but don't have any specific idea or direction. The club can provide significant value for students that already have an idea but don't know how to execute it. The club can effectively support this kind of students.

Another challenge is to find the fit between the students' needs and the support the club can provide. Since the diversification of the club's members is very high – they come from different backgrounds and have different levels of skills – it is very important to specify what kind of support they need and what kind of help will create for them the greatest value.

Actions Taken

In order to attract the right students we encourage "word of mouth" communication between the club's members and their peer students. The club emphasises the importance of pitch presentations in the regular meetings. Obviously, students who still don't have an idea can't present anything. General audience is very welcome to participate in the monthly meetings which take the following format: a presentation by experienced entrepreneur, 3-4 student pitches, review of the presentations by an experts' panel. However, private meetings with supervisors and other experts are available for students that already have a specific idea.

Every student that asks for the club's support meets a faculty member that specifies a tailored support program

Results

In the last year 90 students participated on average in the club's monthly meetings, which held: presentations of 6 entrepreneurs, 19 presentations of students ideas and panel discussions. 16 groups of students for further support of the club.

Summary

Bar Ilan Entrepreneurship Club is a new activity started last year. The club supports students from varied backgrounds and with different skills in their first steps as entrepreneurs. most of the members of the club are students of engineering, computer science, laws and business. The club encourage students who already have a specific idea or direction to participate in the club's meetings. Members attend monthly meetings and or private meetings with experts and consultants.

According to the report of some of the participants the club already created some
value for them. In addition to very practical tool and advises they got value from the meeting with peers entrepreneurs who straggle with the same problems and doubts.

MY-WAY in web entrepreneurship

http://www...

My web business

Bridge Budapest

STARTUP
EUROPE

Bridge Budapest

Background

Bridge Budapest is a non-profit association aiming at inspiring young Hungarian talents to become successful entrepreneurs by focusing on one single skill: self-confidence.Bridge Budapeststarted from the cooperation of globally successful, Hungarian orotherwise Hungary-related entrepreneurshipsNNG, LogMeIn, Prezi and Ustream to change a society in which people hardly believe they have the power to influence their own lives. The mission of Bridge Budapest is therefore to inspire the youth who wants to leave Hungary or is discouraged in launching a new business by showing them options, telling stories of success and bringing the message that with just a single idea, hard work and a bit of luck it is possible to create products and enterprises that fulfil the needs of a society and make dreams come true.Bridge Budapesthas become today one of the leading global knowledge-based entrepreneurship organisations in Hungary.The CEO of this organisation, Ms. Veronika Pistyur, has a diverse educational background, having studied television directing, visual and cultural anthropology, and international relations. She has produced television programs, run a communications agency, and worked in marketing.Ms. Pistyur acknowledges the usefulness of a diverse experience, noting that many other people in the startup community started as philosophers, psychologists, engineers, or artists. An ability to use different skills and identities in different projects is, in her opinion, increasingly valuable, not only in entrepreneurial or professional activities, but also in tackling the social challenges of our age.By bringing their personal successful experiences and examples, making efforts to raise awareness on the subject and, most importantly, by giving practical opportunities of knowledge sharing and experiencing success, Bridge Budapest founders aim to fulfil their vision of a future Hungary that is proud of the results and the knowledge produced by Hungarians.

Challenge

Budapest is a cool and sophisticated city, culturally and intellectuallyvibrant. The quality and the price of living is comfortable and cheaper than in most popular European cities. Renting an office downtown, in the heart of the city, is not beyond the reach. Moreover, the majority of young Hungarians have a high educational level, the Internet is exceptionally fast throughout the city. At the same time, a persistent lack of confidence on part of many talented young Hungarians in making a change for the better is the root

reason why they are not trying to pursue their dream or are failing in their endeavours. Adding to this, the regulation related to starting a new company is complex and sometimes inconsistent, thus discouraging many young people who lack the legal knowledge or are not enough motivated.Since Bridge Budapest started to build the bridge between the ecosystem and the mainstream,however, the community and the landscape changed a lot. New and renovated buildings are almost everywhere in Budapest; contemporary art and design moved downtown, especially into the party area, where it is possible to find a wonderful, exciting ecosystem with locals and foreigners, artists and businessmen. The harmonized public transport, the cultural life, the startup ecosystem, the diversity are those things that transformed this city a lot in the past few years and made it much more comfortable and attractive especially for the young, creative and innovative generation.Of course talents are keen on staying and working in Budapest if they find meaningful jobs and activities.Now there are thousands of people who are interested in building global enterprises from and in Budapest. The funding landscape is also improving, as some investors are increasingly focusing on Central and Eastern European countries, such as the Jeremie Funds. In particular, the potential in the technical and design sector is deeply integrating in the startup scene. The global success stories related to Hungary show that the product part of tech start-ups, engineering and design are the main areas giving added value to a global company. With global partners in management, strategic marketing and other business skills, the ideas spreading from this city are potentially able to conquer the world like Prezi, Ustream, LogMeIn or NNG have done already. Today the motivation is higher, proving that it is possible to jump from a basically fatalist and paternalist past into a creative, innovative, meritocratic society.

Actions Taken and Results

The flagship project of Bridge Budapest is its two-way fellowship program.
One part is intended for a selected number of Hungarian university students or fresh graduates (6-8 per year) to gain practical experience – and inspiration – at partner companies outside Hungary: LogMeIn, NNG, Prezi, and Ustream, in their headquarters in Boston, San Francisco, Israel, Japan, India, and China. The goal of these fully financed fellowships is not only to expand knowledge in a chosen field (computer science, marketing, design and sales in particular), but also to establish contacts with high-ranking mentors, to experience a different work culture in global centers of innovation, and gain valuable insight and inspiration. The fellowship is thus intended to result both in getting to know leading companies and realizing that such success can be started in Hungary and Central Europe. The same goals apply to the second type of fellowship, available to journalists from around the world. They visit Hungarian enterprises and help spread the word about the country's successes and potential. So far, Bridge Budapest has given 14youngsters an insight into the entrepreneurship ecosystems of the Silicon Valley, Boston, India, Japan, and Israel, hitherto unknown to them. By touching the lives of these students, it is also possible to indirectly positively influence those close to them, through a multiplier effect.

Besides, Bridge Budapest raises awareness on business success, telling powerful stories that may inspire others, and allow existing entrepreneurships to become more competitive. During the first six months of Bridge Budapest, nearly half of the Hungarian population, around 5 million people, heard these success stories, which mostly focused on Hungarian startups. They published hundreds of outputs: articles, interviews, and even TV series.

The other unique initiative is the **Bridge Builders**. This is an executive, invitation-based, special mentoring programme for 10 talented, young professionals to empower Hungary's future leaders to inspire and build a Hungary that is proud of its achievements and knowledge. All around the age of 30, who have already proven their leadership capabilities in the fields of culture, business, media, politics and NGOs, and who could be the future leaders of Hungary. The process lasts over the course of one year, with five weekends and one journey to Sweden.

Summary

Today's young generation was born and raised in a free and democratic Europe, and is determined to make its dreams come true. This generation is prepared to bring changes in people's minds and dreams of global success and meaningful work. Bridge Budapest aims to contribute to and speed up this process. It believes that a good idea, stamina and a bit of luck will help you achieve what you want.

Contact:
Ms. Veronika Pistyur
CEO, Bridge Budapest
veronika.pistyur@bridgebudapest.org

Website:
Bridgebudapest.org

Facebook:
facebook.com/bridgebudapest

Twitter:
@BridgeBudapest

http://www...

My web business

Entrepreneur First

STARTUP
EUROPE

Entrepreneur First

Background

Entrepreneur First http://www.joinef.com is a six-month full time programme for talented technologists. They select individual's predominately graduates from top UK Universities such as Cambridge, UCL, and Warwick and help them build their startups form scratch.

Entrepreneur First objectives are to build the most valuable deep tech startups in Europe.

EF selects elite individuals only, based on their technical talent and founder abilities. They typically take three kinds of people. 1) Computer Scientists and engineers straight from university, 2) PhDs and research professionals, 3) Developers from startups and corporates.

They recruit from across Europe and bring the individuals to London and each cohort has 50-60 individuals in it.

The programme is six months long and starts twice a year, March and September.

The focus on selecting only people that are able to build their first Minimum Viable product means that EF is unique amongst accelerators in being able to recruit on to their programme individuals with a "burning" desire to be entrepreneurs prior to them having a team and prior to them having a product. EF then provides them with the know-how, skills and connections to build out the team, carry out the research and customer development to identify the problem they wish to solve using technology and then build out and test the first solution.

Taking talented individuals prior to the ideation stage is one of the reasons that unlike the standard accelerator model, EF takes 6 months to complete.
 The lengthier period also means EF can help the individuals to form co-founding teams with each other, work out what idea to work on and gain traction for demo day.

Demo Day happens in the final month of the programme. More than 200 investors watch the startups do a three-minute pitch and they have a good track record of helping participants raise seed investment. The total valuation achieved by teams that have graduated through the EF accelerator programme is over $150m, having raised over $30m in venture capital. Investors include Index Ventures, Notion Capital, Balderton, Octopus Ventures, Y Combinator and London Co-Investment Fund.

This partly due to the fact that the EF accelerator programme team includes 4 Venture Partners who are serial entrepreneurs and investors. They act as mentors during the programme and are carry partners in the fund. They are Chris Mairs, co-founder Metaswitch, Chris Wade, former Head of VC at UKTI, Nadav Rosenberg, former head of Taboola Europe and Phil Wilkinson, a serial Internet entrepreneur.

Each individual that joins EF is paid a monthly stipend for three months. This is £1,100 as of March 2015. This is to cover basic living expenses and is a recognition that graduates from universities often leave with lots of debt and have very little money to live on whilst they are building up a potentially great tech business. After three months EF will make an investment of £10,ted and accelera000 and the previous stipend rolls into the investment. E.g., for a two-person team, that would be £16,000. EF takes an 8% equity stake.

A good example of the companies that have been started and accelerated at EF is Adbrain. Adbrain is a data intelligence company that enables enterprises to unlock their data to deliver smarter advertising campaigns across multiple devices. Founded by Elia Videtta and Rashid Mansor less than 1 year after they graduated from Warwick University and University of Sussex, Ad Brain has gone on to raise £7.5M from the UK's leading VC's Notion Capital and Octopus.

Got a tip? Let us know.

Follow Us

News ▾   Video ▾   Events ▾   CrunchBase

Search

DISRUPT SF   Gagan Biyani, CEO of Food Delivery Startup Sprig, To Speak At Disrupt SF   Get $1,000 Off Tickets Now ▸

entrepreneur first

Europe

Popular Posts

Ruby, A New App To Track Female Sexual Health
5 days ago

Sony's New Phones Are Perfect For Snapchat, Yet No One Will Buy Them
2 days ago

Which Programming Languages Get Used Most At Hackathons?
a week ago

#ILookLikeAnEngineer Aims To Spread Awareness About Gender Diversity In Tech
a day ago

PicMonkey Grabs $41 Million Investment
6 days ago

Amazon Cuts Down On Prime Members Sharing Their

Entrepreneur First Raises £8.5M To Find Europe's Best Technical Talent And Invest "Pre-Team, Pre-Idea"

Posted Jul 15, 2015 by Steve O'Hear (@sohear)

2,401 SHARES

CrunchBase

EF (Entrepreneur First)   —

FOUNDED
2011

OVERVIEW
Entrepreneur First is the best place for Europe's top technical individuals to meet and build world-changing startups in London. We select purely on the basis of technical talent, so you can apply before you have a team or an idea. Our intensive 7-month programme is designed to give you the best possible support in the first 100 days of your startup's life. We've created 20 startups now worth ...

LOCATION
London, England

CATEGORIES
Enterprise Software

FOUNDERS
Alice Bentinck, Matt Clifford

WEBSITE
http://www.joinef.com

Full profile for EF (Entrepreneur First)

London-based Entrepreneur First (EF) has come a long way since founders Matt Clifford and Alice Bentinck came up with their idea for something entirely different in the startup acceleration space: Instead of backing teams with two or more co-founders who are already working on or have even launched an existing business, EF sources and invests in the best technical talent in Europe — often straight out of university but also working at existing tech companies — before they have a team or a developed idea. Needless to say, EF's "pre-team,

http://www...

My web business

Excitera

STARTUP
EUROPE

Excitera

Organizations background and activities

The Excitera entrepreneurship society was founded about ten years ago with the intent of fostering entrepreneurship at the KTH (Royal Institute of Technology) campus. The nomenclature of the word ''Exit'' and ''Excitation'' as well as the Swedish term ''Excitera'' which is a translation from the English word excitation.

Ongoing activities

KTH's core activities consisted of case competitions and inspirational events/lectures. Examples are:
  » SGA (Swedish Game Awards) the leading competition for student driven startups involved in the gaming industry,
  » EIC (Excitera Innovation Challenge) the innovation challenge for students that aim at setting up to new companies and collaborations,
  » EEF (Excitera Enterprise Forum), a project arranging inspirational lectures,
  » Startup Pub, one day event which takes place every month, gathering the co-working spaces, accelerators and support centres representatives to discuss future events for entrepreneurship in the Stockholm region
  » The StudentInc. Incubator, started about four years ago ran in co-operation with KTH Innovation which has now transitioned into a mainly KTHI run startup incubator.

Future activities

  » "Startup Tour": A tour visiting various entrepreneurship related venues in Stockholm aimed at students
  » Hackathon For Startups; Hackathon contest for gifted groups of coding students
  » Collaboration with entrepreneurship societies from other universities
  » A wholesome guide of all the entrepreneurship supports centers in Stockholm such as guidance centers, incubators, accelerators, co - working spaces, startup tax offices etc.

» TEDx KTHA ; event at KTH that is independently organized by the TED group at the KTH. We will be supporting an provide speakers.

» Continuation of the previously mentioned events

Excitera is a student run pro-bono organization. Excitera also works in close collaboration with KTH Innovation (Royal Institute of Technology Innovation Department) that is the university institutional body of innovation activities. KTHI is the university department that is running the project StudentInc and its day to day activities at the KTH campus as well as several other activities such as establishing partnerships with the key players that help fund prizes and activities at the campus. Excitera helps to engage students in the KTH entrepreneurship activities and helping out through the student's entrepreneurial endeavors that they've started. Moreover it should be noted that KTHI maintains key partnerships with accelerators and co-working spaces in Stockholm such as STING(Stockholm Innovation & Growth), SUP46(Startup People of Sweden) and THINGSto name a few that are common future paths for startups that graduate from the campus incubator StudentInc.

Excitera does not have a member registry but we use our Facebook page with 700+ members as our main pipeline for information about events, articles and other startup related things to students in Stockholm. Our board consists of nine members, who are the only official members of Excitera. We seek to keep our organisation open to everyone, which is why we don't use the term members to describe our followers and students at our events. Further, there is no membership fee or cost for attending our events. Last semester we estimate more than 1000 unique visitors at our events combined. This can be broken down into roughly 70 % at SGA, 20 % at the Excite week and 10 % at remaining events.

