



On Entering the Startup Scene

Being a Team Building Pro

Understanding Cross-Border Doing

On Maintaining Wellbeing while Venturing

A Student's Manual for Kymenlaakso Region's
Expanding Entrepreneurial Activities

A Student's Manual to Entrepreneurial Activities



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THE INTRODUCTION:

For the Reader

WELCOME TO THE NEW ERA OF THE STUDENT DRIVEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP!

A MANUAL. This is a student's manual for entrepreneurial activities. We have collected some guidance and useful tips on how to navigate across different entrepreneurial environments – whether you are ambitious or simply testing the student entrepreneurship waters.

THE AIM. This manual concentrates on forming the supporting startup culture, equity and courage in participating to various events – from recreational to hackathons and bootcamps. We want to highlight that entrepreneurship can also be seen as a mindset. We strongly believe that the chapter's learnings are some good reading even if it's not a current career move of yours.

THE CONTEXT. This manual belongs to a bigger context of project called Startup Connect. On the larger scale the project will support startup entrepreneurship and SME cooperation and eventually to form "a community of active and motivated business leaders with ambitions and capacities for global success". This manual serves the students, the young generation as the future power of our regions. Our manual shares tried-out tips and thus helps in avoiding some common pitfalls. This manual's one topic of community building is vastly based on research of a Xamk international business graduate. Adams Kerosi. He has examined the benefits in cross-collaborations with strong interest in casual, club-form entrepreneurial activities.

THE STRUCTURE. The first three chapters de-mystifies student entrepreneurship and equips you with ideation skills and reminds of the importance of maintaining wellbeing. Last two chapters is for further reading. It presents the benefits of career growth and personal branding. The manual ends with a chapter that takes one step ahead and introduces us cross-border doing – a possible, future way of working. Briefly, through the cross-border student entrepreneurship communities, clubs and joint programme, we are about to break physical barriers between Finland and Russia.

OUR FUTURE IS INTERNATIONAL. This manual actively brings students together. By this manual we want to encourage YOU to take part in the various startup events in a supporting and authentically international atmosphere. With joint effort we're taking the steps towards a fully functional Kymenlaakso Startup Ecosystem of joint opportunities within business and innovation.

Join the experience!

Team Startup Connect members and the authors of the Student's Manual to cross-border communities & entrepreneurial up-skill: Adams Kerosi, Anu Ivanoff, Minna Lehesvuori & Laura Häkkinen.

In Kouvola April 13th, 2021.

This manual is created with the support of Startup Connect project and with supplementary insights from local entrepreneurial players: *ship Startup Festival and Patteri Entrepreneurship Society (Patteri). Startup Connect is a project executed by the following consortium: Cursor - Kotka-Hamina Regional Development Company (FIN) (Lead partner), ITMO University (RUS), XAMK - South-East Finland University of Applied Sciences (FIN), St. Petersburg Foundation for Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Development (RUS).



HOW TO UTILISE THE STUDENT'S MANUAL?

This is a student's manual for entrepreneurial activities. We have collected some guidance and useful tips on how to navigate across different entrepreneurial environments – whether you are ambitious or simply testing the student entrepreneurship waters. And just like any other journey you may engage in; having some background understanding of what student entrepreneurship entails, becomes practical. The student's manual will give you useful insights but also unveil the expanding Kymenlaakso startup ecosystem.

So, the basics are required—the ABCs—starting with the student entrepreneurship path, ideation, team formation and your wellbeing. A top of that we encourage in widening your existing networks that will enable you to successfully bootstrap your business idea or concept to viability and gain traction. Something that ultimately could lead into successful commercialisation. Therefore, it is worth noting that the contents shared are not a complete solution to success. Instead, it will highlight some key aspects and elements that are of significance particularly to student entrepreneurship and startup team's development in general and to arouse the entrepreneurial spirit. We find those sometimes oft-repeated aspects worth to be **enriched with the internationalisation and networking aspect.**

The possible entrepreneurial path is always unique, and we want to motivate and ease the kick-start of your entrepreneurial journey. The manual enlists and describes those local support services that are dedicated in helping and transforming your innovative idea into a viable startup. For student startup teams there are quite a few student-driven startup pitching events in Kymenlaakso region. Not to mention the annual *ship Startup Festival that has been a fertile ground for teams to pitch their ideas. The confidence alluded is critical especially if you end up pursuing entrepreneurship at a later stage as you will become more conversant while negotiating with investors while seeking for seed-funding.

Based on multiple interviews with mentors, student entrepreneurs and leaders, a considerable sense of ownership and independence is needed. This means trusting your instincts – the ability to make your own decisions. While formal employment is preferable by the majority owing to some sort of security, being self-employed offers greater sense of personal satisfaction. This means the chance of tailoring your career and mastering the preferred field of expertise. Entrepreneurship is also about finding a personal balance between exploring the unknown paths and minimising risks. Curiosity, self-discipline and commitment are great in-born assets. It is possible to combine these traits with some training: courses or casual info sessions upon your interest to unleash the individual's or you start-up team's full potential. Sometimes the missing piece of information or inspiration may have surprising effect in boosting your journey. What comes to the ability of tolerating risks, many startups in general are known to be built under risky conditions in the first place. High uncertainties call for **an ability to work under both emotional pressure and modest resources.**

Because risk-taking is not the most usual move for many prospective student entrepreneurs, the Finnish Kymenlaakso region's entrepreneurship ecosystem will offer considerable support to student entrepreneurs to manage or deal with these entrepreneurial risks. It is an agile combination of entrepreneurial support services consisting of actors with deep understanding and knowledge of the support levels for startups and entrepreneurs in general. In addition, Patteri will give support to cushion you from such uncertainties. Also stay tuned for X-lab (Kotka) and Space 006 (Kouvola) being spaces where students can meet, team up, share learnings, experiences and develop their entrepreneurial and creative ideas.

CHAPTER ONE:

The Student's Path to Entrepreneurship

THE STUDENT'S PATH TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP

1.1. Some General Notes on Student Entrepreneurship

Ever thought as a student of walking the path of entrepreneurship? How possible is it that you can be an entrepreneur or engaging in related activities while simultaneously pursuing your studies? Some may argue that coupling the entrepreneurial spirit with studies is like trying to hit two birds with one stone or scaling the stairs while chewing gum; mindful not to bite your tongue. When you imagine the pathway to entrepreneurship as a student, it is also highly likely that you may look at it in a more linear angle: in that, you focus on your current studies and upon graduating you get actively engaged in entrepreneurial activities, right? Well, this should not be the case. Your orientation path to entrepreneurship as a student is winding and at times could be said to be accidental.

Where does a foreign international student start his or her entrepreneurial journey in Finland and how does it look like? Well, first things first. To qualify and study in Finland, one needs to meet the Finnish Immigration Service's (MIGRI) requisites. Adams Kerosi, an expert in cross-border community student startup activities and former MBA student from Xamk explains: "Generally, if you are from a none-EU country in terms of nationality, you are not entitled to free education. Hence, you need to have sufficient funds. On average, Finnish institutions charge between € 6,000-8,000 per academic year. However, this figure will be higher if you are a self-sponsored doctoral student. Further, you are required to have additional funds in your account equivalent of € 7,000 regarded as sufficient for your annual upkeep. The next step is to search for the institution (university) based on your course/study/degree preference and eligibility. Thereafter you will have to apply, sit for the entry examinations, pass the exams and get the admission letter. It is upon receiving the admission letter that you can proceed and begin the application process via the digital immigration portal services and apply for a residence permit based on a study. This permit is valid for a period of one year, after which you are required to renew upon fulfilling the initial requirements".

What next? To get started, upon joining the university, you can register to be a member of a student-based entrepreneurship society, join a startup team or apply to be an intern in any of the entrepreneurship activities that are student-run. However, worth noting is that you have to be pro-active. Some may say that you need an indomitable entrepreneurial spirit. Pro-activity is what will enable you acquire key networks that will be beneficial to you as an entrepreneur. The peer networks will help you learn tricks on how to navigate the startup world. Additionally, you will most likely learn how to ideate and pitch your idea. On matters such as development of a business plan, incorporation of your startup and so on, there are several regional actors who are part of the regional as well as the cross-border startup support infrastructure. All you need to do is ask for help. Remember to always nurture relationships through the networks developed, without which you will likely face hiccups. How hard or difficult is it to start your own startup and establish yourself as an entrepreneur? This can be simplified through regional development agencies and other regional development actors. Do I need to have a Finnish partner to register as an entrepreneur? No. However, as a foreigner, being part of a startup team, it is more beneficial to have a local partner who is conversant of the local landscape and may possibly help in overcoming cultural barriers such as language.

