



The Incubation and Business Development Program for Students of University of North Sumatra (USU)

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Abstract. The Business Incubation and Development Program for USU Students aims to create new independent entrepreneurs based on science and technology, enhance the network between university entrepreneurship and the community, industry, and other institutions, and establish a suitable entrepreneurial guidance model for PMW/P2MW students, those initiating business ventures. This program is slated to run for 3 (three) years, from 2023 to 2025. In its inaugural year, it will nurture 20 (twenty) tenants, consisting of 1 (one) P2MW student and 19 (nineteen) PMW students forming 18 groups who are venturing into new businesses. The program begins with the Pre-Immersion Phase, involving the recruitment process for participants (tenants), followed by training encompassing 3 (three) stages: Product Design Training, Creativity and Business Innovation Training, Design Thinking and Business Model Training. Subsequently, participants undergo the Immersion Phase, engaging in internships at SMEs, followed by the Post-Immersion Phase involving business coaching, mentoring, business gatherings, curation, demo day, pitching, and concluding with program monitoring and evaluation. The output of this KBM program aims to generate 5 (five) new student entrepreneurs.

Keyword: Student Entrepreneurship, Pre-Immersion, Immersion, Post-Immersion

Abstrak. Program Inkubasi dan Pengembangan Bisnis Mahasiswa USU bertujuan untuk menciptakan wirausaha baru mandiri yang berbasis iptek, meningkatkan jejaring antara kewirausahaan perguruan tinggi dengan masyarakat, industri dan lembaga lainnya, dan menciptakan model pembinaan wirausaha yang sesuai bagi mahasiswa PMW/P2MW, mahasiswa yang sedang merintis usaha. Program ini direncanakan akan dilaksanakan selama 3 (tiga) tahun mulai dari tahun 2023 hingga 2025. Pada tahun pertama ini dibina 20 (dua puluh) tenant yang terdiri dari: Mahasiswa P2MW 1 (satu) orang, mahasiswa yang merintis usaha baru dalam Program PMW sebanyak 19 (sembilan belas) orang yang terdiri dari 18 kelompok. Program ini dimulai dengan Tahap Pre-Immersion yaitu proses recruitment calon peserta (tenant), kemudian peserta mengikuti pelatihan dimana ada 3 (tiga) tahap pelatihan yaitu Pelatihan Produk Desain, Pelatihan Kreativitas dan Inovasi Bisnis, Pelatihan Design Thinking dan Business Model. Selanjutnya para peserta mengikuti Tahap Immersion yaitu magang di UMKM dilanjut dengan Tahap Post-Immersion yaitu proses business coaching dan mentoring lalu business gathering, kurasi,

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demo day dan pitching serta proses terakhir adalah monitoring dan evaluasi program. Luaran dari program KBM ini akan menghasilkan 5 (lima) wirausaha baru mahasiswa.

Kata Kunci: *Wirausaha Mahasiswa, Pre-Immersion, Immersion, Post-Immersion*

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1 Introduction

The USU campus is situated in Padang Bulan, a lush green area spanning 120 hectares in the heart of Medan City. Its academic zone, covering 90 hectares, accommodates nearly all student lectures and practical activities. The learning system is supported by a library and over 200 laboratories. The USU library offers various learning resources in both print and electronic formats and is currently one of the best in Indonesia. The Padang Bulan campus is also equipped with information technology infrastructure to facilitate access to diverse informational resources, aiding students' learning and research processes.

The Student Entrepreneurship Center (SEC), established in 2009, serves as a platform for nurturing entrepreneurship among USU students. The primary role of the SEC is to support students interested in entrepreneurship by providing further guidance through training and offering business capital via the Student Entrepreneurship Program (PMW). To qualify for financial assistance from the University of North Sumatra, students must undergo a multi-stage selection process. Students with well-developed business plans capable of articulating them effectively before a panel of judges appointed by the SEC are eligible for varying amounts of business capital.

The SEC also mentors students involved in social entrepreneurship, agribusiness, health entrepreneurship, and more, not just limited to technological entrepreneurship [1]. Another program related to entrepreneurship is the Student Creativity Program (PKM) in Entrepreneurship, known as PKMK, which helps produce entrepreneurial students grouped under the Student Entrepreneurship Program (PMW). The number of students participating in PMW has significantly increased in recent years. However, many face challenges in sustaining their businesses, especially start-ups that often struggle to continue operating.

