GEI LAUNCHPAD PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

With a full intensive 10 session incubation program (in addition to introductory sessions, review sessions and the demo day), the GEI Launchpad 1.0 is designed to help MEL and Technology startups identify new growth opportunities, from finding the product market-fit and ideas validation, to strengthening the core-team until expansion strategies to new business potentials, that support the process of evidence generation and building a new evaluation ecosystem that drives technology and is also technology driven.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE: The Launchpad program will be structured in 3 overarching blocks mirroring key innovation phases:

- BUILD
- VALIDATE
- LAUNCH

Each block will have a number of capacity building sessions (3-4). Each session will consist of a 2-hour virtual program to be delivered once a week. Sessions will include lectures, hands-on exercises with mentors, and presentations to the group.

BUILD	VALIDATE	LAUNCH
- Design thinking and User centric design. - Lean startup method - Prototyping and Product design and development - Business model canvas and value proposition	- Setting up your company - Pitching, pitch deck development, and storytelling in marketing/PR - Financing a start-up	- Customer acquisition/client mapping - Building a MEL brand - Analytics (and social media)

The program will embrace a "learning by doing" philosophy. Teams will apply concepts learned to their own product/service and engage in a continuous iteration process to improve their products.

While the core program will be based on the development of an enterprise, additional sessions can be offered on specific topics such as AI/ML, Blockchain technology, drones and UAVs, data analytics, etc. The emergence of technology for development has also opened space for new and innovative ways to gather evidence, therefore in addition to building on the teams' ideas, GEI Launchpad will make available webinars on innovative topics of using technology in the field of evaluation and evidence generation throughout the Launchpad process. These would be pre-recorded and can be viewed at the team's own time and ideas that emerge from these lectures can be incorporated in the teams proposed solutions as applicable.

DETAILED GEI Launchpad PROGRAM

BLOCK - BUILD

Block 1 consists of 4 sessions delivered from April 5th and concluding May 3rd. Block 1 will give an opportunity to introduce the Launchpad to the participants, and also learn from the selected teams about their ideas and concepts and the problems they are trying to solve through their solutions. The teams are expected to present a 3-minute presentation of 5 slides each, which includes introduction to their team, the problem they are trying to address and their proposed solution. The GEI Launchpad mentors will work with the teams to help them to get their ideas of the ground and start building them into concrete and viable projects. The mode of delivery of sessions will be half day interactive sessions with our expert mentors with regular reviews. This will also include office hours for Q&A from participants throughout this module.

Introductory session - April 4th

This session will introduce the launchpad program to all participants, the mentors and the program structure and process. This will also give an opportunity to learn more about the teams and their solutions through their initial pitch deck.

Sessions 1: Design thinking and user-centric design – April 5th

In this session the teams will learn how to develop their solutions, using the design thinking framework for product development, Design thinking is a **human-centered, interactive learning process** that focuses on customers as people with defined needs, and works backward to a technology solution.

Sessions 2: The Lean Startup Methodology – April12th

In this session the teams will learn about the lean startup method[1], that teaches how to drive a startup-how to steer, when to turn, and when to persevere-and grow a business with maximum acceleration. It is a principled approach to new product development.

Sessions 3: Product development – April19th

This session will work with teams to help them understand the product development process, which is generally a **six-stage plan that involves taking a product from initial concept to final market launch**. This includes identifying a market need, researching the competition, ideating a solution, developing a product roadmap, and building a minimum viable product (MVP).

Sessions 4: Business model canvas and value proposition – April 26th

This session will focus on the Value Proposition Canvas, a tool which **can help ensure** that a product or service is positioned around what the customer values and needs. It is a detailed look at the relationship between two parts of a broader Business Model Canvas; customer segments and value propositions.

Review and stocktaking: – May 3rd

Towards the end of the 'Build' sessions, the teams will meet for half a day and this session focus on where they teams, are clarify any questions and help them navigate towards the next part of the Launchpad.

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[1] https://ideabuddy.com/blog/lean-startup-methodology/

BLOCK VALIDATE

After the teams have progressed from the idea stage and started building their product or idea, this would be time to Validate their idea. The sessions from 5 through 8 will focus on the process of gathering evidence around ideas through experimentation to make fast, informed, and de-risked decisions. It's a process that starts from an idea and typically ends with a paying customer. The purpose of idea validation is to expose the idea to the practicality of the real world before you build and release the final product or offering. This will be done through expert GEI Launchpad mentors who have practical experience of running a business in the field of MEL and technology for development. The sessions will be participatory and interactive with both practical and theoretical lessons.

Sessions 5: Setting up your company – May 10th

This session will focus on setting up your company legally and considering other practical aspects of running a successful business using your idea.

Sessions 6: Pitching your idea – May 17th

This session will help the teams to prepare a pitch deck for their ideas, A pitch deck presentation— also known as a startup pitch deck or slide deck—is **a visual document that provides investors with essential information about the business plan, product or services, fundraising needs, and key metrics** like valuation, target market, and financial goals.

Sessions 7: Financing your idea – May 24th

This session will help you learn about financing your company. This important session will cover aspects of right start-up financing that can give your new business a solid financial base. Working out how to finance your start-up begins with knowing how much money you are going to need and where to find it. This session will also help you to understand what the different types of finance can offer a start-up, so that you can get the right financial mix for your business.

Review Session

Prior to the final 4 sessions, GEI Launchpad team and selected mentors will do a mid-course stock taking to do an extended review of the teams' progress and answer any questions or clarifications and provide guidance and support as needed. This could be in the form of an open office hours or a half-day session. All participating teams are required to attend and present their progress.

BLOCK LAUNCH

At this point the teams have progressed well into having 'built' and 'validated, their ideas, the next step would be to helping them market their idea and scale it up and ensure they are able to identify the customer base, the right market and sustain their business. Our mentors will focus on helping them understand the difference between growth and scale, building a business that not only grows but grows exponentially. The sessions will be interactive in nature with practical examples from the real world with team exercises. This module will end with the final demo day where the teams will present the final product and pitch to potential partners, investors and get feedback and potential funding opportunities. All participating teams will receive a certificate and a chance to present their ideas in a selected location.

Session 8:   The Customer base – June 7th

This session will help the teams to understand the basics of identifying and retaining a customer base and the costs associated with it. Customer acquisition refers **to bringing in new customers -** or convincing people to buy your products. It is a process used to bring consumers down the marketing funnel from brand awareness to purchase decision. The cost of acquiring a new customer is referred to as customer acquisition cost (or CAC for short)

Session 9:   Your MEL Brand   – June 15th

This session will help understand the business of owning and operating an MEL company, it will combine the elements learnt in the blocks and give practical tips and examples from the field how to create your own brand, its unique proposition and help stand out in the market that can help acquire customers and retain them.

Session 10:   Analyzing your business performance – June 24th

This session will help the teams to learn how **data analytics can be used** describe, predict, and inform **business** decisions in the specific areas of marketing, human resources, finance, and operations. This will help to grow the business and understand the market in real time.

Demo Day – June 30th, 2022

The 12-week intensive sessions will culminate in a 'Demo Day' where the teams will present their final products. All teams will be given certificates and opportunity to travel to present their ideas to a larger audience. The day will end with closing remarks from IEG/DG.

Webinar sessions

As indicated above, the teams will have access to short webinars from experts in the field who work in the cusp of Evaluation and Emerging technology. The tentative topics are listed below. These webinars will focus on understanding how the emerging technologies of the 4th industrial revolution can benefit MEL Systems and how MEL methods in turn can help integrate these technologies into the field of evaluation as well as in development interventions.