

@iBIZAFRICA OPEN INNOVATION PROGRAMME

COURSE OVERVIEW

According to figures published by Startup Genome Report in 2011, nearly 92 percent of startups globally fail within the first three years, while a more recent report by the Global Entrepreneurship Network showed that Africa has one of the worst ‘discontinuation rate’ at about 14 percent. However it is proven that having adequate and consistent support within an ecosystem increases the success rate for startups.

For example, a research by Venture Capital 4 Africa showed that 50% of startups who actively participate in the Kenyan startup ecosystem support programs secure investment. Actually, the average investment for companies within the ecosystem is up to 6 times higher than an average startup.

@iBizAfrica’s Open Innovation Program provides the opportunity for start-ups previously incubated to be reintegrated into the ecosystem in a framework that will increase the likelihood of success. The process will involve a series of experiments and experiential learning components geared towards reengineering and developing customer centric & flexible business models.

This support program for start-ups is aimed at enhancing the exit plans of start-ups after being incubated. The program seeks to design business strategic plans, understand and mitigate the bottlenecks to successful continuation of start-ups post incubation.

COURSE DURATION

The course will be delivered over a period of 3 months and each class will have upto 10 entrepreneurs.

STARTUP MODULES

The Open Innovation Programme is a unique course which will examine the real-world operational challenges and risks associated with sustaining your venture as you continue to navigate the dynamic startup ecosystem. The focus is on creating tailored made pathways for our entrepreneurs. The modules will be delivered by our in house mentors and trainers through active learning, demonstrations, practice, reflections and case studies. It will cover;

- Human Centred Design
- Customer Development
- Business Model Development
- Communication
- Entry to Market Strategies

BENEFITS

The programme will support entrepreneurs to increase the success rate of their start-ups from through;

1. Supporting the development and tracking of a business blueprint or strategic plan based on specific needs of each enterprise.
2. Developing the capacity of businesses through providing access to applied research or experimental learning for founders.
3. Provide access to networks for entrepreneurs to grow through the chosen pathways.

PROGRAMME MODULES

The pathways for each enterprise will be geared towards addressing the following components of start-up development;

Human Centred Design

Human-centred design is innovation inspired by people. It is a method of design thinking which taps into the creative abilities that typically get overlooked by more conventional problem-solving practices.

Human-centred design is a process that begins with gaining deep empathy for customer's needs, hopes, aspirations for the future, and context. It covers the following areas on customer understanding.

1. **Empathetic.** Human-centred design begins from a deep understanding of the needs and motivations of people.
2. **Collaborative.** Human-centred design emphasizes greatly on integration of views of multiple perspectives.
3. **Optimistic.** Human-centred design is the fundamental belief that we can all create change.
4. **Experimental.** Human-centred design is all about experimenting and learning by doing.

Customer Development

Customer development is a hypothesis-driven approach to understanding a fundamental issue of the business model of an entrepreneur, the customer. This includes answering the following questions;

1. Who your customers are
2. What problems and needs they have
3. How they are currently behaving

4. Which solutions customers will give you money for
5. How to provide solutions in a way that works with how your customers decide, procure, buy, and use

Since the approach is hypothesis driven the entrepreneur is required to actively invalidate the assumptions they have about the market in order to establish whether the product is in line with pain points before conducting product development.

Business Model Development

A working business model is the backbone of every self-sustaining and functional company. A start-up can be described as a temporary company designed to search for a repeatable and scalable business model. @iBiz Africa seeks to integrate, the Lean Method, aimed to find and validate a working business model as well as support incubatees throughout the process. It involves constant testing of the key assumptions of a business model for a start-up, rather than creating an elaborate business plan. The focus is on defining the business model overview.

Communication

Communication theory has been developed with large corporations in mind and a start-up could go through a lot of struggles if it only follows communication theories and practices by the book. @iBiz Africa seeks to tackle communication challenges and needs as a significant intervention to enhance the growth trajectory of start-ups.

The startups will be able to navigate communications aspects of their company. The output of the program will greatly benefit the startups as they will have a concrete guide to help them understand and achieve their communications goals, needs and functions.

Entry to Market Strategies

Upon establishing the customer and business model start-ups must understand how to effectively gain entry into the target market in order to commence revenue generations. There are a variety of ways in which a company can enter a market. There will be a number of factors that will influence the choice of strategy, including, but not limited to, tariff rates, the degree of adaptation of the product required, marketing and transportation costs. While these factors may well increase costs it should always present and opportunity for the increase in sales to offset these costs.