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STARTUP ENABLER CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT (SECA)

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A TOOLKIT FOR UNDERSTANDING STARTUP ECOSYSTEMS THROUGH THE CAPABILITIES OF INTERMEDIARIES

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CEO	Chief Executive Officers
EU	European Union
OKR	Objectives and key results
RDA	Regional development agency
SECA	Startup Enabler Capability Assessment
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
TTOs	Technology transfer offices
UK	United Kingdom
VC	Venture capitalist
WBG	World Bank Group

Executive Summary

This toolkit introduces a method for assessing the capabilities of startup enablers. Startup enablers—organizations that connect or provide entrepreneurs with resources—are essential to entrepreneurship, which in turn drives innovation, job creation, and growth. Despite the vital role they play, we know little about the capabilities of startup enablers.

Information about the capabilities of startup enablers would be useful for policy making. Data on the capabilities of startup enablers could identify gaps within a startup ecosystem; this would be of value to policy makers seeking to support startups in order to drive innovation, employment, and economic growth. In particular, policy makers could use information about the distribution of capabilities of the startup enablers in their ecosystems to make decisions about interventions and monitor the effectiveness of interventions over time.

One challenge in measuring the capabilities of startup enablers is that the enablers—like the startups they serve—are diverse. A given enabler typically provides a unique mix of services, potentially including financial capital, mentorship and advice, networking services, physical resources, skills training, and personal development. Although some work has been done on measuring the capabilities of other sorts of organizations, there has not been until now a tool specifically designed to measure the capabilities of these diverse organizations that are so central to innovation, employment, and growth.

This toolkit describes the Startup Enabler Capability Assessment (SECA), a tool designed specifically to measure the capabilities of startup enablers. It is applicable to a variety of types of startup enablers. It measures 44 dimensions grouped under seven organizational capabilities—financial capital, strategy, human capital, networks, advocacy and political capital, leadership and governance, and management and organizational processes. The tool comprises four phases: a classification and mapping phase, a stakeholder consultation and issue discovery phase, a broad data-gathering phase, and a deep-dive structured interview phase. It is intended to allow comparisons over time and geography and has been piloted in Romania through a separate initiative in collaboration with the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalization. This toolkit uses the results from the pilot to illustrate the methodology.

SECA may be preceded by identifying the need for an enabler diagnostic. Prior to using SECA, a wider ecosystem diagnostic or a grassroots ecosystem consultation may identify that enablers are relatively few and lack capacity. As a result, stakeholders may rank building enabler capacity as a top need within the ecosystem. Such prior work may establish the need to investigate enablers' capacity further and help ensure the participation of existing enablers in the subsequent enabler diagnostic process.

Phase 1 (classification and mapping of enablers) consists of categorizing enablers in the ecosystem of interest and mapping their geographical distribution. The categorization of enablers can be challenging because enablers may regard themselves as being of one type when they would better fit another type. A single enabler may also play more than one role. This issue can be mitigated by maintaining definitions of enabler types that are consistent with local usage.

Phase 2 (stakeholder consultation and issue discovery) builds trust with stakeholders and determines the broad needs of the enablers, as well as factors that should be probed in more depth in subsequent phases. This phase is useful for framing and prioritizing the capabilities as well as getting buy-in that helps ensure later participation. It may not be necessary to use this phase if the measurement team already has local knowledge of the ecosystem and credibility with existing actors, because the seven capabilities that SECA measures are likely to be the same across ecosystems. In any case, a key lesson from the pilot was that local knowledge of the ecosystem and credibility with existing actors are essential.

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Phase 3 (broad data collection of stakeholders' activity and characteristics) aims to gather basic information from as many target enablers as possible. As such, a sound sampling strategy is important. A key lesson from the pilot is that it is helpful to distinguish between programs and organizations, although organizational boundaries are sometimes unclear.

Phase 4 (deep dive interviews of enablers' capabilities) is the measurement phase, which consists of structured interviews comprising 44 questions testing dimensions of the seven capabilities. The questions are intended to probe enablers' existing capabilities and identify gaps that might inhibit their ability to support entrepreneurs effectively and sustainably. A scoring guide and the use of multiple scorers allow for objective quantification of interview responses. Among the lessons learned was that the best interviewees are usually the startup founders, especially if they are also the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs).

Post-SECA analysis and intervention design involves analyzing scores by factor and sometimes by enabler type, considering the mean and variance of the scores. Grouping enablers together by type of enabler may be helpful, but doing so may reduce the statistical power of the analysis. The analysis examines average scores per factor, with higher scores illustrating greater proximity to good practice. The analysis also examines the variance of the scores. High-variance dimensions typically indicate potential opportunities for peer learning, whereas low-variance dimensions indicate more uniform practices that, if poor, likely need external interventions.

The data from the pilot in Romania were revealing. The mapping phase revealed geographic gaps in support outside of major cities. The survey revealed that most enablers were effectively startups themselves (on average 7 years old with 5 full-time employees, and often struggling to develop a sustainable business model). It also highlighted gaps in support for later-stage startups. (There was very little capacity for startups at later stages.) Questions about networks suggested where greater linkages were needed. Although local networks were fairly strong, international connectedness was much weaker. In addition, investors were significantly more focused than programs on encouraging startups to consider international markets.

In particular, the deep-dive interviews often examined the reasons behind constraints that the roundtables and survey had revealed. For example, the roundtables and survey showed that public funding was a small component of the funding mix for typical enablers; the deep-dive interviews examined the reasons for this. Similarly, several enablers reported in the roundtables and survey that talent was a constraint; the deep-dive interviews examined the reasons for this and concluded that the issue was systemic in the ecosystem.



SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship drives job creation, growth, and innovation. Entrepreneurship—the process of starting and growing businesses—creates jobs directly (through starting and growing firms) and indirectly (through supply chain development and other means). Entrepreneurship contributes to innovation through numerous pathways, including identifying unmet needs, developing new products, services, or business models to meet them, and exerting competitive pressure on established firms. Innovative entrepreneurship, in particular, contributes to economic growth (Ordeñana et al. 2024) and solving social problems, which is why it is of special interest to policy makers—and the focus of this toolkit.

Startups have special needs. Startups are young companies, especially those developing innovative business models or new technologies and looking to scale up. Although startups may be considered a subset of small or medium enterprises (SMEs), they often have particular needs, such as access to specialist talent or risk capital. For various reasons, including inherent technology risk, unproven business models, and inexperience, startups are fragile and frequently fail through preventable mistakes such as premature scaling, team conflicts, poor strategy, or weak execution. Additionally, market failures (including a lack of information about available resources and uncertain risks) often affect startups. These distinct characteristics warrant treating startups differently from other SMEs.

Entrepreneurs and startups often benefit from ‘startup enablers.’ Startup enablers are organizations or individuals that provide entrepreneurship support services to startups. They are sometimes known as ‘startup support organizations’ or ‘intermediaries.’ Startup enablers play a vital role in the innovation ecosystem by supporting entrepreneurs as they turn novel ideas into viable businesses contributing to economic growth and development. These enabling organizations can help entrepreneurs avoid errors, access resources, and grow faster. In other cases, they can help entrepreneurs realize more quickly that their proposed businesses are not workable, encouraging them to reallocate resources to other ventures. Well-functioning startup enablers thus help realize the social and economic benefits of entrepreneurship.

A diverse array of startup enablers offers a variety of services. Enablers typically provide a mix of resources and services to startups. As non-exhaustive examples, enablers may offer or provide access to:

- Financial capital—financial resources that are crucial for research, development, and scaling up innovative ideas. (Some also pay stipends, which provide a safety net for entrepreneurs to pursue innovative and disruptive ideas.)
- Mentorship and advice—experienced professionals who can guide startup founders, helping them refine their business models and strategies.
- Networking—connecting startup founders with other entrepreneurs, investors, mentors, and potential customers, which can lead to new ideas and partnerships. Directing startups elsewhere in the ecosystem can help provide them with critical resources.
- Physical resources—such as office space, technology, and other operational tools that startups might not be able to afford on their own.
- Skills training and personal development—programs that equip founders with the skills necessary to innovate and grow their businesses.

However, startup enablers may need support themselves. Especially in less-developed countries—such as Romania, where this tool was piloted—many enablers have limited capacity. Many find that it is difficult to develop sustainable business models, which limits their scale and scope. This is especially true for enablers operating in ecosystems where the quality and quantity of startups are low. Paradoxically, these may be the ecosystems where the support provided by enablers is most needed, an “institutional void” that inhibits the functioning

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of the market.¹ As a result, support for startup enablers is a legitimate target for policy makers, and public intervention can help the sector to develop in a way that ultimately attracts more private capital and increases economic sustainability.

Supporting enablers may also lead to positive spillovers. There is evidence that some enablers—such as accelerators²—create positive spillovers (benefits beyond their own activity). These spillovers, which include greater visibility and connectivity of the ecosystem, are not captured by the enablers themselves but lead to greater investment.³ They are a public good, an additional reason for public policy makers to support enablers.

Policy makers should direct support to the areas of greatest need, which requires measurement. To improve startup enablers, it is useful to identify their weaknesses and the gaps in their capabilities. This helps policy makers target interventions effectively and helps the managers of enablers improve their organizations. To identify weaknesses and gaps, it is necessary to measure capabilities across different dimensions, including fit with what startups themselves need. Additionally, it would be helpful to compare capabilities over time (to ensure that interventions are effective) and in different ecosystems (to realize the benefits widely and allow for benchmarking).