Further we promote entrepreneurship at KTH through our events and competitions where students can develop products, business plans, marketing strategies, networking and by employing all of these together being handed the tools to start their own company. The project Student Inc. is the campus incubator programme and was founded as a student driven business incubator in a collaboration between Excitera and KTH Innovation for student founded tech-startups at KTH where Excitera provided a project leader and KTH Innovation provided the know-how and resources for business development. However, after a rise in demand and number of startups in the incubator, the project is now mainly run by business coaches employed by KTH Innovation.

In addition to our case competitions we arrange inspirational events with speakers from the startup scene. Among those who have spoken at Excitera run events are Niklas Zennström (Skype), Thomas Hartwig (King.com), Greger Hagelin (WeSC) and Hjalmar Winbladh (Rebtel). Excitera does not provide business development per se since we don't have the resources and proper knowledge but since we have close ties to KTH Innovation which is the business development wing of KTH, we redirect all students to them so that they can benefit from KTH Innovation's processes. We do not have any explicit partners but collaborate on a regular basis with the following institutions, organizations and companies which among them are: KTH Innovation;STING;THINGS; Malvina;SUP-46; SU Innovation (Stockholm University); Entrepreneurship Academy (University of Uppsala); SSES (Stockholm School of Entrepreneurship);The Entrepreneurship Society of Stockholm Business School.

Our primary goal is to reach every student on KTH Campus which is around 10-15.000 students when counting graduate and post-doc students. Further we aim to branching out to the rest of Stockholm to ensure a better synergy between tech entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs from other schools. Excitera consider itself pretty well of due to the successful backing by collaborative companies and are also very lucky to have such a strong innovation department at the KTH.

Finance structure

All of Excitera's work is pro-bono and financed through sponsorship agreements with companies interested in meeting entrepreneurial minded people. Since Excitera is a non-profit organisation we are not paid to do any work and all the profits are reinvested in the organization and the further promotion of Excitera. Our work is divided into various projects where every project has its own budget but in total the budget for all projects combined is somewhere around €100.000.

Challenges

Excitera faces many challenges throughout the work, mainly regarding students' lack of confidence in their idea or not feel like they can afford to put aside time and money from their studies to start a company. Further, most students lack knowledge in different aspects of business administration like marketing, corporate finance and business development. It could also be mentioned that one challenge in Scandinavia is the apparent lack of insight in how well equipped the society in the north is to take on business endeavours. No matter how many times you try the social security system will always pick you up.

One of our biggest challenges is to promote ourselves because students on campus come and go and we only have a limited amount of time to reach out to them. When we have failed in doing so, students might go to either other organizations or alone. Another reason people chose to not go with us is that the company isn't at the idea stage but has come further in their process. When a company already has its foundation, it's most likely that it will continue their growth in an accelerator or co-working space such as STING or SUP-46.

Moreover, with so many events and initiatives happening on campus, it's sometimes hard gathering people for events if there's no proper incentive for people to show up. Since studies at KTH are pretty full on and the knowledge that students aren't known as masters of time management, there are sometimes too many things happening and too little time for students to show up. Especially during times close to exams and breaks. Many times people just come for free food also, instead of wanting to be there to listen, learn and participate in discussions which make it hard to measure the success of an event.

Besides that Excitera faces other practical challenges namely: structural one, it is always apparent and that is the size of the KTH campus as a whole with all its initiatives, networks and activities. This makes it hard to reach out to students at times but we think that the challenge about size is one that would affect any entrepreneurship society or support network operating in the same sized climate.

In order to overcome the challenges mentioned above we take several actions that prevent from escalating it to the greater problem;

Issues of young adults:

1. Don't know the opportunities they are missing: Opportunities include:

Starting a company in a country where the social system works as a "cushion" for failures. Working in startups may be more attractive than working for larger companies for many people (especially young adults).

2. They are interested in entrepreneurship, but the startup process seems overwhelming.

Excitera takes action against these issues by hosting different informative events, addressing the common doubts and questions. Excitera uses as well extensively social media(website, Facebook) to share the knowledge about the entrepreneurship.

Excitera's Initiatives

We are offering many unique initiatives to our young entrepreneurs through our various projects.

The project Student Inc. is the campus incubator programme and was founded as a student driven business incubator in a collaboration between Excitera and KTH Innovation for student founded tech-startups at KTH where Excitera provided a project leader and KTH Innovation provided the know-how and resources for business development. However, the project is now owned by KTH Innovation to ensure further growth. A long-running project sprung from Excitera is the Excitera Innovation Challenge which started as collaboration with KTH Innovation. KTH Innovation has access to all research performed at KTH and for the competition they select five research cases with potential for commercialisation. Teams were then formed by students to develop a business plan around the technology from the research case. What's unique in this is that the teams had access to world leading research material from our institution. The teams then pitched their idea for business coaches and people from the industry and a winner was selected. The winner was, apart from a cash prize, awarded a spot at Student Inc. to get the possibility to further develop their product. Above of all Excitera takes a great pride in work of promoting entrepreneurship for women through our initiative React, which is an female evening with dinner and

panel discussion. Building on 2014s concept of a female entrepreneur evening, React took things to the next level in 2015, hosting 100 female students in the old nuclear reactor hall on campus.

Unique Selling Point (UPS)

Moreover we offer to the students our initiatives that work continually throughout the on KTH Campus. There are a few events catering to entrepreneurs but there is no initiative like Excitera that runs all year. Our close ties to KTH Innovation is a strong unique selling point which gives us a serious impression when approaching new students since they often want tangible possibilities to start their own company, which KTH Innovation can provide through the Student Inc. project and their various processes with business coaching. We are not experiencing a problem with the concentration of entrepreneurship activities due to not having any real competitors on campus. However, students might not attend our events if we ourselves have failed in promoting our initiative.

As a one of most important outcomes of our support is that students have increasingly started to consider starting their own company or working for a startup as a real career option. They get more knowledge of how the startup process works, reducing the barriers for taking the step themselves. This in turn has opened up the minds of countless students to the idea and benefits of developing yourself through having courage and taking faith in your own hands.

We don't have any formal measurements to identify the real impact but our goal is to maintain a steady flow of well executed events, while expanding the scale of them, and at the same time, not fall behind in our school work. We do not have a formal KPI or Project Management, when we have decided on a project to fulfill, for instance a case event; we decide on different responsibility areas. Each week Excitera has a meeting where everybody reports on their progress. Responsibilities may switch depending on school and business work load or if someone gets a "foot in" in some area.

Comparing to other university support centres we have seen in Scandinavia we think that the Student Inc. project has managed to create a very approachable atmosphere on campus. This mainly comes to show in the way that if you have a team you formed together with co-founders on campus you are only one email away from getting a consulting and coaching session at the StudentInc. Incubator. After the session you are already well on your way to building up your first company knowing what need to be done to for a company and be accepted to the incubator. Another activity that we consider unique is the female entrepreneur activity by the name ''React'' described earlier that aims to attract female thought leaders to a fully female panel discussion aimed at young women. This is tapping in the equality movement in Sweden and has been one of the most successful activities on campus.

Best Practices, Lessons Learned, Success Definition

One of the main features of entrepreneur support centres at the KTH campus is that it creates a safe haven for students who want try their wings and meet like-minded people in the sphere of innovation and entrepreneurship. Through this many ideas and teams change along the idea development phases of the people involved. Excitera tries to do its best by arranging various pitching, activity and educational events on campus to spark the flare and attract the entrepreneurial minded people to join the activities and entrepreneurial network. As previously mentioned Excitera tries to engage the students in taking the first steps as well as creating valuable lectures for people already involved in entrepreneurial endeavours but are not necessarily part of the campus incubator projects. KTHI does an amazing job in providing the first meetings and consultation sessions with the newly founded companies that show interest in getting involved in the campus incubator programme and coaching them along the road.

Excitera has a great support of KTHI. When our organization was "restarting", i.e. finding new board members, KTHI supported us during the process. They have sponsored events, as well as provided feedback and guidance for our ideas.

http://www...

My web business

FIVOSZ-BossConnect Mentor Program

STARTUP
EUROPE

FIVOSZ-BossConnect Mentor Program

Background

BossConnect was founded in 2013 two main objectives: the first is to provide opportunity for business leaders to create investments and income relying on their professional experiences and connections. On the other hand, BossConnect aims to catalyze the development of companies by sales/business development (primarily for mature companies) or connecting joint venture professionals with new project founders or startuppers.

FIVOSZ is the largest Hungarian organisation bringing together Hungarian young entrepreneurs and business-minded young people into a community of success. It works for supporting the creation of the next Hungarian business generation, representing them in Hungarian and International forums and building bridges between the entrepreneurs of today and tomorrow. In June 2014 the two organisations launched a partnership from an idea of Csaba Lévay, founder of BossConnect. His personal experience showed the need for a new mentorship programme in the first place, as he himself failed in a startup project as young entrepreneur. Moreover, BossConnect had previously launched success skills courses dedicated to university students, but Mr. Lévay soon realised this was not enough: a comprehensive F to F mentorship programme supporting talented junior managers and wannabe entrepreneurs was the next step.

Currently, the FIVOSZ-BossConnect Mentorship Programme is coordinated by two employees and comprises 90 mentors: company CEOs and MD-s, SME owners, entrepreneurs, accelerators from Hungary, who believe in the power of mentoring. The programme starts with a recruitment of students on part of FIVOSZ, which has deep connections with student organisations. The potential mentees present their ideas and each mentor will decide which one he/she wants to support. A "master and student" type of collaboration is thus created, in which the mentor provides personal consultation and support in business decisions. The consultation takes place once or twice a month, depending on actual needs. The collaboration normally lasts half a year, but can be extended if required. The topics are not limited and the main focus is on the increasing company value and incomes or – in case of junior managers – shorter step further to a higher position.

Challenge

Among the key challenges discussed with Mr. Lévay, the most relevant one is the fact that students do not have hands-on knowledge about how to real life business works, about actual product, pricing, marketing and sales strategies and operations, legal issues, and so on. They are well educated and have in depth academic knowledge but do not have much hands-on experience on real life cases. This is makes practice-based entrepreneurship education much needed in the Hungarian educational system. (In Hungary, from historical causes, enterpreneur skills are missing much more from family- and educational know-how transfer system, as in western economies.)

On the other side, many ongoing initiatives in the country derive from single individuals' personal motivation, but should at some point become self-sustainable. Some of these activities fail exactly because of the lack of business know-how and money (convertible also for manpower). There are many startup enthusiasts that are willing to contribute, but reaching validated business phase is quite difficult – first of all because of lack of business skills. Angel investors and seed funds are also only a few, however, VC2 venture capital (100k+ EUR) is over-represented in Hungarian startup economy.

Actions Taken

According to the satisfactory surveys conducted after the end of each mentoring period, 93% of mentees are satisfied; 46% received "much more than expected". Startup "usual business" mentees reached 30%+ growth in average by mentoring only. BossConnect has successfully supported 50 mentees/young people per semester to become entrepreneurs or part of larger ventures or institutions, in sum more, than 250 person. Talents are also carefully followed-up via alumni events or one-to-one follow up meetings. The mentees can always contact the programme for further support or collaboration.
Satisfaction of the mentees is also due to the high success rates of the programme: while resources for the programme's operations are still difficult to find, mentees end up building successful startups, which create value and generate income. This not only helps the organisation in its income and company value, but it is also a measure for success for the newly created entrepreneurships, which take less time to scale up.

One of FIVOSZ-BossConnect's main selling points with respect to other programmes in Hungary is given by the fact that it fosters one-to-one mentoring sessions with senior company leaders and owners: this is unique in Hungary, since most other mentoring programmes mainly founded by HR professionals and focus on coaching. This has been among the first initiatives to launch the opportunity for private persons to have business support by mentors with relevant experience and connections. On the other hand, the

mentorship programme aims to catalyze the development of companies via sales development (primarily for running companies) or by dealing professional and financial investors (for startup members).

Moreover, mentors are unique business leaders with many years of experience and excellent references; working free of charge. The fee of the overhead cost of organization is affordable even for students.

The lessons learned from this programme include suggestions to universities and entrepreneurship centres, which should offer more specific support to young people, such as exchange programmes or co-working spaces. Beyond mentee company and personal incomes strengthening the entrepreneurship mindset and the free thinking would be also and added value.

As far as the programme's future is concerned, a very first step will be to find and convince more investors that this initiative is really contributing to the development of the startup ecosystem and providing important support to wannabe entrepreneurs. Building cooperation with similar initiatives from different EU countries would also allow extending the activities and learning from the European best practices, as well as ensure the necessary funding for the continuation of the programme. Another path to follow in the future will be the building of long term cooperative relations with universities, so as to root the practice-based entrepreneurship education. So far, BossConnect has established connections with 14 universities, with the target of providing students with opportunities to support them if they have an excellent idea and would like to turn it into a business. Finally, the programme leaders plan to recruit more mentees and mentors; to extend the programme's activities to other cities and to organise and attend conferences, in order to achieve higher visibility and thus ensuring sustainability by connecting with new investors who are willing to support these activities.

Contact details:
Mr. Csaba Lévay
BossConnect Üzletfejlesztési Innovációs Zrt.
levay.csaba@bossconnect.com
www.bossconnect.com

http://www...

My web business

Girisim Fabrika

Girisim Fabrika

Contact person
murat.tortopoglu@ozyegin.edu.tr

Background

Founded in May, 2011 in İstanbul/Turkey. our vision is to show that entrepreneurs are the positive ambassadors of the social change, prosperity, sustainability and innovation by supporting every member of the start-up ecosystem to perform their own missions.

We are legally connected to Özyeğin University Entrepreneurship Center. we have on and off campus offices to support startups. Turkcell (leading GSM company in Turkey) has been supporting us from the beginning. We had some banks and risk capital organizations as sponsors in previous years. We are reporting to executive committee (members from: Özyeğin University, Turkcell, Fiba Holding, Angel Investor) and Vice Dean of Research,Özyeğin University.

The size of your organisation is 6 Employee (1 Director, 1 Program & Investment Manager, 1 Communication & Operations Manager, 1 Content & Training Manager, 1 Engagement Manager, 1 Front Desk). Our yearly budget is slightly above 1 mio TL (including all salary and rent expenses)

We have an accelerator program for 5 weeks. This program allows entrepreneurs to test their ideas using pure start-up philosophy. It stands up with the entrepreneurs while they transform their ideas to sustainable, scalable, and effective companies. It helps this transformation give birth to successful start-ups with its comprehensive guidance, networks, access to academicians and support of financier network.

During the 5 week program, we help them experience the startup process and share the road to success. They learn what tools they can use, how will they use , who will they get advice and how to talk to customers. We expect them to reflect their learnings as a progress in their startup via customer interactions both face to face and on digital channels. Through these interactions with customers we want them to proceed on the first steps of Fit Startup Roadmap (5 milestones: Customer-Problem Fit > Problem-Solution Fit > Solution-Resource Fit > Product-Market Fit > Biz.Model-Growth Fit)

They have weekly iterations mentoring meetups with investors and experienced founders. At the end of the 5 week program they make a presentation to Executive Committee who will decide them to be one of our startups or not.

Being accepted as Girişim Fabrikası startup means, they will continue to get mentoring, business network, office space and some perks. We do not get any equity or fee for any of these services that we provide. We only get equity when we offer investment from Fiba Holding. (The main group that started and owns the university)

Challenge

Lack of financial support is the key missing part. Founders should have a minimum money to
continue to live and hire one or two developers at least for 6 months. Access to cofounder and access to money. As we are working with first time entrepreneurs it is hard for us to find money for them. Both biz model and team is risky for investors. Cofounder matchmaking is a not easy process, it requires coworking effort for a period of time.