Although there has been an increase in the number of students passing selection processes in programs like PKM, PMW, and P2MW, the progress of the managed businesses hasn't paralleled this growth. These students encounter various obstacles in running their businesses. Challenges include students' inability to innovate within their businesses, especially for technology-based entrepreneurs. Typically, entrepreneurs struggle to perfect product technology and determine the right market segmentation and target audience, resulting in lower market demand for their products. Therefore, intensive mentoring for entrepreneurial students generated through PMW is essential to foster responsible entrepreneurs capable of engaging in higher business realms.

The mentoring activities aim to enhance the quality of student entrepreneurial technology products to compete effectively and be viable in the market (marketable). Thus, a comprehensive mentoring approach is required to elevate and grow the businesses of entrepreneurial students. Consequently, the University of North Sumatra will conduct the Student Entrepreneurship-Based Business Incubation and Development Program (KBM). This program will involve 20 student business groups, comprising 18 PMW groups: Maryam Wedding Syar'i, RDecocreate, Nyeblak, Kingsoe, Basreng Nusantara, Jala Jius Indonesia, Browsh, Miusu, Kupie Rempah, Vergetten, Rainbowba, Binahong Beauty, Bellecomme, Bipple (Biobattery Pineapple), Domino Creative, Ghania Creative, and Grefill. Additionally, there is 1 group from the P2MW program called May Is Mine and 1 group from the PKMK program named Jasa Kita. These 20 student businesses are categorized into several clusters: fashion (1 group), craft (2 groups), food (6 groups), agriculture (1 group), beverages (3 groups), cosmetics (2 groups), technology (1 group), and services (4 groups).

2 Implementation Method

Implementation of the community service program involves several stages as follows.

2.1 Pre-Immersion

In this phase, the executing team aims to acquire basic knowledge related to entrepreneurial skills and competencies. Students are expected to grasp fundamental entrepreneurial knowledge and mindset and facilitate their business ideas [2]. The phase involves participant recruitment and providing entrepreneurship training.

a. Participant Recruitment

Recruitment entails selecting prospective student participants based on predetermined criteria. The selection process, managed by the Execution Team, evaluates business portfolios and product marketing development.

b. Entrepreneurship Training

Providing entrepreneurship training to students participating in the program is essential to cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit and tap into existing potentials. The training aims to stimulate business development ideas and positively impact the students' independence. One approach to fostering entrepreneurial spirit is through entrepreneurship training activities. The training is conducted via lectures, discussions, and Q&A sessions. Its objectives include enhancing entrepreneurial mindsets, boosting creativity and innovation among tenants, reconstructing businesses with marketable innovations, and nurturing young entrepreneurs. Training encompasses product design, creativity and innovation, design thinking, and business model sessions.

2.2 Immersion

During this stage, the program's execution team collaborates with SME partners to directly facilitate students (tenants) in learning and gaining hands-on experience (onboarding). It is expected that during this phase, students (tenants) can create business models and prototypes. The process includes mentoring by partners to achieve outcomes from the onboarding process, such as students' ability to create business models and develop prototypes. Entrepreneurial internship activities commence with preparation, where participants receive training from partners and make initial visits to the internship sites. These activities are highly beneficial for students. The combination of classical theoretical material (preparation) and direct field practice through real internships can boost the motivation to initiate entrepreneurship, even on a small scale. Direct practice at the internship site provides an excellent opportunity to understand problems, their solutions, and the tactics used by an entrepreneur. [3].

2.3 Post-Immersion

During this phase, student participants (tenants) receive intensive guidance from the execution team, enabling them to validate product processes and business feasibility. The support model includes business coaching and mentoring, business gatherings, identification, mapping, and curation, followed by demo days, pitching, and monitoring and evaluation [4].

3 Result and Discussion

The community service activity titled "Business Incubation and Development Program for University of North Sumatra Students" has been executed with defined targets and achievements as outlined below.

