

# **startup mentoring**

*information guide*

**startup  
mentoring**  
by enpact



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# 1. mentoring for entrepreneurs

Mentoring provides entrepreneurs with numerous benefits for building up their businesses. Entrepreneurs face a wide range of challenges in their endeavour to establish and scale a company. While some of them are generic, others are unique to individual business cases. Entrepreneurs could also learn and master challenges themselves, doing so in a mentoring relationship is much more effective. Mentees have the opportunity to benefit from the experiences that other entrepreneurs before them have made and are thereby enabled to overcome challenges faster.

Experienced business people acting as mentors are an enormous support to overcome the challenges that entrepreneurs face. While a successful mentoring relationship is a win-win situation for both parties involved – the mentors and mentees:

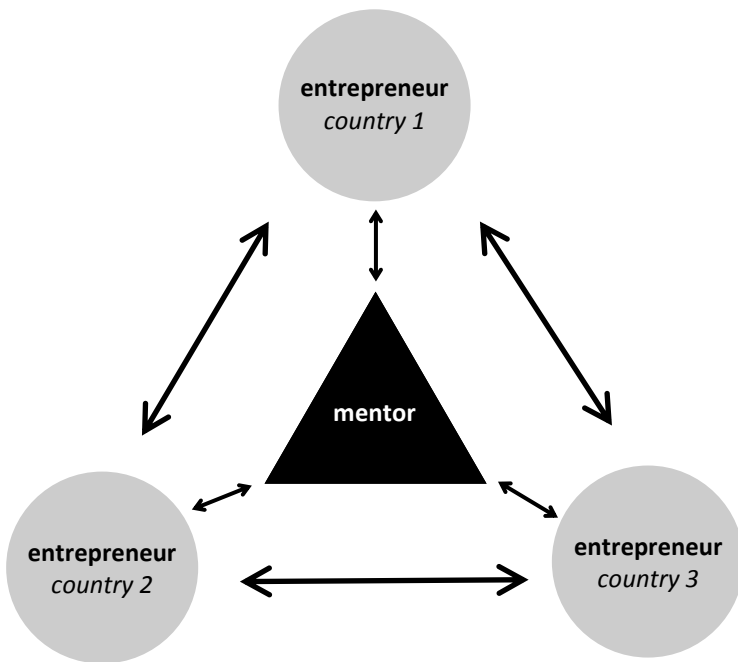
## mentoring benefits

- the mentees receive personalised feedback and encouragement from experienced business people, the opportunity to learn directly from their mentor's expertise, constructive advice, as well as access to valuable networks.
- the mentors gain new insights and perspectives by helping their mentee develop both professionally and personally. In addition, they experience the realities of young start-ups, which is no doubt very inspiring.

## 2. mentoring as a tool for international development

The previously mentioned advantages apply to any given startup ecosystem. Today, many countries are confronted with enormous economic challenges. In light of high unemployment rates and growing populations, job creation is of critical importance. Contributing to startup ecosystems has proven to be a very powerful instrument for the creation of employment. In this context, mentoring is an important enabler for entrepreneurship. Therefore, the impact developed its international startup mentoring programme supporting entrepreneurship and economic development in its project countries. In addition to addressing economic challenges, the programme also brings Europe and its neighbors together by building a sustainable and growing network of entrepreneurs from different continents. These entrepreneurs can become future change-makers in the increasingly interconnected world.

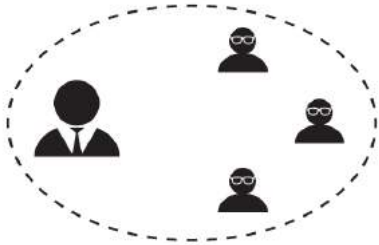
### 3. mentoring approach



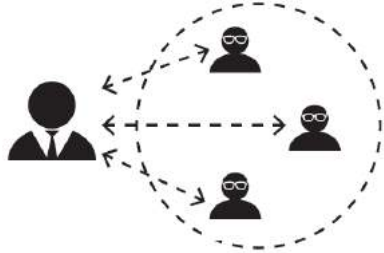
While a number of mentoring groups to foster both vertical and programmes exist to support horizontal knowledge exchange. This entrepreneurs in various contexts, is supported by first-hand insights startup mentoring differentiates itself into the working realities of the by its unique approach. In addition to the different ecosystems in the project traditional one-on-one mentoring, countries. mentoring is also provided in working