We created the Startup Enabler Capability Assessment (SECA) because there was no measurement tool available that captured the nuances of the capabilities of startup enablers. The idea of organizational capabilities is well-established in management and organization studies.⁴ Measuring capabilities can be challenging, partly because capabilities are invisible and may be distributed across an organization. Nevertheless, some tools—mainly originating from the business sector—are available to measure certain organizational capabilities.⁵ However, a review of these tools established that none of them catered to the particularities of startup enablers. We, therefore, created our own assessment. As an example of the limitations of existing tools, the Balanced Scorecard devised by Kaplan and Norton (1992) is generally designed for individual firms to evaluate themselves rather than as a tool for measuring many organizations on common criteria. It could be used in that way, but doing so would require first defining the criteria to measure on the scorecards. Having an initially unknown—or partially known—set of criteria is one of the problems that the SECA solves by using a multi-phase process.

SECA is similar to the World Bank’s functional analysis process in some ways but examines capabilities rather than functionality. As described below, some stages of SECA were inspired by the World Bank’s ‘functional analysis’ process, which examines the quality of individual public spending programs, reviewing their design, implementation, and governance

¹ The lack of startup enablers in ecosystems with few startups can be seen as an “institutional void” of the sort observed by Khanna and Palepu (2004) in emerging economies. Institutional voids inhibit the proper functioning of markets.

² A startup accelerator is a program designed to support early-stage startups by providing them with resources, mentorship, and funding to help them grow and scale quickly. These programs typically last for a fixed period, usually around three to six months, during which startups receive intensive guidance, access to networks, and opportunities to refine their business models and products.

³ See Cohen et al. (2019), Fehder and Hochberg (2014), Hochberg (2016), and Bone et al. (2019).

⁴ For example, Chandler (1962) highlighted the importance of organizational capabilities (as well as their structure), while Nelson and Winter (1982) argued that much of the behavior of firms is determined by their capabilities—rather than being governed purely by principles of rational choice and profit maximization. The ‘resource-based view’ of organizational strategy (Wernerfelt 1984; Barney 1991) saw the development of superior capabilities as a key means of creating sustainable competitive advantage. Closely linked to the ‘resource-based view’ is the idea of ‘core competencies’ (Prahalad and Hamel 1990), which contribute significant value to firms but are difficult for others to replicate. This idea has been expanded with numerous studies of specific types of capabilities. One is the distinction between ‘operational capabilities’ and ‘dynamic capabilities’ (Teece, Pisano, and Shuen 1997)—the latter being the capabilities needed to sense and adapt to a rapidly changing environment, as is often found with startups and emerging technologies. Other examples include digital competencies (for example, Bharadwaj et al. 2013), formation of networks and strategic alliances (for example, Dyer and Singh 1998), the ability to recognize, absorb, and apply innovations (for example, Cohen and Levinthal 1990), and developing appropriate market-oriented strategy (for example, Day 1994).

⁵ Frameworks for assessing broad firm capabilities include the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model, the American Productivity & Quality Center (APQC) Process Classification Framework (PCF), the ISO 9001 quality management system, the Canadian Framework for Business Excellence, the Australian Business Excellence Framework (ABEF), and the Singapore Quality Award (SQA) Framework. In addition, the UK’s BeTheBusiness initiative has developed some relevant practical templates and self-assessment tools. Finally, there are tools such as the Balanced Scorecard (Kaplan and Norton 1992).

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(Correa 2014). However, an analysis of the functionality of enablers would require an activity-by-activity examination of many independent organizations, which is not feasible in many situations. Instead, an organization-level view is more appropriate than an activity-level view when one seeks to understand the constraints and trade-offs faced by enablers.

SECA allows measuring the capabilities of many types of startup enablers over time and across geography. There were three core design principles. First, the diagnostic process should measure relevant capabilities of organizations. Second, it should be sufficiently broad to encompass many types of enablers. Finally, it should permit comparison over both time and geography. That is, it should allow one to determine whether an ecosystem has improved over time and to compare different ecosystems.

Various stakeholders can benefit from using SECA. We originally developed the tool for the benefit of policy makers and enablers themselves, but it may have wider application. Policy makers can benefit from using the results of SECA to assess the distribution of capabilities among the startup enablers in their ecosystems. This information can help them make decisions about interventions as well as monitor the effectiveness of interventions over time. Enablers can use the tool to identify their own weaknesses and potentially also benchmark themselves against others if aggregated data is made public.⁶ Potentially, the tool may even benefit startup founders if aggregated data is published, allowing founders to get a sense of the capabilities that are available to them. Ultimately, it is hoped that the assessment will encourage the development of the ecosystem as a whole.

We piloted the tool in Romania, with several lessons learned during implementation. The pilot use of SECA in Romania allowed shaping the tool and learning from experience in numerous ways. This toolkit contains some example data from Romania. The report *Enabling the Enablers: Capacity-Building for Romanian Startup Support Organizations* (World Bank, forthcoming) developed under a separate project presents the full results from Romania, which can be used for benchmarking. This toolkit describes lessons learned from implementation. In some cases, these led to minor modifications of the process; in other cases, no modification was possible, but the learning is nevertheless recorded here for the benefit of future research teams.

⁶ In the interests of confidentiality, we assured interviewees in the Romania pilot that only aggregate data would be published. We discourage the use of the tool in ranking enablers and recommend that SECA users *not* publish scores for individual enablers. Doing so is highly likely to reduce participation.



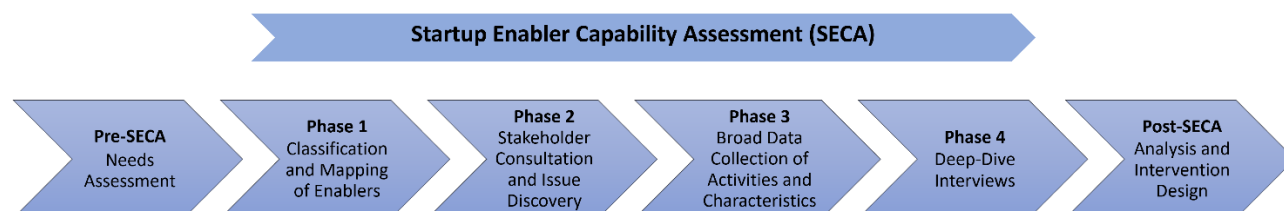
SECTION 2

PROCESS

2. Process

This section describes the process of using SECA. It comprises four phases: classification and mapping, stakeholder consultation and discovery, broad data collection, and deep-dive interviews. It may be preceded by a needs assessment and followed by analysis and intervention design (Figure 1).

Figure 1 The SECA Process



Source: World Bank.

Pre-SECA: Needs Assessment

This toolkit assumes that the reader has already identified the need for an enabler diagnostic. In Romania, the SECA was preceded both by a wider ecosystem diagnostic (World Bank 2021) and a grassroots ecosystem consultation (ROStartUp 2021). The first identified that enablers were relatively few and lacked capacity. The second ranked building enabler capacity as one of the top five needs within the ecosystem. This prompted a drive to investigate enablers' capacity further and helped ensure the participation of existing enablers in the subsequent enabler diagnostic process. In other ecosystems, the decision to embark on SECA could potentially be prompted by factors such as the need to monitor and evaluate the impact of public subsidies or other interventions targeted at enablers. Additionally, this toolkit only describes the 'supply side' and assumes that demand for enablers' services exists from startups. Other tools should be used to test this demand if it is unclear.

Phase 1: Classification and Mapping of Enablers

The first step is to categorize enablers and identify the relevant types. 'Startup enablers' are very heterogeneous. In the Romanian pilot, we used a three-tier system to classify enablers based on the degree to which they were focused on startups. 'Category 1' enablers consisted of organizations exclusively involved with startups; 'category 2' enablers were organizations that often but not exclusively worked with startups; and 'category 3' consisted of organizations that were sometimes relevant to startups but that often focused on wider innovation activities or wider SME support. The category constituents were as follows (see Appendix A for definitions of the various types of enablers):

- **Category 1:** accelerators, bootcamps & pre-accelerators, business angels, coworking spaces, incubators, venture capitalists (VCs), and venture studios
- **Category 2:** crowdfunding platforms, innovation centers, makerspaces, regional development agencies (RDAs), sandboxes, science parks, technology transfer offices (TTOs), and universities
- **Category 3:** chambers of commerce, cluster associations, diaspora networks, digital innovation hubs, entrepreneurship education programs, innovation agencies, SME business support programs, etc.

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For the Romanian pilot, we focused only on category 1, because these were the types of support organizations identified in the wider ecosystem diagnostic as being of greatest relevance. SECA is thus tailored to this category, although it could be adapted to the other categories relatively easily.

Having determined the enabler types of interest, the next step is to map their distribution. The aim is to determine the approximate total number of enabler organizations within the country, understand their geographical distribution, and obtain contact information for subsequent phases. In Romania, this phase primarily made use of local expertise and personal connections; in other ecosystems, it may be effective to use internet searches and 'chain referral' (asking known organizations to name several others and then repeating this for multiple cycles). During this phase, the essential information to gather is the organization's name (or another unique identifier, such as website URL), location, self-described type, and contact information.

The completeness of the mapping may be difficult to determine. However, depending on the purpose for which SECA is being used, it may not be necessary for this mapping phase to be exhaustive. Although not applied in the case of Romania, it may be possible to use modified sampling techniques such as multiple systems estimation to estimate the total population of enablers and, hence, the completeness of the mapping.⁷

Key Lessons from implementation

Categorization of enablers is not straightforward, for multiple reasons. The definitions of many types of enablers are not universal: for example, we encountered slightly different interpretations of what an 'accelerator' is, and how this differs from an incubator. This is exacerbated by the facts that enabler models are constantly evolving, and there are also hybrid models emerging. Additionally, some organizations may describe themselves in non-standard ways: for example, some coworking spaces may call themselves accelerators or incubators in order to attract more startups. It is therefore necessary not only to have a working definition of the enabler types (see Appendix A), but also to check whether this matches accepted local definitions.

