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Guidelines for Mentors and Mentees

Indigram Labs Foundation (ILF) was founded in October 2015, as a technology business incubator under section 8 (Not for Profit Company) of companies act 2013, Indigram Labs is supported by National Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board (NSTEDB), Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. Indigram Labs is committed to foster and nurture viable business ideas in the fields of Agriculture, Food Processing, Renewable Energy and Rural Healthcare. We create an entrepreneurial ecosystem for individuals with creative minds and ideas with potential to grow full – fledged business enterprises which can touch & transform rural lives.

This document represents ILF's current approach to participating mentors and mentees. For more information please contact us directly at tbi@indigramlabs.org

Need for mentoring

You all may be well aware and would also agree that proper and timely mentoring is very crucial for any start-up more so for a technology start-up. ILF does mentor on its own most of the time at a very broad level. Additional focused mentoring from experienced people could be helpful at almost all activities of a start-up, such as formulating the business plan, product development, business development, team-building, fund-raising, marketing, etc.

Eligible Mentees

Incubatees must be willing to agree to the requirements of pre-incubation or incubation programmes with ILF. There should be a signed agreement between incubated company and ILF. Participation/ availing mentoring during incubation is mandatory for those without substantial experience.

Potential Mentors

Mentors are successful and experienced people willing to share or impart knowledge and wisdom on to those less experienced, in this case, entrepreneurs of startup companies. ILF will maintain a periodically refreshed list of people with proven skills and experience who have volunteered to help ILF incubated startups. Mentors will be chosen to represent a wide range of expertise and experiences- such as CEOs, CTOs, VPs, partners or directors of successful companies.

Guidelines for Mentors

Mentors stand to gain the satisfaction of making a difference in fledgling entrepreneur's life and contributing back to the society. In addition, they also get to keep in touch with new technologies, people, and networks by working with the young entrepreneurs.

Mentors should provide no inventive contributions to the mentees without sufficient legal agreements.

The following are expectations of enrolled mentors.

Availability

Mentors will make their best efforts for regular contact with mentees on a mutually agreeable schedule, taking up to 2/4/6 hours per month. This is the typical case; this is flexible based on mutual agreement.

Relationship

The relationship between mentors and mentees should be professional and with proper business etiquette at all times. Mentors should treat mentees with dignity and respect. Mentors should encourage mentees to be responsible for the mentoring.

Confidentiality

Mentors will maintain confidentiality of any proprietary information of the incubatees.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interests should be avoided when deciding on mentoring relationship. If and when one or more interests of the mentor (financial or non-financial) is in conflict with mentoring relationship and responsibilities, the situation should be promptly disclosed to the mentee and appropriate course of action taken.

Change of status or discontinuation

Discontinuation of mentoring relationship should be communicated to ILF. Mentors may transition to a different status such as investor or board member, but again, with explicit communication in advance of the transition to ILF.

Guidelines for Mentees

Clarity of needs

Mentee should identify his or her desired outcomes from mentorship prior to pursuing a potential mentor. This will help ILF identify appropriate mentors with higher chances of positive outcomes.

Responsibilities

Mentee must take active responsibility for the business mentoring relationship. Mentee should be considerate of the mentor's time, open to mentor's suggestions, yet be responsible for all decisions made and actions taken.

Mentee should establish clear objectives together with the mentor and work diligently to get targets.

Contact with ILF

If the mentee has a concern/ question about the mentorship, he/she should contact ILF.

Mentoring Process

- When the incubation of a start-up is being finalized, ILF would recommend a mentor from its list and introduce him/her to the company.
- The promoter's are either free to choose from the said list or are free to have their own mentor albeit with the concurrence of ILF.
- The company and mentor will initially engage with each other to understand the role and contribution that the mentor can make to the company.
- If the arrangement works out positively for the company, the association needs to be formalized with a suitable consideration model so as to ensure continued involvement of the mentor. Such a contract should cover aspects such as:
 - i. Duration of mentoring relationship
 - ii. Objectives and scope of relationship
 - iii. Confidentiality
 - iv. Frequency and mechanisms of meetings
 - v. Tacking and review processes