Actions Taken and Results

Keeping the program timeline long was a mistake at the beginning. Too much training without reflection from startups was also a mistake that we did. When we started our program, acceleration period was 12 months, this make them feel relaxed and make longer plans. we gradually decreased our program to 5 weeks. we are very happy to see that we can change behaviour (to switch to customer development mode) in 5 weeks time.

We attended train the trainer programs for entrepreneurship training. we attended nearly all of the different approaches to startup training. Our univesity supported us to join such trainings.

We offer startup programs which provides free infrastructure resources are free and can be joined online such as IBM's, Amazon's, Microsoft's, Google's and other startup support programs. Most of the technical training resources are online as well. With the help of these kind of free services trial and error efforts becomes nearly free, which courages young people to try.

We have graduated 46 startups. 10 of them got funded with risk capital companies/angels.

Summary

The center provides intense training and mentoring services to early stage start-ups for them to Through these interactions with customers we want them to proceed on the first steps of Fit Startup Roadmap (5 milestones: Customer-Problem Fit > Problem-Solution Fit > Solution-Resource Fit > Product-Market Fit > Biz.Model-Growth Fit). The center attended train the trainer programs to create and be able to deliver relevant and latest cutting edge curriculum..

Biggest challenges are access to finance and team. The center tries to help by creating good teams and business models and then introducing to investors. The center also offers free and discounted offers for web start-ups from partnership programs. The center partners with corporate and mentors to create resources.

http://www...

My web business

Holland Startup

Holland Startup

Short Profile

Holland Startup is a Venture Builder. We solve big problems by building digital ventures together with young entrepreneurs.

Holland Startup is a one year old organization, founded in 2014, but the idea of it dates back to 2012. The developed organization of today came from an idea existed in a university level for over a year, to Dutch Universities in a form of master entrepreneurial class giving the opportunity to students to come in touch with the principles of entrepreneurship for 1-6 weeks as part of the curriculum.

Being an active entrepreneur himself with 3 startups in his curriculum, was no surprise for Mr. Robbert Jan Hanse to become the CEO of Holland Startup. His goal and ambition for Venture building, with graduates' students, lead to the idea and development of an organization that will build digital ventures with young entrepreneurs. The seed was plant when he was planning to create his first company, when a more experienced entrepreneur helped him to find an angel investor and secure some funding enough to start. During his career and among with his partners, he identified the need to start building companies. This would be hard if it would not be combined with involving graduate students.

Holland Startup is working independently, with private companies, external investors and by retaining a close relationship with Dutch Universities. The team of the organization is making sure to create an attractive program which will be included to the master program of the students as part of their curriculum.

Holland Startup is operating with 12 people in various positions to achieve a better monitoring and steady development of their activities. From the 12 people, 6 are entrepreneurs that have created three startups (this number will increase to 10 entrepreneurs and five startups by the end of 2015). There are also 3 full time partners that act as directors for co-founders, business development and program creation. The section of investments is covered by 2 individuals taking care all the relations with potential investors and dedicating their time to bring more on board. Finally, there is one person that exclusively has undertaken tasks related to Dutch institutions, which allows them to have more entrepreneurs into Holland Startup.

Since, Holland Startup is operating officially not more than one year, there is no turnover yet, as all startups are in early stage.

Holland Startup supports potential young entrepreneurs in many ways through a main process on a weekly basis. It is scheduled that every Monday there will be organized sessions and meetings to discuss and share what was the actions taken in the previous week and report difficulties. Every Wednesday a lecture is taking place to help young graduates to develop their entrepreneurial skills covering a broad area from

legal stuff to how you can run your own online marketing campaign. Also, they invite CEOs of other successful companies who present themselves and share their experience when they first tried to establish their business as sharing best practices. The last day working day of the week, Friday, is a day where all partners meet and work with co- founders on a strategical level as mentors, coach or advisors on legal and administrative tasks that young entrepreneurs may face. For example if creating an advertising campaign gives headache to the unexperienced young entrepreneurs, partners are in disposal to do it for them.

By providing mentors and advisors, Holland startup manage to introduce young entrepreneurs to companies and they support them in all the process until they close a deal. Their support includes setting up meetings, having interviews and generally help to boost and speed up the process. They also provide frameworks e.g. how to deal with your legal aspects to create a business within an hour up to set up marketing campaigns on FB. Motivated students just have to be physical present and willing to succeed.

Holland startup has chosen to collaborate with all Dutch universities but also the center of entrepreneurship in Holland. That allows them to have access to students and universities. Also they have built a big network of co-founders, investors (institutional and angel) and big corporations in different sectors. They currently collaborate with big corporations from the energy sector or the coffee industry that do not provide mentorship but are willing to discuss what they want to solve and they share their knowledge on the market.

The main idea of Holland Startup is to have in 5years term, successfully established at least 25 new businesses. In 24 months period there has to be already in the market 10 new businesses, coming from 20 young entrepreneurs, with 2 million euros in funding. In parallel, their goal is to strengthen the startup team with skills and experts to help entrepreneurship.

When they were asked what is the main problem that young entrepreneurs face when starting their businesses Mr. Jan Hanse replied that they should stop thinking in finding directly solutions to a problem. It is better to examine what the problem is and why this is happening than trying to find directly a solution. For this reason, Holland Startup is providing them the guidance they need to progress while staying in the right direction. To achieve this, they have designed a document with milestones that need to follow for the first 18 months, which are the most critical. This is an estimated time to have a healthy company, a strong team, a product to offer and customers that will create revenue for your business.

Lack of financial support is another issue for the Dutch entrepreneurship support organization that makes it more difficult to support young entrepreneurs. Angel investors is Holland are willing to invest in startups that already generate some revenue. Holland Startup though is building businesses from scratch and is hard to have profits for the first 0-18 months of their establishment. There are not enough investors or sponsors that invest in ideas after all.

To overcome barriers Holland Startup is focusing on execution. Young entrepreneurs that join this organization receive from the first moment full guidance. Graduated students need dedicated coaching to become strong entrepreneurs and build a sustainable product. People who are getting involved are providing help and support through full structured ideas, funding and guidance.

Hence, guidance is the unique selling point that differentiates Holland Startup from other organizations. Being entrepreneurs allow them to understand what a potential entrepreneur need and that is to work shoulder to shoulder with someone with experience, especially during the early stages.

All students that have completed their thesis of their master program are potential candidates for joining Holland Startup. Who does not join Holland startup has the profile of this student that knows he will become entrepreneur, has already started working and may abandon his studies in order to focus on his idea. On the other hand, there is this kind of student that wants to become an entrepreneur but is lost in all the information and bureaucratic procedures he has to put himself in. The latter type, is the common graduate student profile attracted to Holland Startup.

About Your Organizations' Actions, Initiatives, Processes and Results:

Already mentioned in previous paragraphs, funding is an important challenge for the organization to face. For this reason there are two contacts that are full time working on increasing the number of investors engaged.

Referring to the program itself, except from the financial part, building two individuals and pair them together can be a challenge because individual may not fit together in a personal level or on the problem.

At this moment there are three startups in building process. The first one has already a product in the market, the second one has confirmed a deal with its first customer and the third one is currently in a university in US to work an algorithm they have designed with a professor there, to further improve it.

To measure success of their service and support they advise the milestones that are planned and how far are from the actual situation. If they stay in track they will achieve in the first 100 days the milestone of having a product. To measure success of the organization itself they simply count the number of startups built.

Holland Startup use different frameworks of KPI's for tracking and reporting the progress of each startup. They use combined data from results of products, customers and with the use of different tools they create a personalized report.

Your Best Practices, Lessons Learned, Success Definition:

What entrepreneur support centers do well is to provide investor visibility, little guidance, facilities and building portfolio to secure cash enough to get started. But Holland Startup believes that the most important is to focus on execution.

If support centers start being more active on execution, do actually the work for entrepreneurs rather than giving simple advices to them would actually help bright student to find their way. Students do not know the way, so investors that provide some funding and meeting once a month is not enough to cover the blank spots in the mind of a student.

Support centers should provide a service from entrepreneurs to young entrepreneurs to successfully join the startup community.

Aside from the mistakes of other support centers and looking into their mistakes they realized that building a startup with one co-founder was much more frustrating giving that the time given is not enough for the many tasks that one person has to perform. Also, graduates come in sequence making time consuming to construct a team.

To resolve the above they received no support but they had to use new methods and adjust with the problems arising.

In order to maintain the momentum as organization Holland Startup is planning to expand to different universities to attract more students to develop their entrepreneurial skills.

The plans though expand further than contacting more universities. Holland startup aim to have more control over the master curriculum. There is a great need to change that entrepreneurial courses are taught by professors that have never been actually entrepreneurs.

http://www...

My web business

I3P

I3P

(Interview with Massimiliano Ceaglio COO of I3P)

Background

Back in September 1999 Politecnico di Torino together with other 5 stakeholders decided to create I3P. Politecnico has the right to elect the President and the CEO. The other stakeholders are: Piedmont Region, Metropolitan city of Turin, Finpiemonte, Chamber of Commerce of Turin and Torino Wireless (no profit SMEs accelerator). The paid-up share capital for each shareholder amounts to 200.000 Euros. Right now I3P can count on about 20 employees and a turnover of about € 1,5M (as a non-profit organization, all proceeds are used only to cover the costs).

In 1999 as well as nowadays its mission is to support and cultivate the entrepreneurial ecosystem of innovative start-ups in Piedmont region.

While reaching its goals, I3P has established several collaborations: first of all with other 2 incubators from Piedmont Region which are focused on those industries not relevant for I3P such as pharmaceutical or agroindustry. I3P is also part of Torino Social Innovation, a public program to support new young enterprises that are able to address social needs in different fields (as education, employment, mobility, health, inclusion), and to create a blended value for the society, both social and economic. The aim is sustaining young social entrepreneurs, their creativity, their digital competences, and their perception for social improvements.

Moreover, I3P is part of PNICube, the association bringing together Italian academic incubators and BP competition (the so-called "Start Cup"). PNI organizes the PNI award (for the winners of all the local Start Cups. At the moment Mr. Marco Cantamessa, from I3P, is the President of PNI.

Several collaborations have been also implemented with technical partners such as Youthpark with Microsoft or Top-IX Consortium. Among the biggest collaborations with VCs we can remember: P101, CII, Siamo Soci, United Ventures, IAG Italian Angels for growth, Club degli investitori. A complete list of all the partnerships can be found here http://www.i3p.it/en/Collaborations

I3P headquarters is within the premises of Politecnico di Torino so, thanks to this strategic position, it's always possible to do scouting activities among students, researchers, research fellows and PhD students. 60% of people inside the incubator comes from the area of public research.

I3P first aim is to support young web entrepreneurs and for this reason they are running a program divided into 2 main sections: pre-incubation and incubation. During the first phase a young entrepreneur can present his project (or just an idea). The team is accepted only if there's a minimum number (basic roles already identified).

During this first phase every team is working on its business plan, business model, team building and its economic resources. All the services provided during this first period are for free (there's actually a symbolic 50€ fee in order to discourage those who just want a free space to work on their own). The pre-incubation period is lasting maximum 1 year (the duration can take longer only for certain kinds of industries like biomedical, where prototypes and certifications are required). Once the company has a defined structure, it can request to enter the incubator through an evaluation committee (composed of: investment funds, entrepreneurs, managers or ex managers, I3P shareholders). After its selection, the Company starts paying the incubation services: space and strategic consulting (Business development and fundraising). The Company can also decide to pay just for the strategic consulting (virtual incubation). The average duration of this period is about 3 years (+2 extra years just for very strategic projects). After the first 18 months a review is performed in order to evaluate if carry on with the incubation. No equity is taken from I3P.

I3P brings a real added value to a young entrepreneur in the following fields: strategic consulting, fundraising (BA, VCs, Banks…), technical development consolidation (mainly through the research and technological transfer area of Politecnico di Torino - SARTT), networking in order to put the companies in contact with possible customers (big companies like Oracle, Ferrero, Miroglio come to I3P 1-2 per month for innovative products or services scouting). Thanks to I3P work, their start-ups are growing fast: for example, just in the first 5 months of 2015 their start-ups raised € 2,5M, that is to say 100% of what the start-ups raised in 2014 (mainly from investments funds and industrial partners).

I3P, while reaching its goals, is aware that they have to face many challenges. Taking a look at the national panorama, lots of things can be done like, first of all, lightening the burden of bureaucracy but, on a regional level, we are really lucky because Torino and Piedmont in general are very start-up friendly. Among the biggest internal problems instead they have to face a huge bureaucracy and all the financial statements they need to provide, as they are a company controlled by public companies. Lessons learned: choosing wrong partners or wrong start-ups! It leads only to a waste of resources.

On the other side, if you are an entrepreneur wannabe, the first real challenge is to understand if you are a real entrepreneur: this is the real discriminating factor! Another great challenge is the ability of the team

to work on the execution of the process: it is essential. Moreover, one of the greatest hindrance is being able to understand what are the market needs before finishing the budget. Other hindrances are the inability to pivot and get better or, at the same time, to network and lobby.

In order to overcome the above-mentioned challenges, I3P is acting in several ways. First of all through a great competence, due to 15 years of experience in this field. Then, a huge internal work in order to create a network able to support, in a short time, the prototypes and the solutions implemented by their start-ups. Thanks to it, when a start-up is ready, we can provide immediately several alternatives for testing the prototype in the market. Quality comes first and you can see it from their track record speaking for itself: business development and capital raised. Their start-ups, then, are the first ones to make them a very good publicity. Is it important to remember that I3P is the first Italian public company to have adopted a Business Model coming from the private world. Their turnover is mainly divided into 2 sections: 35% of it comes from the incubation services paid by the start-ups; 60% comes from structural funds (but only if their start-ups reach specific results). Last 5% of the turnover comes from consulting services sold to third parties who want to open incubators like I3P all over the world (Southern Italy, Northern Africa…). Since 2003, I3P is maintaining a balanced budget. In order to maintain this momentum, I3P is pushing for maximizing their results with the actual effort and, of course, creating a positive synergy among all the stakeholders of the region. I3P efforts are balanced by their track record. They can measure their success through the capital raised, the aggregate turnover and the number of employees of their start-ups.

http://www...

My web business

!gen Debrecen
!gen Budapest

Innovative Generation (!gen) Association

!gen Budapest

Background

!gen is a Social&Business Impact Network in Hungary established in 2014, based on a training programme methodology for entrepreneurs, innovators and changemakers started in 2013.

Challenge

In December 2013, the OECD published a book called '*The Missing Entrepreneurs - Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe*'. It, along with the European Commission's Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan, outlines the urgent need to inspire people from diverse backgrounds to become entrepreneurs and provide them with the tools, skills, expertise, finance and support necessary to be successful and have a positive social and economic impact. With high-levels of unemployment, almost 10%, and less early-stage entrepreneurial activity than most of Europe, Hungary has an immediate need to develop innovative and inclusive entrepreneurs who can increase economic growth, employment and social impact. Total early-stage entrepreneurial activities rate is only 8% Fear of Failure Rate (GEM: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor) is the highest in the region: 45% indicate that fear of failure would prevent them from setting up a business. Indicator for Entrepreneurial Intention is the lowest in the Visegrad Region: 14% intend to start a business within three years (GEM).

