UNIVERSITY "TURAN-ASTANA"

TURAN-ASTANA UNIVERSITY

Approved by order
No.___ dated _04.02_ 2025.

REGULATION
on acceleration programs for startups

Astana, 2025

CONTENT

1. General Provisions

1.1 The goal of implementing acceleration programs for startups: to provide startups with the opportunity for accelerated growth through access to training, financing and expert support. The programs are designed for startups working in the field of IT, consulting and other business areas and provide for openness to external investors and mentors. Expected results: an increase in the number of commercially successful innovative projects of the university and the creation of conditions for their entry into the market.

1.2 The criteria for selecting startups to participate in acceleration programs are determined by the relevant department, which submits a proposal to the Vice-Rector for Science and Innovation to include the startup in the program. As a rule, the stage of the startup, innovativeness and uniqueness of the idea, presence of a team, market potential, characteristics of the product and technology, characteristics of the business model, social mission, potential for investment and partnerships, readiness for acceleration, legal aspects, and the predicted result of acceleration are taken into account. The criteria should ensure the selection of startups with the greatest potential and those capable of receiving the maximum benefit from acceleration. Startup participants contact the head of the relevant department. Based on the analysis of their request, the department prepares a proposal to the Vice-Rector for Science and Innovation, who makes a decision on including the startup in the acceleration program.

2. Program structure

2.1 The program duration and acceleration formats are determined by the relevant department depending on the program goals, resources and stage of development of the startups.

2.2 Main acceleration formats

2.2.1. Intensive programs (Bootcamp)

Description: short-term and intensive courses that can last from several weeks to several months. Startups in such programs go through a series of master classes, trainings and consultations with mentors.

Main features:

Concentrated training and work with mentors.

Focus on specific aspects (product development, marketing, finance, etc.).

Limited number of participants, which allows for deeper work with each startup. The end of the program may be accompanied by a demonstration (Demo Day) for investors and partners.

2.2.2. Mentoring programs

Description: startups receive individual or group mentoring from experts and successful entrepreneurs. This can be a longer format, including not only training, but also practical guidance during the project.

Key features:

Startups receive regular consultations and feedback from mentors.

Mentors help startups solve specific business problems (entering new markets, attracting investment, etc.).

May include online sessions, personal meetings, or a combined format.

2.2.3. Virtual Programs

Description: Acceleration programs that are conducted online.

Key features:

Use of online platforms for training, meetings with mentors and investors.

Programs can be flexible in time, allowing startups to work at their own pace.

Mentoring support via video conferences, webinars, forums and chats.

2.2.4. Investment Programs

Description: Startups are offered seed funding in exchange for equity in the company. These programs are often targeted at startups that already have a minimum viable product (MVP) and can demonstrate growth prospects.

Key Features:

Providing seed capital in exchange for equity in the company.

Programs may focus on helping to raise capital and get to market.

2.2.5. Programs with access to international markets

Description: Focuses on preparing startups for entering international markets, helps startups adapt their product for different regions, study the peculiarities of foreign markets and establish contacts with international investors and partners.

Key features:

Intensive training on international economic relations, legal and cultural peculiarities of new markets.

Assistance in establishing partnerships with international companies and investors.

May include trips to other countries for direct meetings with potential partners and clients.

2.2.6. Hybrid programs

Description: combine elements of online and offline formats, providing flexibility for participants.

Key features:

Combination of online and offline elements.

Ability to flexibly adapt to the schedules of participants.

Ability to receive mentoring assistance both in real time and in a deferred format.

2.2.7. Acceleration with a focus on social entrepreneurship

Description: focused on startups that solve social, environmental or other important public problems.

Key features:

Focus on social, environmental and ethical aspects of business.

Acceleration formats can be combined and adapted depending on the specifics of the program and the goals of the program participants. Startups can choose the most suitable format depending on their stage of development, industry and long-term goals.

3. The role and functions of mentors and coaches

It is advisable to involve mentors and coaches in acceleration programs who have:
• Practical experience in the startup field, especially in the industry where startups operate.
• A successful career in entrepreneurship or managing large projects.
• Specialized knowledge in finance, marketing, sales, team management, legal aspects of a startup, attracting investment and other important areas.
• A network of contacts that can be useful for startups in finding investors, partners, clients.
Mentors can be attracted through:
• Professional networks (LinkedIn, specialized conferences and events).
• Partnerships with large corporations, other universities and research centers.
• Platforms for finding mentors who specialize in startups (for example, AngelList, Founder Institute and others).
As a priority, it is advisable to attract university personnel (faculty and other specialists).
When selecting mentors, the following should be taken into account:
• The reputation and professional history of mentors.
• The willingness and desire of mentors to actively work with startups.
• Compatibility with the culture of the program and startups.

3.1. Privacy and legal aspects

Mentors and coaches should sign confidentiality agreements and, if necessary, intellectual property agreements to avoid potential legal conflicts when working with innovative startup ideas.

3.2. The role of mentors

Mentors play a key role in accelerator programs.
• Long-term support and guidance: Mentors are usually more experienced and can offer strategic guidance by sharing their experience. Their job is to help startups make strategic decisions and support them over several months or even years.
• Motivation and inspiration: Mentors play an important role in maintaining the startup's morale, especially during difficult times.
• Solving specific problems: Mentors are often experts in certain fields and can help a startup solve specific problems (attract investors, improve a business model, enter a new market, etc.).
• Networking: Mentors act as liaisons, helping startups establish connections with investors, potential partners or customers.

