**BARKULAN CO-WORKING SPACE & INNOVATION HUB**

**STARTUP FOUNDER PROGRAM**

***Description:***

This program is meant to produce founders who will build world-class startups out of Somaliland.

***Goal:***

Building people that will build products.

***Duration:***

6 weeks.

***Structure:***

2 days/ week, 2 hours/ day (Total 4 hours per week).

***Method of teaching:***

Short lecture/ presentation slides, discussion, Q&A. Content will be available online.

***Method of assessment:***

Assignments, team work, pitching.

***Course content:***

1. Ideation
2. Customer development
3. Product development
4. Business model
5. Team building & culture
6. Company building & growth

***Bonus content:***

1. Pitching to investors

***Number of startups:*** 10 per batch

***Number of batches:*** 2 per year

***Periods:*** Summer & Winter

***Summer program:*** June – July 2021

***Winter program:*** November – December 2021

**OVERVIEW**

***Plz Ahmed, add something here about the program.***

**MISSION**

Building people that will build products.

**VISION**

World-class founders & startups out of Somaliland.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Transferring knowledge about how to build a startup
2. Providing tools to founders for building startups
3. Preparing founders’ mindset to solve critical social & economic problems in S/Land
4. Preparing founders to build local startups that will become global companies

**CORE VALUES**

1. Transferring knowledge
2. Empowering people

**ABOUT BARKULAN**

Barkulan is a co-working space & an innovation hub in Hargeysa, S/Land. The aim of Barkulan is to build a community of change makers in S/Land through entrepreneurship, technology & networking.

**ABOUT AUTHOR/ TEACHER**

Abdulrazak is a business expert & founder/ co-founder of several startups/ businesses. The main focus of the author/ trainer is to build world-class startups in S/Land that will solve pressing issues in the country, like education, health, manufacturing, etc.

**WHO WE ARE SEEKING**

* Ambitious & driven young entrepreneurs
* Good command of English
* Relevant technical skills

**REQUIREMENTS/ INSTRUCTIONS**

Written application submitted to [info@barkulan.com](mailto:info@barkulan.com) that includes a description about:

* Founders/ team
* Idea (problem & solution)

**COURSE CONTENT DETAILS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **NO.** | **CONTENT** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **1** | ***Ideation*** | Founders will learn in the 1st week of the program, the ideation process. Material will cover:   * Problem * Solution * Insights |
| **2** | ***Customer development*** | Founders will learn in the 2nd week of the program, the customer development process, this week includes also market research. Material will cover:   * Customer discovery * Customer validation * Customer creation * Company building   ***(This last part will be discussed in week 6)*** |
| **3** | ***Product development*** | Founders will be learning in the 3rd week of the program, the product development process. This includes building MVP ***(Minimum Viable Product)***. This week includes also market research. Material will cover:   * Discovery * Definition * Design * Development |
| **4** | ***Business model*** | Founders will be learning in the 4th week of the program, the business model canvas. Material will cover:   * Customer segments * Customer relationships * Distribution channels * Value proposition * Key activities * Key resources * Key partners * Cost structure * Revenue streams |
| **5** | ***Team building & culture*** | Founders will learn in the 5th week of the program, how to build teams & culture within the startup context. Material will cover:   * Co-founder selection & equity distribution * Roles & responsibilities * Core values |
| **6** | ***Company building & growth*** | Founders will learn in the last week of the program how to build & scale a world-class company. Material will cover:   * Articles of association * Incorporation (local & international) * Intellectual property * Branding * Scaling |
| **7** | ***Pitching to investors*** | This part is a bonus material. Founders will be trained on how to pitch their ideas to potential & interested investors. |

**ACTION POINTS & TIMELINE**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **WEEK** | **DATES** | **DURATION** | **ACTIVITY** | **RESPONSIBILITY** |
| **1** | 27/3 – 1/4 | 6 days | Content design | * Abdulrazak * Input from Ahmed |
| **2** | 3/4 – 8/4 | 6 days | Ideation material | * Abdulrazak * Input from Ahmed |
| **3** | 10/4 – 15/4 | 6 days | Customer development material | * Abdulrazak * Input from Ahmed |
| **4** | 17/4 – 22/4 | 6 days | Product development material | * Abdulrazak * Input from Ahmed |
| **5** | 24/4 – 29/4 | 6 days | Business model material | * Abdulrazak * Input from Ahmed |
| **6** | 1/5 – 6/5 | 6 days | Team building & culture material | * Abdulrazak * Input from Ahmed |
| **7** | 8/5 – 13/5 | 6 days | Company building & growth | * Abdulrazak * Input from Ahmed |
| **8** | 15/5 – 20/5 | 6 days | Pitching material | * Abdulrazak * Input from Ahmed |
| **9 - 11** | 22/5 – 10/6 | 18 days | Social media promotion | Barkulan |
| **-** | 10/6 | Week 1 | Program starts | Barkulan |
| **-** | 22/7 | Week 7 | Program ends | Barkulan |

**SECTION 1: IDEATION**

This section will dive deep into the following sub-section:

1. Problem
2. Solution
3. Insights

**WHAT IS IDEATION?**

Ideation refers to the ***process*** of developing and conveying prescriptive ideas to others, typically in a business setting. It describes the sequence of thoughts, from the original concept to implementation. Ideations can spring forth from past or present knowledge, external influences, opinions, convictions, or principles. Ideation can be expressed in graphical, written, or verbal terms.

*Source:* [*https://www.investopedia.com/terms/i/ideation.asp*](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/i/ideation.asp)

**HOW TO GET A STARTUP IDEA?**

The way to get startup ideas is not to try to think of startup ideas. It's to look for problems, preferably problems you have yourself.

