

Swiss Entrepreneurship Program | Ecosystem Stories

Peru | Peruvian Seed and Venture Capital Association | Increasing the availability of seed funding for Peruvian startups and entrepreneurs

Back in 2015, when Swiss EP started its activities, there were only two angel investor networks in Peru – and like other organizations in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, they did not work together. This lack of communication made it difficult to track down angel investment activities in Peru and to identify what the standard conditions were for seed funding rounds. An entrepreneur in need of further funding would not know where to look, and investors were not helping each other in identifying interesting startups and by sharing deal flows.

In the following years, new angel networks appeared, and Swiss EP began connecting them with other ecosystem actors. Based on the success of this early work, Swiss EP facilitated the creation of an association of angel networks, PECAP (Peruvian Seed and Venture Capital Association). Swiss EP helped by setting up space for 5 angel networks to meet up on a monthly basis, coordinating their activities and expanding their outreach. PECAP was announced in May 2017 at a cocktail party at the Residence of the Swiss Ambassador in Peru.



Launch of PECAP May 2017

Swiss EP has continued working with PECAP, hosting in their monthly meetings, and giving them technical support via international financial experts.

During this first year, PECAP has:

- generated the first statistics on angel investment activity in Peru, issuing these reports every quarter
- facilitated the first co-investment among networks on a funding round
- generated standard legal documentation for a seed round which has been freely available on [PECAP's website](#) since May 2018.

The association has rapidly become acknowledged as a key member of Peru's entrepreneurial ecosystem, and increasing numbers of organizations, corporates and VCs are applying to become members of PECAP.

Macedonia | Startup Macedonia | Strengthening the local startup community and foster collaboration

A sense of mistrust for other people and institutions runs deep in the Balkans. This cultural constraint inhibits an open dialogue, sharing of experiences and hinders collaboration. A viable and vibrant ecosystem requires high levels of volunteerism and collaboration among its actors, something the sporadic and scattered Macedonian ecosystem in 2015 could not assemble. Something needed to change.

In early 2016, Startup Weekend co-founder and Swiss EP expert Franck Nouyrigat arrived in Macedonia. The rest is history, as the saying goes. Within a two weeks period, Franck brought together a small group of Macedonian startup enthusiasts to map the current situation and work for a common vision for the Macedonian ecosystem. In specific, Franck proposed the establishment of a startup community umbrella organization called [Startup Macedonia](#).

Only a few months later Startup Macedonia was officially registered with the objective to map, track and support the local ecosystem, and represent the ecosystem in front of third parties, such as the public sector in Macedonia. As a Swiss EP partner organization, multiple international experts have offered strategic and operational support to Startup Macedonia.



Startup Macedonia in action

In 2017, Startup Macedonia produced and promoted a “Launch in Macedonia” booklet. In 2018, it embarked on a large-scale startup system mapping exercise, with the support of Swiss EP expert Oscar Munoz of Startup Commons. Startup Macedonia adopted the Startup Commons’ methodology for mapping, tracking and supporting ecosystems and in April, it published the country’s first comprehensive review of the current status of the ecosystem as well as the development needs of its participants.

With Swiss EP pro-actively facilitating and fostering the dialogue among individual entrepreneurs, startups and organizations, the collaborative future now looks much brighter in the Macedonian ecosystem.

Vietnam | Vietnam Mentors Initiative | Long Term Business Mentoring becomes the standard in supporting entrepreneurs


When Swiss EP kicked off in Vietnam in late 2015, there was a lot of interest in entrepreneurship and startups and several new accelerators and incubators were getting started. The awareness in the ecosystem about entrepreneurship was still minimal, but much curiosity existed around it. One aspect that was frequently discussed was business mentoring, although there was no common understanding of what that meant. Potential mentors did not know how to get involved, or even that there was a need and an opportunity for being involved. The one organization that supported and trained mentors, SME Mentoring, put equal importance on business mentoring, career mentoring, and even mentoring students with their school work. The programs Swiss EP worked with, such as Hatch and DNES, would equate lecturing/advising with mentoring, and were afraid to go and invite potential mentors to participate in their programs. Coaching is "lecturing" if you will. Telling people what to do and how. Mentoring is listening, discussing, asking questions. It is not telling people what to do. Both are important aspects of accelerator and incubator programs, although effective long term mentorship is the most closely aligned with success of the entrepreneurs and startups.



Launch of VMI in 2016

Therefore, Swiss EP kicked-off the program in Vietnam with a series of workshops on mentoring. These were put on by Mike Ducker and held in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, and Da Nang. We invited organizations with an interest in building pools of mentors, potential mentors, and ecosystem players at large.

Ecosystem leaders, many being Swiss EP partners, were excited and inspired by what they learned. The leaders in this group decided that Vietnam needed a national organization that could provide information about mentoring, coach mentoring, and help its member organizations to recruit mentors. The result was a group called **Vietnam Mentors Initiative (VMI)** that formed at the end of 2016 with multiple member organizations



that has gone on to support mentoring in the major centers like Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, as well as the smaller provinces that are developing programs, such as Bà Rịa-Vũng Tàu, where VMI has provided support to the nascent startup community.

Mentoring in Vietnam has evolved from the initial workshops with Mike Ducker, with a few interested people in the ecosystem into a well-recognized service necessary for a vibrant startup ecosystem, and VMI is helping maintaining the interest and capabilities within Vietnam.