The illustration on next page depicts the journey of a student towards entrepreneurship. Just as life is a journey and not a destination, so is entrepreneurship. There will most certainly be ups and downs, but that should not dampen your resolve of engaging and becoming an entrepreneur. When you fail at something, heed the lessons, gather yourself and press on. That's the spirit of entrepreneurial resilience. What we are implying is that you should be willing, bold and courageous enough to at least take a chance of investing in your own ideas and abilities in an entrepreneurial way. Your first contact point as a prospective student entrepreneur is very critical. Why? Because this may largely shape your opinion and interest as well as attitude. In the Kymenlaakso Region, Xamk, being the only institution of higher education, by default has the largest pool of students. You are among the large pool of Xamk students, and you also do agree that there is quite an array of courses the university offers. However, despite all that is on offer, not all the courses equip students with the requisite entrepreneurship skills. But, if you are entrepreneurial enough, irrespective of whatever course you study there is always an entrepreneurial path. Look at it from a different perspective, in that, it may as well be that your course you are studying provides you with skills that are (or) could be lacking in a certain startup team, and that is how you may end up being part of it.

See next page on student entrepreneurship and initiative friendly services with a fresh approach. The re-formulation and re-thinking is part of an EU funded project – Kymenlaakso Startup Ecosystem.

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT SERVICES RE-DESIGNED

Students need entrepreneurial services that both embrace the freedom of selection and have a structure that truly serves **the innovation-curious minds**.

The entrepreneurial zones of activities are designed to be approached as one loose path or alternatively, one may choose services upon one's own need. Note that the pre-services are mainly designed for international students at this very stage. The Zone Thinking has its origin at Patteri and it is further approached at projects Kymenlaakso Startup Ecosystem and now via Startup Connect student manual.

Feedback loop and giving back. All learnings and connections are to be shared as much as possible. Peer-2-Peer learning is highly recommended for revealing success stories and insider tips.

The entrepreneurial support services per zone:



Infographics (above). Team Kymenlaakso Startup Ecosystem:

Lehesvuori - Ivanoff - Nieminen - Rouhiainen - Häkkinen - Lehtonen - Iangaliev (2020).

Conceptualisation & Illustration: Ivanoff, A (2021).

Zone One: PRE-SERVICES

- **"Orientational services and support"**.
- Evaluating the **personal finances** regarding the studies.
- Evaluating the **course selection** at the desired department.
- Evaluating the suitability of campus' **location**.
- Going through the **admission criteria** & plan to succeed at entrance exam (possible IELTS/ SATS separately).
Applying for residence permit and for taking **entrance tests**.
- Accepting the studying place, paying the **fees**. Gathering and translating all the possible documents required for **resident permit**.
- **Booking transportation** and arriving to Finland.

Zone Two: EVENTS & UP-SKILL

- **"Just being curious"**.
- **Taking academic courses**.
- **Visiting meetups**.
- **Attending entrepreneurship club meetings** (Cross-border activities organised by both Kymenlaakso and St. Petersburg areas' ES enthusiasts).

Zone Three: INNOVATION SERVICES

- **"Hands on and getting started"**.
- **Ideation** (Business idea pursued by you or together as a team).
- Participating **bootcamps & competitions**.
- **Research Centers & Institutes** (additional expertise & business intelligence).

Zone Four: TESTING & PROTOTYPING

- **"Building and testing"**.
- **Getting legal advice**.
- **Starting to prototype**.
- **Mentor round** (insights and support at building & testing phase).

Zone Five: GROWTH & INTERNATIONALISATION

- **"Launching and scaling"**.
- Joining **accelerator** or **incubator** programme.
- **Finding a possible co-working space**.
- **Commercialisation & tech transfer**.
- **Hiring staff**.
- Capital round 1 (**series A**).
- Capital round 2 (**seed money**).

Zone Six: AFTER SERVICE

- **"Keeping in touch"**.
- Future service improving **student-centred initiatives** locally, nationally and cross-border.
- **Strengthening Alumnae Networks**.

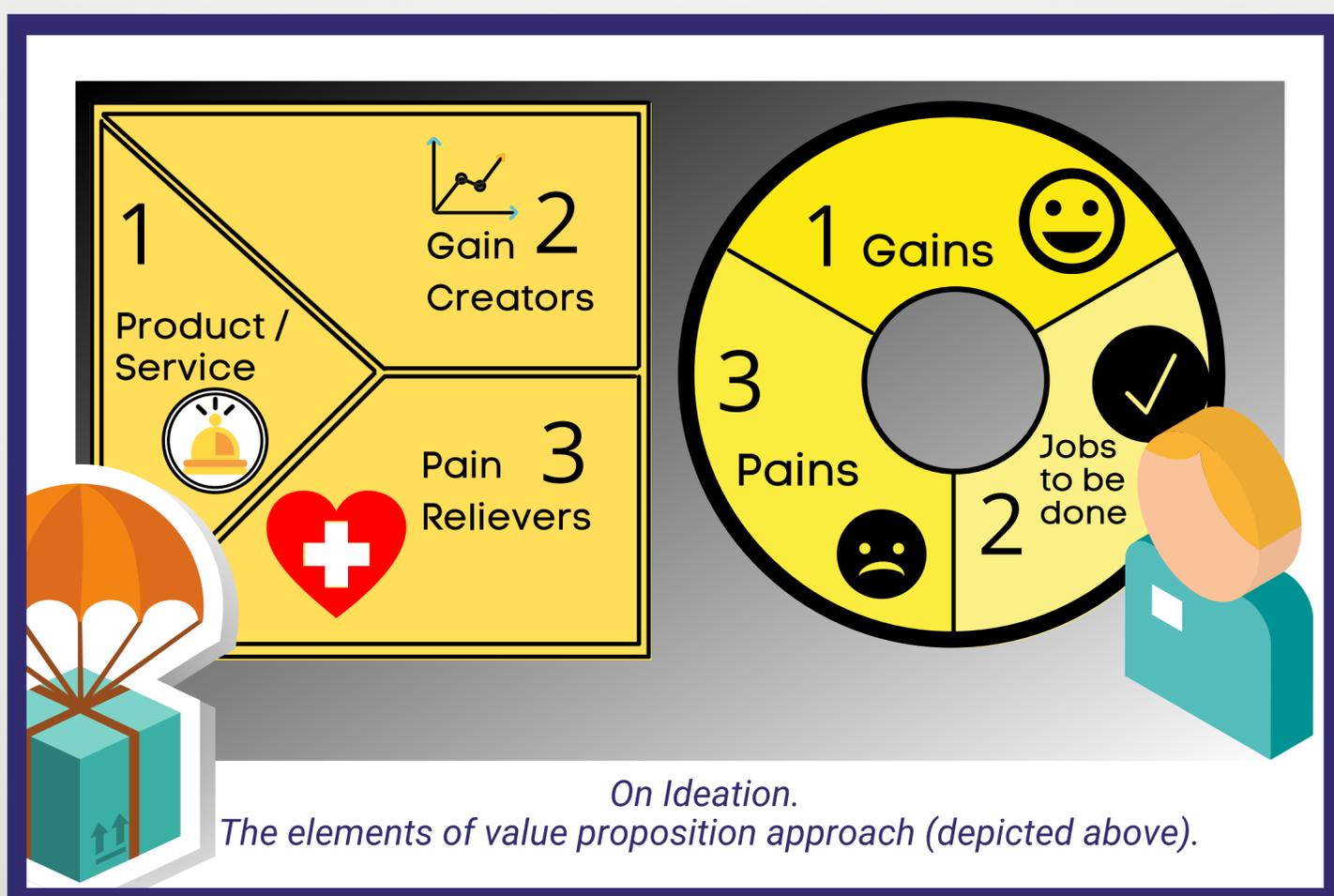
Have a glance at the depicted path of possibilities that the student entrepreneurship societies and clubs want to develop and cherish. (See the previous page). What does this mean to you as a student? As freshmen students, bear in mind that time is some sort of competitive advantage especially when schooling, try not to lose it. Test the entrepreneurial waters while still a student. Let entrepreneurship define your present as well as your future. This then begs the question, how? Upon joining campus – in your first or at the very least second year – it would be worth it if you considered engaging in a pass time activity that may be beneficial to you at a later stage in life. As a student, be on the lookout for entrepreneurship-related activities and initiatives regionally. Any time you come across or become aware of activities such as bootcamps, innovation camps, hackathons, startup pitching events, workshops, motivational talks such as lectures, go and spare you time and have a look.

