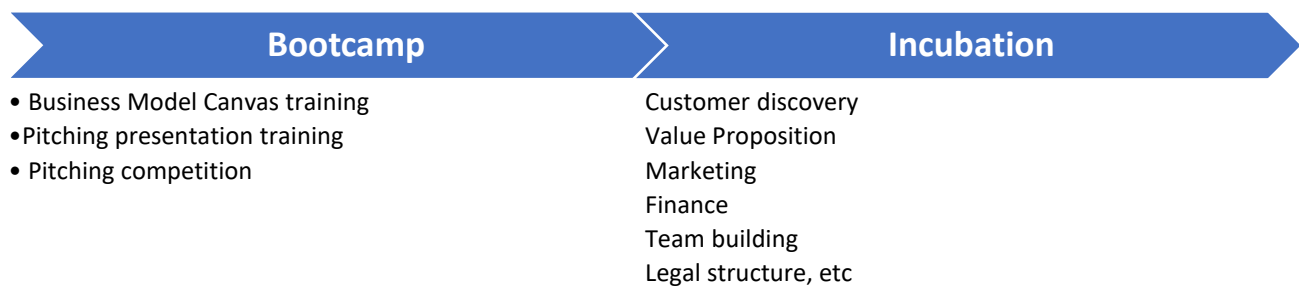**Young Innovators Program (YIP) Guidelines**

Dear students,

Young Innovators Program (YIP) is a cross-university, three-month training and mentorship program, offered to support the brightest and creative students from many universities in Kosovo to transform research papers and thesis into a viable and feasible products and businesses. To this end, the Program is organized in two phases: Bootcamp and Incubation.

Bootcamp	Incubation
• Business Model Canvas training •Pitching presentation training • Pitching competition	Customer discovery Value Proposition Marketing Finance Team building Legal structure, etc

Incubation Program Phases & Steps

1. *Application*

Aspiring entrepreneurs are invited to apply to the Program online through a Google Form, which has 10 questions related to the personal and team member information and information about their business ides: problem to tackle, solution provided, market, etc. Application form also provides the opportunity for applicants to upload any document they have prepared: business plan, concept, presentation, etc. The application phase will remain open until **12ᵗʰ March**, end of the day.

Aiming at informing students at participation universities, there will be info sessions organized at each of the participatory universities. Info sessions will be organized jointly with universities, where universities will select the day, select the venue, inform and organize the students, etc, while VentureUP will share promotion material with universities, lead the session, provide answers to questions, motivate students to apply, etc. Additionally, there will be an online info session for all interested applicants which will be organized by Ventures, while universities will be responsible for sharing information with their students. Additionally, VentureUP will remain available to support every applicant during the entire application process.

2. *Selection*

After the expiration of the application deadline, there will be a selection process taking place at every participating university for applications from that specific university. In total, there will be 10 startups that will be admitted into the Incubation Program, selected from all applications in all eight participating universities. Minimum twelve (12) teams/startups will be selected for the Bootcamp, which meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Applicants have to be from the participating universities,
- Preferably there are more than one team members,
- Readiness to regularly attend the program at ITP Prizren (staying overnight whenever is required),
- Idea is based on the research or thesis.

3. *Bootcamp*

Minimum 12 teams will participate in the 2-day Bootcamp at ITP. The objective of the Bootcamp is to provide additional training, mentoring, and coaching to the qualified teams to prepare and advance their business models and prepare for pitching in front of the jury/commission made of representatives from every university. Further, as result of the pitching competition, at least 10 teams will be admitted to the Incubation Program.

During the first day of the Bootcamp there will be a training session on Business Model Canvas followed by the work of the teams on their own business models. During the second day, teams will receive training on preparing and delivering the pitching presentation. During both days, all teams will be mentored, coached by numerous mentors to receive necessary support to complete their business models and pitching presentations.