Phase 2: Stakeholder Consultation and Issue Discovery

The purpose of the second phase is to build trust with stakeholders and determine the broad needs of the enablers, as well as factors that should be probed in more depth in subsequent phases. In Romania, this was done through roundtable discussions, both physical and online, moderated by the World Bank Group (WBG) team. The invited attendees were a subset of the organizations identified in the mapping phase, selected to encompass a range of organizational types and regional locations. Further details are provided in Appendix B.

Gaining stakeholder buy-in helps ensure later participation. In Romania, an important function of the stakeholder consultation phase was to explain the aims of the SECA process

⁷ Multiple systems estimation (or capture-recapture estimation) is a technique originating in ecological studies, whereby a population is estimated by taking a sample, tagging its members in some way, releasing them, and resampling at a later date. By counting the number of the tagged population found in the second sample, it is possible to mathematically estimate the total population. Organizations such as Startup Genome have successfully applied this method to estimate the population of startups within an ecosystem. The technique has also been applied to a variety of other situations, such as estimating the number of civilian casualties in a war and the number of victims of human trafficking.

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and how this would ultimately benefit enablers. Care was taken, both in this phase and the subsequent phases, to explain how the process would be of benefit to enablers. It was emphasized that the process was not intended to give a comparison or ranking of enablers, and that only aggregated data would be published.

This phase is not intended to gather detailed information about specific capabilities and their gaps, but rather to frame and prioritize the broad topics. Therefore, the roundtable discussions should be deliberately steered towards being quite general and high-level, with questions such as ‘what do you want the ecosystem to become?’ ‘what do you see as your role in making that a reality?’ ‘what might stop you from achieving that?’ and ‘what do you need to be more effective?’

It may not be necessary to use the discovery phase. This phase was important in determining the seven capability areas that make up the diagnostic interview tool used in the measurement phase. We suggest that these areas are likely to remain unchanged if the process is run in other ecosystems (and keeping these unchanged would permit comparison with the results obtained in Romania and elsewhere). However, there may nonetheless be value in running the discovery phase discussions in order to decide whether some of the seven capabilities need special treatment—such as additional, in-depth questions that reflect particular national circumstances.

Key Lessons from implementation

Local knowledge of the ecosystem, and credibility with existing actors, is important. Many of the key staff of enablers (as with startups themselves) are resource constrained and relatively time-poor, so the request to attend a half-day discussion, or even half an hour to complete a survey, was not an insignificant imposition. The success of these phases therefore depends in large part on the research team including individuals who are well known and respected within the local ecosystem and can draw on their personal social capital to request time from others. Involving such individuals within the interview team also provided important local context, which helped interpret some responses.

Phase 3: Broad Data Collection of Enablers’ Activities and Characteristics

The aim of the third phase is to gather basic information from as many of the target enablers as possible. For this phase, we suggest that an online survey tool is used, and distributed to all the relevant enablers identified in the previous mapping phase. In Romania, this survey included questions about the activities undertaken by enablers, which was used by the research team to reclassify some organizations according to our definitions. It also asked about ownership (in particular, to help disambiguate situations where one organization ran multiple facilities or operated multiple programs), funding, and perceived barriers. The list of survey questions is provided in Appendix C.

It is important to sample properly to ensure reliable results. The desired minimum number of responses should ideally be calculated with reference to the total number of enablers identified in the mapping phase, so as to allow the quantitative responses to be statistically significant of the total population at a given level.⁸ However, there are several challenges with this: first, in underdeveloped ecosystems, the total population of enablers may be very small, and thus require a high proportion to participate, which may not be feasible: for example, if the

⁸ For example, if the mapping phase suggested that there were 250 enablers in total, then a sample of at least 70 would be needed to have 95% confidence that the margin of error was less than 10%.

mapping phase suggested 100 enablers in total, then one would need to sample 50 of the 100 to obtain the same confidence as above (in Romania, we estimated that there were a total of 81 category 1 enablers and received survey responses from 60% of these, but such a high response level is not guaranteed). Second, sampling bias may well be introduced at this stage if respondents are not *required* to answer (for example, one may receive responses from enablers with more internal resources, who are better able to spare the time), or if the survey is distributed through channels which are themselves not representative of the ecosystem.








Key Lessons from implementation

It is helpful to distinguish between programs and organizations, but sometimes organizational boundaries are unclear. In Romania, several organizations ran multiple programs, such as both an accelerator and a pre-accelerator; in these instances, we were primarily interested in understanding the combined activities and the organizational competencies of the 'parent' institution. However, in other instances, one may find an entity such as a corporate or a university is the ultimate 'parent'; in such cases, what is most relevant is the extent to which the enabler can draw on wider resources of the parent (an enabler might have a fixed budget allocated to it by the parent, but able to draw on wider organizational resources for recruitment and media, for example).

Phase 4: Deep Dive Interviews of Enablers' Capabilities

The final phase is the measurement phase. The previous phase was broad; this phase is deep. This phase consists of structured interviews comprising 44 questions testing multiple characteristics across 7 capability areas. (See Figure 2 for the characteristics and capabilities probed and Appendix D for the list of questions.) The questions are intended to probe enablers' existing capabilities and identify gaps that might inhibit their ability to support entrepreneurs effectively and sustainably.

Figure 2 Characteristics within Capabilities Covered by the Startup Enabler Diagnostic Tool

 Financial capital	 Strategy	 Human capital	 Networks	 Advocacy & Political Capital	 Leadership & Governance	 Management & Organizational Process
Adequacy of financial resources for current offer	Setting of vision / mission / end-goals	Recruitment ability / adequacy of human resources	Extent of stakeholder networks	Awareness of policy & policymaking process	Depth of management / adequacy of deputies / succession planning	Process formalization and replication
Stability of resources	Translating mission to strategic goals	Talent management	Local connectedness	Sectoral collaboration	Leadership development (internal)	Experimentalism & risk-taking
Budgeting & cashflow management	Strategic coherence of activities	Staff retention	Global connectedness	Sectoral advocacy, communications, media skills, promotion	Governance	Organizational learning (internal)
Business planning (internal)	Alignment of strategy with startups' needs; evaluation / measuring customer satisfaction & gathering feedback	Ability to design staff incentives	Ecosystem building skills	Data-collection & evidence-building		Awareness & adoption of global best practices
Internal business development, marketing & partnership skills	M&E of progress towards goals / use of key performance indicators	General human resources (HR) skills (internal)	Pipeline management skills (input)			
Familiarity with European Union grant funding process	Alignment / shared understanding of strategy	Managerial quality	Pipeline management skills (output / leavers) (external)			
Familiarity with different funding sources (e.g., philanthropic foundations) and how to interact	Stakeholder involvement	Ability to manage staff progression & development	Startup community management & active curation			
	Foresight & emerging technology sectors		Alumni network management			
			Facilitation and hosting skills			
			Helping startups access external markets (attitude)			
			Helping startups access external markets (skills)			

Source: World Bank.

PROCESS

Note: The characteristics shown in this figure relate to questions with a scoring range of 1–5. Characteristics linked to questions without a scoring system include the following: size of organization, profitability, and adequacy of financial resources for expanded offer/further development (under Financial capital); and ecosystem-building skills (under Networks). M&E = monitoring and evaluation.

The capabilities will likely stay the same across other countries, although some minor adaptation may be required. The 7 capability areas are quite general and are likely to be applicable to enablers in every ecosystem. However, the dimensions within each capability area may be more or less relevant, depending on the ecosystem concerned. (For example, one could envisage an ecosystem where all enablers of interest are fully funded by the public sector; in such a scenario, their business development capabilities would likely not be of interest, although the rest of the tool would remain relevant). The stakeholder consultation & discovery phase should identify whether certain capabilities or characteristics need to be probed in more (or less) detail or if any questions need to be rephrased for the local audience.

A guide allows for objective scoring of interview responses. In a similar manner to WBG Functional Analysis interviews (Correa 2014), the questions are accompanied by a scoring guide, prepared in advance, which provides possible scores for each response ranging from 1 to 5 (see Appendix D for the scoring guide). This is intended to allow an evaluation of responses in a relatively objective and comparable manner. The guide is based on spanning the range from the WBG team’s estimation of international best practice (scoring 5) to the absence of any capability or likely worst-case practice (scoring 1), with three gradations between the endpoints. Strict calibration of the guide was impossible for the first use but will improve over time as more results are obtained.

Each interview should be attended by 3 members of the research team to improve the reliability of scoring. One person typically leads the interview, with the other two taking detailed notes and asking clarification questions if needed. The answers are scored independently by all three people in the interview team, using the scoring guide. The three sets of scores are then compared, question by question, to remove the personal bias. In the interests of efficiency, if two of the three scores agree and the third is only one point higher or lower, no changes are made. However, in all other cases (i.e., where the highest and lowest scores given by the three team members for a given response differed by more than two points out of five), the interview team discusses the rationale for their scoring amongst themselves in order to check that each member has interpreted the interviewee’s response and the scoring guide correctly; this discussion continues until all members agree on the score, or at least can reduce the difference in scores to a maximum of one point. Scoring takes approximately 60-90 minutes per interview.

Key Lessons from implementation

The downside of including interviewers familiar to the ecosystem is the potential for conflicts of interest. Interviewees may be unwilling to disclose sensitive information to interviewers whom they view as competitors. The team can be conscious of this possible conflict and, on occasion, change the composition of the interviewing team to avoid it. However, this was rarely a problem in the Romanian study, and our opinion is that the net benefit of including local contacts who know, and are known within, the ecosystem is highly positive.

Holding pilot interviews with ‘friendly’ interviewees can be useful. The Romanian team piloted the deep interviews with about a half-dozen interviewees who were well-known to the team. After the interviews, feedback was sought about the process—such as whether questions were appropriately phrased, whether the interview missed important topics, and so on. As a result of this, some minor changes were made to the deep-dive interviews, such as changing the question order and modifying the phrasing of some questions; this is expanded upon in the section below.

