StartUp WE brought together 50 young entrepreneurs to build new ventures.

54 hours to save the Lebanese environmen

Lebanon, 21.05.2016, 15:58 Time

USPA NEWS - 3 young Lebanese, Layal, Tala and Elias got together in February and decided to make Lebanese entrepreneurs think about the environment. "Startup WE Beirut - Environment"[?] was born. The event took place from Friday 13 May 6:00 PM to Sunday 15 May 8:00 PM non-stop at ESA business School in Clemenceau.

The three-day event aimed and succeeded to connect people around the topic of turning back Lebanon to its green days, and gave entrepreneurs the opportunity to develop business ideas and new products.
For 54 consecutive hours, full of energy and some coffee, some 50 young entrepreneurs built business models, working prototypes, mobile apps and fully functional websites to solve basic environmental problems like calling a truck (uber-like) to pick up pre- selected garbage or reducing the size of glass recycling by making the consumers smash their bottles in the bar. Little sleep and full passion for a cause, is a good summary of these intense 54 hours.

The European Union, l'Ecole supérieure des affaires (ESA), Berytech (Incubator), AltCity (bootcamp), MEVP (Venture Capital firm), Speed@BDD (Accelerator) and many other institutions, have committed time, effort and money to fund this $50,000 event to allow 50 entrepreneurs to get together, learn with 30 local and international mentors and come up with concrete solutions to solve day-to-day problems. 300 guests attended the event, including start-ups, entrepreneurs, future entrepreneurs and students, to listen and engage with several environment and startups experts sharing their thoughts and advices with all participants.

Elias Ghanem, who opened the event on behalf of the organizing team said"[?] I am a Lebanese citizen, just Lebanese. I am truly proud to welcome you today at Startup WE Beirut, Environment. Let´s disrupt the established ecosystem, let´s innovate and let´s turn back our land to a beautiful green land, that smells well, that looks beautiful and that considers the environment at the centre of its priorities. Welcome to startup WE Beirut Environment. Welcome to Lebanon 2.0. I am Elias Ghanem, I am a Lebanese citizen, just Lebanese,"[?] he concluded.

In her opening speech, Ambassador Christina Lassen, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon said: "This is the first time the European Union is financing such an initiative, and we do so because we firmly believe that creative and innovative entrepreneurs are the backbone of a healthy, strong and sustainable economy." "We also believe in the importance of investing in people and we know that you all can make a significant contribution to growth and job creation in Lebanon, which is urgently needed," she added.

Beirut, 20 May 2016
Some 50 people organized in 7 teams worked non-stop to come up with the most innovative and relevant ideas in the course of "the 54 hour thinking and developing- marathon". The 3 most innovative, business viable, with the right customer validation and the proper technical and design execution got rewarded with cash and in kind incubation worth more than $20,000.

The winners are:
1st Prize: Promoting the Sorting of Recyclable Waste: Limm (prize of $3,000 and 3- month incubation period at Berytech and access to the AltCity Startup Bootcamp).
The word "Limm"[?] means to pick up in Arabic. The platform wants to solve a basic problem for anyone willing to sort recyclable waste but does not know where to put them for recycling. No problem, now the "Limm"[?] app will send you a truck to collect your selected waste, free of charge! Limm will also reward households based on the quality and quantity of their output, through programs funded by private companies´ CSR programs. In the next stage, Limm will allow individuals to integrate the platform based on an "Uber concept"[?] said Nicolas Farah, one of the entrepreneurs behind this idea. This would allow truck owners to register as freelance collectors and earn additional income.

2nd Prize: Food Engagement: CoBite (prize of $2,500, an incubator package from the Smart ESA Incubator, and access to the AltCity´s Startup Bootcamp).
What do you do with this extra cooked food that your mom generously prepared for you? Well now the "CoBite"[?] app will help you donate it or sell it. Through the app´s verified social network, users can sell their unconsumed food at reduced prices, thus reducing food waste. The project will first target users between 16 and 26 years living in Beirut (estimated at around 500,000) who might not have the time or the knowhow to cook. These users will now be able to purchase home-cooked food. The project then hopes to tackle food security for people in need, working with NGOs and private-sector sponsors.

