



[EANET newsletter # 48](#)



7 April 2017

In this newsletter:

- Reflection on Strategy workshop for the ministries
- Tips & Tops from the speakers at the workshop
- ENTREPRENEURS IN THE SPOTLIGHT
- Top 5 reasons to run your start up from Georgia

Upcoming events:

15-17 May 2017	International Highlight Event	- ISU Tbilisi
26-28 June 2017	Sustainability Workshop for EANET Staff & Ministries	- GTU Tbilisi

**Do you have an interesting story to share with (other) alumni entrepreneurs and EANET partners?
Please send it to us at eanet.dissemination@gmail.com**

Next issue: Friday 21 April 2017

Copy can be sent before Wednesday 19 April

Looking back at Tempus EANET Strategy Workshop for Ministries, Partners, Entrepreneurship facilitators and Entrepreneurs

How Kharkiv can apply the experience of Start Up Amsterdam

By Konstantin Kudriavtsev

Investment Development and City Image Division
Of Kharkiv City Council



The dynamics of a modern world is accelerating every day. We are witnesses of the era, when humanity is evolving into informational and highly-technological world where information, ideas and brains are mostly valued. New words, such as: Start Up, pivot, Hub, Crowdfunding, etc. step-by-step become common in our life. So how does the modern highly-technological center look? What is a city standing with one foot in future? From 20 to 23 April, 2017 representatives of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova had the opportunity to study the experience of Amsterdam City in creating an attractive ecosystem for the development of the startup environment.

Let us try to understand what made success of the European Silicon Valley, which gave birth to such world giants as Booking, TomTom, Rockstart and others, and how we can use this experience in Ukraine.

The Dutch principle of building an efficient business environment is based on close networking and collaboration of all parties - authorities, universities, active youth, NGOs, chambers of industry and commerce, associations, businesses and investors. Each participant provides available development

instruments to mutual system, thereby expanding it and creating synergies. With this approach to management it is much easier to follow up and meet the needs of each participant, making the system effective, developing and dynamic. Start up Amsterdam is not a set of highly technological buildings, but people building an effective system of networking, open sharing of experience, information and opportunities, it is an extensive working network aimed at mutual development and healthy, not frontal, competition.

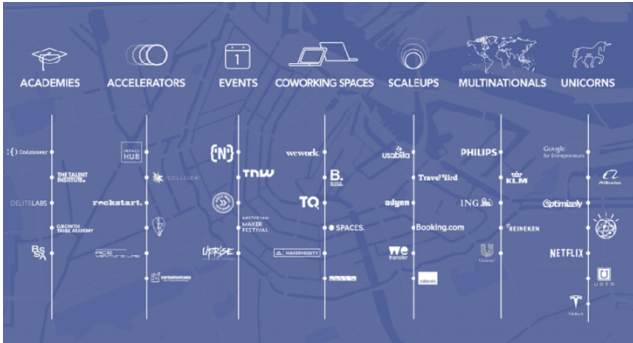
So what are we missing? And how can we get closer to that day when Kharkiv will stand among Berlin, San Francisco and Amsterdam?

We need to define main differences in Ukrainian and Dutch approaches forming an efficient business ecosystem. Challenges that we need to face come out from that differences. Together with our Amsterdam colleagues we have identified the following points:

- Low level of urban and business infrastructure development;
- Regulation of Business;
- Lack of open and wide information field, poor networking of system participants; Unwillingness of business representatives that share experiences and consult young entrepreneurs openly (weak business culture);
- Narrow and expensive credit market;

It is clear from the above challenges that they cannot be solved without close collaboration of all the parties. The infrastructure is created by the state, but it is active business and citizens who pay taxes and creates request for this infrastructure. And the clearer and more definite this request is, the more efficient is usage of public funds and results are

higher. From here comes out a conclusion that the success of Start Up Amsterdam is in efficient, prompt networking of all environment parties, general and open access to resources and information, in a single strategic development vector.



A very simple question arises: **Where to start?**

First of all, existing resources (business schools and incubators at universities, startup centers and hubs, co-working and open spaces, scientific and research centers, etc.) should be integrated into a single open network. This will create a basic field for communication and fight destructive competition between such centers. Young entrepreneurs will be able to use a broadened resource base and information network.



Further, the system needs to involve representatives of big and successful business, who will act as consultants and advisers as well as potential investors for young entrepreneurs, will transfer them culture and business principles. It is the big business and local authorities that must assume the role of business ambassadors and guides for promising projects.

As a result, we get a system where a young entrepreneur is not limited with frames of one university or business incubator, but is free to use the entire network's resource, receives qualified advice and practical support from successful mentors, accelerators and business practitioners. This enables a person to create an investor-attractive product and gives the understanding of necessity to transfer business culture and experience to starting entrepreneurs.



