CRITERIA FOR STIMULATING, DYNAMIZING AND SELECTING SMART AGRIFOOD PROJECTS

Startup Europe Smart Agrifood Summit Working Paper

Envisioning a journey for an entrepreneurial project

Before we start, we have to realise that all entrepreneurs dream of destiny and of their project. They think deeply about why they want to do it - and with whom. Travelling for rest and relaxation is completely different from setting out on a journey to experience the adventure of exploring an endless number of possibilities.

To plan this journey out properly, though, means we have to define - pretty much explicitly - why we are doing it and what our aims are. And of course, the key factors in this process are the resources we have at our disposal, the budget available, and the people we can ask for help or advice.

Once we have these components in place, we start to move. We plan the route, visits, and activities, and then we launch our project. And upon our return - consciously or unconsciously - we make an assessment. We go over how it went and what mistakes we made. And by doing that, we start to learn. But what makes for a good journey? What will we alter next time and what will keep the same?

Each day we have to deal with planning our own personal projects, big and small - a trip, choice of a job, organizing our day. Developing the skills to create new ideas and planning projects – that is an innovation project
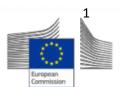
Project Selection Process

Our intention is to work with an open mind about each team's ability to develop a project as part of the move towards our goal of gradually building up an entrepreneurial ecosystem for AgriFood.

Projects in any of the following areas could be chosen:

1. Agriculture
2. Livestock
3. Fishing
4. Food and Catering
5. Agrifood distribution
6. Circular Economy

7. Blockchain
8. Agri-food hardware and software
9. Artificial intelligence applied to agriculture
10. Beekeeping
11. Sensor Systems
12. IoT
13. Food sales and distribution.
14. The shared economy.
15. Young Farmers
16. Agrifood in Africa and Latin America
17. Others

One of the challenges we face in creating an innovation ecosystem is how to choose from the different ideas that emerge during the innovation process itself. Which ideas do you choose? Which ideas do you start prototyping? How do you put it into operation? How do you make your project viable? Do you already have a minimum viable product? Or, even better, you already have a project that's doing very well, and some clients, but now you want to develop it further to win a larger market. This is the event for you. Get your project ready.

Leading the innovation process requires the team to develop a lot of ideas (both good *and* bad) and blend them creatively.

How is one project rather than another chosen? - Criteria

The following are some of the criteria that you should think about in submitting your project for assessment by a panel of judges and investors - all of whom, let us not forget, are your ultimate target audience.

<u>1.</u> Clarity

Choose an idea that makes the fewest assumptions. By choosing an idea with the least amount of unknowns, you can guard against [unpleasant] surprises and disasters.

Of course, the simplest solution may not be the most ambitious. Leaders who promote innovation will not always take the well-beaten track; but neither, on the other hand, will they ever be without their own, very clear, road map. This is a crucial distinction.

<u>2.</u> Usability

Does the project meet a practical need? Is it useful? In other words, does it solve a particular problem or meet a specific market need? If it does, is it likely that the idea will find a niche market? The practicality, usability and marketability of an idea are crucial.

3. Stability

Is it a niche market project that meets a single unique need or a customer requirement? Will the project have some stability on the market over the long term? Or is it just a passing fad? Ideas that become obsolete even before they go to market are ideas that should be chosen with extreme caution. It is vital to see whether the idea may become obsolete due to the impact, for example, of technology.

4. Scalability

It is important for a model to be tested in prototype as part of the project. A power point presentation on its own is just not good enough. And then, can the prototype be scaled up? Can it be consistently duplicated, meet continuous standards and be replicated so that it can be produced again and again without being constantly reinvented or adjusted?

5. Stickiness

Could this project turn into a habit or a trend? 'Stickiness' is often defined from the utilitarian point of view (i.e. based on its usability), but a product's rigidity can also define its emotional appeal. Is the project or prototype capable of bringing a product to market that, in the long term, will be driven by the customer's belief that they need it?

