



Supporting vulnerable people in their business ventures in and around Lyon

FRANCE

- 67 million inhabitants
- 8 million people living below the poverty threshold
- 6 950 asylum applications registered by Lyon's prefecture in 2017

Source : INSEE

France

BACKGROUND



A vulnerable population on our doorstep

The shortage of paid jobs in France is hitting the most vulnerable sector of the population, particularly single parents and refugees: 40% of the former live below the poverty threshold and 40% of the latter are long-term unemployed.

For them, entrepreneurship can lead to successful social inclusion. However, half of new businesses do not survive beyond the first five years. Vulnerable people therefore need greater support in order for their businesses to become sustainable.

MISSION



Fostering sustainable inclusion while fulfilling local needs

In 2018, Entrepreneurs du Monde launched the ICI (Incubation Creation Inclusion) project in Lyon, to facilitate the lasting and successful socio-economic inclusion of vulnerable individuals, or those in danger of falling into poverty.

The team supports and counsels them in setting up businesses that fulfil local needs: digital technology and sustainable catering services.

This support, focused on growing markets, gives entrepreneurs a real chance of success and viability.

MILLENNIUM GOALS



METHODOLOGY



Training and support

In partnership with public and private local organisations, the ICI project welcomes and assists project managers to overcome any obstacles to their integration.

Those with a viable project receive personal assistance from a volunteer mentor, and participate in training sessions provided by the team or by experts (business development strategy, accountancy, law, insurance, etc)

SUPPORT



Towards viability and spin-off

Entrepreneurs du Monde structures and supports the ICI programme with the aim of it becoming autonomous on all levels. In particular, the team's goal is financial viability. The team is considering which would be the most appropriate legal structure, and potential self-financing strategies. If the results of this first French experience are positive, Entrepreneurs du Monde will extend the model to other regions, and open up business creation in other growth market areas.



MILAD

Refugee entrepreneur

I am a political refugee from Iran. I worked for a dozen or so years in 2D/3D animation. In France, I wanted to start up my own company in this field, but it was hard doing it on my own. Thankfully, in February 2018, I started on the ICI programme. I attended training workshops, and the team helped me to create a strong business plan. With their assistance, I also followed a 4-month intensive course on 2D/3D lay-out at the Emile Cohl School. I'm ready to launch my business now, thanks to the ongoing support I received from the team and my mentor, and to all the training sessions that I still attend.

FOCUS

THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE PROGRAMME



Each project manager receives personal support from a team member, and from a volunteer mentor who has either founded a company, or whose work is related to entrepreneurship. They follow a three-step programme.



The first step involves listening and guidance: each project manager meets with the counsellor who will assist them with every step of the process. Then they might be guided towards partner organisations who will help to remove potential obstacles to success: learning the French language, psychological support, help with housing, emergency funding, etc.

The second step is training and testing the business idea. The business creation workshops are conducted in groups, to encourage the sharing of experience and to further promotion dynamics. For these training sessions, both the ICI team and outside experts use appropriate teaching methods. Technical training in computer code is provided by Simplon.co, and training in catering is given by experts in this field. Learning how to adapt to the social economy, familiarity with fair trade practices and skills in sustainable development are an integral part of the course.



The third and last step is the launching of the business: with the help of a mentor and a counsellor, entrepreneurs trial their business in a real-life setting, refine their original idea, continue to train, and develop their network and marketing opportunities.

KEY FIGURES

	No. of persons received	No. of persons supported in creating a business	No. of incubated businesses
2018	45	18	5
Objectives end 2020	60	40	20

HIGHLIGHTS



The launch of the 3rd wave

Within one year, three successive groups of entrepreneurs have been supported, each focused on different sectors. After reviewing the year's results, the team decided to prioritise two growing sectors (digital technology and catering) and to provide a longer period of more technical assistance, leading right up to the trialling of the activity.



A programme which benefits everyone

The benefits of this programme are threefold:

- For vulnerable people: removing obstacles to entrepreneurship; professional training; setting up businesses in a secure environment
- For the local area and its businesses: new outlets for local producers and new digital technology skills resources
- For the local population: healthy and local catering services and opportunities for intercultural discoveries

OUTLOOK



Long-term support thanks to a BEC

In order to give businesses enough time to grow and reach viability, ICI is studying the possibility of creating a Business and Employment Co-operative (BEC) to provide specific services (administrative, legal, social, etc), allowing project managers to focus initially on their core business.



A dedicated Food Court

In 2019, for a period of 6 months, ICI will be given the keys to a shop in the heart of one of Lyon's food courts, so that the first supported caterers can trial their businesses. Eventually, the team plans to open a solidarity food court housing 6 sustainable catering projects. If the feasibility study confirms the project's suitability, the support provided to entrepreneurs will last for a year, with a particular focus on business administration or marketing.

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CONTACTS

Programme Manager
> nicolas.david@entrepreneursdumonde.org
Head of the VSB/Employability Unit
> thibaut.mary@entrepreneursdumonde.org

ON THE WEB

> www.entrepreneursdumonde.org
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