Question sequencing impacts interviewees. In the first few interviews in Romania, the interviewers began with questions about financial resources. However, the team soon realized that such questions were potentially sensitive and that interviewees needed to build rapport with the interviewers before discussing the topic openly. Thus the sequencing was changed so that finances were discussed later in the interview. Instead, the team found it helpful to begin with questions about the history and strategy of the organization because interviewees were accustomed to opening discussions about their organization in this manner, and the information was often helpful in providing additional context for later responses.

The best interviewees are usually the founders, especially if they are also the current CEOs. The interview questions require a deep understanding of the strategy, finance and operations of the enabler. For that reason, the interviewing team should typically target the founder or CEO of the organization (who were often the same person, in the Romanian study). On occasion, founders may be unavailable and may suggest interviews with other key staff; however, such interviews are often less satisfactory since such employees rarely have a complete overview of all the areas that the team wanted to test. Moreover, the constraints on CEOs themselves, and the extent to which the organization was dependent on their continual involvement, were important topics that arose from the interviews in Romania.

Post-SECA: Analysis and Intervention Design

Scores are analyzed by factor and sometimes by enabler type, and the analysis considers the variance as well as the mean of the scores. In analyzing the scores, it may be helpful to group enablers together by type of enabler, although doing so may reduce the statistical power of the analysis. The analysis examines average scores per factor, with higher scores illustrating greater proximity to good practice (although with the caveat that calibration is difficult, so mid-range scores need to be treated with caution). The analysis also examines the *variance* of the scores. High variance scores typically indicate potential opportunities for peer-learning (since they show that some organizations have high capability in an area while others do not). Low-variance areas indicate more uniform practices that, if poor, would likely need external interventions—since if there are no ‘pockets of excellence’ within an ecosystem, organizations likely cannot learn from each other. (See the findings from Romania, below, for an example).

Key Lessons from implementation

There are some areas where the tool could potentially be improved. For example, there is reason to believe that the quality of mentors is a significant factor in the performance of accelerators; this was difficult to test directly but further research may suggest a way to do this efficiently. Similarly, the tool tested the capabilities of enablers at a very high level but did not directly examine, for example, the curricula of accelerators or the investment decision-making process of venture capital firms.



SECTION 3

**EXAMPLE DATA
AND FINDINGS**

3. Example Data and Findings from Romania

The full findings from the Romanian study are published in a separate report *Enabling the Enablers: Capacity-Building for Romanian Startup Support organizations* (World Bank, forthcoming). This section contains some examples of the data and insights obtained by the SECA tool.

The mapping phase revealed geographic gaps in support. Unsurprisingly, most enablers were based in the major cities, where the highest density of entrepreneurs were found. However, many regions were left with little or no support. Since the later survey showed that it was often uneconomic for enablers to serve large rural areas, this illustrated a market failure which warranted public intervention.

The survey revealed that most enablers were effectively startups themselves. The survey enquired about organizations' size and age. It showed that enablers were on average 7 years' old with five full time employees, and often struggling to develop a sustainable business model—much like the startups that they were assisting. This was helpful in framing some conclusions and recommendations—such as asking enablers to think reflexively about what they would say to startup founders in their position.

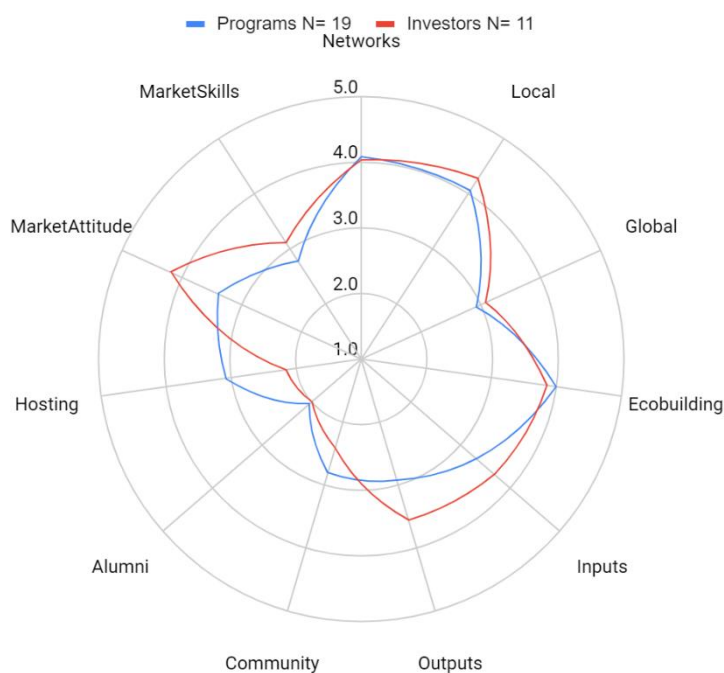
The survey phase revealed gaps in support for later-stage startups. Surveys enquired about the stage of startups which were served by enablers. This showed that there was very little capacity for startups at later-stages; this was not necessarily a problem for Romania given the stage of development of the ecosystem at the time, but illustrated a gap that would need to be addressed in due course.

The roundtables and survey showed that public funding was a relatively small component of the funding mix for typical enablers; the deep-dive interviews examined the reasons for this. In Romania, public funding constituted an average of 20% of the funding mix for enablers, substantially less than in the UK (one of the few countries where comparable data existed). This led the deep-dive interviews to focus on understanding the reasons for this, which revealed not only a supply-side shortage of funds but also a demand-side reluctance to accept State funding, plus a lack of awareness of potential sources.

Several enablers reported in the roundtables and survey that talent was a constraint; the deep-dive interviews examined the reasons for this and concluded that the issue was ecosystemic. Deep-dive questions sought to understand whether some enablers struggled with talent primarily because they did not know how to recruit appropriate staff, or could not retain them once recruited—in which case, the issue could have been tackled primarily through organization-level training. The research concluded that the problem was an ecosystem-level shortage and hence that it should be tackled through wider initiatives to bring talent into the ecosystem.

Questions about networks suggested where greater linkages were needed. The figure below summarizes the Network capability scores for Romanian enablers, as determined by phase 4 of the tool. It reveals, for example, that while local networks were fairly strong, international connectedness was much weaker. It also shows that investors were significantly more focused than programs on encouraging startups to consider international markets.

Figure 3 Romanian Networking Competencies (Separated by Enabler Type)



Source: World Bank analysis.

Note: The competencies tested are: the overall extent of advisory networks (*networks*), local network density (*local*), global network density (*global*), time spent on ecosystem building (*ecobuilding*), the extent to which enablers had well-developed networks specifically for sourcing dealflow (*inputs*), whether they passed-on leaving startups to other support (*outputs*), community management (*community*), alumni management (*alumni*), whether they had hosting & facilitation skills (*hosting*), their approach to encouraging international expansion (*market attitude*), and their ability to support such international expansion (*market skills*). In the Romanian study, we split category 1 enablers into *Investors* (such as angel networks, crowdfunding platforms, VC firms, and venture studios, that support organizations based on business models that involve investing in startups) versus *Programs* (such as accelerators, incubators, pre-accelerators, and related organizations, which are more programmatic and generally do not invest).

High-variance scores suggested that there are opportunities for peer-learning, while low-variance scores suggested the need for external interventions. In the figure below, one can see that Romanian investor-type enablers were scored consistently highly for governance competencies, consistently low for evidence-gathering competencies, and were highly variable in their management and staff development competencies; the latter areas may lend themselves towards ‘communities of practice’ where enablers can learn from peers. In contrast, the consistently low scores for evidence-building suggests that this topic should be addressed with external support, such as from the university sector or from overseas enablers.

Figure 4 Romanian Investor Competencies by Mean Score and Va



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Appendix A: Enabler Types

Category 1 (Exclusively Involved with Startups)

Accelerators are startup support programs that are selective, cohort-based, and of fixed duration (usually ranging from months to years). Almost all such programs provide mentoring, peer-to-peer interaction, investment readiness training, and connections to investors. Some may take equity as payment for their services; others are privately or publicly sponsored.

Angels or **Business Angel Networks** are groups of 'business angel' investors—individuals who invest their own personal money in startups while typically also providing contacts and business advice. Angel funding is sometimes treated as a subset of VC funding.

Bootcamps are intensive short-term programs aimed at providing aspiring entrepreneurs and early-stage startups with accelerated learning, mentorship, and resources. Similar to pre-accelerators, and potentially considered a subset of them, but typically run only for days.

Co-working Spaces are flexible, shared office spaces usually available on short-term commercial contracts. They typically do not provide additional services such as technical support, mentoring, or business advice.

Incubators are startup support organizations that provide physical space to startups, along with additional growth-related services, but are not cohort-based nor fixed-term (though there may be a residence limit—usually up to 3 years—and some admissions restrictions). Some may provide lab space and technical services. Almost all require payment from the startups or government grants.

Pre-Accelerators are short programs (usually weeks or months) intended for first-time entrepreneurs at a very early stage. They primarily focus on encouraging entrepreneurial understanding and persuading prospective founders to take the first steps. They support entrepreneurs in shaping their business ideas and equipping them with elementary business acumen.

Venture Capitalists (VCs) are firms or individuals that make financial investment in startups, usually in exchange for equity.

Venture Studios are organizations that directly create multiple startups, often based on a repeatable internal process. They are relatively uncommon.

Category 2 (Often but not Exclusively Work with Startups)

Makerspaces provide individuals and communities with the tools, resources, and collaborative environments necessary to experiment, create, and develop new ideas.

Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in Europe support R&D, foster collaboration between businesses and research institutions, and promote technology transfer, particularly for SMEs and startups. They also implement regional innovation strategies, align with European Union (EU) objectives, and focus on reducing regional disparities through targeted investments in skills, infrastructure, and sustainable technologies.