Table 1. Targeted Activity Outputs/Achievements

No.	Output	Target	Key Performance Indicator	Achievement Performance
1	Generating new entrepreneurs	5 (five)	Students have businesses; they gain experiences outside the campus	Generated
2	The publication of articles in a domestic International Conference with an ISBN	1 (one)	The work results of lecturers are utilized by the community or gain international recognition	Draft
3	Publication in the form of an article in the print mass media, the Waspada Daily	1 (one)	The work results of lecturers are utilized by the community or gain international recognition	Published
4	The video content of activity execution	1 (one)	The work results of lecturers are utilized by the community or gain international recognition	Uploaded

3.1 Implementation of the Pre-Immersion Phase

In this phase, participant recruitment has been conducted, involving 1 student from the P2MW Program, representing 1 group, and 19 students initiating new businesses within the PMW Program, comprising 19 groups.



Figure 1. Participant Recruitment

Furthermore, entrepreneurship training has been conducted, encompassing various types of training. The training included Product Design Training, providing sessions on brainstorming, product design, packaging and branding, along with market testing. Creativity and Business Innovation Training covered topics on business development opportunities in industries, SMEs, agriculture, food fisheries, crafts, services, healthcare, and information technology, as well as the utilization of social media marketing and entrepreneurial ethics. Additionally, Design Thinking & Business Model Training provided materials on ideation, prototyping, business model creation, business planning, and pivoting.



Figure 2. Entrepreneurship Training.

3.2 Implementation of the Immersion Phase

In this phase, internship activities were successfully carried out by 20 program participants with SME partners. These 20 participants were divided into 6 clusters: food cluster, beverage cluster, craft cluster (fashion and crafts), technology cluster, cosmetics cluster, and creative industry cluster. During the internship, the program's execution team conducted monitoring and evaluation of the internship process. Following the internship, participants are required to submit a report covering innovation aspects, product and marketing aspects, financial aspects, human resources aspects, and social aspects.



Figure 3. Internship Activities

3.3 Implementation of the Post-Immersion Phase

The implementation of the Post-Immersion phase is carried out using the following mentoring models.

a. Business Coaching and Mentoring

In the application of experiential-based learning, two crucial aspects are business coaching and mentoring, which serve as the pillars for the success of this method. Through this process, students and facilitators (who can act as mentors or coaches) will consistently interact on a scheduled basis, engaging in in-depth discussions on various aspects such as business ideas, problem-solving, innovative approaches, and the development of creativity [5]. Facilitators acting as coaches/mentors will guide and empower students, enabling them to self-develop. One critical aspect in enhancing the performance of student business groups is improving their individual performances.



Figure 4. Business Coaching and Mentoring

b. Business Gathering

Business Gathering is a meeting involving USU student entrepreneurs with business stakeholders (entrepreneurs and banking leaders) aimed at exchanging information to enhance the link and match between theory and practical application. It also serves to assess market needs for various technologies, such as production technology, information and communication technology, agricultural technology, among others. This gathering is facilitated by the USU Student Entrepreneurship Incubation Center. Inputs gathered from the business gathering will be utilized to refine tenant products to make them more marketable.



Figure 5. Business Gathering

c. Identification, Mapping, and Curation

During the curation process, 5 student businesses were selected based on their marketability. These businesses will receive assistance in the form of business equipment and the provision of business space at the Entrepreneur Laboratory (E-Lab) of the USU Research and Innovation Development Agency. The 5 student businesses will receive support in the form of a booth for their business, along with its furnishings (such as shelving, tables, and chairs). Subsequently, a demo day and pitching event will be conducted on various marketplaces, such as [blibli.com](https://www.blibli.com), [shopee](https://www.shopee.com), and [bhinneka.com](https://www.bhinneka.com), to establish the marketability of the student products.

d. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are conducted throughout the stages of pre-immersion, immersion, and post-immersion. This process aims to enhance the program for the following years.

4 Conclusion

From the conducted program, it can be concluded that this initiative has effectively enhanced the knowledge of entrepreneurial students at the University of North Sumatra in developing their businesses. The program has provided inspiration, skills, and new experiences to these entrepreneurial students, enabling them to manage their businesses effectively, from production to product promotion and marketing to consumers. This has resulted in increased sales volumes and expanded market reach for their products.

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