

**Innovation for African Universities**

---

# **Network Partner Interim Report**

**Final**

**Deadline 15 December 2021**



## Table of Contents

1. What did you do and what is your plan now? .....	3
Section 1.1 Problem investigation .....	3
Section 1.2. Implementation Plan.....	10
2. Learning .....	14
3. How can you be sure you will achieve your outcomes? .....	17





# 1. What did you do and what is your plan now?

## Section 1.1 Problem investigation

Q1: Please outline what you have done to deepen your understanding of the problem you are investigating in Phase 1. (600 words)

*Guidance: The IAU programme looks to encourage equal peer partnerships between sectors and between countries. The design of the programme is based upon a broad design thinking model where it is expected that investigations and a deepening understanding of the problem being tackled will allow a more nuanced and better formed solution set.*

- Narrative of the process undertaken, including which partner did what
- Outline what changed from your original proposal and why
- Financial report (separate spreadsheet supplied, not counted in the word limit) of how the first tranche was spent and accounted for, showing split between partners

### Centre of Excellence Workshops:

LSE were represented by 2 people in attendance at the workshops each week, GOU had 3 of their ambassadors present at the workshops and Sparks had 1 person attending the workshops each week. The team greatly appreciated the interactions with other projects and actively engaged in the community of practice, learning from their peer and offering insights were relevant.

### Surveys for GOU students:

GOU assumed the lead, outlining the questions for the survey which was sent to GOU students to better understand how they engage within the area of entrepreneurship. LSE and GOU supported the team in refining the survey to include questions on social entrepreneurship. LSE took the lead on the initial analysis of the survey which collected 42 responses.

### In person 2-day workshop:

GOU took the lead, identifying 16 students to invite for the inperson workshops. We selected students from the survey as well as from those who did not participate in the survey itself but showed an interest. GOU also hosted the in-person workshop at their DNA Learning Centre at the university in Enugu. LSE took the lead in conducting the workshop which included gathering more in-depth information around the entrepreneurial education they had received as well as conducting a business modelling workshop. GOU supported the delivery of the workshop.

### Changes from Original Proposal:

The initial proposal was targeting students and alumni from both LSE and GOU to participate in the incubator programme. However, during the course of the initial phase, it became evident that the target group needed to be narrowed down to only GOU students. This is because the programme will take place between Enugu and Lagos. It would be difficult to attract LSE alumni who are not based in Enugu to participate. Most LSE alumni are based in Lagos and Abuja. Additionally, as the workshops delivered by the Centre of Excellence progressed, it felt more relevant to focus on the upskilling of GOU and their entrepreneurial offerings through the support of the knowledge and experience of LSE and Sparks. The initial plan was also to bring GOU students to Lagos to participate in workshops, however, following the LSE trip to Enugu, it became evident that GOU

[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)



would benefit more from a programme taking place in Enugu as this would allow a wider number of GOU staff to be upskilled and exposed to the programme rather than a small group of students in Lagos. The initial programme also looked at running a virtual programme which would see LSE and Sparks ecosystem members contributing to workshop delivery. Following the trip to Enugu, it is clear that GOU has a range of relevant network members that can also contribute to this offering.



Q2: What did you do to learn about and deepen your understanding of the problem investigated? How did that change from your original application and why? (300 words)

*Research questions, methods, approach*

### **Surveys for GOU students:**

Conducted a survey with 42 local Nigerian students / alumni, which taught us more about their motivations for starting businesses, and what they felt had been holding them back.

- Finance was widely considered the biggest barrier to them starting businesses
- Respondents considered the impact their businesses would have in quite general indirect ways that were not as directly tied to UNDSG as some UK students generally assume 'social impact' businesses to be. (From this we explored further the local conceptions of 'social impact'.)
- 80% of respondents had taken entrepreneurship classes as part of a degree, with 37% also having taken informal classes and only 10% having also watched online recordings (like YouTube).
- 50% considered the entrepreneurship classes that they had taken so far to be '10/10' helpful, and were very passionate about their experiences and building upon them.
- 95% of respondents had plans to start a business
- 100% of respondents said that they would need support to help launch their businesses

### **In person 2-day workshop:**

As a follow up from the survey that was sent to GOU students, an in person 2 day workshop was conducted jointly between LSE and GOU at the university. The students were gathered from the department of Biotechnology. The intention was to gather students from a cross section of departments across the university. However, since the GOU team members working on this project are all part of the Biotechnology department, it was easier to gather students from there to take part in a 2 day workshop that required missing classes. The purpose of this workshop was to understand the type of entrepreneurship education they currently receive at GOU as well as to identify the gaps in their education through a discussion of opportunities and challenges with the students. The 2 day session was run through an interactive approach where the first day was focused on a focus group discussion with the aim of identifying the opportunities and challenges in entrepreneurship from the perspective of the students. The second day was focused on an interactive session that addressed some of the challenges the students identified on the first day. The purpose of this session was to test out how students interact with and value a workshop that focused on their challenges.