### 3. mentoring approach

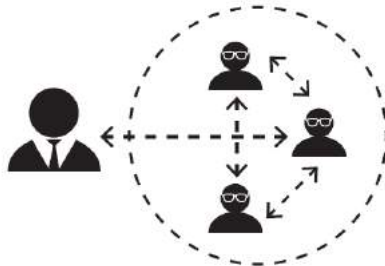
1. Mentoring teams consist of one mentor and three entrepreneurs



2. Throughout the mentoring programme the entrepreneurs in each team will work together with their mentor



3. The mentoring consists of one-on-one mentoring between each entrepreneur in the team and the mentor and of horizontal exchange between the three entrepreneurs of one team

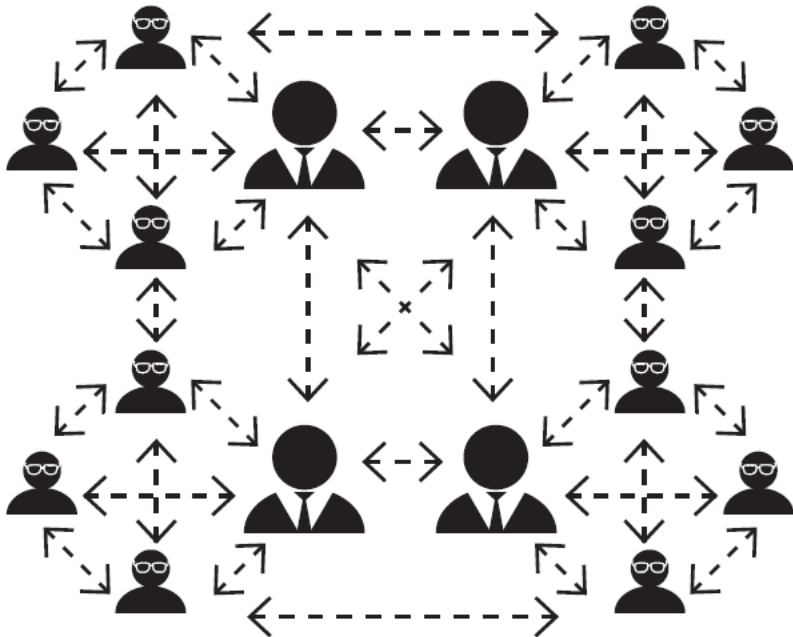


startup mentoring utilizes a multi-layered, horizontal learning and mentoring approach that is based on triangular relationships between young entrepreneurs from different regions who are guided and advised by mentors from the startup mentoring network. Over the course of 8 months, young entrepreneurs benefit from intensive one-on-one mentoring as well as peer-to-peer learning within their group. Whilst the mentors provide fellows with

individual coaching and counseling, strong emphasis is also put on knowledge exchange and the sharing of experiences amongst the fellows themselves. In this way, the startup mentoring approach is a unique peer-to-peer learning method, guided and advised by a large multi-disciplinary group of mentors who are able to provide the participants with tailor-made expertise and advice for the business cases presented.



4. Beyond the mentoring within the teams, horizontal exchange is fostered between all entrepreneurs of one cohort and between all fellows and the different mentors



This combination creates the basis for a sustainable entrepreneurial network and enhances lasting cross-cultural relations between the participating entrepreneurs. In order to secure the impact of the programme, the fellows are integrated into startup mentoring's alumni network upon completion of the programme.

Last but not least, participants benefit from the expansive startup mentoring network, both in Germany and other parts of the world and are given the rare opportunity to gain first-hand insights into the start-up scene of startup mentoring's different project countries.

A portrait of Thierry Feike, a middle-aged man with short, dark hair, wearing glasses and a light-colored collared shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

“

enpact not only gives me the chance to share my experiences with outstanding fellows – it also allows me to gain firsthand insights into high potential entrepreneurial ecosystems.”