6. Integration

Does this idea completely integrate with the organization's strategy? Ideas and prototypes are often wonderful in themselves, but if they are outliers in terms of organizational strategy, they may not receive the organizational support necessary to keep the initiative viable – and they will wither and fade away. Great ideas and usable prototypes must integrate, or be capable of integrating, with the organization's overall strategy and business model. It has to fit into a logical process leading right up to the point of sale.
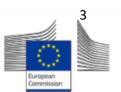
7. Profitability

Profitability, though by no means everything, is still key. This is usually what everyone focuses on. Competing projects are always ranked according to their perceived earning potential, but the choice is not always clear-cut. It is the innovation leader's specific role to focus on not just a project's marketing potential and monetization opportunities, but also on the other factors mentioned above.

8.- Business model

It is essential to have a well-designed business model for the project or the startup. It must
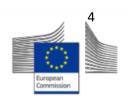
have a coherent plan that directly reaches either a well-researched market by addressing its needs, or a niche vertical which it is about to exploit. And that is why it is really valuable to find

out about existing competition in the market model that is being considered. The level, targeting and timeframe of investments required to develop the model must be well defined. A table showing the investments and the income generated from them is absolutely essential. Demonstrating positive EBITDA with high profit levels over a 4-year time-horizon is another of the essential items.

9. The project team

Quite often, the teams working on the project lack even the most basic qualifications to function properly. Roles and responsibilities are not properly defined in terms either of professional qualifications or the startup's support needs. This in particular is a key aspect for all investors, because it is a critical factor in the development of the startup and its growth. Clearly defined roles are therefore needed: Project manager (CEO), finance manager (CFO), a marketing manager (CMO) and a technology manager (CTO). No one person can 'do it all'. So, roles and responsibilities should be assigned according to each member of the team's main specialization. Small teams mean limited effectiveness. An individual work is far away from a successful project. To search partners and partnerships is the road to success.

10.- Overall evaluation of the project

Choosing a project often means making difficult decisions, and innovation leaders must constantly evaluate which idea or prototype to choose in order to move forward. Every time we make a decision, we take the risk that they fail and that we miss others that would succeed. No matter how much data has been accumulated or how much research has been done, something will always be lost. The important thing is that we produce a detailed rationale. We must be able to make it clear to everyone why we are choosing one project over another.
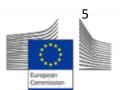
CONDITIONS

Participants

Those responsible for the startups/projects can be anybody of any adult age who is dedicated to the project, wishes to participate in the Contest, and complies with these terms and conditions.

Each team must be composed of 3, 4, or 5 people and must appoint a representative to explain the project at the Elevator Pitch presentations.

The teams must explain the Project's development themselves in person while physically present in the area provided for this purpose. During the Elevator Pitch function, teams and their members, as well as investors or companions, may remain in the room.

The Startup Europe Smart Agrifood Summit organization may reject any Project submitted which does not comply with any part of these Conditions.

Presentations

Presentations are to be made by those responsible for the projects. The organization must be informed more than 15 days before the event which person will make the Elevator Pitch.

The organization will create and publish on the web the public list of the projects/startups that have been chosen by a group of experts from the INTEC Foundation and the event's Advisory Board. This will help the judges, entrepreneurs, investors, attendees, as well as the bloggers/journalists, who are covering the event for publicity.

Presentations should be as simple as possible. They will be made in English with the help of slides/additional audiovisual material. These must be delivered to the organization 7 days before the event (deadline 14 June) to the event's official email address.

The public presentation at the Elevator Pitch will have a maximum duration of 5 minutes per team (including support material) - that is 300 seconds which cannot be extended. The jury and the organizers will have a watch to continuously keep track of the time used and/or remaining.

The organization will have a play-list of presentations. These will be organized by drawing lots by the surname of the person presenting the project or the startup.
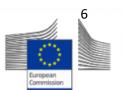
Each member of the jury will be provided with a Teaser/File for each project, and a spreadsheet with the criteria and scoring areas (blank) to assist them in their work.

Elevator Pitch Judges

The judges will be experts in the subject-matter areas covered by the event. Judges must have a mainly technical background or knowledge of the relevant subject-matter area (AgriTech, Food Tech, Technologists, Investors, etc.). The judges have been selected on the criteria of technical expertise and membership of the event's Advisory Committee. The judges will have a place available for them in front of the exhibition stage so that they have a good view of the exhibition's proceedings.