These activities present plenty of opportunities for students interested in entrepreneurship. You will likely draw inspiration, tools and knowledge on entrepreneurship. It is highly likely that through such activities, you will likely get ideas, meet like-minded individuals, get co-opted into a startup team, meet mentors and coaches as well as expanding your own personal networks that may come in handy later in life. Joining a student entrepreneurship society will thus be the best bet since as a student you are likely to learn critical entrepreneurial skills and gain new networks and contacts, not to mention the fact that there is the possibility of it becoming a launching pad for your innovative idea. Go ahead and kick-start your entrepreneurial journey!

For instance, Patteri as a student-driven organisation has been playing an agile role in energising the home base – the student entrepreneurs. This is being done by providing a platform for student entrepreneurs to test their entrepreneurial ideas. Students eagerly learning the tips and tricks will build on the positive entrepreneurial attitude of students to discover present and future talent. Further, through the various events organised yearly, participating student entrepreneurs are exposed to and to get insights on how to navigate through the dynamic startup world. Within four years, which is typically a student’s study period no matter what course you pursue, there is always a path, and so, make the most of it by being a part of the entrepreneurship community.

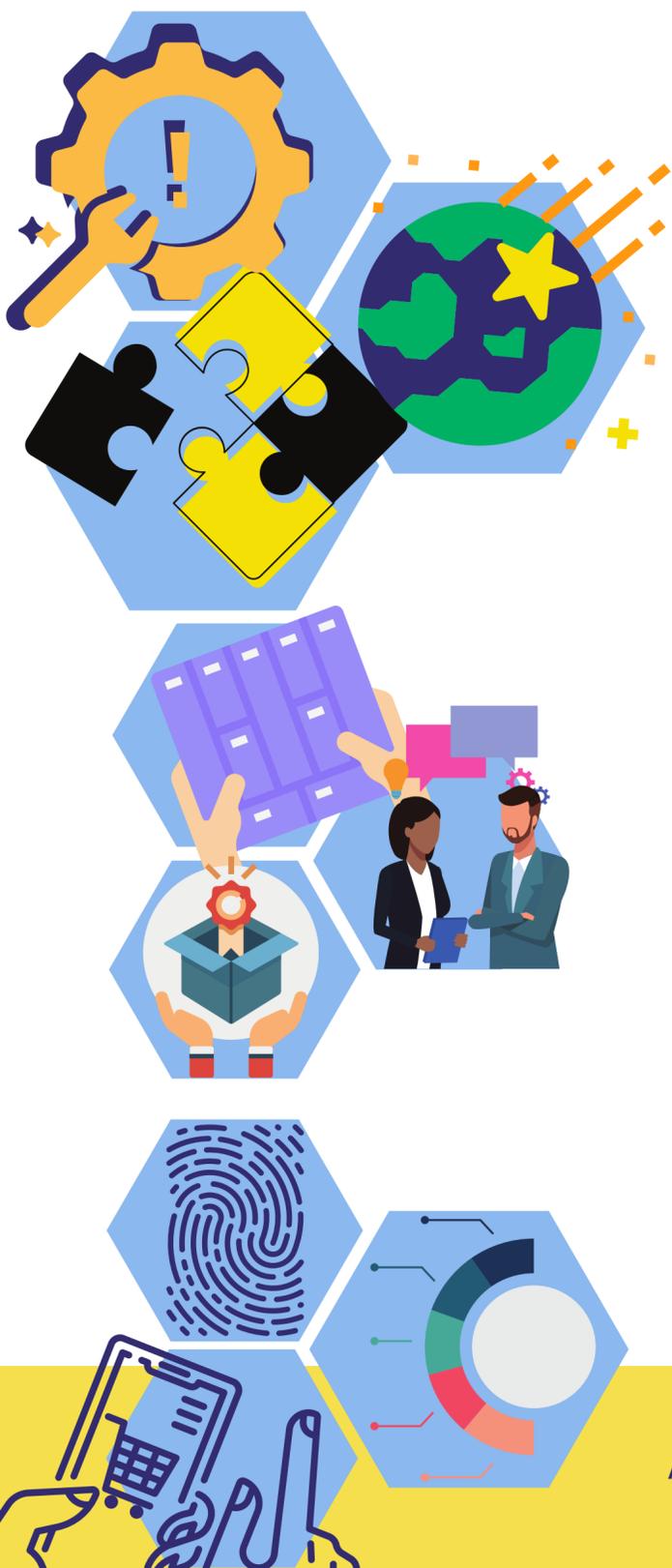
1.2. Ideation Skills: From Idea to Action

This is an out-of-the-box-thinking of how to ideate. As a student, and with little or no hands-on experience in entrepreneurship, it will be worth noting that entrepreneurial ideas are simply basic & good ideas; derived from the environment we live in, or things & places we interact with, and, even often, from conversations we engage in our day-to-day life. These are the low-hanging fruits, so to speak. Take for instance, an opportunity may come forth from things or situations that are perceived as problematic – or, by looking around you will realise a societal challenge. By solving it innovatively, you're closer to an entrepreneurial opportunity and eventually, a possible business idea. Even better off; ideas in response to the emerging environmental challenges - think carbon neutral & circular economies, for instance. Aim in understanding the basics in all things technological and future consumer trends. Therefore, as an entrepreneur & innovator, look for a need and supply to that need. To reap the benefits and thrive as an entrepreneur, you must understand that it is all about solving societal problems by providing solutions to existing needs.



But where do the valid ideas come from? Some entrepreneurial ideas start off as fun activities that you engage in with your peers through club activities. But as time goes by, they gain traction and suddenly it strikes you that it can present an entrepreneurial opportunity. All you need to do is swing the pendulum. In entrepreneurship you need to remember that fear and self-doubt should not be your sin – these two alone are known to kill more dreams than failure alone. The notion that entrepreneurial ideas are, or have to be, an equivalent of what comes from Silicon Valley is far-fetched. However, for you to have an entrepreneurial idea, you as well have to be curious and creative. To some these are innate attributes, but still they can be developed and nurtured through peer learning and being with creatives. Remember that with all the innovations witnessed, creativity is at the core. It does not have to be a killer idea, but as time goes by and you indulge with your team members, it evolves and there comes more clarity.

It is incremental – a step-by-step growth – until it becomes clear in terms of the offering and the novelty of the entrepreneurial idea. Typically, we highly recommend adopting the most used approach of; identify a problem that presents an entrepreneurial opportunity, show how the idea will solve the problem i.e., the solution and lastly what is the societal impact. Refining your team’s entrepreneurial/innovative idea may require some elements of entrepreneurship studies such as the business canvas model. With the help of mentors and coaches, you will be able to identify what the unique selling proposition of your idea is, as well as what you are offering. Further, dotting your i’s and crossing your t’s for your idea entails; why would someone want your product/service? Who is your target group or market? How will they access/reach what you are offering? If you have and can provide the answers to these questions, then you are well on course to realizing your entrepreneurial dream. Alternatively, joining a student-based entrepreneurship society – in this case, Patteri – may offer help in terms of guidelines for developing your entrepreneurial idea to the extent of testing its viability. Regionally, there are quite a few players who organize ideation bootcamps and workshops. Cases in point are regional development agencies and educational institutions including Xamk and its Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) activities. The next step is to develop a proper business model. This will help show how you will generate revenue. Lastly, to the bigger picture, is the growth projection i.e., 2–5-years’ projection. To cap it off, upon successfully developing your idea, there is need to patent it lock, stock and barrel. Remember, today intellectual property is very critical.



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But where do the valid ideas come from? Some entrepreneurial ideas start off as fun activities that you engage in with your peers through club activities. But as time goes by, they gain traction and suddenly it strikes you that it can present an entrepreneurial opportunity. All you need to do is swing the pendulum. In entrepreneurship you need to remember that fear and self-doubt should not be your sin – these two alone are known to kill more dreams than failure alone. The notion that entrepreneurial ideas are, or have to be, an equivalent of what comes from Silicon Valley is far-fetched. However, for you to have an entrepreneurial idea, you as well have to be curious and creative. To some these are innate attributes, but still they can be developed and nurtured through peer learning and being with creatives. Remember that with all the innovations witnessed, creativity is at the core. It does not have to be a killer idea, but as time goes by and you indulge with your team members, it evolves and there comes more clarity.

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1.3. Pro-activity – On Pursuing Your Business Idea

For a moment, just close your eyes and immerse yourself into thinking for a couple of minutes. What random ideas crossed your mind, and you may want to try them out? Or which idea have you been itching to share or try? What prompted or triggered you to think that the idea is worth pursuing? Here is a typical path on how to proceed and pursue with the spark of a business idea.