—Thierry Feike, Warema, Mentor

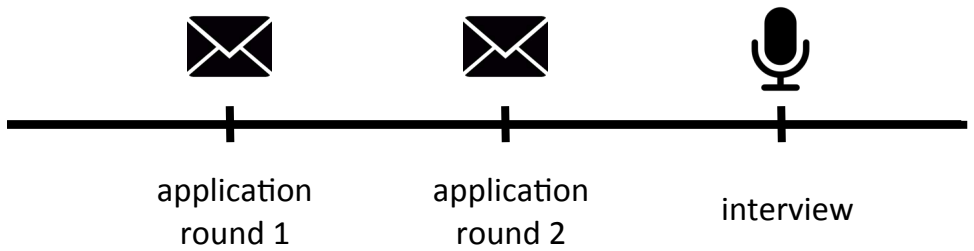
## 4. key objectives

While each entrepreneur participating in the programme will develop individual goals with his/her mentor, startup mentoring has these common objectives to ensure that the programme is successful:

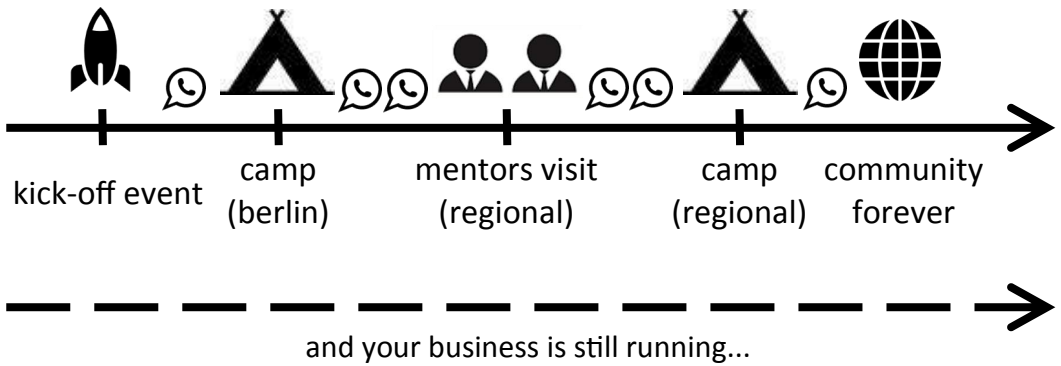
- provide mentoring support for promising young entrepreneurs from different countries to help scale up their businesses
- create a sustainable and extensive international network of young entrepreneurs bridging Europe and its neighbors
- foster intercultural understanding of young entrepreneurs from different regions
- offer startup mentoring fellows and mentors insight into the different ecosystems of the project countries
- facilitate market access and potential business cooperation
- support the creation of sustainable and innovative jobs

## 5. annual structure

### Application Process



## 8-month mentoring programme



## 6. key components

### programme activities



#### *kick-off event*

Each year at the start off the new programme, fellows come together in the project countries for an introduction. The fellows participate in icebreaker activities to get to know each other and present their startups to to the group. startup mentoring provides the fellows with resources and information about the programme's structure and mentoring approach. During the event, fellows complete the on-boarding process so that they are prepared for the camps. The kick off event is the first introduction to the startup mentoring community.



#### *camps*

Camps are an integral part of the startup mentoring programme. During each programme cycle, two camps take place, one in Germany and one in a project country. These camps give all participating mentors and fellows the opportunity to meet in person for four days in order to provide optimal conditions for a successful mentoring process. Normally, these camps follow a similar structure: international triangular groups with one-on-one mentoring, specialized workshops, and local excursions.



#### *national roundtables*

The national roundtables take place on a monthly basis and serve as an opportunity for fellows to meet regularly within their country. The aim is to monitor and secure the progress of the ongoing mentoring and to foster knowledge exchange among fellows. During these roundtables, fellows can address their needs on specific subjects. startup mentoring alumni, as well as external experts, are often invited to facilitate workshops on subjects that are agreed upon within the national group. The roundtables are also an ideal opportunity to visit each other's premises, since startup mentoring encourages fellows to take turns hosting.



#### *one-on-one mentoring*

Throughout the programme, fellows get the opportunity to work in several one-on-one sessions with mentors who are relevant to their specific business cases. This exchange takes place during camps and throughout the rest of the programme via online calls and e-mail exchanges.



### mentors visit

The mentors visit occurs during the months between the camps. Mentors travel to project countries to meet with fellows and their teams and see operations on the ground. This gives a unique opportunity for impactful mentoring sessions during the visit. Besides this, our mentors support the local startup ecosystem by making workshops for entrepreneurs in our local partner communities.



### startup mentoring lounge

The startup mentoring lounges, which take place on the evening of the last day of each camp, give all participants the opportunity to meet a variety of actors and stakeholders from the local startup ecosystem. At the lounges, interesting start-ups, renowned entrepreneurs, potential investors, and representatives from startup mentoring's national partners are invited. They provide a unique opportunity to network and build sustainable cooperation with the local startup scene.