According to our own representative quantitative research Hungarian 20-35 years old youth are very pessimistic about their career opportunities in Hungary: 60% of them expect to be an employee in a decade, only 25% can imagine launching or joining a company (Researchlab 2014).

Actions Taken and Results

The !gen Programme is a 12 weeks long hybrid programme that includes training, mentoring and on-going startup incubation and acceleration for successful projects. The training helps to establish and implement social innovations and launch successful and sustainable initiatives. Participants are working in teams throughout the 3 months, developing together the foundations of an enterprise. In the weekly training sessions and team mentoring the programme focuses on the different skills and tools which are necessary to build a successful and sustainable project. Participants listen to experts, innovators and entrepreneurs week by week who have useful knowledge and experience. The curriculum covers important topics in the field of social innovation and startups with the help of professional speakers and practical innovators. A starter kit is the output of the programme, which includes the following tangible materials:

- a detailed and validation-driven business model,
- a concept description,
- a 1 min intro video,
- a 2 mins pitch presentation,
- a communication campaign action plan.

The complex entrepreneurship education programme operates with community development methods: participants developing each other, listening to presenters and working with mentors during the education part of the programme.
Once the training sessions are over we take a short break to let participants prepare for the pitch fest.

The first 2,5 years of !gen has validated and developed the programme's method. The first five cohorts of Budapest participants in numbers: 300 applicants, 150 participants and 25 projects.

We aim to boost social innovation by guiding potential changemakers and entrepreneurs through hands-on learning experience and supporting the creation of successful and sustainable impact enterprises. Social innovations are new ideas that simultaneously meet social needs and create new social relationships; they are both good for society and enhance society's capacity to act

In the 6th cohort we have adopted several new elementssuch as the dynamics of becoming a team. Hence we keep participants at the individual level for three weeks, to get to know one-an-other, then the following four weeks we ask them to pair up only to become a team after week 7 and then stay as in order to realize a crowdfunding campaign together. Our vision and mindset has not changed, we are testing and validating new elements from the learning's of the past 5 programmes.

Recently both cities (Budapest and Debrecen) stretched further to assist their alumni and community and provide them with inspiring space and have opened their corresponding co-working offices. In Debrecen,

the Debrecen Hub, in Budapest, the!GEN Space. This is still an ongoing validation with promising synergies, bright prospects and great enthusiasm.

Some of the projects that have gone through our !gen programme in Budapest:
- Route4U (a wheelchair route planner provides accessibility information of places and routes using data collected by users manually and by the sensors of their smartphones)
- Járókelő (the Hungarian Fix My Street)
- Cyclonomia (a hub, where everybody can try and learn about cargobikes and get known to the healthy way of living)
- Slow Budapest Movement (a movement promoting the conscious and more balanced lifestyle developing slow products and services)
- Fabulous Budapest

!gen Association is the part of SIAC Network (Social Innovation Accelerators in Cities) established by the SEiSMiC project. SEiSMiC helps tackle Europe's biggest urban problems by engaging citizens, identifying social innovation needs, and contributing to future urban policies and research strategies. It builds diverse networks of urban stakeholders to propose effective, widely agreed solutions. It then engages the public in creative ways, so that research learns from citizens, and citizens learn from research.

Contact:
Zsófia Rét
President
ret.zsofia@igenegyesulet.hu
www.igenschool.info
www.i-gen.org

!gen Debrecen

Background

!gen Debrecen was launched in 2014 in Debrecen, based on the success of the training programme started early in 2013 in Budapest. The three founders had already been involved in various entrepreneurs' support activities earlier, but decided to start working together on a completely new project, to supporttheir peers who have an idea and would like to test it, to see if it works.!gen Debrecen operates under the framework of the Budapest team, but with large independence for local activities.The organisation runs a 12-week training programme to support young innovators develop their social innovation projects and startups; participants form a team and receive mentoring, feedback and home-work. The idea is to give them the opportunity not only to improve their entrepreneurial skills, but also to enlarge their network.

The typical week consists of 2 hours training, 30 minutes coaching or mentoring and 5-10 hours team work. For three months, participants work in teams on specific project ideas: they are helped in outlining a business model, validating the idea and producing a 2 minutes pitch presentation. At the end of the programme, the best projects may look for investors or for Crowdfunding. The main themes that are covered in three months are:

1. Dating with the innovations and startups
2. The importance of the teams, team dynamics
3. Problem defining and validation
4. Business model
5. Financing
6. Reflection
7. Project management
8. Pitching and Presentation
9. Growth hacking
10. Brand management
11. Data driven marketing
12. Closing, group coaching
13. Competition

The maximum number of participants is 30 people: above that, there would be a risk of decreasing the quality of the programme.

Mentors of !gen Debrecen are entrepreneurs in the region who are ready and willing to tell their story, share their knowledge in different fields and mentor the teams.Participants of the program are asked to write blog posts on their experience on the homepage of !genDebrecen
http://igendebrecen.hu/category/blog/

Challenge

In the experience of !gen Debrecen, the main challenge faced by wannabe entrepreneurs is the gap between theory and practice: in other words, young people who address them have gained the necessary background knowledge from university, but do not know where to start, how the legal mechanisms work, and where to find funding. A positive challenge is also given by the programme itself, in that people are encouraged to work in teams: while sometimes people efficiently work with others from the beginning, other times they need to find a whole new way of relating with others.

Actions Taken and Results

In order to support those with an interest to turn their idea into a living business, the organisation offers an interactive up-to-date learning environment, a community of open-minded people interested in entrepreneurship and ready to work in teams. In particular, !gen Debrecen provides an environment in which wannabe entrepreneurs are not afraid of making mistakes and can challenge themselves.The organisation believes in giving space for reflection, paying attention and giving constructive feedback to help wannabe entrepreneurs. Among various activities, entrepreneurs mentor, coach, give useful information on accountability, organise idea/pitching fests and final competitions. The programme foresees even the assignment of homework, which is highly appreciated by participants; it mainly requires presentations, which allow participants not only to improve their public speaking and presentation skills, but also to receive feedback in a comfortable, non judgmental environment and to learn from each other.

The results are both tangible – good ideas growing into actual business, and intangible: improved personal skills (for example self-confidence and teamwork), as well as strong networks. For example, there is possibility for mentors and participants continue to have strong and successful relations even after the completion of the programme.

!gen Debrecenteam measures success not only via the reflections provided by participants, but also by putting themselves in the mentality of funders: would we finance the product that is being developed? In more quantitative terms, they also track the number of new incomers, the number of projects running after the end of the programme, the number of participants taking part in thenetworking events.

As far as the future is concerned, their plans include: raising awareness about entrepreneurship and their programmes within University Journals and further building their networks; building a HUB, a physical space for meeting and working; developing a community of social entrepreneurs starting from those who took part in the training programme at the country level; organising !gen visits, to bring together participants and companies; developing a Workbook, which will be publicly available and will include literature, TED videos and more material to help young innovators develop and implement their ideas.

Contact:
Judit Katonane Kovacs
katonane.kovacs.judit@econ.unideb.hu

Website:
http://igendebrecen.hu/

Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/igendebrecen

http://www...

My web business

Venture Catalyst Challenge

Venture Catalyst Challenge

(Context- The National Association of College & University Entrepreneurs report that there is not a single student entrepreneur society, out of 100+ they endorse and fund in England, that offers any programme of support and advice to students to become web entrepreneurs.

Consequently these case studies are a look at a novel and innovative approach taken by:

A university in partnership with London's investment and VC sector that have set up a pre-accelerator programme to support students and graduates to develop, test the commercial viability and for a select few launch tech start-ups. The programme chosen for this case study is co-funded by Imperial University London, a world renowned science focused university, and Capital Enterprise and run by employees of Imperial Universities Tech Transfer Office- Imperial Innovation.

An Accelerator that exclusively focuses on enabling recent graduates from the UK's top universities who are tech proficient to become web/tech entrepreneurs. The programme chosen for this case study is Entrepreneur First a member and partner of Capital Enterprise.)

The Venture Catalyst Challenge (VCC) http://imperialcreatelab.com/vcc2015/ is an annual pre-accelerator for both present under-graduate and post students and recent graduates of Imperial University London. The VCC is designed to test the commercial viability of participants early-stage science and technology ideas. To this end the VCC programme incorporates elements of Stanford Universities Design Thinking course, the principles of Lean Start-Up methodologies, tools such as the Business Model Canvas and Lean Start-up Canvas and the latest in Customer Development Methodologies.

The format is evening masterclasses and workshops for 6 weeks from February to March. The program culminates in an annual Showcase, at which the University gives out a cash prize.

The university draws in some of the most powerful corporations in the world, top innovators and mentors with specific expertise to work 1:1

with the student startup businesses and the focus is to move the startups forwards as fast as possible. In 2015, the Venture Catalyst programme startups received:

» Support from Google and the majority of London's accelerator programs aligned with Capital Enterprise such as Tech Stars and Entrepreneur First.
» advice and 1-2-1 support from technology commercialisation specialists from Imperial Innovations (the universities tech transfer department).
» dedicated prototyping workshops with Imperial College Advanced Hackspace
» An assigned mentor from the startups industry area to liaise with over the programme
» Demonstration day in front of an invited audience of investors, corporates and organisations engaged in supporting entrepreneurs in London.

There is very strong entrepreneurial culture in most London based universities but especially at Imperial College London where starting a business is seen by many as a very attractive career option as well as a means to take their research into a product or service that can positively impact on the world. Over 400 students registered interest in joining the VCC programme in 2014-15 and after a rigorous selection process led by outside experts 20 teams are selected to progression to the programme.

Masterclasses
6 weeks of evening masterclasses

The Venture Catalyst programme has been designed and delivered to meet the specific challenges facing student/ graduate tech entrepreneurs. For instance, workshops are scheduled not to clash with lessons at times that most students can attend. In fact the VCC recognize that in term time most students only have 10-15 hours per week spare to work on their Startup, making it effectively part-time. To make best use of this time the VVC teaches the student entrepreneurs to use goal-setting and information curation to ensure that the learning and for this to be time-efficient.

To provide the teams with additional manpower the VCC have sourced a series of paid start-up internships from Imperial companies to support entrepreneurs over the summer if they don't have the resources to keep working on their idea.

Aftercare
12 months of free space & support

The college provides 12 months of free working space at the South Kensington campus Incubator to reduce overheads.

It is claimed that the VCC is the only University deep science pre-accelerator in the world and the only pre-accelerator in London that you can truly do whilst also working or studying full time.

Since the launch of VCC in 2013-13 VCC have worked with approximately 200 students and given out £50k in grants. The VCC has accelerated 80 student led companies, 70% of whom have survived and are still operating, with total funding raised by these companies now at £6m and with 2 exits.

An example of a company that has done really well recently is Aria Wearable, which has just raised $150,000 on Kickstarter for their wearable smart phone plug in. The company founded by two UCL post-graduate students Alfredo Belfiori and Alessandro Allievi has been featured in Tech Crunch - http://techcrunch.com/2015/05/22/the-aria-lets-you-control-your-smart-watch-without-touching-it/ and are on track for a full launch at the end of this year.

http://www...

My web business

ITU GINOVA

ITU GINOVA (Istanbul Technical University Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center)

Contacts

erdenz@itu.edu.tr, alpyurttas@itu.edu.tr

Background

ITU GINOVA was founded in May 2014. ITU GINOVA aims to diffuse entrepreneurship culture at Istanbul Technical University (ITU); inspire and encourage ITU students and academicians towards creative thinking and innovation; to equip them with entrepreneurial skills and competences before the incubation stage. It operates as a center under the Rectorship of İstanbul Technical University (ITU). Its aim is to give training towards entrepreneurship. We design entrepreneurship certificate programs for different levels of students.

ITU GINOVA has 7 academicians who provide mentorship to students and two of these mentors have administrative functions. In addition, there are two administrative staff members as well, who are PhD students. There are also, two undergraduate students who are employed during the academic year.

Challenge

ITU's main challenge is to address the main challenges faced by young entrepreneurs when starting their business, primarily that they lack entrepreneurial skills, financial literacy and have limited access to financial resources.

Entrepreneurship is an immature field in Turkey. Universities have become interested in this area quite recently. The main challenge for the center is the organizational culture, which did not have this element. As a center, a big challenge is to create a continuous infrastructure, and the ecosystem at ITU.

Actions Taken and Results

The center started a program to be the first step for the students who want to start a new entrepreneurial activity. The center strives to make itself relevant and attractive by offering a mentor team who have different background and competences in business.

The center works closely with the other organizations in the İTU Ecosystem to create the ecosystem. It organized a design thinking workshop with the topic of 'how to enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem at ITU', with the participation of directors of these units. This helped the center and the players identify our challenges and our needs as to how to work in coordination.

In order to be visible to the students, the center chose its location to be in the central area the main campus (beside the central library), where student traffic is very high. It also uses social media channels very actively to involve more students. It organises "open office hours" at Monday evenings which offers students to hangout and increase their network. Moreover, it plans some outdoor activities to meet students for this coming academic year.

The center observes that the students who get mentoring from us are more successful at further stages of their entrepreneurship career. (E.g. accepting to the ITU Teknokent, ease of access to financial resources etc.)

In the entrepreneurship education programs, the center classifies the students according to their level of entrepreneurial efficacy and stage of their business model development and designs programs for each different group such as beginners, advanced and academic path.

Summary

This center sees that every start up needs mentorship service at the beginning step and also needs to increase their professional network in order to reach key contacts for their projects (to find financial resources, improve their business or find team members etc.) It strives to provide these by an active and diverse mentorship program, being easily accesable to students and also by partnering with other relevant stakeholders.

The center just fulfilled its first year. Its initial hypothesis that ITU students were willing to be entrepreneurs was not at expected levels. The center learned that it needs to increase entrepreneurial intentions as well as enhancing skill sets.

http://www...

My web business

JADE

JADE – the European Confederation of Junior Enterprises

About Myway

MyWay aims to find, organize and promote resources, synergies and best practices for student centres, networks and entrepreneurship support organizations to support young adults to become web-entrepreneurs in Europe. The project is funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 and will take place in 2015 and 2016. More information can be found here: http://mywaystartup.eu/

This case study is interested to find out best practices and lessons learned in supporting targeted young adults (students and young alumni) that can be, want to be or are young web entrepreneurs.

Logo and short profile of contributing organizations will be added to the report and to the dedicated part of the website. Results of case studies will be made available on the website and MyWay will promote the case studies and contributing organizations.

Short Profile: JADE's mission is to encourage entrepreneurship in Europe by fostering a unique concept: the Junior Enterprise, a student non profit business that invests its profit into its own development. By integrating a network of 280 Junior Enterprises and supporting the growth of its members, JADE is one of the most powerful European organisations that fights skills mismatch and create great potential for a more entrepreneurial society and active citizenship.

About Your Organization & Services:

First Junior Enterprise was founded in 1967 in Paris while JADE international was founded in 1992.JADE was organized by junior enterprises themselves, so it was involved in young entrepreneurs support from its beginning. JADE is a bottom-up organization, it was first created by junior enterprises themselves and later developed on an international level.