Sandboxes provide a controlled environment where new ideas, technologies, or business models can be tested and refined with minimal risk. They allow for experimentation and

iteration, enabling innovators to address regulatory, technical, and market uncertainties while gaining valuable insights and feedback.

Science Parks provide collaborative environments where businesses, research institutions, and entrepreneurs can work together. They offer access to specialized facilities, resources, and expertise, fostering technology transfer, encouraging research and development, and supporting the commercialization of new ideas.

Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) facilitate the transfer of research discoveries and technologies from academic and research institutions to the private sector. They support the commercialization process by managing intellectual property, negotiating licensing agreements, and connecting researchers with industry partners, ultimately accelerating the development and market adoption of new technologies.

Universities contribute to innovation by conducting cutting-edge research, developing new technologies, and fostering a culture of creativity and critical thinking. They also facilitate the transfer of knowledge through collaborations with industry, support startups and spin-offs, and provide education and training that develop the skills needed for future innovations.

Category 3 (Sometimes Relevant to Startups but Often Focused on Wider Innovation Activities or Wider SME Support)

Chambers of Commerce foster collaboration among businesses, provide networking opportunities, and advocate for policies that support a favorable business environment. They also offer resources, training, and support services to help businesses adopt new technologies, improve processes, and drive economic growth.

Cluster Associations facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing among businesses and research institutions within an industry cluster. They also advocate for supportive policies and provide networking opportunities that connect members with potential partners and investors.

Cluster Managers are people or organizations which manage a geographically defined (and often sector-specific) technology network. They oversee the implementation and coordination of cluster activities, ensuring that strategic initiatives are executed effectively. They facilitate collaboration among cluster members, manage projects, secure funding, and develop strategies to enhance the cluster's overall innovation ecosystem.

Crowdfunding Platforms are organizations that enable startups (and other fundraisers) to raise funds from many donors or investors, typically via a website. Compared with traditional investment firms, crowdfunding platforms have many more investors who each contribute much smaller sums.

Diaspora Networks leverage the skills, knowledge, and resources of expatriates to drive entrepreneurial activities and technological advancements. They facilitate the exchange of ideas, foster cross-border collaborations, and provide access to international markets and investment opportunities, enriching the innovation ecosystem of both their home and host countries.

Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) provide businesses with access to advanced digital technologies, expertise, and resources. They support companies, especially SMEs, in integrating digital solutions, enhancing their digital skills, and developing innovative products and services, ultimately driving digital transformation and boosting competitiveness.

APPENDIX A

Entrepreneurship Education Programs equip entrepreneurs with the skills, knowledge, and mindset needed to start and grow new ventures. They provide practical training in areas such as business planning, opportunity recognition, and problem-solving, which encourages the development of innovative ideas and helps turn them into successful businesses.

Innovation Agencies support the development and implementation of new technologies and solutions. They provide funding, resources, and expertise, facilitate collaborations between industry and research institutions, and help scale innovative projects, ultimately enhancing the overall innovation ecosystem and accelerating economic growth.

Innovation Centers provide collaborative environments where businesses, researchers, and entrepreneurs can work together to develop and test new ideas. They offer access to cutting-edge technologies, expertise, and resources, support the commercialization of innovations, and facilitate partnerships and networking opportunities.

SME Business Support Programs provide small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with financial assistance, resources, and guidance to develop and implement new ideas. They offer access to funding, mentoring, and training, helping SMEs overcome barriers to innovation, adopt new technologies, and scale their innovative solutions.

Appendix B: Phase 2 Roundtable Format

In Romania, we ran three physical roundtables and one online roundtable, with the latter being chosen specifically to ensure that enablers from more remote regions could participate. The format of each roundtable, physical or virtual, was similar, with each lasting about 2 hours. The agenda was as follows:

Agenda Item	Description	Duration (minutes)
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome (including, for physical session, instructions regarding the venue facilities; for virtual sessions, instructions regarding the online tools) Introductions of all present Overview of agenda & purpose (including context of WBG's previous work in the country & how the project should ultimately benefit enablers) 	30
Icebreaker / 'check-in' question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this short exercise was to help participants to become comfortable talking to the group. Examples could include giving people 30 seconds to talk about their hobbies, an unusual fact about themselves, finding something in common with the person next to them, and so on. 	5
1st Exercise: Identifying a common vision for the ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this session was to clarify participants' 'big picture' vision of the startup ecosystem. Participants were asked to consider the question: "What would the ideal future (Romanian) startup ecosystem look like, 5 years from now?" All participants were given two minutes to think of three or more adjectives that would describe their ideal startup ecosystem. They were provided with sticky-notes and then asked to write one adjective per note. (Note, for the online workshop, a 'virtual whiteboard' tool, Miro, was used for this step) After this, the WBG moderators asked volunteers to propose one adjective at a time and talk about why this mattered; the moderators then asked the group whether others had the same or similar ideas. Sticky-notes were then placed by the moderator on a board (or virtual whiteboard) and grouped into similar themes. Moderators attempted to identify which elements of the vision were universally agreed. 	20
2nd Exercise: Identifying how each enabler's impact contributes to that vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of the second session was to make the 'big picture' vision relevant to participants' own organizations, and think about their ideal role. Participants were asked to consider the question: "How does—or could—your organization contribute to realizing the vision we just outlined?" To aid the discussion, participants were asked to consider what impact their organization generated that was core to its mission, versus what impact was generated incidentally or as a spillover. 	20

APPENDIX B

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a further aid, participants were presented with six categories of impact (human capital; access to finance; access to markets; R&D and innovation; improving regulations; and infrastructure) and moderators used these to prompt the discussion. • All participants were asked to reflect in silence for 2 or 3 minutes and then moderators asked participants to describe their organization’s impact. • WBG moderators captured the discussion via a whiteboard (or virtual whiteboard), again attempting to identify and group common themes 	
3rd Exercise: What would help each enabler be even more effective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the third—and most important—exercise was to determine, at a high level, what capabilities organizations needed to have more impact, and ultimately drive towards the desired ecosystem. • Participants were asked to consider the question: "What would enable your organization to achieve even greater impact?" • (As follow-on prompts, participants were asked to consider “are there additional capabilities or resources which would benefit your organization?” and “what might stop you from achieving your ideal impact?”) • WBG moderators captured the discussion via a whiteboard (or virtual whiteboard), again attempting to identify and group common themes. • Importantly, the moderators tried to keep the conversation high-level, and identify different categories of capabilities and common barriers to impact, rather than allowing the conversation to be drawn into the specific circumstances of any one enabler. 	40
Wrap-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the conclusion of all the exercises, the moderators highlighted some of the learnings from the exercises. • The moderating team then explained the next steps of the SECA process (e.g. how the workshop information would be used in designing diagnostic interviews), and reiterated what the ultimate benefits of the process were expected to be; this was part of the process of ensuring engagement in the following phases. • Moderators thanked participants and closed the event. (Note. For the physical roundtables, the WBG ensured that refreshments were available at the start of the session and that a light lunch was served afterwards. This provided a small incentive for participants to stay beyond the end of the roundtable and continue the discussion.) 	5

Note: WBG = World Bank Group.

Appendix C: Phase 3 Questionnaire

The survey distributed to enablers in Romania was as follows. (Some of the questions were chosen to reflect a similar survey that was run in the UK, in order to permit the responses to be compared and contrasted).

1. Name of the organization
2. If you belong to a parent company or organization, what is its name?
3. Which descriptions best define your organization? Please choose all that apply. [Options: Boot camp; Pre-accelerator; Accelerator; Incubator; VC; Angels Network; Venture Studio; Coworking space; University; Other (please specify)]
4. In which city is your organization headquartered?
5. If you have other facilities or locations, where are they located?
6. Please provide the website/s of your organization/program
7. In what year was your organization/programme established?
8. What best describes your organization's ownership? [Options: Private, Public-Private Partnership, Public; Other]
9. What are your preferred sectors in which you invest or offer entrepreneurial support? [Options: Sector agnostic; Cyber Security; Deep Tech; Diversity; Education; Fintech; Food; Health; Impact; Industrial; Tech; Insurtech; Marketing; Marketplaces; Mobility; Retail; SaaS; Space Tech; Travel; Other (please specify)]
10. Do you have a vision statement for your organization?
 - 10.1. If so, could you link to it / share it?
11. How is your organization funded? (If multiple sources, please allocate approximate percentages from each source, by inserting a number between 0 and 100.) [Options: Regional Operational Program; National funds /Structural funds; European Funding (Horizon, European Institute of Innovation and Technology etc); Service fees/rent from clients; Corporate Sponsorship; Return on equity from startups; Philanthropic donations; Other (please specify)]
12. What is your approximate annual turnover in EUR as an organization?
13. What factors have made your organization effective in startup support? Please select your top 3. [Options: Strong mentorship and guidance; Access to funding and resources; Tailored programs and services; Extensive networking opportunities; Proactive outreach and engagement with startups; Well-defined admission criteria; Effective marketing and promotion; Robust monitoring and evaluation processes
Collaborations with other organizations; Continuous improvement and learning culture]
14. What obstacles have you encountered that prevent your organization from being more effective or successful in startup support?
15. If applicable to your organization, what is your total investment?
16. To what extent do you have autonomy in governance decisions?
17. Is there a requirement to seek permissions or approvals from higher authorities?
18. To what extent do project managers/leads have autonomy or control over their budgets and resources?
19. Do you utilize resources, such as staff or space, that are provided by another department without a commercial transaction?
20. What is the coverage of your startup support services? [Options: Local, National, Central and Eastern Europe Region, International]*
21. Do you have an acceleration program for startups?
 - 21.1. If so, please list the name(s) of the acceleration programs
22. On average, how long do startups typically participate in your program or utilize your services?
23. What has been the average number of employees engaged in startup-related activities in your organization over the past 3 years?

