



The C2C Barcamp

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Documentation

Topic: Cross-sector incubators

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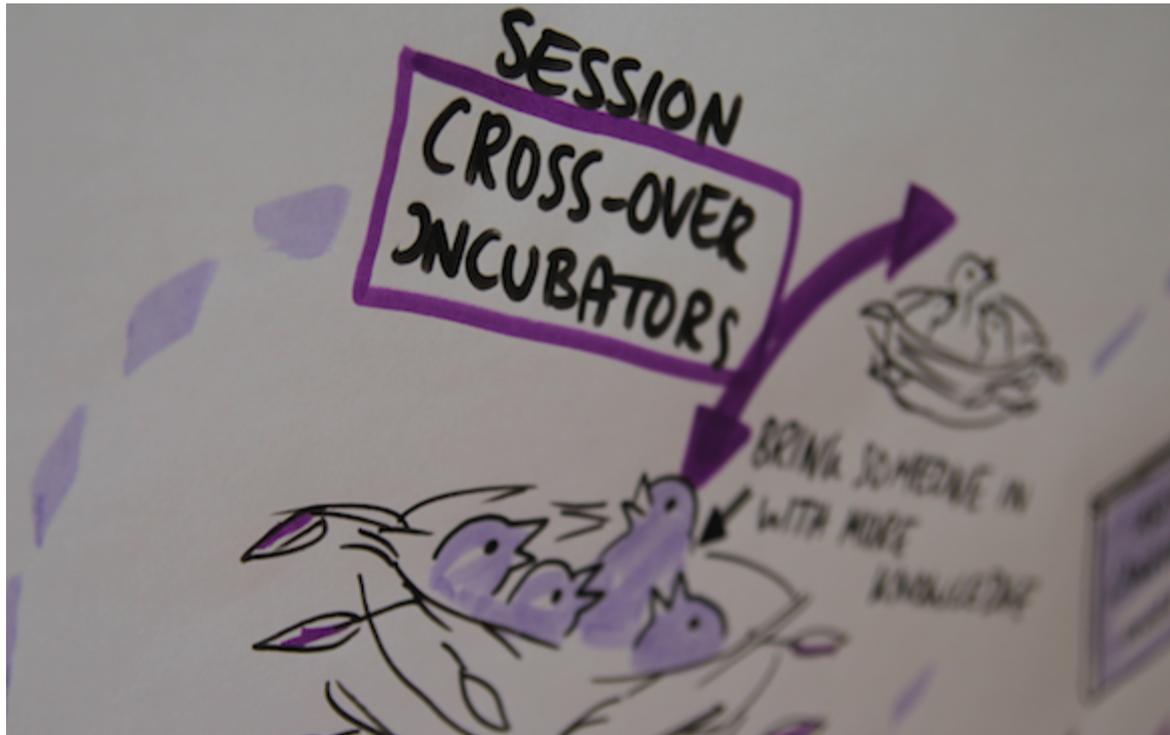
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Session: Cross-sector incubators

Host: Helen Piir, Tallin Creative Business Incubator, Tallin, Estonia



1. Introduction and description of topic

Helen Piir is the manager of development at the Tallin Creative Business Incubator, an incubator for both creative professionals and companies and non-CCI companies. At the moment, there are 42 companies inside the incubator. Both the mix and the size make the Tallin Creative Business Incubator an exception not only in Estonia.

The incubation program begins with a 6 month start-up module during which mostly organisational issues such as legal forms, homepage development etc. are handled. This phase is followed by an 18 months growth/development module, which focuses on finding new clients and branching out activities. The start-ups can drop out of the incubator at any time - since they have their own structures and goals, after every 6 months, the company and incubator evaluate their time together and decide whether they want to continue the incubation period or not and how. Experience shows that the process is faster, i.e. success is achieved earlier, for technology-based and creativity-based companies.

For this session, Helen Piir wanted to focus on the question: Should there be different incubators for creative companies and other sectors?

To answer this question, the two opposed scenarios (yes/no) were discussed.

2. Theses and major points for discussion:

Entry questions addressed by the participants:

- what kind of structural base do you need for an incubator to manage expectations? (Robert Karlsson, Kulturkraft Syd)
- how to network with incubators/start-ups and with what tools we can help them? (Gabriele Nilsson, Media Evolution)
- what are the solutions for financial sustainability which don't depend on government funding? (Corrado Bottoli, Milan Chamber of Commerce)
- how to address different needs of investors and creatives and how to find the right people for an incubator? (Denise DiDio, Milan Chamber of Commerce)
- are sectorial incubators necessary or counterproductive? (Linnea Ax, Tillväxtverket)
- should we combine incubators from different industries to make them more diverse? (Sandra Zätterström, West Swedish Chamber of Commerce)
- Spaces can be shared, but what about processes? Does there need to be a fixed program or can there be different modules that can be mixed according to needs, individual training, schedules etc.?
- What can we do now with this knowledge?
- How can we find the right people?
- What is the goal for an incubator?
- How can we attract other companies and cooperations with creatives?
- What are the threats/pitfalls of cross-incubation?

Results of the workshop:

Scenario "yes" to the practice of cross-sector incubators:

- incubator as a point of reference
- one training program for all
- easier to get money because investors/government funding can be targeted better
- different languages, different logic (mindset)
- space can be adjusted to fit needs
- marketing focus
- increases competition

Scenario "no" = keeping the sectors apart:

- can offer different scenarios within an industry since individual approaches are always necessary, especially in the creative sector.
- spreads or reduces the risk
- makes it easier for companies to exchange knowledge
- gives companies and investors a feel for industry thinking
- one infrastructure for all

3. Summary

- the question of a separated or joint incubator should be based more on value, methods and goals, not industries.
- the process should be the same but special mentors, trainings etc. should be

added

- the word "incubation" should be changed to "contamination"! Incubators shouldn't be isolated, should be open networks that enable thinking and working outside the box.



4. Links

Tallin Business Incubator: www.inkubaator.ee

Milano Speed Mi Up: <http://speedmiup.it>

Contamination Labs in Italy (see page 109):

http://www.sviluppoeconomico.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/startup_eng_rev.pdf