JADE international functions completely independently although our members, junior enterprises, are closely connected with the universities. The majority of the Junior Enterprises are established and developed in the campus, but even though they work closely together, junior enterprises have their own bodies and make their own decisions. Currently,JADE network counts 20.000 members with 280 junior enterprises and a turnover of 16 million Euros.

JADE works in a company-structured way. Their position in a "fearless zone", allows them to train themselves. They are open on trying different methodology or hierarchy. Once they finish with Junior Enterprise, they already have a notion and gives them the opportunity to learn from their own mistakes. So, once a Junior Enterprise becomes an entrepreneur, he will not repeat mistakes. I believe the risk-free environment is of essential importance, as well as the mentors, who are all academics and more experienced entrepreneurs.

JADE supports young entrepreneurs with a variety of ways likeknowledge transfer and the experience they receive through Junior Enterprises. JADE also organizes many activities, such as workshops, international events, case studies. More experienced entrepreneurs and JADE alumni are engaged to share their best practice and give junior entrepreneurs some hints on how to run a successful business and replicate when creating their own company. In the year 2015, JADE has decided to create the JADE academy, which will be structured as a one week boot-camp, which will provide our members with training which is essential when creating your own company. Networking, contacts and synergy are really important and big part of a large network like JADE provides for its members.

Jade is collaborating with a number of partners butone of the most important and oldest partner is Microsoft. Jade signs an agreement with the big corporation on a 3-years basis. They support Jade's events by providing training and services. One of the new partners is EY, but they are still developing the details of their professional relationship. EIIL is also supporting Jade network by providing training. They host many workshops, and JADE members always have a free place on those quite expensive, but very high-quality workshops. Since many of Ent-Ex events are also on a local level, it gives a chance for Jade's members to have a look at how to organize events etc. The European Commission is providing financial support in exchange of Jade's surveys and reports. Least but not least theycollaborate with Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs program.

One of the big new projects planned is establishing a JADE Academy, a boot-camp for 30-40 participants who will be trained to be trainers themselves, and who will spread the knowledge gained at the Academy on their local level in order to have a bigger impact. In addition, an online-platform for all junior enterprises will be created to connect with companies, alumni. It will be a big platform on which junior enterprises will be able to share experience, upload CVs and even get hired. The main goal is always to enlarge JADE network and have more junior enterprises.

About Challenges Faced By Prospective Young Web Entrepreneurs and By Your Organization and Your Positioning

The biggest challenges an entrepreneur face when starting a business is the fear of failure, access to finance, red tape and bureaucracy. There are many financing opportunities from the European Commission itself, but those options are not disseminated enough. On the bureaucracy side, it differs from a Member State to Member State, but the situation is always improving. Portugal is a great example of that.

Jade, like other entrepreneurship support organizations, is in the lack of funding, whichin their case is not from the public, but from the private sector. When it comes to training and providing speakers, private sector is willing to help, however, when it comes to sponsoring and providing financial support, is really hard to close a deal. Academia supports Jade, as well as the infrastructure. If the budget was bigger the support and positive impact on entrepreneurs would be maximized and more people could be reached.

Jade differentiates from others because they offer the opportunity to young people to run their own company for a year, knowledge-transfer and the possibility to participate on international events.

People join JADE network when they have less knowledge, when they are students at their University. I don't think this question is relevant for JADE.
The target groupis people between 18 and 24. They pick to be a part of JADE, because of their lack of experience.

About Your Organizations' Actions, Initiatives, Processes and Results:

One of the main challenges as mentioned before is a scare of failure. Since they experienced something similar in Junior Enterprises, Jade members are not afraid of failing; they are not scared of the risk. All of the challenges are tackled during their international events, through networking. Jade cooperates with the local government and the European Commission. They also organise Generation's Cubs with people from outside the networks, after which they draft a report. Theyorganise debates that also result with papers and reports on specific topics. JADE Academy will also deal with some of the everyday challenges junior enterprises are faced with on a daily basis.

The main problem JADE has at the moment is the enlargement of our network. It is a long process, but they offer support to potential members as much as they can

Writing reports, organizing debates, directing projects with direct added value help them to tackle challenges. It is really encouraging that when Jade took place in a marketing challenge with their partners - Junior Enterprise for Poland won on a competition against "real", "adult" entrepreneurs.

To measure success Jade sets some goals every year which is part of the 3-years strategy plan, a cyclus. Each year has one or two specific goals. They measure the progress by the number of members, countries and junior enterprises. Currently,the quality is on a high level, but the numbers have space for further improvement.

To track and report Jade use the CDP - Confederation Development Program. It is an audit program that consists out of 5 pillars (HR, processing, fund-raising etc). They ask for their members to send individual reports, and then they create clusters based on the age and the number of the members. At the moment they are in the process of creating 2016-1018 strategy. They have monthly KPI's, and 3 annual KPI's. Every month JADE sends a financial report to their national partners, and then one big more detailed report at the end of the year. That report covers all the causes and several KPI'S for all the areas. And of course in the end of that 3-years period, they compare the goals set then and what have they have achieved in the meanwhile.

Your Best Practices, Lessons Learned, Success Definition:

Entrepreneur support centers are important for putting in contact young with more experienced entrepreneurs and people from both private and public sector. Their contribution on helping young people and create challenges for them is a big boost to prepare them to become entrepreneurs.

Jade's long-term mission is to create a foundation, and organization to support entrepreneurs in their network. Once junior entrepreneurs leave University, they are automatically becoming alumni, and there is a space to get involved after this point.

Jade is more informal than other organizations and that seems to attract young entrepreneurs and should be adopted from more organizations. Their international events are quite formal, but then in the evening, they are more informal, as we are all very young. The environment is very relaxed.

During the last few years there was not enough focus on branding the association, as it was on the quality of Junior Enterprises. As their members now are very high-quality and strong enterprises, they can focus on branding.

Of course, entrepreneurship organisations need support and Jade receives great support from their alumni, which is very strong, powerful and useful for JADE. Also, JADE council, which consists out of 5-6 people, all previous board members is a great source of information and experience. Board members may come not only from the previous years, but also from 10 years ago, people who were in a junior enterprise and are now running a successful business. In combination with the advisory board, external people who give advises on logistical issues, Jade is progressing steadily towards their goals.

To maintain the momentum as organization, JADE organizes the same events and activities. It goes without out question, that those things became part of their DNA and helped this old association to stay at the top all these years. However, the board changes every year. The good thing is that they have an annual plan, and the new board gets elected in the middle of that annual plan (after 6 months). With this way they ensure sustainability and continuum of their goals, regardless the board.

In the near future Jade is planning to have the JADE Academy, an Online platform for Young Enterprises, an Alumni database and on a long-term vision, a Foundation.

http://www...

My web business

LIFTOFF

LIFTOFF

Background

LIFTOFF is an office of the department of career opportunities and entrepreneurship inserted on the academic association of the University of Minho with the mission of promoting and supporting the entrepreneurial spirit within the academic community (students, professors and staff) of the University of Minho. It contributes to the creation of social, economic and cultural conditions that facilitate, support and ongoing training of entrepreneurship, aiming to contribute significantly to facilitate the transformation of knowledge into business ideas, creating, growing, innovating and internationalizing.

Besides the fact that LIFTOFF covers all target groups of its academic community, this project found the need to minimize the difficulties faced by entrepreneurs creating a stimulating environment qualified entrepreneurship a motivation to target young entrepreneurs and to enhance the efficiency of a system that wants mobilize knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurial spirit.

Being the students of this University the largest target group of LIFTOFF scope, several initiatives have been implemented in order to enable and stimulate them on becoming entrepreneurs, such as awareness-raising activities for entrepreneurship, acceleration of business ideas, the promotion of fair entrepreneurship, the promotion of various formations and programs and mentoring.

In terms of synergies and cooperation LIFTOFF relies on several partnerships to better meet the needs of the academic community and increase the number of available services and associated benefits. The established partnerships cover various areas of intervention.

Some examples of programs implemented by LIFTOFF to support young web entrepreneurs:

Connecting The Dots makes part of the first actions of this centre – "Da sensibilização à Ideia". It tackles several critical success factors, especially regarding with employability, creativity and innovation, management and personal development. This programme aimed at organizing workshops, debates and seminars providing tools and competences to the participants adjusting between job opportunities/ creation of its own business and their professional expectations and capabilities.
(info: http://www.liftoff.aaum.pt/index.php/noticia/923/Connecting+The+Dots)

Liftoff To Market is an incubator initiative that provides infrastructure facilities with a business context for the development of entrepreneurship activities and the access to a group of partners. This project enables support to new business projects (during their establishment phase) or individual professionals with the

condition of including at least one member of the academic community. The service includes: providing workspaces with furniture and/or CoWork; facilities of LIFTOFF TO MARKET for the purposes of registered office; Secretariat working during opening hours of the Students' Union (incoming mail, fax and phone); Administrative support (communication log and other notes); Meeting room and / or training room; Internet access; Update on periodic initiatives and entrepreneurship programs; Assistance and advisory support for the establishment of the company; Network.
(Info: http://liftoff.aaum.pt/index.php/noticia/927/LIFTOFF+TO+MARKET)

StartPoint is an event organized at both campus of the University in order to reach the biggest number of students from the different courses, with different profiles and competences. These 2 days activity (which had already some editions) aimed at providing direct contact among students/adults and the labor market, where opportunities were disseminated and a space to develop competences and network. The StartPoint event was open to the academic community, unemployed young people and entrepreneurs.
(info: http://liftoff.aaum.pt/index.php/noticia/1274/Start+Point+@+UM)

Working Ideas is a project that intended to stimulate/boost the creation and development of business ideas through entrepreneurs organized in teams. These 2 weeks program aimed to: Provide tools to the students to make them able to exploit opportunities, plan and develop a business model, focusing on their creativity, research and innovation skills in projects, with the support of technical experts and renowned entrepreneurs; Develop skills for teamwork in potential entrepreneurs; promote the opportunity of presenting a matured business model to a range of business angels, venture capital and investors who can join the viability of these projects in the market.

Challenge

LIFTOFF presented some challenges on creating the necessary means to support young entrepreneurs. The lack of financial support and difficulties in disseminating information seems to be their main needs. When it comes to young entrepreneurs starting their own business this young entrepreneurship network have mentioned that the lack of financial support, market vision and knowledge are the challenges faced by them.

Considering those challenges LIFTOFF strives to make the difference among other networks by creating proximity and closest contact with students of the University of Minho and offer a wide range of services that are available free of charge.

Actions and Results

In accordance with the above-mentioned challenges LIFTOFF has been investing on supporting the contest to entrepreneurship programs and promotion of an evaluative training program.

External consultants who support this young entrepreneurship networks with whom they often discuss about their initiatives.

On offering services and initiatives to support the stimulation for entrepreneurship among young students of this University as well as to create spaces for acquisition of competences, to create awareness for the potential of entrepreneurship, boost synergies and to give the opportunity to network, LIFTOFF have developed unique initiatives to offer to this target group, such as: StartPoint / Working Ideas / Connecting The Dots (please see brief description above). These initiatives have been giving to the network an opinion about their students regarding with the entrepreneurship – "Our students are very sensitive and attentive to the sharing of experiences and exchange of information". Which apparently seems that their initiatives have been successful according with their local context and target group features.

LIFTOFF also invests on establishing collaboration with other business, incubator centers, organizations, people etc. in order to support young entrepreneurs.

Summary

LIFTOFF is located inside of one University which has two campus in different cities in the north of the country. This University is quite new and has been known by its significant economic activity and by the youth of its population, the University of Minho is playing the role of development agent in the region. With over 19,000 students (42% of which are postgraduate students) and with about 1300 professors and 600 employees, UM is one of the largest Portuguese universities.

With a complexity of reaching and satisfying all the needs of the entrepreneurs, academic community and the sustainability of an entrepreneurship centre in a University that itself develops often a big diversity of events, activities, projects is really interesting the existence and maintenance of this centre there which has been implementing actions in both campus since 2011. It's also relevant to see that they were created with a link to the Students Union Association and to the University which brings it other opportunities and credibility (on the eyes of their target group).

With all the initiatives (some of them above mentioned) implemented they have been getting positive feedback from their target group, they plan to give continuation to the main programmes to support

young entrepreneurs and to bring new actions in the future adapting them to the needs and expectations of the field and target group. The approach, language and closest contact with the students makes this network successful giving reasons for its existence, however the lack of financial support limits the actions and initiatives they would like to see developed.

LIFTOFF monitor their success by measuring it through the Number of companies that entered the market and business development projects and number of students that recognize our activities.

http://www...

My web business

M31

M31

m3I

Interview with: Prof. Ruggero Frezza, President of M31

M31 has been founded in 2007 by Ruggero Frezza, former professor of automatic controls at computer engineering department of Padua University. Throughout his 19-years career, Prof. Frezza has seen a large number of brilliant students who, despite their great creative and/or business skills, did not have many job chances for their overqualified university curricula. Before M31, Prof. Frezza also created 5 University spin-offs. M31 was then founded, first of all, to give more opportunities to those young people, by acting as a catalyst of the main three reagents: inventors, entrepreneurs and investors. Today M31, considering the various subsidiaries in Italy and the US, includes about 45 employees for a total turnover of approximately Euro 5.5 millions. The overall sales volume of M31 participated companies reaches Euro 20 millions, with more than 200 employees.

Since the beginning, M31 successfully cooperated with many partners including Business Angels, Universities (as one of its main sources of ideas), and of course, accelerators/incubators (as partners or co-investors). Padua University, Politecnico (Milan), IRCAM Institute (Paris) and Drexel University in Philadelphia are the main collaborator of M31, within the framework of educational institutions.

In order to help the young entrepreneurs, M31 manages SeedLab, the acceleration program for new businesses mainly engaged in technology. SeedLab was born as the acceleration program of the venture capital fund TT Venture, managed by Quadrivio Group. Within its Group, M31 includes also other companies, in Italy, UK and in the US, like Si14, Adaptica, Mogees, Zehus. M31 often deals with the reduction of the go-to-market time, business development and internationalization.

To reach its goals, M31 provides a set of basic services such as accounting, legal, HR but, overall, the added value of M31 is given by the management coaching (sometimes also with temporal managers) within the business strategies of the projects. For the next 24 months, the main objectives will be the management of the exit from few investments and the reorganization of M31 in order to have more resources available for future investments, to be managed directly or through a fund.

Of course, while reaching its goals, M31 has to face several kinds of challenges. On the one hand, they have to be able to find those managers who can really make things happen; they need the right managers for supporting the founders, who, in most cases lack those managerial skills, useful for bringing their projects to succeed. On the other hand, however, young people approaching the hi-tech entrepreneurship world must be able to build a team willing to act immediately, so that they can become interesting for high level investors, thus avoiding to waste too much time with the small ones. You need to think big and find

the right partners for succeeding. Actually, the main reason why a young entrepreneur approaches M31 is definitely its track record that speaks for itself.

M31 has on the table a huge dealflow of hard-science project: we were able to attract very profound projects about biotech, cybersecurity, aerospatial, nanotech, AI, medtech, IoT, Big data, automotive. Of course, to keep its "momentum", M31 also needs to accelerate few exits from the current portfolio in order to create the future with every new project.

