

Germany

MEDIA EXIST: START-UP INCUBATION AND BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR MEDIA FIRMS AT THE “KONRAD WOLF” FILM & TELEVISION ACADEMY, POTSDAM-BABELSBERG

Rationale and general information. MEDIA EXIST started in 2007 at the “Konrad Wolf” Film & Television Academy in Potsdam-Babelsberg (HFF) as an entrepreneurial support project for creative individuals in the media industry. It is the only start-up incubation centre hosted by a German film school. The main goal is to set up a sustainable framework for transforming innovative ideas into entrepreneurial activities. This also includes enhancing creative thinking amongst media professionals. Also important are activities that seek to increase international co-operation and joint-ventures.

The services of MEDIA EXIST (e.g. mentoring and coaching) are tailored to the needs of media professionals and the start-up and business development environment in the media industry. MEDIA EXIST is open to employees in the media industry in Berlin and Brandenburg, as well as to students, graduates, research assistants and professors/lecturers from media universities.

MEDIA EXIST had to overcome HFF's internal prejudices and resistance to the 'partnership' vision between creativity and business. Yet, the success of the early entrepreneurship education activities was so significant that they were soon integrated as a compulsory element into the curriculum of most HFF degree courses.

Timeframe. Ongoing until September 2010

Budget and financing sources. The annual budget of EUR 167 000 is financed by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology and the European Social Fund.

Human resources. 3 employees

Activities.

- MEDIA EXIST CONSULTING offers support to media professionals with a concrete business idea. Cost-free consulting to develop business models, facilitation of team building, access to finance and continued support/advice during start-up
- MEDIA EXIST FUTURE is a future-oriented research project aimed at identifying innovative and technologies in the media sector
- MEDIA EXIST MARKETING DAY and MEDIA EXIST PITCHINGS are adapted to the needs of media start-ups, entrepreneurs and freelancers
- Experienced external experts are involved in entrepreneurship education (e.g. blockbuster producer as a role model). MEDIA EXIST also produced an entertaining and educational DVD
- INVESTOR POOL: Biannually MEDIA EXIST organises an event in which innovative and growth-oriented business ideas are presented to a selected group of international investors from the media and financial sector
- www.Frames4Fame.com – the MEDIA EXIST Portal provides an exclusive internet community for students and graduates of international film schools. It is virtual networking platform for joint-working on projects, and a marketing platform for the media industry. Frames-4Fame is going to be used for the presentation of future ideas

Partners. Main partners include the BIEM, Brandenburg public universities' and the regional development agency's entrepreneurship; the Zukunftsagentur Brandenburg GmbH; the Bauhaus University Weimar; the Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg GmbH; the ICB GmbH (Internet based consulting for business start-up and development); and the Projektträger Jülich (administers "EXIST", the federal grant scheme for academic entrepreneurship).

Success factors.

- Strong network relationships
- Involvement of the business sector
- Close collaboration with potential investors

Achievements.

- MEDIA EXIST made young professional and students more aware of the different support offers for business start-up in the media industry.
- Today, entrepreneurship education at HFF is integrated into all faculties and departments. Participation rates are increasing, now including students and alumni of other German film and media schools.
- Although the film academy has only 500 students MEDIA EXIST has been able to reach out to nearly 900 participants over the last 18 months.
- The close contact with potential investors helped young media entrepreneurs to be more competitive and successful in the market.
- 120 start-up entrepreneurs worked intensively with MEDIA EXIST CONSULTING during the 2007/2008 period.

- Amongst the projects supported by MEDIA EXIST there are traditional film-sector business start-up projects, as new media, technological trendsetters and innovative service provider projects. Several MEDIA EXIST founders have won German and international business idea awards.

Website.

www.mediaexist.com

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Notes.