In conclusion, I would like to point out that one article cannot describe everything that is needed to and can be done. One ancient wisdom says: A journey of a thousand kilometers begins with a single step. And despite our goals may seem idealistic - nevertheless we will try.



A reflection by Oleksandra Fedorko Chief Specialist, H2020 UA NCP for SMEs

Entrepreneurship Development Division
Department of Entrepreneurship Development and
Regulatory Policy,
Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of
Ukraine

“I would like to express my gratitude for organising the Tempus EANET sustainability training visit for Ukrainian team to Amsterdam on 20-22 March. It was a great experience both in getting acquainted with Amsterdam, its friendly people, interesting cuisine, or in getting insight on creating an ecosystem for start-ups in Netherlands.”

A visit to Amsterdam Science Park's Start-up Village gave a glimpse of how the start-up spaces closely connected to the university and science looks like, and how talented students and young entrepreneurs can benefit from having easy access to the scientific institutions at the Amsterdam Science Park. Our friendly guide Julia was open to share with us information on principles of Start-up Village functioning, as well as introduced us representative of one of the first companies that moved here – ‘Aiir Innovations’.

Thanks to the training visit I also got the basic knowledge of the TQ Amsterdam's co-working space, a platform to a tech community of fast-growing start-ups. It was useful to get acquainted with presentation by Ronald Kleverlaan to better understand, in particular, why it is important to develop crowdfunding ‘culture’ in society. Further discussion within TQ Amsterdam's co-working space among EANET partners and delegates on building and strengthening entrepreneurial ecosystems was an opportunity to work closely with colleagues from Moldova and Georgia, and to find best practices and common solutions on given topics promptly and efficiently.



Also, a visit to the Rockstart, one of Europe's top accelerators, was especially memorable thanks to an outstanding presentation by Oscar Kneppers, CEO of Rockstart. ‘Leave your comfort zone, for the magic happens beyond it’, Oscar Kneppers's main idea on developing start-ups can be applied, I believe, in various spheres of life. The tips by Oscar Kneppers on how to 'feel' when it is necessary to shut down the project timely, or how to make the best start-up team (the rule of ‘3-H’), were interesting as well.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs in the Hague, our final destination point, and presentations given therein by Niels Tigchelaar and Brigitta Groenland, familiarised me with the functioning of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency and principles of Dutch international business promotion.

I would also like to thank you for organising all the discussions which became a good platform for establishing new working contacts either with our Ukrainian participants or with Moldavian and Georgian colleagues and guests from various professional specialisations, all combined with a common matter – building and facilitating entrepreneurship ecosystems.

I'm looking forward to our future cooperation,
Oleksandra Fedorko

Experience gained by GEAR, Georgia Technical University

By Boris Gitolendia

I'd like to express my overall impression that I have gained of the value of the Tempus EANET Sustainability Training conducted at Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences – HvA (Netherlands). Strategy Workshop for the Ministries took place during the period of 20.03.2017- 22.03.2017 and was regarding building and facilitating entrepreneurship ecosystems for start up and scale up entrepreneurship.



Top management representatives of various Ministries from Netherlands, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine together with the representatives of EANET project consortium universities and business connected to the EANET partners responsible to encourage the development of entrepreneurship ecosystems in the countries have been participating in the event.



It was of great importance for me to participate in the workshops especially related to the issues such as creating favorable ecosystems for entrepreneurship; sharing existing experience and knowledge in what it takes to stimulate the formation of an ecosystem for entrepreneurship that creates economic growth,

innovation and jobs and that attracts talent and investment. Moreover, it was great experience to take part in the Round Table discussions how to facilitate the growth of start-ups by trainings program and investors. As well as the meetings with successful people who actually were able to achieve their objectives in this regard.

Experience gained from this strategy workshop will help GTU Interpreter Alumni Reunion to attract more partner institutions to fully benefit from GTU Alumni Club, Business Incubator and HR Incubator. Thanks to the training now we know more how to encourage a spirit of loyalty, friendship, service and benevolence among the members of the Reunion, how to promote and support chapters and affiliates of the Reunion throughout Georgia and internationally, and how to



coordinate relevant interaction.

