

BUILD SOLUTIONS

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES FOR START-UP ACCELERATOR PROGRAMME

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1 – FOREWORD

Building Urban Intelligent Living Design Solutions

Cities currently host more than half of the world population, which is projected to increase up to 70% by 2050 (UN, 2014). Already, cities account for 70% of global CO₂ emissions (C40). With the expected population growth, cities would hence be the source of an estimated 85% of global GHG emissions.

There is a growing recognition and awareness that nature can help to provide viable solutions by using and deploying the properties of natural ecosystems and the services that they provide in a smart and 'engineered' way (EC). These living solutions provide sustainable, cost-effective, multi-purpose and flexible alternatives for various objectives. Working with nature, rather than against it, can further pave the way towards a more resource efficient, competitive and greener economy. It can also help to create new jobs and economic growth, through the manufacture and delivery of new products and services, which enhance the natural capital rather than deplete it (EC).

With that in mind, the big question is, why are nature-based solutions not used more to address the global urban challenges?

The main answer would be that there's a distinct skill and financing gap in the biotechnology sector. While we currently have great researchers in biotechnology, too often the commercialization and hence the implementation of their discoveries stumble due to a lack of personal experience in entrepreneurship and cooperation with industry leaders (Fritsch, 2010).

And even when most of those skills are present in a team attempting to commercialize a technology, another obstacle rears its head: the lack of short-term funding available to biotech start-ups and spinoffs (Swamidass, 2008). Recently, the High-Level Group for the European Innovation Council published their first recommendations which state that funding for disruptive, market-creating start-ups with deep-tech solutions (like biotech) is severely fragmented and doesn't meet the needs of the start-ups for developing the technology (http://ec.europa.eu/research/eic/pdf/eic_recommendations_set-1_2017.pdf). The lack of funding can be attributed to multiple factors, chief amongst them being the perceived risk and the huge capital expenditures necessary to develop sound biotechnology solutions.

Building Urban Intelligent Living Design Solutions (BUILD Solutions) project aims to set up transdisciplinary cooperation among universities and business, engaging students, teachers and researchers and providing them with the necessary entrepreneurial skills and connections to bring intelligent living solutions to the market, by investigating biological systems, creating smart design prototypes, business plans, plans for start-ups and working with accelerators.

The project's objective is to develop an experimental transdisciplinary educational system linking biology, intelligent design and business through several kinds of activities, such as courses for students and trainers, symposiums, development of educational resources, the set-up of an accelerator programme, launching an international call for ideas and creating new networks.

The project is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.



Living design solutions provide sustainable, cost-effective, multi-purpose and flexible alternatives for several urban challenges.

2 – BUILDS START-UP ACCELERATOR PROGRAMME

2.1 Introduction

At the end of the One-Year Programme, a group of investors were invited to serve as a jury to identify the best-case idea developed throughout the educational programme.

During this Final Pitch event, held in June 2020, Epiclay was chosen as the best project group and was given the opportunity to spend one month in the Bloxhub Accelerator Programme in Copenhagen. The incubator helped Epiclay in developing their start-up business idea with the aim of commercializing a real product and service that could contribute to city resilience and its re-naturalisation.



With the assistance of City Facilitators, GreenTech Challenge and BUILDS business experts, Epiclay received tailored and exclusive training, mentoring, and networking; pitches advice; had meetings with municipalities, architect studios, investors; among other activities, that helped them launch to the market their amazing green wall system.

2.2 About the Organisers

Copenhagen is a leading European hub for innovative climate and city solutions with a strong ecosystem of business, universities, venture capital, experts, and dealmakers. The customised Accelerator Programme is a unique path to fast track into the ecosystem with the aim of scaling an innovative business idea that will help to create a sustainable city.

The programme took place in four intensive weeks from August 31st until September 25th. With close mentoring from City Facilitator and GreenTech Challenge' team of business experts, the students got a unique opportunity to develop their business through training, mentoring, sales meetings with potential clients and industry stakeholders, pitches to investors and business angels, networking events, interaction with other start-ups, and a number of visits to relevant hubs in Copenhagen that work with sustainable urban development and innovative solutions.

The programme was located at the interdisciplinary innovation hub and co-working place BLOXHUB at BLOX in Copenhagen which is the heart of the smart city ecosystem in Copenhagen. The Accelerator Programme concluded in a demo day, September 24th, where the participating students present their solutions in front of an exclusive audience including the partners involved along the process.

In order to evaluate the success and impact of the Accelerator Programme we developed an evaluation questionnaire addressed to the students.

2.3 Methodology

We will carry out a survey which includes a mix of qualitative and quantitative feedback to evaluate the success and impact of the educational programme. We will use Mentimeter software, a user-friendly survey platform, to engage with the audience.