All these challenges are addressed by M31 with great professionalism and trying, as much as possible, to expand its network through new initiatives and new collaborations.

Among their initiatives and collaborations focusing on young students, M31 often deals with student entrepreneurship centres which, despite the several good examples of success, should focus more on what they were born for, that is to say being responsible for the relations with organizations such as M31 because, in most cases, their work is limited primarily to aid the founders to implement a BP or to create a limited number of connections with small and local investors.

On a national level, then, the creation of a real venture capital market would help a lot, because, to date in Italy, we can count just on 2 real funds investing in technology.

Moreover, it would be useful to be able to reduce the bureaucratic burden that characterizes our Country, further encouraging the creation of new start-ups and their tax exemption.

http://www...

My web business

MAOF

STARTUP
EUROPE

Maof

Background

Maof is a non profit organisation aims at supporting small businesses. Among different target audiences, the students community gets special attention. Maof offers its services and support to students through student organisations and universities. Maof's services include:

» Diagnostic meeting and continuing professional guidance.
» Business Consulting in wide range of areas - from setting up business growth and success.
» Training topics: entrepreneurship and starting a business, business management, online marketing, financial management, import-export, franchising and more.
» Assisting in obtaining financing and business loans - from foundations, banks and
» state-guaranteed loans.

During the first evaluation meeting, director of customer files get to know the operations of the business, identifies needs and adjusts the required services. A tailored plan is adjusted in order to track the business and ensure its growth.

Maof specialises in a wide range of issues, consultancy services and training programs for entrepreneurs, such as:

» Establishment of a business or enterprise and management
» Financial Consulting, assistance in obtaining financing
» Consulting in marketing and sales
» Consulting and organizations
» Operational Consulting and Logistics
» Consulting triggering innovation and creativity
» Consulting import and export
» Technology consulting and implementation of IT systems
» Environmental consulting
» Energy efficiency consulting
» Government procurement and tenders
» Franchising
» Chief Scientist support programs the traditional industry projects.
» Business Registration

Challenge

For many years Maof didn't distinguish between small businesses and young entrepreneurs. In the last few years they recognised the special needs young adults and especially students have. Trying to approach TYA they were facing some problems:

1. Image - they were identified as an organisation that supports SMEs and not
2. businesses in their initial formation phases. They lack specific services required by TYAs
3. They didn't have proper channels for approaching TYAs

Actions Taken

In order to deal with the above mentioned challenges, they decided to collaborate with organisations that already have relationships with students. They approached student unions in universities and collages in Israel and also business schools. They offered their services through the unions and the business school. Maof recognised that a network activity is crucial for the success of their activity among students. They conduct networking events, such as conferences and workshop. The events are created for students and in many of them students are involved in planning and preparing the events.

Results

Collaboration with student unions and business school was found as a very positive direction. While some business school hesitated to work with Maof, the student unions found it very attractive. For them Maof's services are complementary to their mission and services.

Summary

Collaboration with existing student networks, like students unions was found very effective. Hundreds of students got different levels of support from Maof, which otherwise wouldn't be exposed to their services and support. This collaboration is an example of combination of a very experienced organisation that holds unique knowledge and skills with proper channels that helps to make the services accessible and usable

http://www...

My web business

Newexist

STARTUP
EUROPE

Newexist

Contact:
Benedict Altgassen
NEWEXIST e.V., Esplanade 10,85049 Ingolstadt
newexist@thi.de

Website:
www.newexist.com

Background

NEWEXIST is the entrepreneurship initiative of the Technische Hochschule Ingolstadt (THI).
The initiative collaborates with the university, the entrepreneurship centre of Ingolstadt (EGZ), a network called Baystartup and an organisation which give financial help for startups and belongs to Ingolstadt.

NEWEXIST is the first point of contact for entrepreneurs at the THI university. The initiatives answers their questions and connects them with professors or coaches who help them.

At the moment there are about 50 students who are in the NEWEXIST data base who are interested in entrepreneurship. Ten of them work and support actively for the NEWEXIST organisation.

Challenges

There are two main issues NEWEXIST identified in the entrepreneurship network that make it more difficult to support young entrepreneurs.
Working space: Because the university has a very limited number of rooms NEWEXIST doesn't have its own office. NEWEXIST shares it with an other organisation which can be quite complicated.
Financial Support: At the moment NEWEXIST doesn't get any financial support, but work is in progress. In best case the initiative will be supported by the university next semester.

According to the NEWEXIST team challenges young entrepreneurs face when starting their business are choosing the "right" form of organisation, missing know-how, financial support.
In the local area there is no organisation which especially helps and supports young students and has a big network like NEWEXIST. That's the reason why young adults approach the NEWEXIST initiative and not other organisations.

Actions taken

NEWEXIST offers a big network to startups, political organisations, other entrepreneurship centres companies and our university.

According to the NEWEXIST team, entrepreneurship networks/initiatives can help young entrepreneurs by showing them the great benefits being an entrepreneur. Like e.g. the freedom of decision, responsibility for their own business. And by organizing events to inspire the young entrepreneurs.

NEWEXIST helps students to get in touch with the topic entrepreneurship, visit different events and connect with people.

Results

Since NEWEXIST is a relatively young organisation, it hasn't supported many young entrepreneurs yet. It is too early to talk about outcomes.

NEWEXIST ist growing, gets more and more members and at the same time their network is getting bigger as well.

Summary

The NEWEXIST team attends several events during the semester. At those events they get to know different startups as well as the young founders behind them. Another helpful initiative is the "Gründermagnet", which is kind of an umbrella organisation which helps NEWEXIST to connect with other student entrepreneurship networks in Germany.

According to NEWEXIST, student entrepreneurship centres are great in motivating young adults to engage with the topic and make a first connection with the "founder scene".

NEWEXIST doesn't measure its success in numbers. For the NEWEXIST team it is success to show students what possibilities exist when you are working in a startup or you start your own business. Success is when the initiative makes the students at the THI university more interested in entrepreneurship and they´re realizing there is another option than to work in a big company.

http://www...

My web business

START Berlin

START Berlin

Contact:
Ana Carolina
carolina.alex@start-berlin.com
President of the association START Berlin e.V.

Website:
www.start-berlin.com

Background

START Berlin is a student-led initiative, affiliated with all Berlin-based universities, that introduces students to entrepreneurship. The initiative is dedicated to support its members in their career and personal goals by providing them with unique opportunities to engage with representatives from all aspects of Berlin's thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

START Berlin collaborates with many different organizations from the ecosystem. Otherwise their work would be hardly possible. Some examples are the German Startup Association, Startup Safary, Gründermagnet, Entrepreneurship centers of all universities in Berlin, the COMAS college in Israel and many startups, incubators and accelerators that START Berlin is in contact with to organize initiatives and events together.

The primary objective of START Berlin is to inspire students for the entrepreneurship scene. To show them that there are alternatives to the big corporations. To give them an idea what it would be like to work in a startup or found a business by themselves. The initiative does that by giving the students access to the startup scene. START Berlin is the first place to go for students if they want to dive into the startup ecosystem. For example START Berlin organizes Startup Crawls, an open founders table, founder talks in our weekly meetings, visits to other startup hubs and more. Furthermore the initiatives aims at supporting students if they have concrete requests. START Berlin does that by forwarding them to the right contact person or also with workshops and brainstorming sessions.

Challenges

In regards to the challenges young entrepreneurs face when starting their business the START Berlin team helps young founders especially in the time to before they start their business. What the organisation often sees is that there are this young motivated people that really want to start a startup, but they don't have a team, neither an idea. From the perspective of the START Berlin team there are really few offerings for those people. Some of them can go to a company builder as they get idea and team there, but this is not suitable for everyone.

Students approach START Berlin because they want to get involved in the entrepreneurship scene. They want to get their foot into the scene before founding. Or they just want to get an idea what this whole startup scene is about. They contact START Berlin because they can approach the organisation without the need of a special request. No one expects them to do anything or have achieved anything in the startup scene. They can come to START Berli without any plan, ideas, problems; they just need to be interested.

Actions Taken

The initiatives of START Berlin help to overcome the challenge of not having an idea neither a team, as the organisation connects people.

Referring to the challenge in the pre-startup phase, the START Berlin team believes that there should be a program where young, talented, motivated people without an idea and team can apply. They get some money, mentoring and time to have the freedom to create the idea and team within the program. Like a pre-acceleration program for individuals without team and idea.

START Berlin did a tour to visit the Israeli startup scene with 19 students this year. This was highly beneficial for the participating students. It was a very inspiring experience to dive into the Israeli startup scene for one week. Because the whole START Berlin group learned a lot from the Israeli attitude, could establish valuable networks within the group of 19 students and all students were extremely motivated to go for it and start their own companies by themselves when returning from the trip. This is why START Berlin plans to organize more trips like that to other hubs in the future.

Results

Many students found a team and an idea for starting up through the START Berlin network or within the members of the initiative and started a business.

The START Berlin team is proud that many startups were founded by START Berlin members or Alumnis. For example: Peppar, Klang, Founderio, Culicoo, Junge Gründer, sph Band contest, connect, treev, Enter, Gebrauchte PC Spiele, Scolibri.

Summary

The impact of different entrepreneurship initiatives depends on the phase the entrepreneur is in. Each entrepreneurship initiative has it's own focus and can help most in its own niche.

START Berlin provides its members with freedom and flexibility and encourages everyone to come up with own ideas and take responsibility to make them happen. There are no strict rules or standards about what projects START Berlin supports and which not. Important is that someone is passionate about it.

One of the mistakes START Berlin did along the way was that at some stage the team did not focus enough to get new members on board what was a big problem. Now almost every event also focuses on attracting new active members and every member is briefed to promote START Berlin in their own network.

http://www...

My web business

Startup Dock

STARTUP
EUROPE

Startup Dock

Contact:
Viktoria Boss
viktoria.boss@tuhh.de
Research Associate, TUHH Startup Dock
TUHH Institute of Entrepreneurship (TIE, W-11)
Hamburg University of Technology

Website:
www.startupdock.de

Background

Startup Dock is the first port of call for entrepreneurs at universities and research institutions in Hamburg. It creates interest in entrepreneurship among students and scholars, and strengthens the startup culture on campus. Startup Dock teaches entrepreneurial ideas and actions through specialized lectures, training programs and events. It assists and promotes innovative, technology-based startups on their way to becoming successful companies.

In January 2013, TUHH was one of 12 universities to be awarded funding under the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi) EXIST (University-Based Business Start-Ups) programme for supporting entrepreneurship in German universities.

Startup Dock has a close collaborate with various startups, other partners (universities, …), businesses (HHIS, …).

The Startup Dock initiative supports/enables young adults to become entrepreneurs with a big variety of offerings: university classes, startup coaching, startup events (UniPitch, summer school).

26 people are actively involved in the Startup Dock organisation. Including researchers and student assistants.

Challenges

Lack of financial support, lack of cooperation between institutions, competitive behavior between initiatives instead of cooperation. These are the issues issues the Startup Dock team identifies in their entrepreneurship network that make it more difficult to support young entrepreneurs.

According to Startup Dock, the challenges young entrepreneurs face when starting their business are the lack of co-founders (developers mainly), misconception of effort for startup creation and lack of seed investments.

The reasons for young adults to approach Startup Dock are (for example) good branding/visibility, services free of charge and a professional standing.

Actions Taken

In order to overcome the previously identified challenges Startup Dock optimized its structure and created processes and entry barriers to the entrepreneurship centre for new founders –> be exclusive!

Startup Dock received financial support from the EXIST initiative, which helped to resolve previously identified challenges.

Startup Dock offers unique initiatives like summer schools on entrepreneurship, multiple different university classes, individual startup coaching sessions and StartUP Talks by seasoned entrepreneurs.

An entrepreneurship initiative like Startup Dock can help young entrepreneurs develop their business via business modell coaching, network, matchmaking, critical opinion, investor relation.

Results

Startup Dock helps young adults to get more knowledge about entrepreneurship in general and a better overview of possible ways to get help.
The outcomes of the support by Startup Dock were successful startups. The overall progress
of the student entrepreneurship network is higher awareness on the topic of entrepreneurship.

STARTUP EUROPE

Summary

According to the Startup Dock team, matchmaking with programmers support young web entrepreneurs the best.

The Openness to new ideas and collaboration with other centres helped Startup Dock succeed.

Mistakes that the Startup Dock network made along the way were not having enough structure. The team also learned not just to offer all kinds of services to startups, but also demand several things from startups.

One way how Startup Dock measures the initiatives success is to do surveys amongst students and new entrepreneurs (focus on satisfaction and entrepreneurial intention).

http://www...

My web business

Sabanci University SUCOOL Pre-Incubation Center

STARTUP
EUROPE

Sabanci University SUCOOL Pre-Incubation Center

Background

Sabanci University SUCOOL (Start-Up Company League) founded in 2013. SUCool was started as a pre-incubation center with the aim to support early stage projects, before company formation phase. The initial target groups are current students of Sabanci University, alumni and independent entrepreneurs. The idea was to increase the number and quality of entrepreneurial and innovative projects. SUCool is part of the technology transfer department of the university. It does not have a separate legal entity; it is a unit / department / center at the university.

SUCool's main mission is to help those who have already decided and embarked on this journey. SUCool chooses and supports 10 to 20 teams with potential, every year. Having said this, SUCool runs a newsletter, brings start-up CEOs and speakers, runs an entrepreneurship skill and awareness building class and helps teach the entrepreneurship class to seniors and MBAs at the university.

Helping young entrepreneurs to develop their business is the main focus of SUCool. SUCool provides a training program of 6-7 sessions that teaches entrepreneurs all things they need to know, market research, business model, finance, sales and marketing, product development, team management, legal issues and working with investors. SUCool then matches entrepreneurs with mentors, customer and investors locally and internationally. SUCool teams receive a lot of mentorship.

There are some factors that separate SUCool from other entrepreneurship organizations and makes SUCool unique. First one is speed. SUCool management tries to act like a start-up and get back to entrepreneurs really quickly. Second difference from other organizations is about support; it has deeper and longer support than others. Also intimacy, being open, friendly and direct is another difference. Lastly, relevancy, bringing entrepreneurs in contact with people who have relevant entrepreneurial or domain experience, separates SUCool from other organization. These are starting to be offered only by 2-3 other organizations in Turkey.

The budget of the center is $150 thousand. It has two full time employees right now, one director and one junior associate who just finished university last year. SUCool collaborates with the angel investing networks, local and international mentors, venture capital firms, technology and R&D corporations, government organizations that support entrepreneurs, other incubation centers and accelerators. SUCool has more than 60 mentors, has formal collaboration agreements with more than 5 but has informal collaboration with close to 20 organizations.

Challenges

In Turkey, entrepreneur support centres are mostly incubation and acceleration centers of universities and technoparks. They provide a lot of events, decent training and some mentoring. Supporting entrepreneurs longer with relevant mentorship benefits existing entrepreneurs the most. For prospective entrepreneurs, it is important to teach them to find, curate and join good project areas and ideas and teams. There are too many teams doing similar things.

