Letter of Intent

between

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and

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HPI
HPI School of Design Thinking is the leading institution in Europe to teach and facilitate Design Thinking education in Europe. It aims at developing a mindset of creative confidence among students from all backgrounds by providing them with a useful education that builds diverse skill sets and teaches a variety of tools necessary to develop innovative solutions within a complex challenge and team environment.
Many student project teams engage in non-profit activities throughout the semester, entrepreneurial side projects or directly apply their education into a work environment. The focus of d-school is to educate a new generation of Design Thinkers, mainly with university backgrounds, in both basic and advanced track every semester
Instead, HPI academy was created to develop the skill set of professionals such as project managers and project staff to apply design thinking, lean startup, agile and change management best practices in their work environment and (innovation) teams.
The newly founded HPI E-School focusses on entrepreneurship education. It offers an annual Business Plan Competition and hackathon tailored to the needs of HPI students with a software engineering background and a focus on digital health to accelerate their ideas.

Design thinking is a human centered iterative approach to creating innovative solutions to complex problems. The idea of iteration is shared by other methodologies such as Agile, Scrum and Lean Startup. While developing creative confidence at the d-school participants learn to understand the value and importance of iteration, but they sometimes think that this is limited to the context of design thinking or it ends with the end of the project time frame. We wish to show participants that the very skillset that they have been developing can be taken further to not only find a solution, but also to build a whole business model form in order to successfully implement the meaningful and user-centric solutions they developed.

In extending the knowledge base of participants with a focus on Lean Startups and Agile the d.launchpad wishes to help students to tap into their skillset to see opportunities beyond the scope of their challenge and guide them through the process of starting an entrepreneurial endeavour.

"d.launchpad"
D.launchpad is an initiative that was founded by Norman Nemitz and Hendrik Joosten while studying Design Thinking at d-school in 2018/2019. It aims at bringing together staff, coaches and especially students & alumni from the d-school/ HPI environment with an idea or project who are interested in entrepreneurship or want to develop their idea further.

D.launchpad aims at providing a growing number of formats to the target group to further develop their ideas and projects, to systematically build & test prototypes and to develop business models the lean startup way. Further the goal is to embrace an entrepreneurial mindset, peer-learning and inspiration among the participants.

So far the d.launchpad hosted 5 events focused on
- Bringing together students of both basic and advanced track during a movie night, startup brunch aimed at skill-sharing, community building events,
- experts & entrepreneurs inputs, sharing inspiration & lessons aimed at building entrepreneurial confidence,
- A workshop szenario aimed at generating ideas, pitching ideas and, cofounder matching,

- A fast forward format linking design thinking to lean startup to accelerate the process from generating an idea to actually build & systematically test a prototype and business model
- A networking and movie night introducing the startup mindset of "moving & failing fast"

Content of collaboration between d.launchpad and d-school

Norman Nemitz und Hendrik Joosten, co-founders of d.launchpad intent to work together with d-school as partners with regards to their d.launchpad initiative founded in 2018/2019

- Mutual transfer of skills, methodology & competencies,
- Promotion of skill exchange and peer-learning between d-school students, alumni, staff, startups and experts,
- Mutuals transfer of contacts (d-school students or alumni with project or startup ideas, potential founders, founders and staff) who want to further develop their idea and are potentially interested in starting a business or non-profit organization to startup,
- Exchange to promote d.launchpad and other entrepreneurial events.

d-school can help us directly by

- offering d-school as a workshop & event location, given the space is available
- providing the materials needed to conduct workshops,
- highlighting our initiate via its communication channels (newsletter, internal displays) and across its network (E-School, HPI Academy, etc.),
- Giving us the opportunity to present our initiative regularly to d-school students
- Allowing us to participate in similar formats provided by D.School or HPI Academy for peer-learning purposes.

What we can offer d-school

- Offering a series of networking & workshop formats for d-school community
- Potentially inputs during basic & advanced track (deep dive)
- Building a bridge in between d-school staff & students and HPI institutions (d-school, E-School, HPI Academy & d-school) as well as in between d-school to external institutions within the Berlin startup ecosystem (e.g. Startup Incubator Berlin),
- We already share tools & methods, startup opportunities and insights on a trello-board,
- We already have created a whatsapp group & facebook page to build a community,
- We already have started to create a landing-page for attracting interest (that goes beyond the d-school community, but might create leads for HPI academy).

We will offer the following formats
- We will continuously co-create and try out new workshop formats to meet the needs of the growing d.launchpad community and d-school leads,
- We also hope to host flash input sessions after d-school days and provide a central resource portal to share and communicate all d.launchpad activities,
- The d.launchpad fast forward will be a recurring event to facilitate community building and project/ startup teams progress,
- Potentially we will host a hackathon or startup weekend with or without partnering institutions (E-school).

Our vision
- Support d-school students to launch their (startup) ideas within or outside of the d-school project scope successfully,
- Providing d-school students with an opportunity to learn & practice agile methodologies,
- To build a diverse community of entrepreneurs with a startup mindset,
- Increase the number of successful project implementations,
- Strengthen the perception of d-school as an entrepreneurial education institution,
- To potentially connect the target group to other institutions to leverage success (e.g. E-School business plan competition, incubators, investors such as HPI Seed fund, business angel club or foundations)
- Foster peer-learning among students, alumni and staff of various cohorts and HPI institutions,
- Develop a regular recurring event format that lives of the participation of its members and their expertise,
- To provide successful ideas, projects and teams with a platform to accelerate their journey,
- To provide successful ideas, projects and teams with access to financing and access to market (potentially via HPI seed-fund) in the long run.

It is important to note that we see ourselves as an additional activity for the d-school students understanding that many of them have time and energy constraints. We have every intention to work with d-school staff to ensure that the timing commitment of our events do not jeopardize the education of the participants.

We are excited to facilitate learning and learn from others as we develop the launchpad further. There are big opportunities and big ideas coming from the HPI on a regular basis and we want to support participants in scaling those ideas and making real impacts in society.

This letter of intent does not imply a legal obligation to collaborate.

The d.launchpad project and commitment does not imply payment of the co-founders Norman Nemitz and Hendrik Joosten as their efforts for d-school are based on voluntary work with the goal of giving back to d-school and its community.

The d.launchpad project collaboration and mutual support is defined for a period of one year at first. Given that d.launchpad was started at the beginning of last semester we would like to go into the mutual retrospective and definition of further development of the collaboration with d-school and other HPI institutions at the end of the current semester, namely March 2020.

The co-founders of d.launchpad and d-school aim at collaborating sustainably together according to the defined development goals beyond the defined period of time with the idea to further integrate the growing d-school and d.launchpad community in its acitivities.

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Norman Nemitz   Claudia Nicolai
co-founder d.launchpad   HPI School of Design Thinking

and

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Hendrik Joosten
co-founder d.launchpad