Q3: What were the results of your investigations? (300 words)

*Evidence gathered and conclusions*

### **Surveys for GOU students:**

Discovered what they had previously learnt in entrepreneurship, how they felt about what they had learnt and what they felt was missing from the courses that they had taken - which generally was the e-commerce side of entrepreneurship. Some respondents also requested follow up business education, for how to 'get back up after a business goes down' or 'how to maintain a business'. So It would be worthwhile to implement a generic beginners business course as well as include elements that would focus on developing existing knowledge and skill-sets. E-commerce was a topic which respondents felt they had not been adequately taught, and as a fast moving sector it is important not to be complacent with teaching this topic from potentially out-dated materials.

Whilst 19/42 respondents said they understood what STEM stood for, only 8/42 knew the Western interpretation of the acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths, so the acronym shouldn't be used to prevent future misunderstandings.

When asked what the main issue holding back their business development plans were, 15/42 respondents said finance was holding them back.

There was a strong motivation from a significant number of respondents who were interested in the beauty and cosmetic industry. Many described improving aesthetics and confidence as a social impact in itself. The beauty industry is fast paced with relatively low barriers to entry, and as such has often been an industry with great potential especially for women with a lower socioeconomic background. (The first female self made millionaire in America was an African American beauty entrepreneur, several of the 10 Black British women to raise £1million pounds had beauty based businesses etc.) So in addition to focusing on STEM business development as initially proposed, it would make sense to include elements on how to bootstrap a beauty business, dealing with regulation, suppliers / factories etc.

There were definitely some cultural differences which should be acknowledged, such as the spiritual / moral aspect to business mentorship. When asked to describe their ideal mentor, answers included "someone spiritual" "someone god-fearing", "an honest person who puts the mentee before himself" and "the Holy Spirit and I are ideal mentors". Perhaps business advisor would have been a less loaded term than 'mentor'.

### **In person 2-day workshop:**

The first day of the workshop was focused on understanding the opportunities and challenges faced by the students in their entrepreneurship education. Through this focus group, it was immediately understood that the form of entrepreneurship activity the university engages the students in is slightly outdated and not interactive. The students had been exposed to long and complex business plans as the formal way of designing their business. Students shared that in their entrepreneurship class they are given some money and are expected to use it to set up a business and create revenue. None of the students present had completed the complex business plan they were asked to. This interaction was very informative in helping us understand the way in which students engage in entrepreneurship through their university. It set the foundation for the session that took place on the second day. Given that none of the students were familiar with a business model canvas, the second workshop focused on a taster session looking at building a business model canvas based on the assignment of building a business that was set in their

[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)



entrepreneurship module. The focus of the session was on looking at value propositions for their business. It was also clear that not all students wanted to develop STEM focused businesses despite being STEM students which was also evident from the surveys. Therefore, it will be important for us to create an inclusive business incubator that is not fixed only on STEM businesses. The students received this session very well and indicated that they would be interested in participating in the incubator programme we deliver next year if the focus will be on practical activity and learnings as this workshop had been.



Q4: What is the problem statement you have narrowed down on, for which stakeholder(s) and with what outcome. (400 words). How has the problem you have chosen changed from your original proposal?

*For this part, you can if you wish paste the half-Value Proposition Canvas we wrote on week 3 if complete and up to date.*

The initial problem statement and proposal was:

*By developing entrepreneurs the intention is that the successful entrepreneurs will become job creators themselves. Through this business incubation programme we aim to exchange knowledge across all 3 institutions in order for continued collaboration for business incubation programmes. We hope to be able to upskill each organization to be able to develop and run similar programmes independently.*

This problem statement has not changed as the network partners are still running a business incubator programme which will provide GOU students with an opportunity to explore entrepreneurship as an alternative to job seeking. With more students opting for this path post university, the more likely they are to contribute to the job market by creating jobs. This is a long term goal of the project.

The initial proposal was to run a business incubation programme that aims to build STEM businesses with a social impact focus from LSE and GOU students. This focus has changed following the survey sent to students and the 2 day in person workshop. The initial idea was to support only STEM businesses given that the students at GOU are all STEM degree focused students. However it was evident that most of this students are not engaged in STEM businesses only and it would be a mistake for our focus to lie only with STEM. Instead, the programme will be inclusive of businesses across all sectors both STEM and non-STEM.