The young entrepreneurs in Turkey are well trained in schools, engineering and maths. However, they have little experience in acting in uncertainty, creating a vision and leading and creating business models and sustainable competitive advantages. They are a bit naive. Most of them also have no or very little capital, no or very little industry expertise, most do not work while studying. They think getting the idea right is the most important thing; they underestimate the challenges of execution and dealing with competition and status quo. It is also costly and time consuming and complicated to form and operate a company in Turkey. Setting up and managing partnership and teams is also hard to young entrepreneurs in Turkey.

SUCool is dealing with financial support challenge. SUCool team can only spend 20-30% of their time actually supporting their entrepreneurs, rest of the time is spend on finding and running public and private sector projects to create financial support to subsidize these activities. Lack of a physical space in the city center to form a community is also one of the challenges.

Financial sustainability is the most important issue for SUCool. In its first 3 years, it was financed entirely from external funds, no money taken from university. However, the sponsor giving 60% of the budget was consolidated to another company that withdrew all its entrepreneurship sponsorships to external parties. SUCool's next 24 months primary goal is to secure its financial sustainability with financial support from university, sponsors and government projects and grants. With this, SUCool wishes to grow the team, attract more and higher calibre entrepreneurs, form an angel investing network, start to work on certain vertical areas and strengthen the international support programs.

Some entrepreneurs are very well networked and have financial means; they can and often do go ahead directly without incubator support. Some entrepreneurs choose other organizations in Istanbul because they are affiliated with those organizations, they can use the office space they offer, the timing of those programs better match their timing, or the other program may offer funding, which SUCool currently does not have the funds to do so, or they do to a specialist program that is focused on their area, SUCool runs a generalist program so far.

Actions Taken and Results

SUCOOL is working on some new features to overcome challenges:

» Funding Entrepreneurs: SUCool is trying to create an angel investing network.

» Specialist expertise: SUCool tries to form partnerships with corporate to access their domain know-hows and try to create new vertical programs.

» Timing: SUCool might consider starting to do their program twice a year once they secure finances and team expansion.

SUCool have a hard time convincing corporations to sponsor them. Since they belong to a university that is owned and started by a large conglomerate, everyone thinks the center has or should be supported by this group. Turkish corporate also are not used to long term sponsorships. They are applying to more local and international government support programs.

Measuring success of these kinds of centers is difficult. SUCool has two goals. First is to help build sustainable technology companies, which can be measured over the medium-long term, 3-7 years. In the short term, SUCool looks at investments, revenues, traction. Second is to build entrepreneurial muscles. SUCool looks to see even if the entrepreneurs do not go through with the initial project, whether they have build skills and whether they use them for entrepreneurial ventures and projects going forward. Of the 3 teams that gave up on their project from the first year portfolio, all 3 are ongoing with other entrepreneurial projects.

KPI's SUCool uses are number of start-ups that received investment and how much, increase in revenues, customers, employees and number of new start-ups from entrepreneurs they train. First year (2014), SUCool had 10 projects trained, 5 of them got investment. In 2015 SUCool has 20 projects trained; 5 of them have customers, revenues and increasing them.

SUCool signs a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with entrepreneurs saying if their project goes well, they give SUCool 3% equity share. This is a "pay-it-forward" approach that seems to work well. "If they

give up their project, they are free. If it goes well and we have a good partnership, we become partners. We do not become partners prematurely. Obviously some entrepreneurs can walk away, but they so far have not, if SUCool do their job well, the model works." SUCool director Mr. Kutlu Kazanci says.

SUCool's biggest mistake was to have +60% of their funding comes from their source that was a very political organization. Now, they try to spread their funding sources. The university helps with finding and making connections with local and international government projects and managing them. They need to secure and grow their funding, create early wins, keep current team motivated and grow the team. Angel investing network, meet-ups around certain vertical areas and find space in the city center are new initiatives they are planning to do.

Summary

Sabanci University SUCOOL Pre-Incubation Center focuses on increasing the number and quality of entrepreneurial and innovative projects. They provide trainings, mentorship, international tours to entrepreneurs. The biggest challenge that SUCOOL faces is financial stability. They had a sponsorship that provides 60% of the budget but it has ended. They are taking 3% equity from successful projects but since it is their third year, enough time did not pass to see successful exits and sustain the budget of SUCOOL. They are planning to secure and grow their funding with a couple of sponsors, instead of one, and university's support. Then they grow the management team. Moreover, creating an angel investing network will help their entrepreneurs to find funding. Also it will bring new actors to ecosystem and increase the effect of SUCOOL in the ecosystem.

http://www...

My web business

The University of Huddersfield and the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project

The University of Huddersfield and the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project

Background

The Enterprise Team at the University of Huddersfield puts great emphasis on increasing enterprise awareness at the university and providing practical support to aspiring entrepreneurs and self-employed students. In addition, the University of Huddersfield has been cooperating with other Yorkshire universities in the context of the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project (GEP) which connects students with a wider network of entrepreneurs and enterprise support.

Since 2007 the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project brings together universities in Yorkshire which form a partnership that provides students and recent graduates with the enterprise support and business start-up expertise in the region. The large number of universities in the project allows students to resort to enterprise support services at their university as well as to some regional events. Some universities in the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project offer mentorship services. Depending on the institutional context and needs, there can be a mix of external or in-house business advisors and mentors. The GEP welcomes all young students with initial business ideas regardless of their business type or level. Most young students that access the services at the Huddersfield Enterprise Team are at the proof-of-concept stage. The services provided by the University of Huddersfield range from pre-pre-start to early stage trading support. Therefore, the assistance needed varies significantly from person to person. Support services include networking events, one-to-one advice or mentoring, financial support and Entrepreneurs Boot Camps.

Kelly Smith, Head of Enterprise at the University of Huddersfield, stressed that the universities primarily cater for their own student population, but the collaboration between other Higher Education Institutions serves the the greater goal of enhancing and developing the region's student population. Each university in the GEP framework operates in different ways and provide different services to their student population. On an individual basis, the University of Huddersfield is immensely proactive in enterprise, but the framework of the GEP allows universities to exchange ideas and draw upon wider resources, such as best practices. The Graduate Entrepreneurship Project HEIs are: The University of Huddersfield collaborates, the University of Bradford, the University of Hull, the University of Leeds, the Leeds Beckett

University, the Leeds Trinity University, the University of Sheffield, the Sheffield Hallam University, the University of York and York St John University.

Challenges

The Enterprise Team of the University of Huddersfield identified several challenges that young entrepreneurs face when it comes to building their own company and putting their ideas into practice. Interestingly, the Enterprise Team highlighted several challenges that focus particularly on enterprise awareness and reducing the barrier to entrepreneurship. In other words, many students do not consider or are not aware that entrepreneurship or self-employment is a viable career option for them. Kelly Smith from the Enterprise Team at the University of Huddersfield mentioned another potential reason for this perceived barrier; in her opinion, some students may be put off by the term entrepreneur, preferring other self-definitions, such as freelancer or business owner.

Besides entrepreneurship awareness challenges, young entrepreneurs can benefit from workshops and expert advice to write a comprehensive business plan, solve legal issues and find accounting solutions. The experience of the Enterprise Team of the University of Huddersfield has shown that finance is not necessarily an issue if the right amount is requested at the right time.

Actions Taken and Results

The University of Huddersfield tailored their offering in such a way, that it would help young entrepreneurs overcome the challenges they face. The Enterprise Team works with university students and alumni that graduated in the past five years. The philosophy of the Enterprise Team is that every student is welcome and can be supported by the university to explore self-employment and business or social enterprise start-up. The engagement with students takes place on two levels: enterprise awareness and enterprise support.

Enterprise awareness takes place in form of workshops and one-on-one meetings with business start-ups and advisors. The Enterprise Team of the University of Huddersfield also stresses the importance of using the terms freelancer or business owner instead of entrepreneur and business start-up, social enterprise, freelancing, self-employment instead of entrepreneurship.

In addition, lecturers at the University of Huddersfield are involved in enterprise education by embedding enterprise education (having ideas and making them happen) in the curriculum. The University of Huddersfield offers for example enterprise placement years, game industry placement years, an entrepreneurship top up degree in digital entrepreneurship and a new venture creation degree at undergraduate level (BA Enterprise Development).

Enterprise support takes place in form of in-house business advisors and the possibility to apply for micro finance at the Duke of York Young Entrepreneur Centre. Moreover, the Enterprise Team has arrangements

with a range of professional services for pro bono support and worked with the Institute of Chartered Accountants for England and Wales through the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project last year on an investor ready workshop. One of the Enterprise Team's in-house business advisors can provide advice on seeking investment. The Enterprise Team offers start-up grants of up to £500 to prove a business concept. The University of Huddersfield support the Duke of York Idea Award, which is a national scheme that any young person can apply for.

In addition to the services offered by the Universities of Huddersfield, students have access to regional events such as the Entrepreneurs Boot Camp and he ICAEW investor ready workshop. Some universities offer networking events, which cover certain aspects of the business environment up to five years after graduation. These networking events may include commercial skills workshops. In order to take their projects to the next level, graduate entrepreneurs have the opportunity to get one-on-one advice. Some universities employ full time business advisors that guide the young entrepreneurs through their set up of the business. In addition, the universities in the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project offer financial help for graduate entrepreneurs. Some universities provided Proof of Concept Funds of up to £1000 and Start-Up Grants for up to £2,500 until 2014. Some universities decided to continue similar funding schemes after 2014. The Graduate Entrepreneurship Project organises the Entrepreneurs Boot Camp, which is an annual intensive four-day residential course. This programme offers young entrepreneurs the opportunity to develop their business plans in a fully supported environment. The goal is business skills development by going through interactive business scenarios and talks. Specialist advisors support graduate entrepreneurs with business advice, such as finance, IP, legal requirements, networking, taxation and marketing. Finally, the universities in the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project allow graduates to raise the profile of their business. The region's universities have each nominated a young entrepreneur over the past three years to receive a Duke of York Young Entrepreneur Award. Three business supported by the Graduate Entrepreneurship Project higher education institutions took part in the inaugural Pitch@Palace event.

Summary

The Enterprise Team at the University of Huddersfield not only focuses on practical entrepreneurship support in form of one-on-one advice from in-house business advisors, but also tries to break down barriers that keep students from becoming entrepreneurs. It is crucial to manifest entrepreneurship as a viable option for all students, by informing them about the opportunities out there or by using a range of terms in addition to entrepreneurship in order to engage more students and graduates, particularly those from non-Business School subjects and those who are not attracted by the term 'entrepreneur'.

The Graduate Entrepreneurship Project is an excellent example of a project that facilitates cooperation between universities for the greater good of young entrepreneurs. Thereby, students have the opportunity to access a wide range of support, while at the same time having the close support from their home university.

http://www...

My web business

Trento RISE

STARTUP
EUROPE

Trento RISE

Interview with:

Matteo Cevese (New business creation in Trento RISE): communication manager and community manager for privacy security and trust business community (EIT digital)

Trento RISE is an association founded in 2011 by the Bruno Kessler Foundation (FBK) and the University of Trento. Trento RISE is a core partner of EIT Digital (European Institute of Technology – EIT Digital KIC). They host the seat of the Italian node of the EIT Digital and work in synergy with the six other nodes in the network in Berlin, Paris, Helsinki, Eindhoven, London and Stockholm.

Trento RISE was born as a catalyser of innovation, striving to contribute to the transformation through Information and Communications Technology (ICT) of Trentino into a competitive and dynamic knowledge economy aimed at sustainable development and quality of life. At the moment, Trento RISE has about 45 employees even though very soon the structure of the association will change. Trento RISE is a public body and normally it benefits from three different kinds of public funds: from the Province of Trento, from the European Commission (through 7FP/Horizon2020, Marie Curie…) and from the EIT Digital. New partners are now working together with Trento RISE and very soon a brand new hub will replace it. This hub will be composed of University of Trento, Edmund Mach Foundation, Bruno Kessler Foundation and Trentino Sviluppo and it will be coordinated by the Province of Trento. The new entity will also deal with mechatronic, agri-food technologies and raw materials (with EIT Raw Materials).

Trento RISE covers mainly 3 different fields: education, research and business. Each of these areas has specific collaborations with several partners. First of all, EDUCATION: it deals with business masters and PHD schools and its main collaborations are with 18 prestigious European Universities among which KTH Stockholm, Aalto University in Helsinki, Eindhoven University of Technology TU Berlin, TU Delft, etc…
The second field is RESEARCH: it mainly deals with proposal writing of EU projects and its main interlocutors are the EU Commission and the EIT. Then they have BUSINESS: this area mainly collaborates with investors, accelerators, incubators, organizers of start-up events and big enterprises such as (for example) Reply or Siemens.

Trento RISE is running quite a lot of activities and programs in order to support young web entrepreneurs. Until 2014 it was running the acceleration program called TechPeaks. The program was launched to enable the innovation ecosystem in Trento's emerging tech scene by bringing in entrepreneurs, tech visionaries, and thought leaders from around the world. During the first weeks of the program, teams will form and interact, validating business ideas through lean methodologies. In the first program a seed funding of 25k € was offered for the best business ideas which could then be turned into real start-up companies headquartered in Trentino. Scholarship recipients received free lodging, office space, services and visa for

the first 6 months of the program. Start-ups able to attract private investors could participate to the second phase and obtain matching funds up to 200k €.

The second edition provided 50k funding to up to 5 startups extending to these startups the benefits of the acceleration program for further 12 months (free lodging, visa, monthly allowance) At the moment TechPeaks is in pause and Trento RISE is consolidating the incubation of the last batch of start-ups accelerated.

Other programs run by Trento RISE:

> » Open Office: twice-a-month meetings for giving support those people who wants to start their own project or need help in searching new rounds of investment.
> » Finodex: Fiware accelerator that selects, funds and provides support services to projects from SMEs & Web Entrepreneurs building upon the FIWARE technology and reusing.
> » Every year they organize a Business competition on Cyber Security and Trust (Cyber Security Idea Challenge) for the EIT Digital
> » This year Trento RISE organised a Summer School on Cyber Security (Startify) as part of a H2020 project

Trento RISE aims to explain what it means to become entrepreneur and tries to deliver the message that starting a web-based project has minor risks compared to a much more traditional market. Trento RISE is also educating and spreading the message that creating a start-up means creating new jobs (once the start-up become a company). Trento RISE is not providing technological transfer but it creates bridges and connections with those who do it and the start-ups. It has collaborated with several schools of Trento (like Istituto Artigianelli) and its University in order to explain – for example - how to launch a start-up (though its Contamination Labs, etc…). The collaboration with student entrepreneurship centres usually is not implemented especially because Trento RISE normally deals with the University of Trento, one of its main partners.

While achieving their goals, TrentoRISE faces different kinds of challenges: the biggest one is to educate, that is to say to teach the youth what is the real meaning of creating a start-up and being entrepreneur. In Italy (and Europe in general) they have a huge risk aversion problem: if you fail, you'll be forever a loser. The youth need to understand, as it happens in the US, that failing once, twice or even more, is an issue they have to deal with and learning from these experiences can be of great value to succeed later. They've verified that educating a young entrepreneur, for example during their summer school, has a bigger impact than trying to give competences to those people who already own their start-up. In this specific field, the action of a student entrepreneurs centre is really important: they should provide high-level education to the students of their networks and for example about what to do before addressing an accelerator (pre-acceleration stage).