3rd Prize AND Design Award: Recycling with a Bang: Strash ($1,000 and access to AltCity´s Startup Bootcamp). They also won the "Designed in Lebanon"[?] award for the best hardware startup, earning two months of free design mentorship at the Hbr .makerspace.
Recycling glass is good, but it is cumbersome and heavy, why not reduce the size of the bottles by smashing them while having fun? The guys behind Strash surprised everyone with their concept of a glass bottle crusher for pubs. Basically, after consumers finish their drink, they can entertain themselves and their friends with bottle crushing bouts using the Strash machine. The "ex-bottles"[?] would take up less space than intact bottles before being sent to recyclers.
Besides being fun, the guys figured collecting glass in pieces would also reduce work for recyclers, and encourage them to enter this space.

In its closing remarks, Layal Jebran, Lead organizer, and founder of three startups, said
"I am so amazed to see how on Friday you did not know each other and had no clear idea on what to do. 54 hours later, you have prototypes, mobile apps and business models. But more than anything you have a vision to turn our country green again, please don´t stop so we turn back Lebanon green."[?]

END
Startup WE Judging criteria:
Business Model
Can this idea make money? Is there positive customer growth or revenue? Is there a customer acquisition / rollout strategy? Has a revenue model been defined and is it realistic? Is the idea/team ready for capital and execution? Would you invest in this company at this point?
Customer Validation
Did the team identify customers (demographic, location etc)? Did the team get out and talk to customers? What is the value proposition to customers? What channels of communication are used? Product/Market fit?

Technical "" Execution
Is there a functional product (e.g.in the case of an app, did they build one)? Were architecture diagrams and API signatures included? Which services did they integrate with? How much of the product is running on a real server with non-sample data?
Design "" Execution
Does it have a professional look and feel? Does it deliver a compelling and captivating user experience? Is it memorable? What key insights were gathered over the weekend to go in this creative direction?

Prize Details:
First Prize Winner
- $3k in cash from the Startup Weekend Beirut Environment Team
- A package worth $5k from Berytech (Details Below)
- Bootcamp phase 1 accelerator program package from AltCity.
Second Prize Winner
- $2.5k in cash from ESA Business School
- An incubator package from Smart ESA Incubator
- Bootcamp phase 1 accelerator program package from AltCity.
Third Prize Winner
- $2k in cash from the Startup Weekend Beirut Environment Team
- Bootcamp phase 1 accelerator program package from AltCity.

Sponsored Prize Details:
Berytech
Incubation for 3 months at Berytech.

Access to their co-working space and community
Free Access to Berytech programs and training
Coaching sessions and follow up from Berytech team members for project development
One mentor assigned to follow up with the team
Smart ESA
Startup will be incubated in the coolest college supporting entrepreneurs in Lebanon, one of the only to have an entrepreneurs program run by the faculty itself.
Startup will get to be mentored and advised by the best in business from Lebanon and Europe to grow and scale their startup.

AltCity's Bootcamp
Bootcamp is the top startup program by AltCity, that offers an outstanding opportunity to work with an accomplished network of mentors and investors while being supported by a team of dedicated entrepreneurs and experts.
3 months co-working space.
One on One weekly mentorship sessions.
http://www.altcity.me
Hbr
For the best hardware Startup, hbr creative platform will pick a winner who will receive our "˜Designed in Lebanon´ award and trophy, offering free design mentorship along with a desk for 2 months at our maker and co-working space.
You can check out their workshops here: https://hbrcp.wordpress.com/workshop- offering.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-8015/startup-we-brought-together-50-young-entrepreneurs-to-build-new-ventures.html

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