What is pro-activity in-relation to entrepreneurship? Pro-activity has quite a few components. Breaking it down as lay-man, this entails; taking initiative, being actively involved in entrepreneurship-related activities and initiatives: it is all about living the moment of the entrepreneurship hype by being self-motivated and action-oriented. For a moment, just think, if there was an event like a hackathon or a boot camp, a startup pitching event or a keynote speech, and students are asked to volunteer to organise or take part, would you? Or alternatively, is there a role that you could play or contribute towards such activities? Your participation and involvement could as well be hinged on other issues such as personal commitments, but at least if you consider a probable yes, then you are proactive. To be quite frank, it does not really matter whether you are a student or not, but some observe that people who are proactive in life tend to achieve significant success. We are living at a time when rarely you would expect things offered on a silver platter, you must be a go-getter and, in this way, you will maximise your potential to meet opportunities and being on the lookout for new ones. As a student, therefore, pro-activity or being pro-active enables you to learn new skills & concepts, sharpen the existing ones, and besides, view things with a different perspective. If you are inspired by all this, then you may want to check out student-based entrepreneurship events and activities happening within the Kymenlaakso region such as the nationally recognised *ship Startup Festival, Startup BOOM, Patteri STAGE and much more.

See next page for a generalised path how to proceed with your possible business idea. The path is depicted through the prism of Patteri, that is a local Entrepreneurship Society. In the future Patteri is strongly leaning towards a twin model of two organisers: both Kymenlaakso and St. Petersburg. Briefly, the ten steps may look pretty easy. As many student entrepreneurs will amply attest, it's a living, consultative process that require patience and commitment. This meaning a delicate balancing act especially while juggling with your studies!

PROCEEDING WITH AN BUSINESS IDEA – A BREAKDOWN:

STEP ONE:

Carefully evaluate your business skills, practical knowledge and specific goals. Do not be afraid to venture into the kind of unknown if you are resolutely determined and motivated enough!

STEP TWO: (Here's a lot of tips!)

Find precisely the business idea that ideally suits you best. More often, entrepreneurs, startup founders attempt to replicate successful innovative ideas before giving much thought into them. In such scenarios, they tweak the innovative ideas strategically by differentiation, develop relatively different core competencies and, with that, bring forth some value, albeit short-lived and dive into the market with a huge supply demand gap. With such an approach, the chances of making through are slim. It is thus incumbent upon the entrepreneur to critically analyse what are the reasons-attributable to the success of other startups, replicate the methods and not the idea. It is important as at this stage to know the societal impact of the business idea as well as an idea of how the idea generates revenue. If there lacks clarity, pivoting can be done at this early stage.

STEP THREE:

Reach out to Patteri, the Entrepreneurship Society and carefully present your novel startup idea.

STEP FOUR:

In close cooperation with Patteri, collaboratively develop a viable business model, and form a startup team.

STEP FIVE:

Methodically, make a stellar business plan with your newly formed team.

STEP SIX:

Voluntarily enlist for an accelerator program or incubator program to further **refine your innovative idea.**

STEP SEVEN:

Diligently seek out helpful **mentors and coaches** through local Patteri networks.

STEP EIGHT:

Pitch your innovative idea and **make your voice heard** at *ship Startup Festival.

STEP NINE: (You're almost there!)

Properly register your startup, open shop and, as they say, **"Rock It!"**

STEP TEN, THE GRAND JUMP. (W.O.W.)

If the need arises for more assistance and inspiration, reach out to Patteri. Through its extensive network, you will likely **get an experienced pair of hands in guiding you in the specific field of entrepreneurship.**

CHAPTER TWO:

The Wellbeing Factor

2.1. THE GENERAL IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING ENTREPRENEUR'S WELL-BEING

Building self-awareness and nurturing mindfulness as a student entrepreneur, mastering the art of flexibility as early as now is an absolute necessity. Why? This is because more often, you will experience situations way below your expectation. As an entrepreneurial student, your performance, productivity and success are all a function of your wellbeing. And so, how could you possibly evaluate your wellbeing. Ask yourself these questions; are you really happy? How satisfied are you with yourself? How much pleasure and anxiety have you been experiencing lately? Are you experiencing some negative emotions as you try to overcome challenges? As stated earlier, for any entrepreneur, irrespective of whether you are a student or not, your own wellbeing is of paramount importance. You have to be as fit as a butcher's dog. By staying fit and healthy more so as a young student, your cognitive abilities sharpen. This is because, entrepreneurship, as appealing as it is and for many reasons with exciting new opportunities, it is also quite daunting, demanding and challenging in the sense that it is a whole new game altogether that is; fast-paced, competitive and lately technology-driven. This may suck a lot of energy from you causing what many refer to as burn-out.

There are—or will be—instances where you face challenges. The question is, how will you manage expectations especially when they are low? Faced with headwinds such as financial risks & losses may pile intense pressure to any entrepreneur, hence the question, are you ready for the long haul? If yes, then, there is the need to at the very least buckle up and muster strength of managing or handling such pressure before taking a toll on your wellbeing. Understanding yourself (self-discovery) in-terms of your strengths and weaknesses forms the core of self-awareness. Get to know and understand yourself inside-out. In this way, you will learn how to manage stress and avoid mental and emotional meltdown. It is based on these understanding that as an entrepreneur you are able to assess your stress limits – at which point if exceeded will negatively impact on your wellbeing. You need to know what you can take and how you react under stress.

2.2. Managing Stress

As stated earlier, becoming an entrepreneur in real life is quite demanding and overwhelming at times, presenting a myriad of complex challenges in an almost relentless pace. It often feels more like a roller coaster ride with ups and downs. The challenges that come with life in general are similar of those in entrepreneurship. But with the entrepreneurship skills that you have, you are better placed to manage such. The entrepreneurial side of business is phenomenal and teaches many how to manage emotions and expectations. The stress managing skills can also be transferable to life, relationships and family. Imagining this as a student entrepreneur, study demands may compound this. Many are the times that as upcoming student entrepreneurs we are – or at least will be – swamped with thoughts of quitting. Juggling both your studies and pursuing entrepreneurship is no mean feat. Thus, to handle such complexities of grappling with the realities of life/work -study balance and be effective in your startup responsibilities requires cultivation of mental and emotional strengths. Mental and emotional strengths are what enables entrepreneurs becomes resilient – you will easily adapt, develop a sense of purpose and consequently leverage on available support. The inability to manage stress in the long run may be detrimental to your startup and may even sound a death knell to your entrepreneurial idea. How often have you been in a situation which makes your head spin or worse; causes you a stomach-churning turbulence? There is something very valuable about going through very stressful, intense, pressure-filled times. Not every day is necessarily enjoyable. To remedy or avert such situations, consider physical fitness because it contributes to clarity of mind and thought.

Your mental wellbeing and overall health as an entrepreneur are dependent on exercise: It is an absolute critical part of your wellbeing. Walk, cycle, swim, take a plunge in the river or lake, run, hit the gym or sauna. In addition, having sufficient rest and sleep, eating well and taking time out for yourself may help dampen down anxiety. What about personal relationships? Yes, this helps a lot. Finding trust-worthy people to confide in is equally helpful—remember that nobody is an island. It is often said that a problem shared is half-solved. Always form a habit of reaching out to people whom you trust. When in the company of trusted people tell a joke, laugh or smile and develop deep friendship. What are the tell-tale signs that your wellbeing is poor? You will likely experience or suffer from mental fog (loss of focus) or general fatigue. What happens when you fail at something, or when your scale and scope of failure is so tremendous, and you get overwhelmed? Would you retreat to some silent space where you can calm down, meditate and reflect? Make it a ritual to find space in your day to let your mind breath, process all the information and give it some time to simmer.

2.3. The Economic Peace of Mind

Getting your priorities right. This is all about knowing and understanding what precedes what and at what point should I pull the plug. In as much as you are pursuing your entrepreneurial endeavours if you have your family, their needs definitely come first. This will provide you with more mental stability when knowing that the most pressing matters have been attended to and as a consequence increases your productivity. When it comes to issues such as financial obligations, always ensure they are well taken care of just as prior to when you began venturing into entrepreneurship. Always have a proper and well-thought through plan. Never commit too much resources to your entrepreneurial idea to the point of getting yourself bankrupt.

2.4. The Power of Mindfulness

This is in relation to being conscious to people around you work – interpersonal relationships. Get to know how your colleagues in your entrepreneurial team are doing and if they seem to be having some troubles, trying to find a solution together. Being an excellent listener is being mindful. Such actions of mindfulness will certainly raise the morale of your entrepreneurial team members consequently making them to be more productive. Also, learn to be grateful for the little things you have accomplished together. This puts you and your team into some kind of positive mindset. Have a knack of thinking before you act and avoid knee-jerk reactions or impulsive reactions. As a rule of thumb, always exercise sound judgement and be measured in temperament. As you strive to actualise your entrepreneurial/startup idea, always remember to encourage and inspire your startup team, that is, if you have one or a member of one: develop a passionate and appealing way of communicating your expectations, startup vision and mission to the team – interpersonal skills are key. This will help in the internalization of the goals and objectives, thus reading from the same script.