### expert workshops

Over the course of the programme, fellows have the opportunity to identify topics relevant to their business that they would like to receive additional and in-depth training on. Based on these needs assessments, external experts (from the national and international startup mentoring network) are then invited to hold thematic workshops at entrepreneurs camps and national roundtables.



### local startup exploration

The local startup exploration allows participants to gain insights into the local startup ecosystem and culture. startup mentoring and mentors organize the excursions in close cooperation with local partners from the country that is hosting the camp.

## 6. key components

### resources



*startup mentoring homepage—[www.startup-mentoring.org](http://www.startup-mentoring.org)*

The startup mentoring website has been created to further increase the value of participating in the startup mentoring community. Here, current and former fellows and mentors are featured with their specific expertise and knowledge as well as topics or contacts for what they seek. These tools provide the startup mentoring community with a unique opportunity to benefit from expertise available in the network and to actively contribute to the development of others. They are also excellent for improving B2B and B2C relations.



*social media*

startup mentoring's *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and *Instagram* accounts are routinely updated to promote stories from within the community and to share opportunities for current and former fellows and mentors. The information provided on social media allows the community to keep up to date with each other and with startup mentoring's ongoing development.



## future



### alumni programme

Upon completion of the mentoring programme, participants become members of the alumni programme which was created to secure the sustainable impact of startup mentoring. All fellows and mentors of previous cycles are integrated here and thus build a varied pool of expertise. The alumni programme aims to build a network for lifelong peer-to-peer learning, supported by different initiatives and events. Alumni of the startup mentoring programme are frequent guests at the lounges and play a key role in startup mentoring programmes. One of the many highlights of the alumni programme is the yearly alumni gathering in one of the project countries.



### national mentoring programme

startup mentoring's national mentoring programme aims to provide entrepreneurs in marginalised regions of project countries with access to mentoring. Within this framework, international startup mentoring alumni become mentors themselves and share their experiences. This programme secures the sustainability of startup mentoring in project countries by breaking language barriers and building local capacities in disadvantaged regions.



### ongoing mentoring

In addition to frequent physical meetings throughout the programme, continuous calls take place within teams and individually between fellows and their mentors. They are complemented with e-mail exchange and other follow-up tools and platforms on the Internet.

# 7. methodology and toolbox

startup mentoring provides mentors with a set of methods and tools that can facilitate achieving the two major objectives of the programme:

- 1) creating a collaborative spirit in the team/community**
- 2) advising the individual entrepreneurs on the development of their businesses**

Building trust within the team is critical for a successful mentoring experience. startup mentoring will provide mentors with best practices, tools and methods as a guide to instill trust within their teams at the start of the programme.

To create a common basis for both the one-on-one mentoring and the horizontal exchange within teams, it is crucial to ensure a comprehensive understanding of each business case at the beginning of the programme. Fully grasping the status quo of a business requires a deep understanding of the start-up's background as well as of the specific markets and customers they are targeting. To reach this level of understanding, the Business Model Canvas, based on the Lean Start Up by Eric Ries and Persona Maps, can be useful tools.

## **project plan**

In cooperation with their appointed mentor, fellows need to develop a project plan based on the template provided by startup mentoring. This plan defines specific objectives and milestones of each fellow with steps to be reached at different points in the course of the programme. The plan allows fellows to clearly define objectives and milestones in order to track and evaluate progress throughout the programme.

Fellows will be introduced to the project plan prior to the start of their mentoring at the preparatory workshop. After the first camp, the project plan should be crafted together with the mentor in one-on-one sessions.

The final version is due three weeks after the first entrepreneurs camp.

A portrait of a man with dark, wavy hair and a beard, smiling slightly. He is wearing a red, white, and blue plaid shirt. The background is a plain, light grey color.

“

The enact programme was a unique and invaluable experience for me. Not only did I scale up my business with the support of my mentor and the other fellows – I now have friends in distant countries and continents. “

—Wehib Chebi, Plexideco, Fellow

## 8. goals and attitudes for success

In order to achieve the previously mentioned objectives, startup mentoring seeks outstanding and proactive entrepreneurs who are motivated to take matters into their own hands. The more participants put into the programme, the more they take out of it.

Therefore, proactive engagement of the participants is necessary, not optional. The startup mentoring programme selects only highly motivated individuals who take commitment seriously and are willing to dedicate the necessary time and energy to achieve their goals.