Presentations

Most presentation can be found in the dropbox at: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0By8RcNrF-ejTOGRoTIJNOTZ2Ukk>

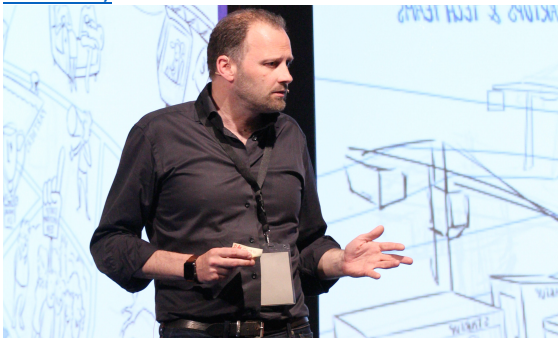
Some Quotes from the Speakers

Oscar Kneppers – Founder Rockstart
(<https://www.rockstart.com/>)



“Stop talking, start doing”

Ruben Nieuwenhuis – Director Startup Amsterdam
(<http://www.iamsterdam.com/en/business/startupamsterdam>)



“Doing the Ordinary, Extraordinary”

Dr Ingrid Wakkee – AUAS

“For entrepreneurship to flourish we need more than ambitious and capable entrepreneurs; We need to build an ecosystem in which various professionals take part and play their role”

Anoesjka Timmermans – AMSIB

“All that is great, once started small, by taking a small step instead of a giant leap”

Ronald Kleverlaan – Crowdfunding strategist, founder CrowdfundingHub & European Crowdfunding Network



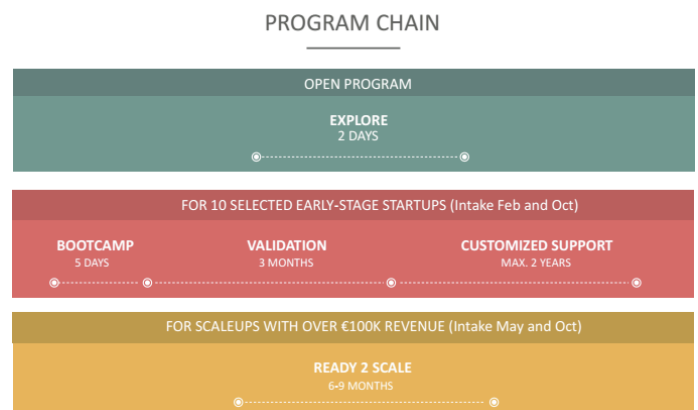
“Crowdfunding is a very powerful tool for entrepreneurs to raise funding from a dedicated group of ambassadors and for market validation of their start up. Governments and start-up networks should support the growth of crowdfunding by educational activities and providing a clear and adaptable regulatory framework, based on the growth of the industry”

Remco de Bruijn
Netherlands Chamber of Commerce



“You have to breathe and dream new digital technology to stay relevant for your customers ”

Yulia Bodnar – ACE Startup Village





ENTREPRENEUR ALUMNI IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Miseliuk Serhii

General Director of Ltd "Prostory of Ukraine"

Entrepreneur-alumni of KROK University

My professional story begins with the first year of living in Kiev. I understood very well that moving to Kiev was the beginning of an independent, adult life. Therefore, the question of "to work or not to work" - did not even appear. I started to work in parallel with the full-time training at "KROK" University.

Since 2002 I worked in a security company. In 2003, I began to work as an assistant of security guard at "KROK" University, due to which I received a discount for training.

According to my major I started to work in the company "Generation" in 2005. This was a turning point of my life. I was accepted to the position of "Trade Administrator". The post assumed a great responsibility. Despite the lack of experience, I was confirmed to this position, as it seems to me for the following reasons:

1. The employer was trying to save money, therefore half of the salary for this position was offered to me.
2. I was recommended by a student of our university, and he invited me to go for an interview.
3. The most important is that I believed in myself. The head of the department asked me during interview, how I intend to work without knowing anything, I replied: "If someone shows me what I have to do, I will do it better than any other." During half a year, I was promoted 4 times.

In 2006, I moved from Ltd "Generation" to Ltd "Konfael" to the post of Administrative Director. After six months I became a director. I was 24 years old. In this short time, I realized that impossible is possible. My success recipe is to do your job in a way you work for yourself.

In 2008, I left Ltd "Konfael" for the reason that personal development in this company was not an important issue. Already in December of the same year, my partners and I founded our own company Ltd "Prostory of Ukraine".

We have been working already for more than 6 years. The staff is 18 people. We are still young, we have much to grow, and already at this stage, we have great achievements. Our organization received state awards, conducts social and charity activities, has a football team and a sport hall for employees.



ALMA MATER - "KROK" IN LIFE

Without a doubt, the training at "KROK" was VERY helpful in my professional life! The experience of overcoming the problems that I had to face during my studies was very valuable. The University is the primary school of life in which we are developed as individuals. In the future this made a huge impact on our career development. I kept in touch with "KROK" after graduation. I joined the Alumni Association of "KROK" University, and for the last two years, I am the member of the Association.

What am I proud of AND WHAT inspires me

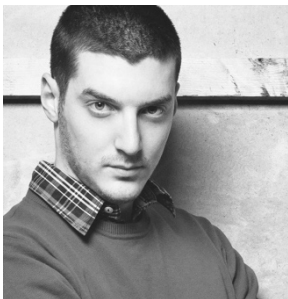
I am proud to have become a manager in a relatively short period - 16 months from the moment of my first

professional position. I am proud that together with my colleagues we created a successful business without and starting capital. I am inspired by my beloved wife, as well as by many goals that will achieve!