Being a public body, then, can lead to some "agility" problems. For example, when they were managing TechPeaks, they had to make financial agreements with the Province of Trento and undergo strict financial rules and the consequence of it was a considerable delay in the availability of the resources. In order to

overcome those challenges, the first thing that has to be understood is that the public sector cannot replace the private one. The best role for a public body, as they are, is to educate and facilitate contacts and processes, which is something that normally a private entity doesn't do. Now they are managing just those funds specifically conceived for a start-up (as they are much easier to be managed). TrentoRISE is an effective gateway for all the different stakeholders such as investors, partners, start-ups... This is something that they can do well even because they have lots of best practices coming from their high-level partners (from University to accelerators to industry partners) Trento RISE, moreover, is running all its activities in English.

In order to keep their momentum, TrentoRISE is organizing events like Start-up Spritz or TechPeaks Academy meetups where important entrepreneurs, famous journalists or other people from the innovation world are invited. They normally pitch in front of a local public and the start-ups of Trento RISE / TechPeaks network. The result is a successful event and a great chance to network and to create a community. TrentoRISE can easily measure its success through the quality of people attending theirevents, the number and the quality of EU projects they are taking part to or coordinating, the media exposure and, of course, their track record (number of start-ups helped, results of these start-ups, etc…).

http://www...

My web business

SmartUp!

SmartUp!

Contact:
Paul Nietzschmann
Paul.Nietzschmann@whu.edu
WHU - Otto Beisheim School of Management

Website:
http://www.whu-smartup.org/

Background

SmartUp! is on a mission to foster the entrepreneurial culture and network at WHU by bringing together experienced entrepreneurs with tomorrow's entrepreneurs. The initiative organizes at least four or five campus workshops each semester. Topics range from idea evaluation over fundraising to term sheets. In addition to the on-campus events SmartUp! hosts three Startup City Tours each year, headed by a three day "SmartUp! Berlin Tour" each year in March.

In spring 2012 the founding members decided to invite alumni from their university to learn from hands-on workshops. The events were a success and "SmartUp!" was born.
SmartUp! collaborates with an Alumni Network, the WHU Incubator and the WHU Career Center.

The WHU Incubator provides young founders with support and information in all areas around entrepreneurship.

Challenges

How do I get financed? What are the first steps in founding a company? How do I write a business plan? What about internationalization? SmartUp! aims to answer all questions in regards to all stages in founding and developing a young company.

Since SmartUp! provides all its offerings for free to the participating students, the initiative depends on financial support through the WHU Career Center and the WHU Incubator.

SmartUp! provides support exclusively for students from the WHU university. On the WHU campus SmartUp! is the place to go regarding any questions around founding a company.

Actions Taken

The WHU Incubator and the WHU Career Center supported SmartUp! both with capital and contacts to which enables the initiative to do entrepreneurship events and tours. Also past core team members are still keeping close contact and support wherever they can.

SmartUp! offers young entrepreneurs Startup City Tours with the unique opportunity to have an insight into other startups, meet their founders and ask questions. Giving insights into real life businesses from first hand sources/ the founders.

The team behind SmartUp! believes that the best inspiration are stories and learnings from people who have already done it. That's what SmartUp! Provides to students who are interested in entrepreneurship.

Young adults benefit from the opportunity to meet company founders together with a small group, with the chance to ask questions openly and without hesitation. This kind of networking is a great opportunity for young entrepreneurs.

Results

Many of the students that have visited SmartUp! events throughout the time now have founded their own companies. The WHU and SmartUp! network helped them doing this.

Since one of the initiative's key value propositions is close personal and informal meetings, SmartUp! can provide its services only to a limited amount of students (to keep the events small and the learnings big) the team behind the initiative has to reject many students who apply to their events every year.

Overall the SmartUp! Entrepreneurship network shows great progress. Every year, ~200 new students sign up for the SmartUp! newsletter and get all the information about events the initiative is planning. Also the

SmartUp! team comes up with new formats each year, for example they will target pupils with the "Startup Academy by WHU & Jugend gründet" this year for the first time.

Summary

The team behind SmartUp! found out that "learning by doing" is the best way to teach interested students. Also the SmartUp! team thinks, that the learning outcomes in small groups are the best. Therefore other societies could follow this principle in order to replicate the success of SmartUp!.

The WHU provides SmartUp! with a strong university network. It really helps the initiative to organize speakers for the entrepreneurship events.

One of the mistakes the SmartUp! nework did along the way was that new team members were not tested enough. This led to smaller problems with the integration of less motivated/ active members into the team and resulted in the removal of non-active team members.

One way to measure the success of SmartUp! Is that after each and every of the entrepreneurship events SmartUp! gets feedback from the participants in a standardized way.

http://www...

My web business

Zaragoza Activa (ZAC)

Zaragoza Activa (ZAC)

Background

Zaragoza Activa (ZAC) is an entrepreneurship center that hosts several stable projects such as an own business incubator, the Yuzz business incubator, Made in Zaragoza project and several events as the No-Master, Conversion, Coaching Day… The aim of the center is to create a social network among all the different project teams to increase their resources.

The ZAC was founded in 2009 with the intention of providing services to the local community of entrepreneurs in Zaragoza. Nowadays, they count with 20 employees and a budget of 800.000€ direcly allocated by the Council of Zaragoza to put into practice the different projects that they are running. This centre develops support entrepreneurship programs as "Semillero de Ideas" which is a public school of entrepreneurship, "Vivero de Emprendedores" where they provide 17 boxes (working spaces) to emergent businesses, "Made in Zaragoza" which is a creative business network, ThinkZAC that is a lab of entrepreneurship on politics, ZAC (their own virtual network). They also offer many daily activities related with employment, innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.

The main objective behind the idea of this centre is to work with young entrepreneurs in order to empower them with resources that the labour market requires to solve social inequalities targeting specifically on underdeveloped neighbourhoods of the city of Zaragoza. In this sense, they divulgate and train young people by organizing training events and other kind of activities such as street markets and they have created an Orientation and Support centre called InfoActiva to provide with information to the citizens.

To achieve their goal they collaborate with a wide range of public and private entities combining different sectors such as the academic with a partnership with the University of Zaragoza, the governmental with cooperation between the regional government of Aragon and the central Spanish government, the business sector with a partnership with the regional Chamber of Commerce, and the local youth with a collaboration with the association of Young Entrepreneurs.

Challenges

Regarding the challenges that Zaragoza Activa have to face to support young entrepreneurs, they highlight the difficulty that these people have when trying to access to credits. The centre gives the opportunity to gather information about the possible credits that they can apply for but as far as the concession of those are depending mainly on external entities, they cannot ensure any degree of acceptance of those credits. This problem is recurrent when it comes to analysing the situation of young entrepreneurs when trying to start a business.

According to Zaragoza Activa, the challenges that young entrepreneurs face when starting their own business are diverse, nevertheless, the most common ones are first the feeling of being left alone and not knowing where they can find the necessary support and second, the feeling of fear to fail in case that their business idea does not success.

The services provided by Zaragoza Activa are currently attracting a big community of young people that, as the director of Zaragoza Activa Raúl Oliván states, find in this centre a very active and productive innovation ecosystem that only with the ZAC project (their virtual entrepreneurship network) gather more than 6.000 members and it is in constant growth.

Actions Taken and Results

The Zaragoza Activa centre has a direct support from the Zaragoza city hall to resolve the previously identified challenges mainly in terms of provision of infrastructure, space and budget. This support allow them to develop unique initiatives such as the ones mentioned before that gather in their ecosystem more than 300 enterprises and 6.000 members. Furthermore, they collaborate with several incubators like CIEM and Etopía, and bib enterprises like Ballay.

The identification of the problems and challenges that young entrepreneurs and support centres nowadays have are tackled by different initiatives that Zaragoza Activa is organizing. One of their most successful projects is the development of a collaborative ecosystem where the funding is not the most relevant component thus in some among the members of this ecosystem they can take into practice their ideas without a specific need of accessing to credit. In this sense, they have very successful activities or programs such as "La Colaboradora" (the Collaborative) which is a P2P Co-Working, where people exchanges the fulfilment of tasks for time acting as a Time Bank implementing a revolutionary methodology in the relationship among the local community of entrepreneurs.

Zaragoza Activa points out that are the activities that benefit the most the targeted young adults are those that put people together and they learn by doing. The most outstanding projects that they have in relation

to this are the school for entrepreneurs "el Semillero de Ideas" and the "Countdowns" which are intensive meetings that last 24 hours where the participants have to resolve a certain challenge by working in an interdisciplinary group.

Raúl Oliván believes that the most important challenge that the society has in order to help young people to become entrepreneurs and to develop their business or grow their desire to start a business is to improve the entrepreneurial culture in the formal education institutions such as the school and the university aiming at diversifying the career paths of the students according to their needs and their motivation.

As a result of five years of implementation of successful projects, Zaragoza Activa, focusing its initiatives on education, formation and orientation has helped around 375 start-ups that have had 2.6 million euros in Social Return of Investment (SRoI) a year. Besides this, they believe that there has been a progress of the student entrepreneurship network in the last years becoming self-employment an actual alternative.

Summary

Zaragoza Activa is a centre that provides services to the local community of people that want to become entrepreneurs by running a diverse range of projects according to the needs of the users. They support young web entrepreneurs through the establishment of a big social network (ZAC) that nowadays counts with more than 6.000 members and more than 300 enterprises where the members can exchange their needs, their questions and their offers. They also empower the young web entrepreneurs by running a collaborative blog on www.madeinzaragoza.es or www.blogZAC.es.

As an example of a successful student entrepreneurship centre, they recommend to implement one of their better known programs "La Colaboradora" (the Collaborative) that consists of a P2P Co-Working space, where people exchanges the development of certain tasks by time avoiding the need of depending on funding that in some occasions is difficult to get. Zaragoza Activa emphasises on the fact that enterprises have the genuine focus of resolving people's problems and then earn money and not the other way around. In this sense, the student entrepreneurship centres must create a positive atmosphere, finding the talent and connecting people.

This centre asses yearly their initiatives looking for the optimization of their resources by analysing the Social Return of Investment. In their plans for the upcoming years count with two new projects such as a Shared Economy Lab and a Creative Economic School maintaining the most fruitful activities that they are currently running.

http://www...

My web business

Appendix II.

STARTUP
EUROPE

MY-WAY in web entrepreneurship
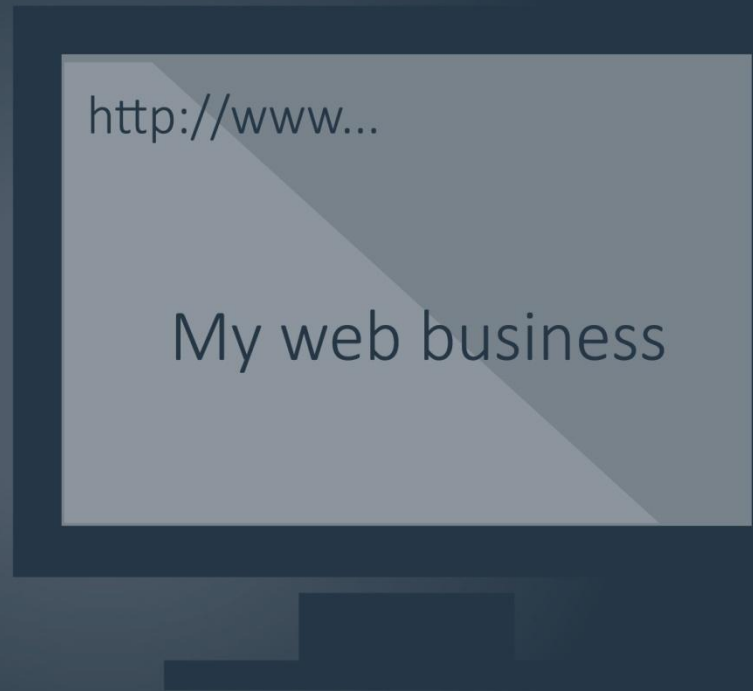
Template
Best practice case studies

STARTUP
EUROPE

Name of Student Entrepreneurship Network/Centre/Initiative providing support to prospective entrepreneurs:

Background

This section will contextualise the case study by providing information about the student entrepreneurship network and its significance for young entrepreneurs. It should cover aspects such as programmes on offer, infrastructure, resources, the key players involved in the student entrepreneurship network, location and relevant partnerships. In addition it will outline the journey of the student entrepreneurship network including specific projects and initiatives they have been working on.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS:

- » How did your organisation first get involved in young entrepreneurs support?
- » What was your motivation to support young entrepreneurs?
- » When was your organisation founded?
- » Do you collaborate with partners, businesses, incubator centres, startups etc?
- » What programmes do you run to support young web entrepreneurs?
- » In what ways does the organisation enable targeted young adults to become entrepreneurs?
- » Do you operate in the framework of an educational institution or do you work independently?
- » What is the size of your organisation (employees and turnover)?
- » Are you looking to scale up over the next 24 months?

Challenge

This will be a brief summary of the challenges faced by the targeted young adults and ways such challenges can be identified by the student entrepreneurship network.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS:

- » What issues do you identify in your student entrepreneurship network that make it more difficult to support young entrepreneurs (e.g. lack of support from the educational institution, promotion of services, lack of financial support, infrastructure etc.)
- » What challenges do young entrepreneurs face when starting their business?
- » What are the reasons for the targeted young adults to approach your student entrepreneurship network and not other organisations?
- » What is the greatest hindrance to starting a business for young entrepreneurs?

Actions Taken

This section will examine the steps that were taken to resolve the previously identified challenges (e.g. further consultations, initiatives or changes in policy). It should offer insights into the processes as well as the relevance of individual initiatives.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS:

» What actions did you take to overcome the previously identified challenges?
» What support did you receive to resolve the previously identified challenges? Who supported you and what did the support involve?
» What unique initiatives can your organisation offer to young entrepreneurs?
» How can student entrepreneurship networks help young entrepreneurs develop their business or grow their desire to start a business?
» Which activities benefited targeted young adults the most?
» Did you collaborate with other business, incubator centres, organisations, people etc. to support young entrepreneurs?

Results

This section will outline the impact of the actions taken. In particular it should identify what issues were resolved with the help of specific initiatives of the student entrepreneurship network.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS:

» How did the actions that you took resolve the issues of targeted young adults?
» Were there any problems that you struggled to resolve? If yes, why?
» What were the outcomes of your support?
» What is the overall progress of the student entrepreneurship network?

Summary

The final part of the case study summarises the overall progress of the student entrepreneurship network including objectives, challenges and actions taken. It should also highlight any aspects that could be done differently or actions and outcomes that could be replicated in other societies (best practice examples). In addition, possible next steps should be discussed to maintain the momentum, monitor success and create new initiatives.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS:

» What initiatives support young web entrepreneurs best?
» Are there any habits or practices that helped your network succeed that other student entrepreneurship centres could adopt?
» What mistakes did your network make along the way and how did you ultimately learn from them?
» What support helped your organisation to resolve challenges?
» What do student entrepreneurship centres do well? How can student entrepreneurship centres help targeted young adults further?
» What plans or ideas do you have in place to maintain the momentum as an organisation?
» How do you measure your success?

A case study should ideally not exceed two to three pages.