The very best startup ideas tend to have three things in common: they're something the founders themselves want, that they themselves can build, and that few others realize are worth doing. Microsoft, Apple, Yahoo, Google, and Facebook all began this way.

*Source:* [*http://www.paulgraham.com/startupideas.html*](http://www.paulgraham.com/startupideas.html)

**HOW CAN YOU KNOW IF A STARTUP IDEA IS GOOD ENOUGH?**

A startup idea is basically a hypothesis and this is the way you should think about it. It's a hypothesis about why a company could grow quickly. And your job is to figure out how to construct your hypothesis, basically, the pitch to the investor, so they understand how it can grow quickly. A lot of times people make the mistakes of trying to just accurately describe or over-describe a lot of different parts.

*Source:* [*https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6e-how-to-evaluate-startup-ideas*](https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6e-how-to-evaluate-startup-ideas)

**WHAT DOES THE IDEATION PROCESS LOOKS LIKE?**

It looks like something like this:

* Problem
* Solution
* Insights

***FIRST: PROBLEM***

So, the first is the problem. So startup idea is composed of three parts. The first part is a problem and it's basically the initial conditions. You have to explain to me, like, what is the setting for this company that allows it to be able to grow quickly. The second is the solution. This is basically what is the experiment that you're basically running within those conditions for it to grow really quickly? And the third is, what's your insight? So what's your explanation why the thing that you're going to try, your experiment is going to end up being successful? Those are the three components that I always try to figure out when I'm listening to someone's pitch. Here's a tip for talking about the problem or to know whether your problem, your initial conditions, are correct.

***Good characteristics of a problem:***

* Popular
* Growing
* Urgent
* Expensive
* Mandatory
* Frequent

*Source:* [*https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6e-how-to-evaluate-startup-ideas*](https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6e-how-to-evaluate-startup-ideas)

***Exercise (20 minutes):***

***Give examples of each characteristics based on the local context of Somaliland?***

* A popular problem (thousands of people have this problem)
* A growing problem (ideally 20% growth rate per year)
* An urgent problem (people are suffering right now)
* An expensive problem (people are paying huge sums of money to solve this problem currently)
* A mandatory problem (some laws have changed & may cause this problem)
* A frequent problem (you have this problem every hour of your life)

**SECOND: SOLUTION**

***TIPS (ADVICE):***

* Don’t start with solution
* Avoid SISP(**S**olution **I**n **S**earch of a **P**roblem)

*Source:* [*https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6e-how-to-evaluate-startup-ideas*](https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6e-how-to-evaluate-startup-ideas)

**THIRD: INSIGHTS**

* Unfair advantage
* Related to growth
* You need one

**PART 1: UNFAIR ADVANTAGE**

* Founders
* Market
* Product
* Acquisition
* Monopoly

***1ST: FOUNDER UNFAIR ADVANTAGE***

All of these will be connected to numbers actually, which will help us make this really easy. Is like are you 1 in 10 of all the people in the world who can solve this problem? Are you a super expert? And 99% of the people we find at YC do not fall into that category. And so if you think it's like, well, I'm a product manager at Google, there's a lot of product managers at Google.

If you say you're an engineer at Microsoft, there's a lot of engineers at Microsoft, it's like, great, but it's not one that will make me think, oh, you have a greater advantage than someone else. If you've done a Ph.D. and let's say you've done it on some kind of crazy biotech research and you have like a special patent to be able to cure some kind of disease, then you have a founder advantage.

***2nd: MARKET UNFAIR ADVANTAGE***

Your market, is it growing 20% a year? Like, by default, if you just build the solution in the space, you should just automatically grow because you're just following a trend. If this is your only company advantage, then it's one of the weakest ones that you could have. It is great to be in that space but you want to have something in addition to this.

Like, you're going to do better than average because you've picked the right problem space and the right set of customers that want your problem. But again, if you're in a market that is stagnating or shrinking, then you're going to have investors worried about the long term viability of your company as a result.

***3rd: PRODUCT UNFAIR ADVANTAGE***

Product, this is super simple. Is your product 10X better than the competition? If it is, then you potentially have an unfair advantage and it has to be very, very clear. Someone should be able to look at your product and go, like, oh shit, this is so much better than everything else I've ever seen. It is 10X faster, it is 10X cheaper, etc. And if it's not in order of magnitude let's say it's just like 2X or 3X again, that's nice but it's not enough for an investor to go like, oh, this is a slam dunk.

In regards to that 10X product and showing that you are able to have that, later in startup school we're going to do a lecture on pricing. We'll talk things about cost and value and that'll help you sort of better understand as, like, oh, how to better prove out that 10X multiple using sort of metrics and numbers and pricing.

***4th: ACQUISITION UNFAIR ADVANTAGE***

You want to find acquisition paths that cost no money. And my favorite companies the ones that become really great are the ones that can grow by word of mouth, which is a good percentage of the way they grow. And so, in the early days of your startup, if you don't have any money, that's actually a very great way of exercising how do I grow this without having to pay for it?

**TIP:**

* Best startups in the world have $0 cost of acquisition

***5th: MONOPOLY UNFAIR ADVANTAGE***

The last one is do you have a monopoly. And so, we don't mean this in the monocle Monopoly game sense. We made it as like, as your company grows is it more difficult for you to be defeated by competitors? Do you get stronger?

A good examples of that are like companies with network effects and marketplaces, where marketplaces, where it tends to be a winner takes, a one company will tend to win. And network effects is just basically as my network grows, the strength of my company, and the value of the product or service also grows with it. Not every company has it, but when you do have that it works out great.

*Source:* [*https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6e-how-to-evaluate-startup-ideas*](https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6e-how-to-evaluate-startup-ideas)