

She was getting constant rejections from investors (as Bill Tai's investment alone wasn't enough), even when they finally got a technical co-founder after a full year of struggle. She recounted reading an article that described how **any deviation from these desired patterns (which investors look for) - Stanford, Harvard, MIT education, ex-Google, Apple, Facebook employee, even down to the up-and-to-the-right graphs - resulted in a negative mark.** As she said, "It would appear that we got a lot of marks, albeit negative ones. We didn't come from the "pedigree" of universities or companies and we didn't have pretty-looking graphs".



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Even their Location was a potential mark against them.

Virtually all the investors insisted they move to Silicon Valley, but they wanted to stay in Australia. Melanie might not have had all the Education and Location advantages, but she did have a ton of Insight, a very clear ambitious vision, and the grit and determination to make it happen.

Yet, even after building out the product that became Canva, and having fast, international growth, they still struggled to raise funding. They revised their pitchdeck over 100 times, and kept improving their pitch, bit by bit. **Eventually, they successfully landed \$3 million worth of investment, half from investors in California and the other half from match funding by the Australian government grant** (after having worked really hard on the application). **They moved to Sydney and launched Canva in 2014. It grew like crazy, and actually became a unicorn startup (worth over \$1 billion)!**

Canva is an amazing story of female tech startup founder success, with an amazing product.