3.3. The role of coaches

Coaches focus on training and preparing startups for specific tasks. This may include:
• Training in new skills: Coaches conduct trainings, workshops and webinars, teaching startups the necessary skills).

• Developing and testing business models: Coaches can help startups develop and improve business models, as well as test ideas for viability and sustainability.
• Consulting on specific issues (helping a startup prepare for a presentation to investors, suggesting new ways to interact with customers, etc.).

3.4. Functions of mentors and coaches

Coaching and mentoring: Mentors and coaches help startups not only with specific issues, but also develop founders' leadership qualities, entrepreneurial skills, and help them learn from their mistakes.

Testing ideas: Coaches and mentors can help startups test their ideas and hypotheses before they are implemented.

Developing a growth strategy: Mentors help startups decide on a development path, including attracting investment, improving operational efficiency, and expanding into new markets.

Psychological support: Startups face many challenges, and mentors often provide psychological support, especially in stressful situations.

3.5. Forms of interaction with mentors and coaches

Regular meetings to discuss progress and challenges.

Open consultations: Startups can contact mentors or coaches for advice at any time as questions arise.

Group sessions: Group trainings and master classes can be held for several startups at once, which allows for the exchange of experience.

Progress assessment: Mentors and coaches can monitor the progress of startups, tracking achievements and adjusting strategy as needed.

Mentors and coaches, in agreement with startup participants, can use other forms of interaction determined by the characteristics of the startup.

3.6. Expected results from working with mentors and coaches

Improved business model: Improved attractiveness to investors.

Attracting investment: Prepare for pitch sessions, which increases the likelihood of attracting investment.

Accelerated growth: Startups can overcome barriers faster and achieve higher growth rates.

4. Startup Evaluation

The process of evaluating startups in acceleration programs includes assessing progress and results, as well as adjusting strategy and support.

4.1. Key criteria for evaluating startups

4.1.1. **Progress towards achieving program goals**

Alignment with goals: each startup should have clearly defined goals that must be achieved within the program (product development, first customer acquisition, revenue growth, etc.).

Plan execution: how well startups follow the planned business plan or strategy, and how effectively they adapt them in response to external and internal changes.

4.1.2. **Product development stage**

Minimum Viable Product (MVP): Assessing how far a startup has come in developing an MVP and whether it is ready to introduce it to the market.

Idea Testing and Validation: Assessing how well a startup has tested its business idea in the market. Startups should conduct customer research, get feedback, and adjust the product in response to the results.

4.1.3. **Financial indicators**

Attracting investment: attracting external funding during the program or achieving other financial goals (increasing revenue, improving financial performance, etc.).

Growth economics: the ability of startups to effectively use available resources for growth, generating income, the ability to scale.

4.1.4. **Marketing and User Acquisition**

Clients: Evaluation of target audience acquisition and retention (analysis of user activity, growth in the number of clients or users, number of reviews and recommendations, etc.).

Attraction channels: the effectiveness of marketing channels used by startups (SEO, content marketing, paid advertising, etc.) and their ability to scale these channels.

4.1.5. **Team dynamics and leadership skills**

Team Cohesion: Assessing the interactions between team members, the distribution of roles, the effectiveness of work and the resolution of emerging conflicts.

Leadership: The ability of startup founders to make important decisions, lead the team, adapt to challenges and inspire their employees.

4.1.6. **Potential for scaling**

Expansion Plan: Assess the startup's scaling strategy and its ability to adapt its product or services to new markets.

Prepare for International Expansion: Assess readiness for international expansion, including product adaptation, legal issues, and localization.

4.1.7. **Innovation and competitiveness**

Uniqueness of the offer: Evaluation of the presence of competitive advantages and unique technological solutions.

Analysis of the competitive environment: Evaluation of the startup's strategy in relation to existing competitors and its work to improve its competitive position.

5. Final evaluation and release of startups

Demonstration of achievements

At the final stage of acceleration, startups demonstrate their achievements at a demo day in front of investors, which helps them to receive further funding or support.

Final assessment

The final assessment of the success of the acceleration program is made by the relevant department (issued in the minutes of the meeting).

6. Final Provisions

6.1. Confidentiality in acceleration programs

During the implementation of acceleration programs, an appropriate level of confidentiality and protection of intellectual property is ensured.

If necessary, a confidentiality agreement is concluded, which obliges the parties (mentors, coaches, etc.) not to disclose or use information obtained during interaction with the startup, unless there is written consent from the startup.

The agreement defines what information is considered confidential (business plan, financial data, technological solutions, marketing strategies, etc.), the terms of the agreement and the possible consequences in the event of its violation.

6.2. Protection of intellectual property

Intellectual property protection may include:

• Patents: the legal right to exclusively use an invention.

• Copyrights: if original content (software, design, materials, etc.) is created, startups may register copyrights.

• Trademarks: brand, logo, etc.

Trade secrets: confidential information (recipes, production methods, marketing strategies, etc.).

If necessary, an intellectual property rights agreement may be entered into, defining the rights to the intellectual property created during the acceleration program. If the startup is working with mentors or other participants, it is advisable to agree in advance who will own the intellectual property created during the work.

Mentors, coaches, and other participants may sign agreements that clarify that they will not claim any rights to the startup's intellectual property unless otherwise agreed upon in advance.

6.3. Changes and additions to the acceleration program

Acceleration programs may be amended and supplemented by agreement between participants..

6.4. Responsibility of program participants

Program participants are responsible for complying with the terms of the program in accordance with applicable law.

First Vice-Rector		K. Zh. Daubaev
Vice-Rector for Science and Innovation		S. Zh. Smoilov
Head of the Entrepreneurship Center		K.K. Shebeko