In order to support this commitment, startup mentoring participants must adhere to the following code of conduct:

- be open-minded to new ideas
- respect the time of others as if it's your own
- be proactive—do not wait for opportunities to come to you
- participate in all key components of the programme
- help prepare/attend startup excursions when the programme is hosting an event in your home country
- develop cooperation and joint ventures within your team and the whole programme group
- think big!

# 9. roles and responsibilities

For a successful mentoring programme, it is crucial to clarify roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. **startup mentoring does not tolerate any forms of racism, extremism, or partisanship!**

startup mentoring strongly believes that in an ideal mentor-fellow relationship, the mentor gives guidance, advice, and takes an emotional investment in the success of his/her fellow. This relationship, however, is not one way. Like any relationship, a mentor-fellow relationship requires both sides to work together continuously to achieve a mutual benefit. These principles of trust and reciprocity are crucial to the success of the programme.

Furthermore, all participants should have a genuine interest in learning about different startup ecosystems, markets and cultures in the project countries. An interest in working with people from diverse cultures is also an important characteristic that will ensure that all parties involved will benefit from the programme on both a personal and professional level.

# 9.1 role of startup mentoring

The startup mentoring team, located in Berlin, is the facilitator and enabler of the programme.

startup mentoring develops the framework of the programme and provides the mentors and fellows with the tools to allow them to succeed within that framework.

Each working group has a focal person at startup mentoring who contributes to the programme in the following ways:

- facilitating, steering, monitoring and mediating the mentoring process in case challenges arise in the programme
- following up on, keeping track of and documenting developments and progress, both on the individual and team level, by implementing the communications tool that the team/fellow has agreed upon
- assisting with the development of a network among participants for mutual support and exchange of ideas during the programme

In addition to the facilitation and monitoring of the programme, startup mentoring covers organisational and logistical tasks during the programme. These include:

- organising camps in project countries, e.g. taking care of hotel bookings and choosing adequate venues and locations for the camps
- planning and preparing content for each camp in collaboration with mentors and fellows to correspond with their needs, wishes and suggestions
- organising national roundtables in cooperation with fellows based on the identified needs in specific project countries, e.g. inviting external experts and startup mentoring alumni
- managing the alumni network, e.g. maintaining an ongoing contact list and inviting alumni to relevant events to foster a sustainable network

Finally, startup mentoring will promote the visibility of the programme and feature individual stories on the website and social media accounts.

## 9.2 role of the mentor

A startup mentoring mentor is an experienced businessperson who has either built their own company or has worked for many years in a senior position within the private sector. They are willing to make an emotional investment in the success of their fellows by providing them with their time, advice, experiences and coaching.

Mentoring should take on a holistic approach to the entrepreneurial journey, rather than focus on very specific technical assistance. The mentor's experience and expertise allows fellows to question existing patterns, change perspectives and discuss strategic ideas, which equips fellows to make their own decisions.

**8 months X 3 hours per month  
for mentoring calls = 24 hours**

+

**2 camps X 40 hours for each  
entrepreneurs camp = 80 hours**

+

**6 hours for the preparatory  
workshop = 6 hours**

+

**5 days X 8 hours per day  
For mentor visit = 40 hours**

**Total= 150 hours**

### **time commitment**

Everyone considering becoming a mentor should be aware of the time needed to fulfill this role and its responsibilities successfully. The experience can only be beneficial to all parties involved when an adequate amount of time is secured for the mentoring relationship and the programme's components. The chart provides a rough overview on the minimum amount of time that must be invested into the programme.



## role

The ideal mentor is highly motivated to support young entrepreneurs in their endeavour to develop and scale up their business. He/she assists the fellow in developing necessary skills to their full extent.

The creation of trust and confidentiality with the fellows is a key prerequisite for the mentoring relationship. After identifying the potential for specific skills, capabilities and business opportunities (personally and professionally), the mentor supports fellows in realising their full potential.

Ideally, mentors are ready to open their own network to their fellows to provide them with access to potential business partners.