As result, at the end of the second day, there will be a pitching competition in front of the jury/commission made of university representatives, which will decide for up to 10 teams/startups that will qualify for the Incubation program. Criteria to select startups for the Incubation Program are as follows:

- Prepare a Lean Startup Business Model Canvas,
- Prepare the pitching presentation and deliver the presentation in front of the jury,
- Idea has the potential to become a viable business,
- Idea has the market and potential to scale,
- There is a strong development team,
- Commitment to regularly participate in all training delivered during the Incubation Program at ITP.

4. *Incubation Program*

The aim of the Incubation Program is to help qualified teams/startups become investment ready. Qualified teams/startups which will be admitted to the Incubation program will go through 8-weeks training program, receiving 9 training modules. The training sessions will be in-residence training, delivered for two days during the week, staying overnight at ITP. The training modules are as follows:

> Training 1: Customer Discovery & Development
> Training 2: Differentiation
> Training 3: Value Proposition & Prototyping
> Training 4: Marketing
> Training 5: Financial Management
> Training 6: Startup tools
> Training 7: Team building
> Training 8: Legal structure
> Training 9: Pitching.

The training will be delivered by international and national trainers. During the incubation programs, teams will upgrade and finalize their business models, prepare their prototypes, become investment ready, and pitch in front of investors with the 3-minute pitching presentation. additionally, teams will be supported by numerous mentors in specific fields, and finally coached by VentureUP staff.

5. *Pitching Competition*

At the end of the Incubation program, those teams/startups who have successfully completed the Incubation program will be invited to participate in a Pitch Competition to acquire Seed Funding. The Program aims to disburse equity-free grants, however, this number is not guaranteed since the exact amount of financial support is dependent on the evaluation by the judges regarding the needed amount of financing and the availability of funding to fulfill finalist clients' needs.

The winners will be selected by an independent jury composed of various actors representing financial institutions, academia, private sector, donors, etc. The winners will be selected based on the following criteria:

1. **Product/service and Problem**
   - Clear product/service description
   - Problem(s) addressed by product/service clearly described
   - Target market and customer segments clearly identified
   - Benefits of product/service clearly described.

2. **Market and Competition**
   - Each target market realistically defined and sized

- o The market(s) is significant and growing?
- o Competition analysis identified
- o Difference of product/service from currently existing solutions in the market

3. **Strategy and Business Model**
    - o The product/service appear to be based on sound technical principles (i.e., does it make sense)
    - o The business model makes sense
    - o The market has shown real interest in the product/service/solution (there is Traction)
    - o Revenue generating activities are clearly described
    - o Realistic financial projections

4. **Team**
    - o Team strength to move business concept forward
    - o Team's commitment to executing the plan
    - o Professionalism and completion of Team's presentation.

6. **Supporting Resources**

Supporting resources for both Bootcamp and Incubation Program include:

- Access to co-working space at ITP
- Overnight stay at ITP
- All expenses for participation for the Bootcamp and Incubation Program (transport, food, sleep, etc)
- Access to conference facilities & shared office equipment
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Networking with Investors
- Follow up support during scaling.

For every additional information on the Program, please contact us in:

Email: mentorrexhepi@venture-up.org
Phone: +383 44 193730.

''Elevating your minds, shaping the future!''

Apply for the biggest cross-university incubation program in Kosovo!

Implemented by: **VENTURE** **UP**

Timeline of activities:

Activity/Timeline	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY
Setting the criteria, preparing material, etc	X						
Open call for application		X	X				
Info sessions at Universities		X	X				
Selection of startups			X				
Bootcamp			X				
Training 1: Customer Discovery & Development				X			
Training 2: Differentiation				X			
Training 3: Value Proposition & Prototyping				X			
Training 4: Marketing				X			
Training 5: Financial Management				X			
Training 6: Startup tools				X			
Training 7: Team building				X			
Training 8: Legal structure				X			
Training 9: Pitching				X			
Working on pitching presentations				X	X		
Demo Day					X		
Networking with investors						X	X