



Solid, Complete Path of Entrepreneurship Education – Entrepreneurship Education Network in Central Finland

Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial approach to work are the keys to the future success of Central Finland. Central Finland is an entrepreneurship –oriented province: the level of entrepreneurship is high, people are highly skilled and innovative, and civic activity is strong. In Central Finland, entrepreneurship education has long traditions maintained by a wide network of development and educational organisations, municipalities, companies and the third sector.

Background Information

In Finland, entrepreneurship education started to develop in the mid 1990's, and Central Finland has been active from the very beginning. The award winning Y4 Ideology (Yrittäjyys Ylös Yhteiskunnassa Yhteistyöllä: Entrepreneurship up in Society through Cooperation) was the result of close collaboration across the boundaries of educational institutions, business, industry and the public sector in Central Finland. The Y4 process was launched in 2002, and its objective was to make Central Finland the most entrepreneurship-oriented province in the world, a province whose success is based on knowledge, skills and entrepreneurial approach. Inspired by the Y4 ideology, Central Finland started to strengthen the entrepreneurship education network, and one important result was the “Solid, Complete Path of Entrepreneurship Education” Model of 2008.

The “Solid, Complete Path of Entrepreneurship Education” network covers all the entrepreneurship educators and organisations from pre-primary education to higher education. Teachers and developers in the network represent all the educational institutions and organisations in the province: Jyväskylä Educational Consortium, JAMK University of Applied Science, HUMAK University of Applied Sciences, University of Jyväskylä, and the Vocational Education Institute of Northern Central Finland. Teacher education, represented by the Department of Teacher Education of the University of Jyväskylä and the Teacher Education College of JAMK University of Applied Sciences, has played an important role in the development. Pre-primary, primary and secondary education teachers in the Central Finnish municipalities have formed municipal cooperation teams. The teams have compiled municipality-specific models and strategies for entrepreneurship education. General upper secondary schools in the province have established “world of work” teams and many of the schools have adopted entrepreneurship education as one of their focus areas.

The network has allowed the development of new, innovative cooperation between educational institutions and organisations in many different forms.



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The “Solid, Complete Path of Entrepreneurship Education” Model caters for different age and learning stages

The result of the work carried out by the entrepreneurship education network in Central Finland, “Solid, Complete Path of Entrepreneurship Education”, is a model that covers the whole entrepreneurship education path from pre-primary to higher and teacher education. The “Solid, Complete Path of Entrepreneurship Education” Model describes the multi-faceted, comprehensive path of entrepreneurship education that systematically proceeds from one stage to the next. It also describes the many possibilities offered to individual people to develop and grow into entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial employees. The path consists of accumulating competence areas developed and supported not only by official education but also by home upbringing, free time activities, workshops, military training, and later in life by business incubators and networks.

The Solid Complete Path of Entrepreneurship Education Model has been visualised as a flower with five petals. The petals represent the five stages in the process and the flower offers a basis for the growth of future entrepreneurship education in the province. The model contains action models, as well as learning environments and methods developed and modelled by the various actors in the entrepreneurship education network. The model covers the whole field of entrepreneurship education in Central Finland; it has been built and it continues to be developed through extensive inter-organisation and inter-project cooperation.

Strategic Development: Provincial Development Programme for Entrepreneurship Education in Central Finland

A significant shared effort and an essential objective of the entrepreneurship education network in Central Finland has been the strategic development of entrepreneurship education in the province. This has been made possible through a programme called “Provincial Development Programme for Entrepreneurship Education in Central Finland 2011-2015”. The six central themes of the Programme are:

- development of cooperation networks
- strategic work and decision making
- learning environments
- teachership, teaching and learning methods
- training for teachers and developers
- entrepreneurship and the operational environment of enterprises

As the strategy is the result of the work of the network carried out in cooperation with the Regional Council of Central Finland and YES Keski-Suomi Central Finland, the whole network is committed to the strategy and its focus areas. Senior management representatives from various organisations have also participated in the activities of the network, and by accepting the focus areas of the development programme, they have also committed themselves to the provincial entrepreneurship education strategy.

Another result of the work carried out by the entrepreneurship education network, was the establishment of an Entrepreneurship Education Development Group in 2012. It was approved by the Competence and Employment Working Group of the Regional Council of Central Finland on 1 February 2012. The Development Group meets a few times every year. To strengthen the “Solid, Complete Path of Entrepreneurship Education” Model of Central Finland, representatives from educational institutions and other education experts have been invited to join the Group. All the various groups of actors in the “Complete Path” network are represented in the Development Group. The main task of the Development Group is to promote entrepreneurship education in the province and to monitor and assess the implementation of the Provincial Development Programme for Entrepreneurship Education in Central Finland. The activities of the network also continue in the form of network meetings that take place twice every year. The focus in the meetings is on highlighting entrepreneurship education, on sharing models and methods, and on promoting networking.

The activities of the “Solid, Complete Path of Entrepreneurship Education” network are coordinated by YES Keski-Suomi Central Finland administered by the Jyväskylä Educational Consortium. The website of YES Keski-Suomi Central Finland (<http://keski-suomi.yes-keskus.fi/>) provides extensive information on the operational models and learning environments applied in entrepreneurship education in Central Finland. Information on the national YES entrepreneurship education network is available in English at <http://www.yes-keskus.fi/english2/>.

Additional Information:

Attachments

“Complete Path of Entrepreneurship Education” Model
Entrepreneurship Education in Central Finland article from Human Tech Center Finland magazine
(http://www3.jkl.fi/tiedotus/human_tech_city/)

Ms Niina Helin
Educational Planning Officer
Jyväskylä College
Tel. +358 40 341 5850
niina.helin@jao.fi

Ms Kirsti Kosonen
Principal
Jyväskylä College
Tel. +358 40 341 6150
kirsti.kosonen@jao.fi



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