

GROWTH HACKING BOOT CAMP “FYI - FOR YOUR INSPIRATION”

Regional Test Case Documentation

08 2021



T2.3.3



Reporting period 5



PP3, CREARE



Nina Hawrylow, Gisa Schosswohl

nina@creativeregion.org, gisa@into-projects.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

0. Abstract	3
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Objective	3
3. Applied approach	3
4. Results	4
5. Goal Achievement and Lessons Learned.....	5
6. Outlook, Sustainability and Transferability	6
7. Annexes.....	6

0. Abstract

CCI play an important role in transforming regions with an industrial background. For this to happen, it is important that the CCI landscape consists of healthy enterprises that are able to grow and adjust in times of crises. We saw a need for entrepreneurship training for creatives, who are often masters in their profession but have little experience and knowledge in entrepreneurship competencies. We, therefore, offered a 'boot camp' for young entrepreneurs from CCI consisting of five workshops, each focusing on one important topic of entrepreneurship.

1. Introduction

In our daily work at the Creative Region, we see a lack of affordable hands-on workshops for young entrepreneurs to learn the necessary entrepreneurial skills which allow them to build successful companies that are possible to be sustained. Creatives are often well educated and experienced in their specific profession but lack background knowledge on how to manage, organize, develop a company.

Many entrepreneurial workshops that are offered are either too basic, not tailored to the specific needs of creatives, not thorough enough or too expensive for young entrepreneurs of the creative industries. Being able to develop a healthy company that allows creatives to do their work for an income is not only immediately important for themselves - in industrial backboned regions, the creative industries and its entrepreneurs serve as change agents for a transformation. For this, however, they have to proof themselves as entrepreneurs in a landscape of big, grown companies and industries in order to be recognized by them as potential cooperation partners, tenderers, contractors etc. We believe that it is crucial in the long run to integrate creatives into the value chain so that they do not depend exclusively on public funding or other forms of financial support.

2. Objective

Our boot camp 'FYI - For Your Inspiration', that we design from scratch within the InduCCI project, fills exactly this training gap for young entrepreneurs described above. The overall objective of our boot camp was to support creatives and founders in becoming successful entrepreneurs and improve their entrepreneurial skills.

With the boot camp we wanted to enable young entrepreneurs and founders from the creative industries to develop their business, increase their value, widen their network, and build a peer group. In doing so, we wanted to support the "next generation" of entrepreneurs and offered a service in demand.

3. Applied approach

The boot camp was designed as a series of five two-day workshops. Each workshop should focus on a different theme with one or two experts in this field as workshop leaders. We decided to stretch the workshop series over half a year, because we wanted to leave enough space for learning, thinking, and implementing the learnt and ideas into daily business from one workshop to the next one and to give enough time for the community building between the participants.

Another reason for the concept of a workshop *series* was the consideration of the participants being entrepreneurs, who often run their business alone - it is difficult for them to leave work for more than two days.

We could make use of the long-standing experience of our organization Creative Region in designing workshops and programs for the creative industries that are relevant for them. At the same time, the setting of the InduCCI project allowed us to reflect on previous experiences, compile them, design a new workshop series, and test it so that we could see, if our considerations and assumptions proofed to be true.

Selection process

We published the call for applications 7 weeks before the application deadline on our website, on social media (Instagram, facebook), in our newsletter, in newsletters of relevant organization (e.g. Akostart, University of Art and Design Linz) and in the newspapers (TIPS, Die Macher), and received 31 applications via an online form.

The criteria for participating were:

- Participants needed to be young entrepreneurs, which means they had founded their enterprise not longer than 5 years ago
- Their enterprise needed to belong to the CCI
- Availability for participating in all five workshops
- Readiness to travel to Linz for the workshops
- Completed application form with a description of the motivation to participate, the benefit they see for themselves in the proposed workshops and the expectations they had towards the workshop series

After screening the applications for these criteria and completeness, 21 applicants were then invited to a digital hearing on May 14, 2020, in front of a jury consisting of Johannes Pracher (Sparkasse Startrampe), Olivia Ulbing (oha! Communications), Patrick Rammerstorfer (Proactive Unternehmensberatung), Georg Tremetzberger (Creative Region GmbH), Julia Pohn as facilitator / moderator. The participants presented a quick 2' pitch and were then asked questions by the jury for 8'. The jury assessed the applicants via a form for their motivation and set goals of a participation in the boot camp, checked whether the workshops potentially could have a positive impact on the development and growth of the applicant's enterprise at this moment of time and kept an eye on the diversity of the group (female/male, different segments of CCI). The jury ranked all 21 applicants and the 12 candidates that convinced the most, were then invited to take part in the workshops.

