

The Startup Firm

Module Name	The Startup Firm
Discipline/Integration/Theme module	Theme Module
Responsible person	Anna Söderblom
Department (when applicable/Discipline)	Entrepreneurship
Integrated with the following modules:	The Multinational Enterprise
Total number of student contact hours	

Module Description

General aims

Entrepreneurship is considered as a major driver for societal development and renewal. Today, a large number of people are involved in entrepreneurship and/or interact with entrepreneurs in various ways. Some are entrepreneurs and choose to start and run their own businesses or initiate new business opportunities within existing organizations. Others will on a continuous basis, for example, finance, work in, deliver to, buy from, or acquire entrepreneurial firms. In other words, entrepreneurs and their activities are essential in several dimensions to many people. This module focuses on entrepreneurial activity in startup firms.

A startup firm's ability to convince the environment about the attractiveness and viability of their business idea is crucial, whether the audience is potential employees, partners, customers or financiers. And convincing the target audience is obviously done through several channels, whereof the most common are business plans. That is, documents describing the core components of a business. In this module, the students will not only learn how to put together business plans but also how to evaluate and value these type of plans.

The general aim of this module is to apply knowledge provided in the previously given disciplinary modules in one thematic area; the startup firm. The students will be given a deepened, to a large extent practical oriented, understanding about possibilities but also challenges of starting new businesses. And, in addition, the students will practice how to critically evaluate all components of startup business processes. In other words, appraise business models.



Topics and themes

The following topics will be included in the module – all with the specific focus on startup firms:

- Recognizing opportunities and generating ideas
- Carry out industry and competitor analyses
- Developing and evaluating business models
- Developing and evaluating go-to-market strategies
- Identifying financial key-ratios and assessing new ventures financial strengths, weaknesses, and viability

Understanding and evaluating potential financial sources and valuation of startup firms

Intended learning outcomes

After this module, the students will be able to:

- Explain theoretical foundations, models and concepts related to the module
- Communicate the business idea, future strategies, core strengths and opportunities, as well as forecasted financial outcome of a startup firm's operations with the purpose of convincing external as well as internal stake holder of the potential in the business
- Critical review, appraise, and identify possible inconsistencies in business models as presented in business plans for startup companies with the purpose of making recommendations to potential future stakeholder

Learning activities & pedagogy

The module will be based on three fundamentals:

- Lectures will be given on specific topics throughout the course
- Case studies form an integral part of the course content
- Practitioners will present in some sessions

Before each session, the students are expected to have read the assigned material and case studies thoroughly. For some of the cases, the students are expected to submit a one page individual hand-in. In addition, the students will write and present either; (i) a business plan for a startup firm, or, (ii) a thorough evaluation of an existing business plan.

Practice integration

The module has a strong real-life approach including case studies, evaluation of real business plans and a number of lectures provided by guest lecturers.



Skills integration

Especially presentation skills and writing skills will be practiced in the module.

Prerequisites

Discipline modules according to the schedule for year 1.

Literature

- Barringer, B. et al. (2006). *Entrepreneurship – Successfully Launching New Ventures*. Pearson Education, New Jersey
- Case material
- Articles

Examination

- Active attendance (20%)
- Hands-ins related to discussed topics (20%)
- Literature test (20%)
- Written business plan or evaluation of a business plan (40%)

Any other additional information

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