The evaluation of all educational activities will include analysis of:

- the effectiveness of the workshops/learning programme including its reach of the target audience
- the impact of the programme on students understanding about Biotech, Intelligent Living Design and Eco-business methods
- the entrepreneurial skills, competencies and dispositions gained during the programmes
- the application of the knowledge and skills gained
- the strengths and weaknesses of the education approach used

- recommendations for changes to the programme so the programme may be implemented in new courses.

In this document we present a questionnaire that we have done to support the improvement of the programme.

3 – EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE START-UP ACCELERATOR PROGRAMME

Q1- What words come to your mind that explain, summarize or symbolize your experience in BUILD'S Acceleration Programme?

- Open question

Q2- How useful did you find BUILD'S Acceleration Programme?

- Very useful
- Useful
- Interesting, but not that helpful
- Not very useful

Q3- How would you rate BUILD'S Acceleration Programme experience?

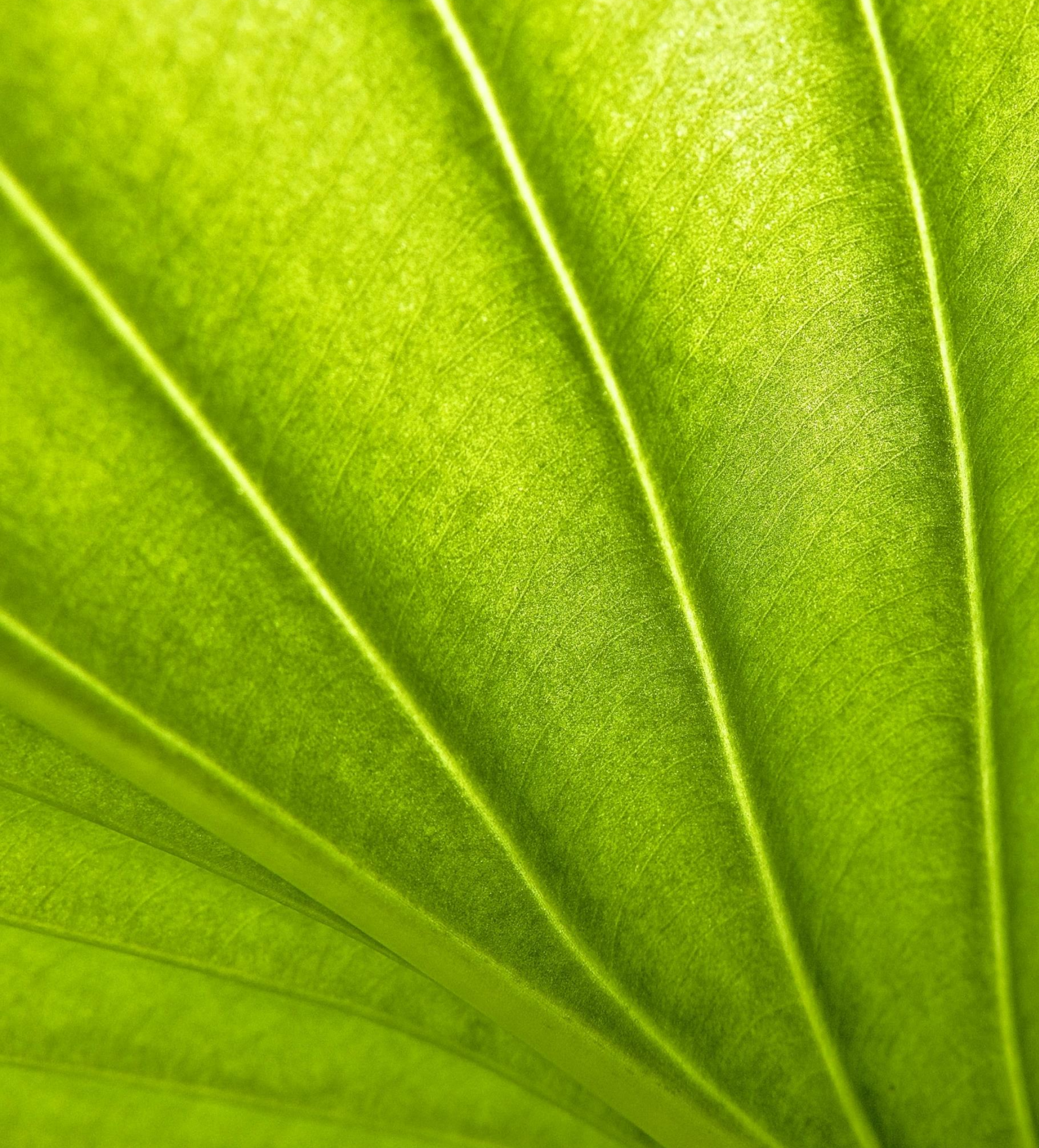
- Excellent
- Good
- Neutral
- Poor

Q4- Rate the quality of the content throughout BUILD'S Acceleration Programme?

- Excellent
- Good
- Neutral

Q5- Any overall comments, feedback, or suggestions?

- Open question



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