4. Results

This was the final **program** of the workshop series:

Module 1 - Kick Off / Entrepreneurial Mindset & Skills with Patrick Rammerstorfer

Module 2 - Vision & Strategy with Doris Rothauer

Module 3 - Branding & Communication with Bernhard Buchegger

Module 4 - Sales with Oliver Kronawitttleithner

Module 5 - Presentation & Rhetoric with Bettina Wegleiter and Wojciech Czaja / Closing

We finished with a closing session, a handing out of certificates and a joint dinner.

Additionally, we made sure that by writing about the ongoing boot camp online and in print the participants receive some publicity. We invited a professional photographer to take pictures that they could later use for their websites or social media postings, we built a bridge between a local journalist and the participants, who later interviewed several of them for a portrait in the newspapers, we also invited them as a group to following events of ours in order to strengthen them as a peer group by initiating meet-ups.

This test case gave us the chance to design a thought-out workshop series and pilot it with our target audience. After the implementation we asked the participants for feedback and received a lot of appreciation by them:

Christoph Grubmair: *“I liked the group dynamics, considerably the opening workshop. All was very trustworthy, there was an honest climate within the group. It was very enriching and a push for all of us.”*

Ness Rubey: *“I was introduced to a lot of doors and opportunities and was able to grow. I got out of my comfort zone and could talk to different people. The choice of topics was top. Super network/friends.”*

Romina Hafner: *“It was a push into the right direction. The sales module was top. In all modules, we were looked after, we were taken care of. Great Network, great people, I know someone now!”*

Peter Postlmayr: *“The group & the program were the highlights. I realized that I can work on myself and my company. I found answers to the questions: What do I do, who am I and what do I not do? There were good impulses for further development. The group constellation was great.”*

We were really surprised by the great team dynamics and the spirit of the participants. They formed a close peer group beyond the duration of the boot camp and still keep in touch with each other and with us. Whenever we have a bigger event, we invite them to give opportunity for ongoing exchange.

5. Goal Achievement and Lessons Learned

The feedback from the participants shows that the workshops were tailored to their needs and that everyone benefited from the contents and the network. With the implementation of the growth hacking boot camp, we definitely reached our goal of delivering the necessary knowledge and skills for young entrepreneurs from the creative industries to develop their businesses. We still keep in touch with them and follow their development.

The **key learnings** for us are:

- A **mix of trades and industry** in which the participants operate with their business positively influences the peer learning effect
- The **kick-off module should focus highly on team building** and bonding to form a peer group with the participants
- Workshops or at least meetings in between in **real life** are crucial for the group dynamics
- There should be at least **2-4 weeks between each of the modules**, because the development of each participant and of thoughts needs time
- The selection of **experienced, motivated, and inspiring workshop leaders** who bring credibility is crucial for the success of the boot camp
- There is a strong wish to connect and form a **peer learning group** beyond the duration of the workshop series
- A “hand-over” of the participants from one workshop leader to the next improves the flow of the workshops
- Not every module fits for every participant in the same way

6. Outlook, Sustainability and Transferability

The feedback was so positive that we immediately decided to integrate the boot camp into the organization's regular program and have started a second round in June 2021. For this, we were able to win the regional Chamber of Commerce as a cooperation partner to co-finance this year's boot camp and thereby offer the service again free of charge for 13 young entrepreneurs and founders from the creative industries.

The first boot camp was also a hotbed for joint projects. Romina Hafner, e.g., now works together with Patrick Rammerstorfer, the leader of the first workshop, and another entrepreneur from the CCI on designing a big office complex. Stefanie Breidfuss met a photographer for her new project in the FYI group.

Additionally, we are in the process of designing a professional networking format to offer former participants the possibility to stay in contact with each other and our company after workshops end and thereby foster peer learning, cooperation, and exchange.

The growth hacking boot camp is easily transferable and adaptable to other regions. We highly recommend this kind of workshop series to other regions that want to support their CCI. Alternatively, other educational options for young entrepreneurs could be checked for their suitability for the creative industries and advertised in the community. Stipends for creatives who want to participate in already existing entrepreneurial workshops in a region could be issued. Our main thought behind the boot camp was: How can we support creatives in becoming successful entrepreneurs? This question can be answered in many ways and our boot camp is one of them.

7. Annexes

Advertisement of the FYI workshops on our website (in German):

<https://creativeregion.org/events/fyi-for-your-inspiration/>

Evaluation sheet for the jury (in German):

<https://creativeregion.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/BEWERTUNG-DER-BEWERBERINNEN-FUER-EIN-FYI-STIPENDIUM.pdf>

Pictures of the growth hacking boot camp are available here, credits Florian Voggeneder:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1g1A53CR9V3qMEUT9C5Ps-Rozz4fZoSIJ?usp=sharing>