APPENDIX C

24. What stage of development do most of the startups you work with tend to be in? [Options: Idea/Concept Stage; Seed Stage; Early Stage; Growth Stage; Expansion Stage; Maturity Stage]
25. Please indicate the criteria for admission into your program or service (Select all that apply):
 - 25.1. Participants' location
 - 25.2. Demonstrable social impact / aligns with your values
 - 25.3. Relates to a specific sector or technology
 - 25.4. Age of founders
 - 25.5. Age of firms
 - 25.6. Individuals must have certain qualifications or experience
 - 25.7. Demographics of the team (e.g. focus on women or ethnic minorities);
 - 25.8. Demonstrable growth potential
 - 25.9. Specific university affiliation
 - 25.10. Revenue above or below a specified amount
 - 25.11. Minimum or maximum amount of funds raised
 - 25.12. None of the above
 - 25.13. Other (please specify)]
26. Please assess your organization's competencies in delivering for the following startup stages on a scale from 1 to 5.
 - 26.1. Idea/Concept Stage
 - 26.2. Seed Stage
 - 26.3. Early Stage
 - 26.4. Growth Stage
 - 26.5. Expansion Stage
 - 26.6. Maturity Stage
27. Please assess your organization's competencies from 1 to 5 on the below:
 - 27.1. Design of programs
 - 27.2. Scouting and selection of ventures
 - 27.3. Delivery of quality content and formats
 - 27.4. Finding experts for delivery (e.g. legal, business, mentors)
 - 27.5. Facilitating connections to supportive people (e.g. mentors, coaches, experts, peers)
 - 27.6. Facilitating access to funds for startups
 - 27.7. Digital delivery and facilitation of programs
 - 27.8. Programs Management and efficiency
 - 27.9. Developing sustainable program portfolios
 - 27.10. Programs fundraising and business development
 - 27.11. Program impact measurement
 - 27.12. Alumni Community Building
 - 27.13. Event organizing (eg Demo Days, Pitch Day)
 - 27.14. Collaboration with universities
28. Please indicate the services that your organization currently provides (either independently or with third-party collaborations) and those that you are considering offering in the future.
 - 28.1. Business model refinement
 - 28.2. Networking with peers
 - 28.3. Press/media exposure
 - 28.4. Office space
 - 28.5. Technical advice
 - 28.6. Lab equipment or space
 - 28.7. Prototyping facilities
 - 28.8. Investment advice/readiness training
 - 28.9. Connections to potential investors/funders
 - 28.10. Support with external grant applications
 - 28.11. Direct funding via loans

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- 28.12. Direct funding via grants
- 28.13. Direct funding via equity investment
- 28.14. Other direct funding
- 28.15. Recruitment / team formation assistance
- 28.16. Mentoring / coaching
- 28.17. Skills training (including business skills)
- 28.18. Intellectual property (IP) advice
- 28.19. Other legal & tax advice
- 28.20. Demo days
- 29. What proportion of your services are delivered physically versus online channels?
- 30. Are there any services that are frequently requested but not provided by your organization or that your organization is unable to offer?
- 31. Approximately how many startups do you typically support per year (in total)?
- 32. Since you started, approximately how many startups have you supported?

- 33. How many startups do you intend to work with in the next 3 years?
- 34. If you are cohort-based, how many cohorts per year do you typically manage?
- 35. What was the amount of direct financial support provided to startups by your organization in the past year?
- 36. What is the average size of your investment/prize tickets per startup? (if applicable)
- 37. Which of the following indicators does your organization track and report?
 - 37.1. Number of new startups/businesses
 - 37.2. Firm scaling up (revenues or employment)
 - 37.3. Job creation
 - 37.4. Survival rate
 - 37.5. Number of training courses attended
 - 37.6. Access to foreign markets
 - 37.7. Successful acquisition
 - 37.8. Capital raised/Follow-on funding/investment
 - 37.9. Startup/ client satisfaction
 - 37.10. Networking & ecosystem development
 - 37.11. Other (please specify)
- 38. What are the most important networks and associations you are part of? In your opinion, what are the main benefits of being part of networks? (Please select max 3 answers)
 - 38.1. Accessing funding sources
 - 38.2. Sharing good practice (including informal learning & continuous professional development)
 - 38.3. Sourcing dealflow / new clients
 - 38.4. Sourcing services / service-providers for clients
 - 38.5. Providing a more coherent voice for lobbying / advocacy
 - 38.6. Moral support / socializing
 - 38.7. Ecosystem development
 - 38.8. Other (please specify)
- 39. What are the main challenges or gaps in the startup support landscape in Romania that your organization has identified?
- 40. Please leave any further comments or feedback about this questionnaire or the process

*Note: Question 20 was poorly phrased, with some respondents providing information about the *maximum* coverage, and others giving information about the *typical* startups. We suggest that this question be rephrased to 'please indicate what percentage of the startups you support are from your region vs nation-wide vs neighboring countries vs international', or similar.

Appendix D: Phase 4 Interview

Questions and Scoring grid

Strategy

1. How did the organization originate? What was the genesis?
2. What is your legal form?
3. What do you think your differentiator is? (If hybrid: what is your scope?)
4. Have you published a vision / mission statement for your organization, which guides your top-level decisions? What is it (briefly - no more than 30")?
5. Translating your mission into strategy, how do you decide what to do and what not to do?
6. To what extent are your current activities and capabilities mutually-reinforcing, and aligned with your stated mission? (If you were forced to split-off certain activities, could this be done?)
7. How do you check whether your capabilities and the services you offer are aligned with market needs? Do you ask the startups you support for feedback? (How do you do this? E.g. Net Promoter Score?)
8. Turning from strategy to operational activities, do you track any measurable indicators key performance indicators (KPIs) / objectives and key results (OKRs) to determine your organization's progress towards its goals? (And do you use them to adjust strategy?)
9. If we surveyed the whole organization, what percentage of the staff would say they understand the organization's vision and strategy, and agree with it?
10. Who do you consider your major stakeholders and how do you engage with them? (e.g. investors, landlord, corporates, chamber of commerce, council, universities, etc)
11. How do you ensure your organization stays up to date about emerging technology sectors?

Financial resources

12. What is your total assets under management (for VCs) / turnover (for others)?
13. Are you profit-making or loss-making?
14. Is your current budget adequate to fulfill your expected results / the OKRs you mentioned?
15. If your budget increased by an additional 10%, do you have a clear idea of what you would spend it on? What about 50%?
16. To what extent is your funding stable and predictable? [If parent org, what happens if that changes?]
17. How frequently do you create, review, and update a detailed budget for your organization, involving key team members for insights? Are you actively tracking and managing your cash inflows and outflows to ensure liquidity and stability?
18. Do you have a detailed business plan and financial projections for the next 1-3 years?
19. How developed are your organization's capabilities for business development, sales and partnerships? [VCs = fundraising]
20. How familiar are you with European Union (EU) funding (including European Investment Fund for VCs)? Have you ever applied for EU funds? (Have you read the documentation for yourself?)
21. How familiar are you with different funding sources (e.g. philanthropic foundations, corporate grants, competitions) and how to identify them?

Human resources

22. How many employees do you have (full-time equivalents (FTEs))
23. What are their roles?

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24. How difficult is it to recruit the right programme managers [other other relevant talent], etc., including those with an understanding of startups?
25. How does your organization identify and attract top talent to join your organization?
26. Once you've recruited people, how difficult it is to retain them? (To what extent does staff churn/turnover affecting your activities?)
27. Do you have a Long Term Incentivisation Plan (e.g. stock options or carried interest) to reward & retain key employees?
28. To what extent do you have a Human Resource plan that specifies roles, responsibilities, remuneration structures, performance appraisals & feedback, onboarding processes, team-building, conflict resolution etc?
29. To what extent do managers know how to motivate, delegate and get the best from their team members?
30. How much do you spend on staff training and development per year? (What mechanisms do you have in place to encourage professional development and growth within your organization?)

Networks

31. How easily can you find external advisors and experts (e.g. patent attorneys, accountants, mentors etc) when you need support? Do you pay your mentors? [Rephrase as 'do you look for external advisors, and if so, what for? Then: 'what type most difficult to find?']
32. How well-known would you consider your organization is locally? If we sampled founders, what percentage would recognise your organization?
33. How well-connected is your organization internationally? Do you have any links into globally-leading startup ecosystems (Silicon Valley, NYC, London, etc) strong enough to ask for favors?
34. What proportion of your time would you say is devoted to 'ecosystem building' activities which are not directly in support of your own startups? (How many hours per MONTH do you do favours for other orgs, or contribute to collective endeavors, like market-building?)
35. What are the activities (education, lobbying / market-building, connection) which you currently do for the benefit of the wider ecosystem? Could any of this be delegated or subcontracted (if a suitable organization existed)?
36. How do you attract or source startups? How do you secure your pipeline?
37. To what extent do you connect startups with follow-up support, after they leave your organization? Do you see yourselves as part of a pipeline of support? (what constrains doing more of this?)
38. If you manage a (current) community of startups, to what extent is that community engaged with, and supportive of, each other?
39. If you have a community of alumni, what do you do to help that community stay in touch with, and add value to, each other?
40. How do you design and facilitate effective events, conferences and workshops to achieve desired outcomes? Do you use trained facilitators or moderators? [What % of meetings do you have an agenda and share in advance?] [Is goal to educate, mobilize, etc?]
41. Do you encourage your startups to scale internationally? (Do you select for this?)
42. How do you do this?

Advocacy

43. Do you engage with the public sector? Who are the most important policy makers for you, and to what extent is your organization able to influence public policy makers in their decision-making (e.g. design of regulation)? Is there a mechanism for you to point out bad policies?

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44. To what extent do you ever collaborate with potential competitors, for mutually-beneficial changes in regulation or market-development, not just for deal-flow? (e.g. hosting joint events, developing common tools, joint letters to government, etc)
45. What are your organization's PR / media skills and capabilities (both traditional media and social media)? How active are you and what resource do you dedicate?
46. How do you know that your programme is making a difference? How do you measure your impact?