2.5. Fall in Love with Failing: How to Optimise after “Failure”

It is enough to say that as an entrepreneur and being a part of a startup team, high uncertainty implies an equal measure of susceptibility to failure. This coupled with the fact that the path to entrepreneurship is littered with obstacles ranging from funding to structural barriers – the so-called bottlenecks or bureaucracy, that are often considered as impediments for entrepreneurs to iterate innovative concepts – just to name a few – implies that failure will be experienced at some point. However, failure can be transformed – or turned around – into a learning process for the team. Not blaming each other when things fall apart but instead adopt forensic reasoning, trying to decipher what worked and what did not. Through conducting fast-cycle after-action reviews, it is easy to identify problems or avert imminent and repeat failures.

As a startup team, failure should neither diminish nor invalidate your ambitions, dreams and innovative ideas. The team should embrace a never give up -approach. A positive attitude as an entrepreneur will equally play a role on how you optimise failure. Viewing the glass as half full as opposed to half empty is what positivity is all about. In a nutshell, failure should present the startup team with an opportunity to get back to the drawing board, compelling them to re-trace, re-engineer and re-focus their entrepreneurial concept/innovative idea. Lastly, always remember that a failure can be transformed into a learning process for the team.

A so called failure can be transformed – or turned around into a learning process for the whole team.

CHAPTER THREE:

On Teamwork Rules & Some Common Goals

3.1. A GREAT TEAM – THE SOLID FOUNDATION FOR ALL THINGS INNOVATIVE

A majority of us may assume that because the entrepreneurial idea is mine, then I can go it alone and there is no need to be part of or have a team. You may ask why it's a must being part of a student startup team. Well, the call is yours to make but the risks and perils of establishing a startup without a cohesive and well-oiled team are many and this may end up stalling your progress or might contribute to your startup/entrepreneurial concept not taking off. Most importantly though a startup team constitutes complimentary competencies and character traits that are deemed critical in entrepreneurship. The members add to the voice of reason in decision making. Having a positive mindset is a vital quality ingredient for an entrepreneur. A positive mindset will often come into play when, despite the odds, one can still push on. In a team set up the individual members should be able to demonstrate optimism in all situations and boost each other. Typically, all entrepreneurs start at least with some kind of passing idea; it does not necessarily require a masterstroke of ingenuity. With the simplest entrepreneurial idea, however raw it may sound or appear, seeking like-minded team members may well be the first step of enriching and polishing that idea. And with each passing day will always be a learning curve. Note, that with the right team and proper execution of an entrepreneurial idea, it is quite possible to make gold out of rubbish.

So, as a student harbouring entrepreneurial ambitions, and you have an idea, consider forming a startup team to enrich and polish the idea. And by a team, we are not necessarily implying an upwards of four members, two members can equally form a team. However, the size of the team is more often informed by the need as determined by skills that are lacking thereof in the startup team. Simply put – working as a startup team it becomes relatively easy to refine an idea complete with a business model. Remember also that teamwork as a concept is all about sharing success as well as failures. However, for the team to be a high performance/functioning one, the goals have to be aligned and the skillsets must be diverse. The technicalities of innovative business modelling may require help from mentors, coaches or any other knowledgeable actors within the entrepreneurship ecosystem, which the Kymenlaakso region has quite a huge reservoir. The recently launched Business Café, for example, provides a catalogue of the relevant information, networks and contacts that you may require as an entrepreneur. Remember that at this stage you don't have to have a business yet, but possibly may qualify as an early stage startup because the idea has not been put to test yet. Next is experimentation/testing, some bit of science to prove the hypothesis and possibly developing a prototype or a minimum viable product. Adopting a proven framework may present a better way of validating your entrepreneurial concept.

For those of you who are or were in the Scout movement, you must be familiar with the mantra "be adequately prepared". We find this very true in entrepreneurship and it actually holds a lot of weight. A student entrepreneur should not ignore this wise dictum when carefully making adequate plans for establishing a successful startup team. Successful startups that have evolved into big businesses/enterprises naturally started small. What this implies is that as a startup entrepreneur you do not build a business or enterprise first; you instead build people (a high-pedigree team). After that, the team builds the business/enterprise by developing the entrepreneurial idea. Bringing on-board exceptionally skilled and competent folks to be part of your team demonstrates that it is not about numbers and size but the people, personal chemistry and good thinking in your team. Seek to have an ethical, purpose-driven & self-directed startup team. The fundamental significance of properly forming a startup team is attributable to the complementary roles an individual brings on board. These individual roles and skills are aimed at sufficiently addressing specific needs of the team. The needs depend on the vision of the team and the shared vision of the startup idea and thus you need to learn how to cobble-up a success-oriented team together since initially this forms the inflection point for success or failure. It is worthy of note that confining yourself to intellectual silos might be counterproductive to you as a startup entrepreneur, hence the need to expand your horizons. This may typically entail expanding your social network of knowledgeable people you typically interact with on a day-to-day business to naturally acquire diverse perspectives. Startups that have successfully taken off have attributed their success to a by-product of their collective, but also complimentary team effort and not settling for mediocre. All team members' hands should be on deck ready to bring their A-game. Lastly, "a chain is considered only as strong as its weakest link" applies to startup teams as well. In this chapter, a representation of skillsets and personality traits is elaborated, though in-brief, to enable you as a student entrepreneur to self-reflect and assess what sort of skills and personality traits you may need when laying the foundation for your startup. It is a delicate balancing act but very crucial. The deliberate intention of highlighting this is to get you familiar with unique personality traits and to enable you to short-track the learning curve when identifying team members for your startup.

3.2. TEAM FINE-TUNING: ELABORATE STRUCTURE & COORDINATION

General insights on Team Fine-tuning. It is vital that as you develop your entrepreneurship/startup team, you ensure having at least one member who brings on board some semblance of order. Someone with good organizational skills, confident and mature personality and the ability to convene and conduct meetings. This member possesses the capability of providing clarity on the goals of the startup. Additionally, such a member has the capability of identifying, mapping and delegating responsibilities – essentially promoting decision making. With this type of personality in your team, it is almost guaranteed that everything is organized. Everything's always on time, everything is solid. Their desk is fully organized; clearly showing schedules, timetables, roles/tasks and key deadlines.

Technical. This distinctive personality is quite evaluative: carefully assessing and presenting all viable options and methodically making a verdict on possible scenario outcomes. We could describe such a team member as sober, strategic and discerning; they often think of alternatives "the what-abouts" and what-ifs": they're thinking scenarios no one else is.

Implementation & Action Plan. The "implementer-in-chief" more often is who turns ideas into practical actions. They are disciplined, reliable, conservative, but brutally efficient. Largely viewed as the action-type of person. They can equally be described as having a sense of urgency–based on the excitement they show when getting things done.

Specialization. The classic type of team member with specialised skills. They naturally tend to be single-minded and, most often they are aligned and/or inclined to play by the book.

Seek the Buddy – "Case Synergist". Typically, this is a team member who creates synergy. Mostly people-oriented and outgoing. That's the person who says, "Hey, how are you holding up? How's everything? This person is a synergist. You feel at ease when you are around them.. This type of person brings the team together. In essence, one may typically need a little bit of everything when earnestly seeking to assemble a successful startup team. However, just think – ordinarily – about what you are and what your startup needs and embark on developing a startup team with the necessary skills and unique personalities that you naturally lack.

Having a diverse set of opinions and voices is highly recommended. As the key leader of your dynamic team, it is paramount that you adequately develop the capability of being a critical thinker; the cognitive ability to objectively analyse complex situations. Critical thinking is a habit to learn and practise. Never shy away from seeking promptly intellectual clarity – probing or asking questions. More often, the 'how about...!' type of questions challenge our mode of thinking.

Keeping it cool – Stay rational. Last-but-not least, as an entrepreneur you should develop an incredible knack of basing your reasons on facts. Being factual and rigid about gathering facts & proof, collecting and documenting data as a reliable means of justifying how conclusions are arrived at is crucial. Besides, you should always have a chain of practical logic, i.e., logical reasoning. This in effect will minimize the risk of jeopardizing your startup idea.

*Is there a
Synergist here?*

KEY TAKE-AWAYS
FOR THE ADVANCED

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CHAPTER FOUR:
On Strategic Planning

4.1.YOUR KEY TAKE-AWAYS ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP KNOWLEDGE

A vast majority of successful entrepreneurs allude to the fact that the entrepreneurship knowledge is not solely derived from direct experience; instead, the entrepreneurs tend to acquire knowledge also via learning by reading, through research and engaging in discussions & discourses.