Q5: Why have you chosen this problem? (300 words)

In the short term, our programme will focus on the development of young entrepreneurs through an innovative incubator programme run in Nigeria. The programme will also focus on knowledge exchange between the implementation partners in order to ensure the development of best practices for entrepreneurial support. In the long term, the programme will lead to job creation for youth since the entrepreneurs supported through our programme will become job creators. Additionally, the programme will spark a culture of creativity and innovation within the partner institutions as well as strengthen the cross-geography institutional collaborations going forward.

The original proposal focussed on the development of STEM startups with a focus on social impact, and following our research we do not think it useful or progressive for the local entrepreneurship ecosystem to push STEM students/alumni to start explicitly STEM businesses, and to instead support STEM students/alumni to start businesses and to assist them in carrying over these STEM skillsets into a variety of sectors. The original proposal also focused on the core areas of youth employability, digital innovation or climate innovation. This will no longer be the focus due to the fact that student businesses come from a wider range of sectors and we would not be able to serve them all if we continued focusing on 3 areas only.



## Section 1.2. Implementation Plan

Q1: What will you therefore do in the implementation phase to trial a solution to this problem?

- Narrative, connecting problem to solution (600 words)
- Plan including who is doing what, when and for how long (Excel template)
- Budget – to reflect the plan of activities (Excel template)
- Risk register (Excel template, top 7 risks)
- Comms and dissemination plan (Excel template)

The programme is divided into 4 stages which are outlined below:

### Stage 1:

Students teams will have access to online material that LSE has curated and gathered over the numerous accelerators they have run. The programme will provide digitally recorded entrepreneurship resources, to both efficiently provide as many useful resources as possible, and to enable entrepreneurs to revisit and build upon a resource bank and learn from it prior to in person presented resources which can be used as a more specific learning opportunity with more specific questions. The playlist will consist of:

- A mix of video recordings of previous workshops conducted for LSE accelerators including sessions on social entrepreneurship, value proposition, marketing, product market fit etc.
- A curated list of podcasts that address various topics within entrepreneurship and have been used by LSE programmes as well as curated through the Sparks network
- Articles that are relevant will also be curated

The purpose of this first stage which is mostly self directed is to get the teams proactive and engaging with content on their own. It will also enable teams to identify areas they are interested in and most relevant to their immediate needs. This first stage will also consist of assigning mentors to the teams so that they can begin to build relationships and get advice.

### Stage 2:

This stage consists of an in person 4 day bootcamp held at GOU at their DNA Learning Centre. The bootcamp will be delivered by LSE, GOU and Sparks through 3 facilitators that are jointly identified for this person, most likely from Lagos, London and Enugu. This bootcamp will take students through the business model canvas as it relates to their specific startups and will have an opportunity to engage with their mentors virtually. The programme will also discuss with the students the next stage of the programme which involves teams having a £500 stipend to prototype for their startups. The structure on how they will be monitored and expected to account for their stipend usage will also be shared here.

### Stage 3:

This prototyping stage will allow student teams to use the stipends to build their products or services and test them. They will have access to their mentors for support as well as specific product/service development guidance. They will be expected to report back to their mentors and the programme leads on how they are using the stipend and will be expected to invoice and show



evidence where possible. They will heavily take advice from the programme team in order to ensure the money is not mis managed. Below is a brief outline of how governance will occur.

Governance structure for £500 stipend per team:

- Students must complete a budget form outlining how they intend to spend the money
- Every purchase or intention of money spending must be approved by mentor and programme team
- For every purchase, students must submit an invoice or receipt or show evidence
- At the end of the stage, a “true spend” form must be completed to show where the money was actually spent
- Students will be making a virtual demo of their product/service and progress they have made during this stage

#### Stage 4:

This final month will consist of lectures and workshops from a global network of industry leaders. The purpose of this will be to further inspire the student teams in a global sense as well as provide them with an opportunity to push their product/service development to the next levels and build on all that they have learnt to date. This final month will also serve the purpose of building a global network for the teams and connecting them to startups and industry leaders from around the world. This final stage will also end in a grand demo day where investors, industry leaders and experts will be invited to watch the teams pitch their startups following the 4 month programme.



Q2: Did your team consider any other alternative solutions to test? Please briefly outline them here and the reasons they were rejected.