Judge's interaction with the team

The judges will be able to interact with all the teams for a few minutes after the presentations. The judges will ask appropriate questions so as to ensure that the proceedings are constructive for the entrepreneurs.

Presentation Support Staff

Technical support staff will be on hand to help participants set up their demos quickly and avoid problems with the projector.

Projector and connector information

Participants must be aware of the projector's input ports in advance. This technical information will be mailed to you to ensure that you have the appropriate adapter.

Information on projector resolution, contrast, etc. will also be provided to participants and speakers prior to the event.
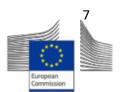
THE AWARDS

The 30 Startups selected for the elevator Pitch have access to a prize valued at $ 12,000 annually sponsored by the program "**Startups with IBM**"[1]**.**

Five prizes will be awarded and there will be one prize per team. The awards will be announced beforehand on the event's website. The prizes will consist of a range of resources for the startups (accommodation for their operations and domicile, cloud space, connectivity, mentoring by the European Foundation for Innovation, and a diploma of accreditation.)

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[1] **"Startup with IBM"** Startup with IMB is the program which afford the startups access to the use of technology about IMB Cloud valued in $ 12,000 per year (Builder level) and until $ 120,000 (Premium level) for high growth startups. The program provides access to Cloud infrastructure, Datas, IoT, Blockchain and artificial intelligence technology with Watson among many other services, as well as access to IBM experts.

The sponsoring companies in the event may also award prizes to the startups and the Organization will announce them beforehand the event.

Prizes will be as follow:

1. Award for best Startup
2. Award for the most innovative Startup
3. Award for the Startup with the most scalability in the market
4. Award for the Startup which contemplates social responsibility on gender equality issues
5. Award for the Startup with the best technological solution

Any of the prizes may be declared void by the judges
The judges 'decision will be final and not subject to appeal

Each Startup previously chosen and participating in the Elevator Pitch will be included in a digital publication that will be delivered to investors and sponsoring companies participating in the event.

IBM will award the follow prizes through his program "Startup with IBM":
- Builder level: use of IBM Cloud technology valued at $ 12,000 annual for the 30 finalist Startups
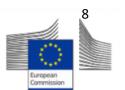- Premium Level: use of IBM Cloud technology valued at $ 120,000 annual for the 5 winning Startups

(*) In all these cases, it must be fulfilled the requirements of "Startup with IBM", that you can find in the follow link: https://developer.ibm.com/startups/startups-faq/

IBM will offer to the Startups a personalized support, consisting of:

1.- "Startup with IBM" program access, according to the terms and conditions of it, and what it offers the following benefits: use of IBM Cloud´s services during one year, valued in $ 12,000, which included the following benefits:

- IaaS & PaaS of IBM Cloud´s services
- Bare Metal, Virtual and Hybrid servers in Cloud
- CPUs, bandwidth, storage, etc
- Watson APIs included in IBM Cloud
- Performance management in IBM Cloud

The services cannot be transferred and will be exclusively for use by the startup. The available services can be consulted in the catalogue: https://cloud.ibm.com/catalog (The program is applicable to everything that is marked as "IBM", what is marked as 'Third Party' is contracted and invoiced separately)

In any case, the terms and conditions of the Startup with IBM program will apply (https://developer.ibm.com/startups), and the start-ups must achieve the following eligibility criteria or as defined by the program if it changes;

* Be constituted within 5 years immediately prior to your request for access

* Income in the 12 months immediately prior to the request must be less than $1,000.000

* Not have been a commercial customer of IBM of any of the Cloud Services included in the program before.

2.- Technological support and accompaniment to those startups that are interested in IBM Cloud technology.

3.- Each winner of the 5 categories will be offered access to the Premium level of the program, which gives access to credits worth $ 120,000 during one year (as long as they achieve he requirements of the program).

Intellectual property

The intellectual property rights of the projects produced at the event belong to the participants, not to the organizers, sponsors or partners.

If any of the projects/start-ups are of interest to the organizers and sponsors, the participants and authors of the project will have access to full financial and technical support facilities for the development of the project, if they so wish.

Finally, please remember to enjoy yourselves! Make sure you have a great time!

If participants follow all these guidelines, prepare ahead of time, and get enough rest before the big day, you can maximize your chances of having an event that is not only a success, but fun and enjoyable as well.