It is important to learn that what is born out of an experience is hardly forgotten. As an entrepreneur prospective, make learning habitual, i.e., a regular part of your workflow, will increase your resilience, hence the capability to cope with the pressure that accompanies the responsibilities. A key factor that determines the entrepreneurial orientation of people is the education level, hence a positive correlation between entrepreneurial education, particularly from institutions of higher learning, with entrepreneurship. It is against this background that XAMK has designed its academic programmes to include entrepreneurship studies.

As you delve into the entrepreneurship life, it is critical that you establish key networks; both formal and informal. This implies that you earnestly begin to network with peers within the realm of entrepreneurship. The networks are an essential part of your future entrepreneurial sphere of influence, i.e., networking presents possibilities of establishing and developing relationships with well-connected peers within the entrepreneurship ecosystem and thus increasing opportunities for your entrepreneurial venture. It is through the myriad networks that support is easily acquired. Networking excursions may entail the following two:

a) Attending entrepreneurial events, i.e., workshops and activities and

b) Attending online forums. Prior to taking part in any discourses, prepare a question or two in advance as well as some key points that you can raise, or global trends and standards that can be emulated. This will make you stand out and, consequently, raise your profile. In the event that you are called upon to share your startup idea, consider relying on off-the-cuff speaking skills for presentation..

"Prior to taking part in any discourses, prepare a question or two in advance as well as some key points that you can raise, or global trends and standards that can be emulated. This will make you stand out and, consequently, raise your profile".



4.2. ON PERSONAL BRANDING, VISIBILITY AND CAREER GROWTH

Strategy development ranks at the top of the pyramid of startup development, hence a defining phase for an entrepreneur. A standard way that is also considered as a best practice for any entrepreneur or startup team is to visualize, document and do a projection of where you would wish to be in a span of over 5 years, consequently becoming a tool for aligning the priorities for your startup. A brief executive summary works perfectly well. A majority of startups have fallen short of success and (or) have had a false start, for the simple reason that they lack a strategic plan. A good and effective strategic plan for startup teams easily transforms into a tool that determines how limited resources, competencies as well as skills when combined creates a sustainable competitive advantage. To gain more understanding of strategy development, the team should acquaint itself with “Porter’s 5 forces” and “PESTLE factors”. Most importantly, the team should be able to identify and craft a unique value offer as a selling proposition.

Personal branding is very important. As an entrepreneur, building your personal brand forms a reflection of what people think about you. Branding might prove instrumental in clinching your first investment for your startup. Personal branding also entails marketing your startup as well as your capabilities and skills.

Startup teams should focus and invest more on branding as it may be a pretty good launchpad for the startup, consequently acting as a catalyst for your business enterprise. Personal branding enhances visibility, hence the two are not mutually exclusive. Having a consistent digital print (presence) constitutes a fertile platform to elevate your startup profile. Visibility on social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Twitter—just to name a few—is likely to elevate your personal brand. Provoke conversations and engagements online through intelligent posts that set into motion a series of chain reactions to social influence and create awareness about your startup. We link another element of visibility to pitching. Your startup team should perfect the art of pitching.

4.3. The Mentoring Way: Stepping forward as a Startup Team Leader

A common misconception about leadership is the command-and-control approach. On the contrary, team leadership is about relationships and more about conversations. By investing more in the quality and depth of your conversation with your startup team, you will forge a unity of purpose which will define your leadership capabilities and, ultimately, success for your startup. Team leadership is a critical aspect that as an entrepreneur you should never overlook. By the unconditional support from your newly formed startup team of like-minded but with varying personalities, it is high time that you step up (rise to the expectations of the team members) and provide the compass for your startup. To be an effective leader for your startup team, all you require is to muster a few basic concepts.

Life is all about learning, hence, a never-ending cycle. Be open-minded and keep learning. True leadership is evidently clear in times of crisis; always rise to such occasions. Since your startup idea will revolve around a particular community, they automatically become key stakeholders. Engage with the community and incorporate some element of environmental and community and Social Responsibility. This will endear your startup to the community, hence gain respect, admiration and, most importantly, the much-needed goodwill support. For your team members, encourage collaborative behaviour and always commend or reward for excellent results. Be an excellent role model and always encourage decency, integrity and credibility.

Cultivate and nurture a culture of freedom, particularly in solution-seeking. This will make the startup team more innovative. Plan, plan and plan.

4.4. OWNING AND BENCHMARKING YOUR ENTREPRENEURIAL ODYSSEY

Benchmarking in simple terms is all about comparing-identifying commonalities. The concept of benchmarking, particularly as an entrepreneur, is aimed at enabling YOU to have an outside view of the goings-on in the ecosystem and possibly adopt best practices from other startup entrepreneurs and teams deemed as role models & trailblazers. In addition, benchmarking practice provides the metrics through which your startup team can measure itself, i.e., setting the standards. The benchmarking process should be progressive as your team escalates towards the full realisation of their idea. The team should be encouraged and inspired by what their compatriots have achieved and aim to better their results. Within the Finnish entrepreneurship ecosystem, benchmarking is best achieved through collaborative engagements with other startups.

The resultant effect of such collaborative engagements is increased optimism and accelerated drive, which is critical in fast-tracking your startup venture. However, when benchmarking, always scout for the best so as to gain new experiences as well as challenge yourselves to increasingly stretched goals.



CHAPTER

FIVE:

The Emerging Kymenlaakso Startup Ecosystem: Possibilities Without Borders

5.1. EXPANDING THE NETWORKS

AN OVERVIEW OF EXISTING NETWORKS THAT SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURSHIP. This chapter brings to the fore the various existing and diverse entrepreneurship networks within the Kymenlaakso ecosystem consequently creating awareness to student entrepreneurs/startups on where to initiate contact when seeking to establish your startup. With these networks, be assured that there is always plenty of room to wiggle through as a student entrepreneur. It suffices to say that the list is not exhaustive, however, through these networks it is possible to meet mentors, coaches, investors, business angels et cetera. Additionally, through these networks, as a student entrepreneur you will likely gain new perspectives and insights (offer counselling and assist in developing innovative business models and growth concepts) necessary to launch your startup.

It is through these networks that you will likely to seek answers to various questions regarding your entrepreneurial idea. The early stage and pre-stage startups stand to benefit more from these networks:

Kouvola Innovation Oy (KINNO)

KINNO is a non-profit development company owned by the City of Kouvola. Their mission is to increase the vitality of the Kouvola by providing services for companies. They coach and engage entrepreneurs and are active in social networks which boost the local economy upward. KINNO is one of the key players regionally that organises ideation challenges and workshops. As a student, such competitions have been designed to not only to discover talent and reward innovators but also to encourage innovative ideation and creativity that could present commercial viability. For instance, the latest competition organised by KINNO attracted a significant number and among them were five students. By seeking, discovering and rewarding innovations, inventions or ideas that can be seen to have commercial potential. More on KINNO via: <http://kinno.fi/en/front-page-test>

The Regional Development Company Cursor Oy

Cursor Oy based in Kotka, Finland is a regional development company and a key actor within the Finnish-Russian cross-border region. They render services to upcoming entrepreneurs' intent on starting their company, and for those who have already established their companies, they provide help in terms of; funding, growth to the extent of mergers & acquisitions. Equally important, for student entrepreneurs, you can test your business idea through their platform where you get tips on how to refine and implement your idea. Visit: <https://www.cursor.fi/en/front-page/>

South-Eastern Finland ELY Center

South-Eastern Finland Centre for Economic Development, Transport and Environment (ELY) plays a significant role in the promotion of entrepreneurship. Student entrepreneurs who are on the verge of establishing their startups can source for advice, training as well as seek expert advice. Further, through their network, early-stage startups can with ease seek and secure funding. Their network partners include Business Finland and Enterprise Finland. For more information, check out <https://www.ely-keskus.fi/ely-kaakkois-suomi>

The Employment Office - TE-Palvelut

TE-palvelut operates under the Finnish Ministry of Employment and Economy. It is within this ministry they cater to entrepreneurs through TE by providing versatile services for entrepreneurs and those interested in enterprising or starting a business. They intertwine the services offered with Business Finland, Enterprise Finland and ELY. TE-Palvelut Main Page: <http://www.te-palvelut.fi/te/en/>

More Organisations to Reach Out:

Southeast Finland University of Applied Sciences, XAMK

Similarly, actively involved in promoting regional entrepreneurship. Through the RDI, activities aimed at developing student-based entrepreneurship activities are organized. The activities take various formats ranging from Hackathons to accelerator programs. XAMK, being the sole university within the Kymenlaakso region, is the heartbeat of student-based entrepreneurship activities. XAMK is the centrum of the Kymenlaakso startup/entrepreneurship ecosystem. Check out more info regarding entrepreneurship initiatives from XAMK at <https://www.xamk.fi/en/indexterm/entrepreneurship/>

Taitaja (Global Education Services Taitaja, GEST)

Global Educational Services Taitaja (GEST) a vocational training centre within Kymenlaakso region offers an array of opportunities for individuals or teams seeking to enhance their entrepreneurial skills. For entrepreneurial students' intent on acquiring particular skills and learnings that form the core of their entrepreneurial idea, GEST, by default, is the ideal place. The trainings on offer are tailor-made to suit individual as well as team's needs. Check out more info regarding what opportunities GEST avails for you as a student entrepreneur. Visit: <https://taitajantie.fi/about-us/>

The Joint Authority of Education of Kotka-Hamina Region Group (Ekami)

This South Kymenlaakso Vocational College is yet another organisation within Kymenlaakso that is entrepreneurial-centric. Students who are rearing to test the entrepreneurial waters, this is the place. EKAMI, offers a wide array of opportunities to build your entrepreneurial career from idea development to establishing your startup. More importantly is that they link students through their collaborative networks with real entrepreneurs for experiential learning. For those students who have ideas, and regardless of the industry, you can participate in their ideation camp. Check out EKAMI for more info. See more: <https://www.ekami.fi/in-english#ekami>

Yrittäjät Finland

Yrittäjät Association is a federation of influential Finnish businesses as well as entrepreneurs. As a federation, they mainly influence opinion and raise awareness on entrepreneurship in Finland. They as well provide expert legal services freely and with their extensive network, entrepreneurs easily gain access to mentors, coaches and they link like-minded entrepreneurs. Check out Yrittäjät for more information. Kymi Region Entrepreneurs (Kymen Yrittäjät) Visit Main Site: <https://www.yrittajat.fi/en> & Check also Kouvola and Kotka Pages: <https://www.yrittajat.fi/kymen-yrittajat/kouvolan-yrittajat> and: <https://www.yrittajat.fi/kymen-yrittajat/kotkan-yrittajat>

Last, but not least - The Invention Foundation:

Page and useful links (in Finnish) Available at: <https://www.keksintosaatio.fi/keksintosaatio/>

5.2 THE EIGHT BENEFITS OF THE CROSS-BORDER DOING FOR STUDENTS

In the verge of the emerging Kymenlaakso startup ecosystem and a more tight-knit network in east, we – the authors of this student's manual want to present the novelty of cross-collaborations and give a sneak peak to the future of entrepreneurship without borders.

In a nutshell – be part of the entrepreneurial community and take advantage of the existing opportunities including but not limited to:

1. NETWORKING.

Key contacts from the cross-border region, brought to you by Patteri Entrepreneurship Society & St. Petersburg based student clubs.

2. NEW ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES.

Internships, summer courses & exchange programs.

3. SHARED EXPERIENCES & LEARNINGS.

4. PARTICIPATING IN WIDE-RANGE ACTIVITIES.

Think i.e., workshops, webinars, pitching competitions, lectures etc. Get to engage in insightful conversations and hear from trailblazers within the cross-border ecosystem.

5. MORE EVENTS, BOOSTED.

Raise the bar and organize events as joint effort.

6. MEETING POTENTIAL TEAM MEMBERS. Like-minded people to share ideas with.

Become a part of a startup team or find the missing expertise for your business.

7. EASY ACCESS.

Incubator and accelerator programs across the border.

8. CROSS-BORDER POOL OF PROFESSIONALS.

A cost-effective way to acquire knowledge and skills for your entrepreneurial idea/concept. In another words: high-end mentoring catered to you based on your startup's needs.

APPENDIX - SUMMING IT UP

On developing co-creation skills

On the community building frameworks

Towards cross-collaborative student entrepreneurship community



ON DEVELOPING THE CO-CREATION SKILLS

THE FRAMEWORK. The startup ecosystem constitutes mainly of the regional entrepreneurship ecosystem and partnering with satellite entrepreneurship ecosystems – complementing each other through various contributions. Value is created through synergy, whilst fostering new, international job opportunities, funding and networking opportunities for the participants. The satellite ecosystems offer a complementary point of views, ensure learnings and cross-pollination of ideas. Market insights across the different ecosystems offer evolved and innovative business plans a chance for expansion. The flagship industries act as rooftop descriptions to the ecosystem, where all eager startup teams may network and scout for business opportunities without silos.

To **(pro)actively participate in the startup ecosystem, co-creation skills are the new norm in today's working life.** Co-creation is a form of open Innovation. Co-creation (or co-design) is the act of creating jointly with stakeholders (businesses or customers). Often, co-creation will seek for fresh and significant improvements on ideas to existing processes. The direct benefits are tackling strategic challenges such as getting a fresh perspective, getting in touch with key trends and the underlying business drivers.

Co-creation helps in “unlocking the world” and bringing it inside: cross-pollinate with people from different industries, pro-bono workers and representatives of citizen activism. Types of co-creation process may vary upon the axis of openness and ownership—referring to the initiative party of the co-creation process and how much time and resources there is available. In co-creation the end-users are brought to the limelight. Co-creation takes place with the end-users from the beginning, all the way to the end of the design process. This kind of innovation is not a cosmetic trick of participation but active involvement.

Another benefit of co-creation between different stakeholders is that all the participants are perceived as equals. It's a round table, catered with people from diverse backgrounds, experiences, varying emphasis and most importantly, the willingness to participate and create something new. As a best possible outcome, the individuals in the co-creation journey are dedicated in supporting and to flourish the varied points-of-view.

ON DEVELOPING THE CO-CREATION SKILLS

GAINING THE SKILLS. For the participants, it means developing a way of working that brings out other's potential and strengths. Once you are willing to unleash the potential of someone's thinking, you can expect the same kind of facilitation from others. In order to successfully work in projects of co-creative in nature, the individual should embrace:

The basic co-creation skills such as:

- Patience, since co-creative projects has several stages
- Ability to work under uncertainties and to cope within a team, where the pool of knowledge can temporary be lacking (when facing the wicked problem)
- Have time to invest to the topic and type of co-creation selected varying slightly in the axis of openness and ownership
- A positive mindset
- Empathy and true willingness to see reasoning from even opposite angle
- Active build of trust and bond between different stakeholders

As advanced skills one can:

- Solve conflicting point of view
- Support the cause and appreciate the methods chosen
- Exit one's comfort zone

Some challenges may be caused by:

- Co-creation process's timetables, how much time is spent orientating to co-creation's core
- The technicalities and facilitation, that may be remotely organised
- Participators representing significantly different expectations on the outcome or:
- Drastically different (business) culture

ON THE COMMUNITY BUILDING FRAMEWORKS

Congratulations, you've now made it to the end of the student's manual to entrepreneurial activities! Once more, a warm welcome to the emerging startup ecosystem! startup ecosystem! **A future cross-border community is the student's home base. Get acquainted to the startup ecosystem, find friends and like-minded team members, find and explore entrepreneurial opportunities together.**

ABOUT THE ECOSYSTEM. Our startup ecosystem consists of the main regional entrepreneurship ecosystem and partnering with other regional entrepreneurship ecosystems complimenting each other uniquely through various contributions. The ecosystem is designed to match the Kymi Region's flagship industries. However, it is worth to remember the inherent dynamic nature of business areas which are strongly merging. One may study game design and end up working/operating in a totally different sector such as health technology. The presented partner ecosystems offer a complementary point of view and ensures learnings and cross-polluting of ideas. Generally, ecosystems tend to develop and evolve through different stages to maturity. Market insights between different ecosystems offer evolved and innovative business plans a chance to expand. The flagship industries act as rooftop descriptions for the ecosystem, where all eager teams may network and scout for business opportunities exclusive of silos.