Alternative Solution	Reason for rejection
NA	NA



Q3: What benefits do each partner expect to get from phase 2 (300 words)?

**GOU:**

GOU will benefit from the expertise of LSE in running successful incubator programmes. This pilot programme will allow GOU to form the foundations of their own incubator programme for their university. They will also be plugged in to a valuable entrepreneurial ecosystem through the Nigerian network of LSE and Sparks. This pilot programme will also provide evidence for why the university should invest more in the entrepreneurship programmes at the university and it will enable the DNA Learning Lab to successfully seek for relevant funding for student entrepreneurship.

**LSE:**

LSE Generate has a 5 year strategy that is looking at global expansion and scaling their offerings beyond students in London. Running an incubator programme for GOU students in Nigeria meets this requirement and provides LSE with an opportunity to test the offerings it has developed in London in Nigeria. Additionally, LSE Generate is looking to develop a pan-Nigeria university accelerator programme following the success of the ASPECT pan-European accelerator. This programme with GOU allows LSE to pilot in Nigeria before developing the more complex offering across multiple universities in Nigeria.

**Sparks:**

Sparks has a mandate to connect players within the entrepreneurial ecosystem as well as to identify up and coming entrepreneurs which it can support through funding and other kinds of entrepreneurship support. Working on this programme, Sparks has been able to grow its network in Enugu as well as tap into its vast network of business and industry leaders to contribute to the development of new entrepreneurs. Additionally Sparks will gain members from the LSE and GOU networks to add to their vast ecosystem enabling Sparks to position itself as a valuable community that entrepreneurs and investors would like to join.



## 2. Learning

Q1: What new knowledge and skills have you learned in the last 3 months as a result of your participation in the programme? Give some examples? (300 words)

- We have learnt the local understanding of 'STEM' and how it is not a universal concept
- We have learnt that spirituality is considered an asset and can be expected in a mentor in Nigeria
- We have learnt that the current standard of entrepreneurship education would be considered slightly outdated in UK standards, the models provided to prospective entrepreneurs are not particularly agile or digitally savvy.
- We have learnt that Nigerian entrepreneurs have a broader interpretation of the concept of 'social impact' than UK entrepreneurs might.
- Technologically, we've acquired new skills for idea articulation and professional collaboration by mastering the use of Miro and Hivebrite.
- We've obtained a mental shift in project writing by obtaining first hand information of what funders and funding agencies expect for pertinent stakeholders to be attracted.
- Through ideas obtained from the programs, we have understood the essentiality of having a right purpose-centred mindset in project design through design thinking; the pertinence of speaking and understanding the language of stakeholders for effective communication and attraction with/of stakeholders, and so much more.



Q2: What collaborations have you achieved through your participation in the CoP and program workshops. Also include examples of Hivebrite utilization. (300 words)

- Greater understanding of the issues facing Nigerian would-be entrepreneurs.
- Exposure to creative ideas and materials which has facilitated renewed understanding of our individual project.
- The community of intellectuals from different parts of the world and with different entrepreneurial perspectives has allowed us the accumulation of the wealth of entrepreneurial knowledge in individual project execution.
- Moreover, understanding of other projects outside and within one's individual project through the communal interaction facilitated by the program illuminated our understanding of our project and enabled a clear understanding of the gap that is needed to be filled.
- Collaborative experiences in determining the right and appropriate stakeholders



*Further Guidance on Implementation Plan:*

*A detailed workplan should show different partner roles in different work packages, and a full budget and risk analysis that follows British Council guidance for allowable expenditures as detailed in the budget spreadsheet.*

*Guidance on the comms and dissemination plan:*

*The aim will be to create awareness around good practice and workable models of innovation in entrepreneurship ecosystems. Examples could include marketing support budget and channels, mini-exhibitions or digital case studies to demonstrate the impact of the project and programme. You should consider to budget for your readiness to pitch ideas, products or innovations to audiences that may include industry partners, established innovation hubs, funders and policy makers.*

*Incorporate the comms and dissemination plan into the workplan for the project: also showing network partner roles in different work packages, a full budget and risk analysis.*



### 3. Outcomes

Please provide a mini logic model using the table in the Excel workbook.

The table in the tab 'IAU Phase 2 Logic Model' will assist you to think through the logic of your project, clearly showing how your activities link to the expected results (outcomes). It is important to think through the expected results intended for each activity, the requirements needed for each activity, as well as data and evidence collection processes. In this way, project progress can be tracked, and evidence can be produced for reflection and learning.

It may be easiest to start mapping your activities in column 4 (use one row per activity) and then complete the columns on either side.