Leadership

47. If the CEO were unavailable for a period, or permanently, how would your staff cope with managing the organization? To what extent have you planned for the organization's continued operation? (Or departure of cofounder)?
48. How effectively does your organization identify and nurture leadership potential within your team and organization?
49. What's your governance structure? (Do you have a board of directors and how much power do they have?) (If corporate: to what extent do you have board-level buy-in?)

Organizational processes

50. To what degree are your internal processes formalized and documented (as opposed to existing only in staff's minds)?
51. To what extent does the organization experiment with its offerings and processes, innovate & take risks? Do you have any constraints from funders or regulatory bodies? How much autonomy? Agility to respond to needs of beneficiaries?
52. To what extent does your organization have a systems to enable continuous learning and improvement? Does the culture support this?
53. To what extent are you aware of international best practices for your industry? (Do you have mechanisms to find out what these are?) And to what extent have you then adopted them?

Wrap-up

54. Is there specific training or capacity-building which you would like? (Where do you want the org to be in 3 years, and what capacity need to build to get there?)
55. What have we missed that is relevant to your internal competences?
56. Who else should we talk to, who might not already be on our interview list?
57. Any feedback for us concerning this interview or the wider process?

Q.	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Strategy					
1	No scoring; free text				
2	No scoring; free text				
3	No scoring; free text				
4	No meaningful mission or vision statement exists; this may exist within the founders but is not	-----	Mission / vision statement exists but is rarely referred to and/or disconnected	-----	Clear vision for the organization, which is not only motivates staff but provides

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	communicated to staff.		from day-to-day operations		guidance for strategic decisions.
5	Haphazard; no clear strategy. Potentially 'following the money'.	-----	Most activities are directed towards the organization's end-goal but strategy revision may be intermittent	-----	Clear strategy, with all activities perfectly aligned with vision and long-term goal for the organization, & a regular process for ensuring this.
6	Strategy is haphazard, with little or no integration of different offers. Some activities may be legacies, without due consideration for their current need; others may be very opportunistic.	-----	Strategy is partly-integrated: there is a rationale for the existence of different offers, but this is not fully coherent.	-----	Strategy is an integrated whole: no activities are superfluous but all are mutually-reinforcing, ideally linked by a clear rationale / theory of change.
7	Services designed primarily on the basis of 'gut feeling' or personal experience. No meaningful market research or feedback from startups	Some market research or feedback, but primarily ad hoc / informal	Some formal research / feedback mechanisms exist (e.g. workshops with founders to enquire about unmet needs) but these are quite limited in scope and/or frequency, and not standardized	Feedback obtained regularly, but not in a formalized fashion that allows comparison over time	Systematic, high quality, mechanisms for market research exist (e.g. regular founder surveys, Net Promoter Score), which are repeated periodically to track changing demand and allow comparison over time.
8	No meaningful indicators tracked consistently.	-----	Indicators are tracked, but these are not well aligned with critical activities, and of limited use in tracking progress or	-----	Clear indicators, which are well-chosen (SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely) or

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			making course-correction		similar framework)), actively monitored, and used to adjust strategy
9	Little or no shared vision or direction.	-----	A vision/mission statement may exist, but this is not widely understood or shared by staff.	-----	The whole organization shares a common vision / mission and sense of direction, which they find highly motivating.
10	No strategy for engaging external stakeholders	Basic strategy (comms is infrequent and outgoing only); may invite them to an event	Sporadic engagement with stakeholders; some use of these stakeholders to adapt or direct strategy, but this is quite limited	Moderately frequent engagement with some of the stakeholders; but this may not involve all stakeholders, or may not use them to full potential	Well-developed strategy which considers a wide range of stakeholders, and involves them at appropriate times and with appropriate frequency (e.g. on board)
11	Passive; little or no active measures to stay on top of trends, resulting in low awareness	-----	Modest attempts to follow trends, via media and events, but no thought leadership.	-----	Makes active efforts to keeps on top of emerging technology trends (e.g. via subscriptions to journals, attending conferences, links with universities). Evidence of thought-leadership.
Financial Resources					
12	No score; absolute value				
13	No score; yes or no				
14	Budget very inadequate (e.g. can only perform <60% of stated functions)	70%	Budget is a limiting factor in performance (e.g. can only perform ~80%	90%	Budget satisfies current needs 100%

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			of stated function)		
15	No scoring; free text				
16	Complete uncertainty over budget for next year; may be a case of 'feast or famine'	-----	Have moderate confidence in funding envelope	-----	Have certainty over budget for foreseeable future
17	No formal budget process and only basic cashflow tracking. Responsibility unclear	Budgets are infrequent, with sporadic team involvement. Cash inflows and outflows are monitored occasionally but not consistently, leading to recurring financial stability challenges.	Budget reviews undertaken annually, but responsibility may be unclear, and/or cashflow management poor.	Budget reviewed at least every 6 months, with clear responsibility. Cashflow reviewed at least once within the year.	Budget reviews at least quarterly. Cashflow management is tracked at least monthly, ideally with dedicated accountancy tools.
18	No formal business plan; operations are relatively ad hoc, with projections only made for the current quarter, if at all	-----	Developing planning: We are actively working on creating a detailed business plan and financial projections for the next 1-3 years. Progress is ongoing, and the strategy is becoming more comprehensive.	-----	Business plan exists and is both referred to regularly (to guide day-to-day operations), as well as reviewed (to assess need for revision).

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19	Little or no business development capability	-----	Developing: We are actively working on enhancing our capabilities in business development, sales, and partnerships. While progress is evident, these areas still require further refinement. We have established some strategies and are committed to improving our approach.	-----	Experienced business development team which is successful at spotting opportunities and securing deals.
20	Unfamiliar with process and no EU funding obtained	-----	Moderately familiar with process but no successful grants	-----	Have applied for and won EU funding; confident about process
21	Unfamiliar; little idea who to approach or how to identify funders	-----	Somewhat familiar: We have a basic understanding of various funding sources, but our ability to identify them is limited. We are aware of philanthropic foundations, corporate grants, and competitions but haven't fully explored these options.	-----	Familiar; have approached and won funding from various sources
Human Resources					
22	No score, just value				
23	No score, just value				
24	Very difficult to find/retain appropriate talent, and this has significant impact on the organization or	Finding such program managers is consistently tough.	Talent is challenging to find, and recruitment takes time, but	We face minor hurdles but generally succeed in recruitment and retention.	Adequate talent availability; don't need to recruit from overseas, nor

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	quality of its services		usually is manageable.		pay above market rate
25	No clear strategy; recruitment is primarily local and relies on traditional methods like job postings without a focused talent acquisition strategy.	Basic talent identification and attraction approach, using common methods like job listings and occasional networking events.	Organization employs a moderately advanced approach, combining job listings with targeted outreach, limited employer branding, and some networking to identify and attract top talent.	Targeted employer branding, active participation in industry events, robust networking, and innovative recruitment methods to identify and attract top talent.	Excels in identifying and attracting top talent, using cutting-edge recruitment technology, strong employer branding, extensive industry networking, and a proactive, global approach to talent acquisition.
26	Constantly recruiting due to high staff turnover; significant impact on organization's activities	Frequent turnover has a noticeable and consistent impact on our activities.	While turnover is a concern, it affects our activities to some extent but is manageable.	We experience minor disruptions due to turnover but can adapt quickly.	Recruit primarily for expansion of organization or its programmes; little or no impact of leavers on ability to conduct activities
27	No incentives	-----	Some bonuses or performance-related pay, but lacking in long-term nature and/or coverage of key staff	-----	Formalised long term incentive plan in place, e.g. Employee stock ownership plan or carried interest plan, and potentially also other innovative incentives to reward and retain all key employees.

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28	Highly incomplete: Our Human Resource plan lacks critical components such as clearly defined job roles, structured remuneration packages, or a formal onboarding process.	Incomplete: While we have a basic plan, it lacks important elements. For instance, we may not have a comprehensive performance appraisal system or well-defined team-building initiatives.	Somewhat complete: Our plan covers some components, like roles and responsibilities, remuneration structures, and basic onboarding processes. However, it may lack detailed performance appraisal methods.	Mostly complete: We have a fairly comprehensive plan that specifies roles, responsibilities, and includes detailed remuneration structures. Still, it may not address all aspects of team-building or conflict resolution.	Comprehensive human resource plan which covers all key components, including clearly defined roles, structured remuneration packages, performance appraisal and feedback systems, robust onboarding processes, and well-documented team-building and conflict resolution strategies.
29	Mid-level management is weak and ineffective. Employees do not feel empowered or appropriately directed. Conflict is avoided rather than resolved.	-----	Developing proficiency: Managers are actively improving their skills in motivation, delegation, and optimizing team performance. Progress is evident, and these skills are increasingly utilized.	-----	High quality managers who know how to motivate, delegate and get the best from their team members. Good communicators who encourage effective teamwork, set goals, accept responsibility for decisions and empower their team members.
30	No formalised training for staff	Training is ad hoc (not budgeted) and minimal, delivered only as required (e.g. to raise awareness of new legislation)	Training is budgeted but minimal, primarily covering basic online courses and occasional workshops.	Training budget supports comprehensive online courses, external workshops, and certification programs.	Significant financial commitment to staff training and development (e.g. opportunities for advanced degrees, participation in global conferences, etc.). Mechanisms for professional growth encompass personalized development

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					plans, and incentives for staff to undertake training.
Networks					
31	Extremely difficult to find external experts, and this has significant impact on the organization or quality of its services	Very difficult: It is a challenging task, and it takes considerable effort to secure the right support.	Moderately difficult:: Experts can be challenging to find, and search takes time but usually concludes satisfactorily	Somewhat easy: Finding external advisors and experts is relatively straightforward, and we can secure their support without significant hassle.	Adequate expert availability; don't need to pay above market rate, nor devote substantial resource to searching
32	Very little recognition: A mere fraction of local founders, less than 10%, would recognize our organization. We have minimal visibility and are virtually unknown in the local startup community.	Limited recognition: Approximately 10% to 20% of local founders might recognize our organization. While we have a presence, it is limited, and our reach needs improvement.	Moderate recognition: Around 20% to 40% of local founders are likely to recognize our organization. We have made progress in establishing visibility but have room for growth.	Substantial recognition: A significant portion, approximately 40% to 70%, of local founders would recognize our organization. We have a solid local presence, and our name is well-known within the startup ecosystem.	Highly recognized: Over 70% of local founders would readily recognize our organization. We enjoy exceptional recognition, and our name is synonymous with the local startup scene.