Work is only a part of my life, the second part. The superiority belongs to the family. I met my wife Julia at "KROK". For more than 10 years we have been in love with each other and we are going to do it a 100 times more.

For this time different things happened: both good and complicated. And she was always there, and this is of very great value. I wish each of you to meet your partner, with whom you can grow love - strong and reliable.

I wish everybody to always be self-confident, not to be afraid to take responsibility and live according to your heart.



**Giorgi Kontuadze,
Co-Founder of GIFFER,
One of ISU's most
successful alumni
entrepreneurs**

**and active member of ISU (Ilia State University)
Entrepreneur Alumni Centre**

Main working field is Social Media Marketing, with 5 years of experience.

- 1. How did the idea of starting your own business come about?**
- there were two factors: a rapidly growing trend of GIFs on social media and a gap on Georgian event lacking innovations. We combined these and the Giffer was born.
- 2. What is your startup all about?**
- we are an innovative GIF booth rental. We bring a lot of fun to events and make sure gifs are shared on social media right way.
- 3. What are your future plans?**
- we have to continue progress, innovate more and do experiments. I don't like talk about future plans, competitors are everywhere. :D

- 4. What expectations do you have from EANET network?**
- connections, it's key thing I want to take from EANET, and XP that gives you opportunity to make yourself better in your business.
- 5. How would you like to collaborate with other members of international Entrepreneur Alumni Network?**
- During the July meeting in Chisinau, we met Ukrainian Entrepreneurs and in October we have found out about start of their activities in Ukraine. They invited us to their activities as a partner; as a result, on November 19, GIFFER.COM.UA became the partner of ALUMNI-marathon - you can find the report on giffer.com.ua, and I think it's just a beginning, because this project members are not from Ukraine but from the other countries.



5 Reasons to Run your Startup from Georgia

Caucasus Business Week

September 21, 2016 [Facebook113](#)

Your to-go-to place when you want to found a startup is Silicon Valley, right? Or perhaps London? Wrong. It was, a few years ago. But it isn't anymore. Not only does the mayor of Palo Alto (which includes Silicon Valley) want the tech giants out, investors are also done with putting their money in salaries, rent, and other administrative stuff, rather than the product itself.

1. The Business Climate

Now, don't get me wrong, it's not 'easy' in Georgia to set up a business, but it's a whole lot easier than many other places in the world. And I've set up several in several different countries. Georgia is by far the friendliest place to do business.

What you should know: easy registration, English speaking staff in most institutions and businesses, a not bad taxation system, and a one-stop-shop for getting your residency permit.

I've learned a lot in the year we've ran our business in Tbilisi, and of course we had our frustrations with government clerks who had troubles understanding what we were doing. I also must admit that I believe Georgia's tax system isn't perfect, and needs quite a lot of work to make it a major attraction for start-ups, but there's a good intention. And I believe that with a few adjustments, they can get there.

2. Moneysz

Doing business in Georgia is good for business: for a fraction of the cost elsewhere you can run your business. Not only salaries, but everything else you'd need to put money in to run a successful business are significantly cheaper than, let's say, Silicon Valley or London. That, plus cheap and delicious, healthy, organic food: what else would you need?

3. Invest in your Product

Instead of spending money on the administrative side of running a company, you can actual invest that money directly into your product. Which, basically,

means you can create your product faster, more efficiently, and as a result, more successfully.

And that is especially interesting for potential investors who are tired of seeing most of their investment going to anything but the product itself.

Now, don't get me wrong. Investors aren't throwing themselves at you in Georgia. But you will be in a unique position to make them understand their investment will be extremely cost efficient for them. And that is something investors love to hear.

4. Inspiring Creativity

If any, Georgians are incredibly creative. And their history is a major contribution to this. But I also strongly believe that the beautiful environment adds to the creativeness of Georgians: the mountains, the architecture.

And as a start-up, you need to surround yourself with very creative people from all kinds of different fields, whether it's design, marketing, or programming. The best results are yielded through a creative and innovative team.

5. Perfect Market to Test your Product in Beta

Every start-up needs to test their product, and Georgia is a perfect market for this. It isn't extremely large (around 4 million inhabitants) and it's full of people who are eager to try out new 'cool' things.

Is Georgia perfect? Definitely not. It can improve its business climate for startups in many different fields.

But it has a major potential.

That is why I am working together with other businesses to attract international startups and investors to Georgia, to help them build the Start Up Nation they could become. And help the young generation in Georgia.

An article in the Caucasus Business Week, written by Hila Peled