KYMI, UNITED. We are taking steps towards a student-based entrepreneurship community that operates with the cross-border regions of Kymi (Finland) and St. Petersburg (Russia). This is a community of equals – members, participants and contributors. You are invited to bring fresh insights and energy to the table. Below see the flagship industries forming the ecosystem consisting of the main entrepreneurship ecosystem (emerging businesses/startups). Last but not least: **What is your passion?**

THIS IS YOUR PLAYGROUND:

A

- The Main Innovation Ecosystem (**R&D, research data, expertise**)
- The Partner Ecosystem in Innovation & The Cross Border Main Partner in Service Design (**ITMO - Software Engineering & Service Design**)
- The Partner Ecosystems in Innovation (**Bio Product Engineering**)
- The Partner Ecosystems in Innovation (**growth, internationalisation, IPR, legal counselling, GDPR**)

B

- The Main Corporations Ecosystems (**local steady businesses and big corporations**)
- The Partner Ecosystems in Corporations Ecosystems (**international companies, Blockbusters**)

C

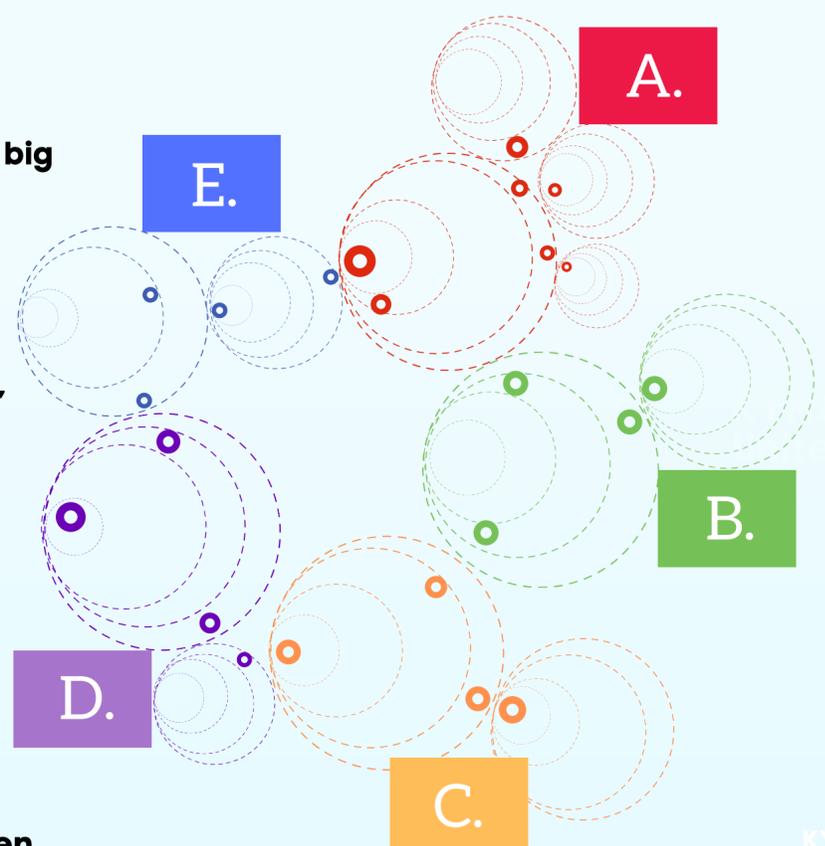
- The Main Impact Ecosystems (**social impact, active citizenship, governmental & legislation**)
- The Partner Ecosystems in Social Impact (**ethical footprint & sustainability, smart city development**)

D

- The Main Lifelong Learning Ecosystems (**competencies, talent spotting**)
- The Partner Ecosystems in Lifelong Learning (**edutech, future pedagogics**)

E

- The Main Entrepreneurship Ecosystems (**startups, student-driven agile trials & initiatives**)
- The Partner Ecosystems in Entrepreneurship (**complementing pool of startups, student-driven agile trials & initiatives**)



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FIN

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Conceptualisation & Visualisation Ivanoff, A (2021).

THE SUMMARY AND A CALL FOR ACTION

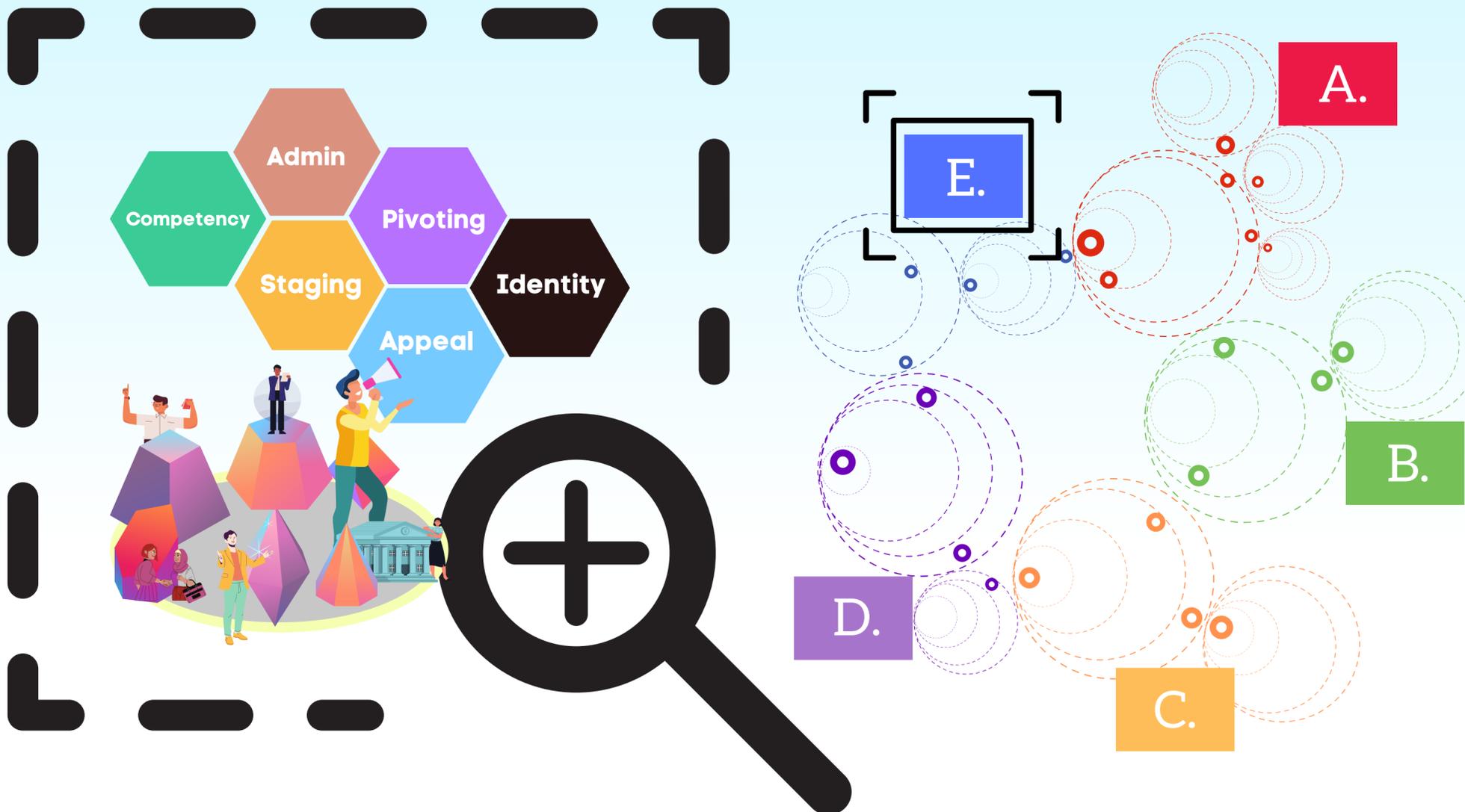


Fig.2. Zooming into the student community and its building blocks.

THE SUMMARY

The evolving cross-border community for student entrepreneurship operates as an authentic bridge builder—in synergy with the whole Kymenlaakso startup and entrepreneurship ecosystem. A joint calendar of activities can be planned to cater both Kymenlaakso and St. Peterburg cross-border regions. Cross-collaborations can also be planned to run without any national borders. The community's building blocks are identified. Innovation without borders has an open call for open innovation and **the makers of the cross-border community** and to respond to the need of:

COMPETENCY BUILDING. Two-pronged; equipping students with the requisite entrepreneurship skills and knowledge. Additionally, peer learnings through cross-border interactions. The cross-border community will develop key competency in organising cross-border startup events and activities. Tapping into the successes of organizing and hosting *ship festival and SumIT.

ADMINISTRATION. Organizational leadership comprising student leaders from the cross-border region of Kymenlaakso-St. Petersburg. To be achieved through incorporating Patteri and ITMO-based entrepreneurship clubs.

STAGING. Developing a harmonised joint annual calendar of activities and events. Ranging from startup pitching events, innovation camps, workshops, seminars etc.

PIVOTING. Change of strategy and approach – internationalization of student-based entrepreneurship.

APPEAL. Broadening the appeal to students through new experiences while promoting student-based entrepreneurship and startup development. Access to top notch mentors & coaches. Additionally, presenting opportunities for internships, summer courses, attending accelerators programs and innovation camps.

IDENTITY. Uniquely international through the cross-border element. Student driven.

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THANK YOU!

**This was
Student's Manual for
Entrepreneurial Activities**