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33	<p>Very limited connectivity: We have few international connections and lack substantial links to leading startup ecosystems. Our ability to ask for favors is minimal.</p>	<p>Limited connectivity: We have some international connections, but they are not extensive. While we have modest links to prominent startup ecosystems, our capacity to request favors is limited.</p>	<p>Moderate connectivity: We maintain moderate international connections, and we have links to several leading startup ecosystems. We can occasionally request favors with reasonable success.</p>	<p>Substantial connectivity: Our organization has established substantial international connections, and we are well-linked to leading startup ecosystems. We can confidently ask for favors and receive a positive response.</p>	<p>Highly connected: We are highly connected internationally, with a vast network of connections in leading startup ecosystems such as Silicon Valley, NYC, London, and more. We can easily request favors and have them fulfilled within these networks.</p>
34	<p>Focus is solely on internal tasks & directly-supported startups. We engage with external organizations only when we have to do so, and in a transactional fashion. No 'spillovers'.</p>	-----	<p>Spend ~6h / month helping others</p>	-----	<p>Philosophy of benefit for wider ecosystem; regular events, publications, etc which have wider benefit than to own startups. At least one role dedicated to connecting others & maintaining external relationships OUTSIDE their own community.</p> <p>>8h / mnth</p>
35	No scoring; free text				
36	<p>Limited Attraction (1): Relying mainly on organic referrals. Minimal marketing efforts, limited online presence. No formalized strategy for sourcing startups.</p>	<p>Basic Attraction (2): Utilizing basic online platforms and social media for outreach. Limited participation in local events and meetups. Some word-of-mouth referrals but not</p>	<p>Developing Attraction (3): Actively participating in industry-specific events and conferences. Building a presence on key online startup platforms. Establishing partnerships with local</p>	<p>Strong Attraction (4): Running targeted online marketing campaigns. Engaging in strategic partnerships with industry influencers. Hosting regular networking</p>	<p>Exceptional Attraction (5): Multi-channel marketing strategy, including thought leadership; actively scouting via global startup communities; industry-specific research to identify emerging startups; advanced</p>

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		systematically tracked.	entrepreneurial networks. Implementing basic lead tracking and follow-up processes.	events and webinars. Implementing a comprehensive consumer relationship management system for lead management.	analytics and databases for lead management.
37	No support; they are on their own	Informal links with later-stage support organizations, but hand-over to these is rather haphazard.	Regular introductions to follow-on organizations & investors, but not customized - 'one size fits all'	Customized introductions to follow-on organizations & investors; structured meetings	Comprehensive plan for all startups post-programme, with regular customized links with other later-stage support organizations; clear graduation process
38	There is little to no effort to connect startups or encourage them to stay in contact with one another.	Basic efforts to encourage network to share contacts and expertise; run occasional networking events.	Established startup community with regular events. Basic mechanisms to connect needs & offers.	Established startup community, with an explicit community-building strategy and attempts to share good practice and facilitate collaborations	Established community strategy with dedicated community manager and evidence of engaged community (e.g. members mentor one another, participate in knowledge sharing). Evidence of formal partnerships and joint ventures.

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39	There is little to no effort to connect alumni or encourage them to stay in contact with one another.	Basic efforts to encourage alumni network: sharing contacts, occasional events.	Established alumni network with regular events. Potentially some tailored connections in response to alumni requests.	Established alumni network, with an explicit community-building strategy and attempts to share good practice and facilitate collaborations	Established community strategy with dedicated community manager and evidence of engaged community (e.g. members mentor one another, participate in knowledge sharing). Evidence of formal partnerships and joint ventures.
40	Unstructured meetings; little or no awareness of facilitation techniques.	Meetings usually have basic agendas and ground rules, but little active moderation.	Meetings usually involve clear agendas, time management, and role assignments. Moderator pays attention to group dynamics, attempting to ensure equal participation.	Meetings consistently employ techniques like active listening, summarizing key points, and involving all participants, aiming to harness collective wisdom, enhance problem-solving, co-create innovative solutions. and maintain a positive group dynamic.	Trained facilitators who ensure high levels of active participation; use of methodologies like Design Thinking, Art of Hosting, Deep Listening and open dialogue. Consistent attention to meaningful outcomes including personal growth, shared understanding, societal change.
41	No encouragement for startups to consider international markets	Little support. Though startups they work with might be too early stage, they still encourage them to consider	Moderate support, seen as important, but not a focus of the support services offered by the organization	Some international markets targeted; and/or optional	They encourage all startups from day 1 to think internationally and be aware of the limits of the Romanian market. Seen as very important to scale overseas.

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42	None / not a focus	Will find connections as requested, but little in house knowledge or connections	Support in connecting to some other organizations with the skills and focus	Good connections in some markets, but limited in geographical scope and/or some limits on exporting awareness	Multiple overseas connections; awareness of exporting requirements;
Advocacy					
43	No meaningful examples of policy change	-----	Occasional interaction with policy makers, but only when policy makers seek input.	-----	Regular, meaningful dialogue with policy makers (at both regional and national levels), resulting in concrete examples of policy change. Conversations sometimes initiated by the organization. Unafraid to tell policy makers when public sector action or inaction is an inhibitor.
44	No collaboration with similar intermediaries; dynamic is almost wholly competitive.	-----	Occasional collaboration with intermediaries, but the dynamic of cooperation is inhibited by competition.	-----	Regular, meaningful collaborations with other intermediary organizations, via well-established networks or fora. Sophisticated understanding of common, 'pre-competitive' issues where collaboration may be beneficial to all.

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45	Little or no active promotion of the organization or its startups.	organization is active in social media, but remains relatively passive in its engagement with journalists.	organization has a media engagement function, and is active across a range of media, with some success.	Media function active across social and traditional media. Some success in actively approaching journalists to place articles.	Expert media team. Regular articles appearing in a range of media. Active engagement with press, with a forward-looking strategy that anticipates key dates. organization is known to and approached by media for expert comment.
46	Level 1 You can describe what you do and why it matters, logically, coherently and convincingly	Level 2 You capture data that shows positive change, but you cannot confirm you caused this	Level 3 You can demonstrate causality using a control or comparison group	Level 4 You have one + independent replication evaluations that confirms these conclusions	Level 5 You have manuals, systems and procedures to ensure consistent replication and positive impact
Leadership					
47	Absence of CEO would be highly disruptive, even catastrophic; formal delegation and existence of deputies is lacking; (s)he alone is responsible for key processes, connections, strategy, etc.	Absence of CEO would likely be very damaging; organization would take a substantial time to recover. Very limited awareness of other people's roles	Absence of CEO would create some disruption, but this would be manageable. Staff have a moderately good awareness of other people's roles and could cover.	Reasonable depth of management; business would likely continue without major disruption (albeit without some strategic decisions). Some formal processes for deputisation.	Formal deputisation. Cross-training of key employees to help them develop a full understanding of the business. Cross-purchase agreements in the case of partnerships.
48	No formal process. Leaders emerge organically, but may be disillusioned by lack of opportunities for promotion and assumption of	-----	Developing identification and nurturing: The organization is actively working on improving the identification and nurturing of leadership potential. Programs are in place, and	-----	Clear process for identifying and training up-coming leaders. Formalised leadership training.

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	more responsibility.		progress is evident.		
49	Governance is confused, unclear or board's interests misaligned with mission / operations.	-----	Board non-existent, or exists and is not active	-----	Clear structure (e.g. board or formalized limited partners and general partners structure); clear role definition; expertise to assist CEO (if applicable) and help course-correct.
Organizational Processes					
50	Minimal formalization: Internal processes are minimally formalized or documented. Much of the knowledge exists informally within the staff, and documentation is scarce.	Basic documentation: We have basic documentation for some internal processes, but there are gaps. Critical processes may still rely on staff knowledge rather than formal documentation.	Developing formalization: We are actively working on developing formalization of internal processes. Progress is being made, and key processes are being documented.	Well-documented processes: Internal processes are well-documented, and formalization is a priority. Staff can readily access documented procedures for most activities.	Comprehensive formalization: Our internal processes are comprehensively formalized and documented. A systematic approach ensures that all processes are well-documented, contributing to organizational efficiency and consistency.
51	Little or no scope for innovation; rigid processes and offerings	-----	Moderate experimentalism, but constrained e.g. by external authorities, staff dogmatism or client expectations	-----	Complete freedom to experiment, as well as the willingness to try new things
52	No systematic M&E, nor knowledge management systems	-----	Some M&E systems and knowledge management, but not a systematic internal learning process	-----	High-quality M&E systems, plus knowledge management systems to capture & record learning over time. Continuous improvement is part of the organizational culture.

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53	Little or no awareness, nor mechanisms to learn from others	-----	Some awareness of good practices; may not be best practices. Limited mechanisms for learning from others	-----	Fully aware; have mechanisms to monitor and learn from others (e.g. international networks, events); actively seeks such communities
Wrap-up					
54	No scoring; free text				
55	No scoring; free text				
56	No scoring; free text				
57	No scoring; free text				