## responsibilities

- establish a common basis for mentoring within his/her team and build trust among the team
- find consensus within the team on how to structure the work during the programme (with the support of an appointed focal person at startup mentoring)
- advise and assist in developing project plans for fellows
- Define goals, accomplishments, and reporting methods in accordance with the team
- facilitate the process of defining communication tools within the team as well as for individual communication with the fellows
- ensure that dates and appointments for calls, the delivery of documents, etc., are carried out in a timely manner
- oversee and document fellows' progress (with the support of the appointed focal person at startup mentoring)
- ask the right questions and question assumptions critically
- be a good listener and give honest feedback
- adjust and adapt to challenges and treat any given information as confidential

## 9.3 role of the fellow

A startup mentoring fellow is a promising entrepreneur who is building up his/her own company. The fellows are both eager to receive advice on specific challenges they are facing and share their own experiences with peers. They also show high interest in the startup ecosystems of other project countries.

startup mentoring fellows should have already developed a Minimum

Viable Product (MVP) and possess a proof of concept. In the past, the majority of startup mentoring fellows were founders of businesses that existed for an average of two to four years and aimed at scaling up their business. Although these characteristics describe a typical startup mentoring fellow of past cycles, these characteristics are by no means a requirement for the selection process.

**8 months X 8 hours per month  
for mentoring calls, preparation  
and follow up tasks = 64 hours**

+

**2 camps X 40 hours for each  
entrepreneurs camp = 80 hours**

+

**6 hours for the preparatory  
workshop = 6 hours**

+

**8 hours for the national  
roundtable = 8 hours**

+

**5 days X 8 hours per day  
For mentor visit = 40 hours**

**Total= 198 hours**

### **time commitment**

A fellow needs to be willing to invest an adequate amount of time to the mentoring relationship and the programme's components. In total, a startup mentoring fellow needs to commit to an average of around 2 hours per week throughout the duration of the mentoring programme which adds up to almost 200 hours over the entire 8-month programme.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

In the event that a participant misses more than one event unexcused, startup mentoring reserves the right to immediately exclude them from the programme. All relevant and important dates are available on the homepage and should be consulted before submitting an application.

## **role**

Fellows are expected to be proactive and actively contribute to the programme. Desire to build a good and productive relationship with the mentor and team members is crucial. Investing adequate time into the programme is therefore an absolute necessity.

Fellows should know their mentor will not relieve them of their duties or make business decisions. On the contrary, it is expected that fellows propose initiatives and reflect upon goals and business alternatives, which are then discussed and challenged in close cooperation with the mentor.

As we put special emphasis on peer-to-peer learning, fellows must proactively participate in all aspects of the programme. startup mentoring expects fellows to be eager to learn from one another by sharing their experiences and skills.

## **responsibilities**

- keep relationship with mentor and team positive and productive
- develop and submit a project plan with feasible milestones and identify what you aim to achieve over the course of the programme (in close cooperation with your mentor after the first camp)
- discuss openly with your team and mentor. Be responsive and express your wishes to your mentor, team members and startup mentoring in order to gear components of the programme towards your needs.
- treat any given information as confidential
- be proactive. Ensure good team spirit throughout the programme
- respect deadlines, both within your team and with your mentor. This also applies to deadlines given by startup mentoring staff, such as submission of the project plan, programme feedback, and logistical arrangements
- dedicate the appropriate time for mentoring throughout the programme
- be responsive. Make sure you reply to e-mails and answer calls from your mentor and the startup mentoring staff
- host a national roundtable at your premises
- organise a local startup exploration for your team members when the entrepreneurs camp takes place in your home country
- be aware that each fellow cohort consists of about 50 individuals. It is impossible to please everyone at all times. Therefore, always remember that startup mentoring offers a large variety of opportunities, tools and platforms it can not solve all problems in one single workshop

# 10. alumni network

All fellows are integrated into our growing alumni network after the mentoring phase. The network provides startup mentoring programme graduates with vast opportunities within a diverse and international network of entrepreneurs.

In order to give sustainable added value for members of the startup mentoring community, several opportunities to network and engage with like-minded businesses are offered. Alumni have the chance to become mentors in upcoming startup mentoring programmes and lead expert workshops in future programme years. Finally, startup mentoring invites all alumni to lounges in project countries where success stories are shared during inspiring talks.

One of the core components of the alumni network is startup mentoring's "national mentoring" programme.

This new initiative is aimed at promoting entrepreneurship in marginalised areas, where entrepreneurs face difficulties in developing their start-ups and maintaining a sustainable entrepreneurial drive.

This new initiative supports economic development in disadvantaged regions of project countries. During the regional mentoring programme, entrepreneurs receive mentoring in their native language. In contrast to the startup mentoring programme, national mentoring fellows do not need to be fluent in English.

The combination of the two programmes enables startup mentoring to support more entrepreneurs in these countries. As with the startup mentoring programme, national mentoring is implemented in working groups of three entrepreneurs.





## **Imprint**

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