

Entrepreneurship education in Denmark¹

1 OVERVIEW

The Danish government views its education system as a central tool to ‘stimulate the ability of students to innovate, see opportunities and convert ideas into value, in other words to be entrepreneurial’ (Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science 2015). Entrepreneurship education has been high on the policy agenda in Denmark for more than two decades. It first appeared in a strategy from 1995, which highlighted the importance of promoting entrepreneurship teaching at all levels of education. These early initiatives help to lay the foundations for future activities and nowadays, Denmark has a well-established platform supporting the introduction of entrepreneurship education.

The platform entitled “Partnership for Education in Entrepreneurship” was established by four ministries: the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Children and Education and the Ministry of Business and Growth. To further support the implementation of the government’s vision regarding entrepreneurship education, as set out in the ‘Strategy for Education and Training in Entrepreneurship’, a dedicated Foundation was also set up. The Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship, established in 2010, is another joint effort of the four Danish ministries. The Foundation, also member of Junior Achievement worldwide, supports the development of entrepreneurship education at all levels, funds entrepreneurial projects, and undertakes research and analysis in the field.

Schools, teachers and pupils have the opportunity to engage with a large number of different initiatives, programmes and projects, due to the significant emphasis put on entrepreneurship education and on entrepreneurial attitude and skills at the policy level in Denmark. The education system in Denmark is traditionally student-centred which is reflected in the pedagogy and outward looking curriculum. Therefore, introducing entrepreneurship education has been a smooth process throughout the system.

2 GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

The Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship

2.1 SUMMARY OF THE INITIATIVE

The Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship was established by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science, Ministry of Economics and Business Affairs and Ministry of Culture in January 2010. It is a centre for the development of entrepreneurship education for all levels, including teachers and

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The content of this document, including the case studies and the descriptions of the initiatives reflect the information available as of August 2015.

society in Denmark. The foundation promotes entrepreneurship education, funds entrepreneurial projects, and undertakes research and analysis in the field.

2.2 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE

The Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship - Young Enterprise is the national knowledge centre for the development of teaching entrepreneurship. Set up by the Danish Government, the Foundation has the motto "from ABC to PhD" with the goal of including access to entrepreneurship education from primary education to tertiary level. Its three overall objectives are:

- To spread entrepreneurship education - for pupils and students to meet entrepreneurship at least once at every education level
- To enhance the quality of entrepreneurship education
- To catalyse activities

It remains the overall objective of the Foundation to create initiatives that result in a higher number of entrepreneurs and innovative employees.

The Foundation puts significant emphasis on the development of material and advises on the implementation of entrepreneurship in teaching. It also facilitates cooperation and networking around entrepreneurship education. New knowledge is generated by the Foundation through research and studies on the impact of entrepreneurship education in Denmark.

The Foundation uses a broad range of implementation tools which vary from funds for development projects in entrepreneurship education, through to micro grants for students with an idea for prototyping, market research, pilots, consultations or programming to knowledge mapping to understand the participation in entrepreneurship education. In addition it provides models for entrepreneurship education, education tools and enables networking for teachers and teacher training. It also carries out impact measurements, development projects and studies and promotes various programmes.

Since it was launched the Foundation has developed four programmes, including StartUp programme, Company programme, Next Level and Project Edison. Alongside these programmes, there are also specialised support initiatives for elementary, secondary and VET, university and teacher training level.

The Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship provides a comprehensive approach to entrepreneurship education in Denmark with access to all the necessary tools and resources in one place. The material and support available can be used to enhance any schools approach to embedding these skills and competences in students and pupils. The Foundation's target groups are learners from primary school through to higher education, teachers, educational institutions as well as companies, researchers and policymakers.

2.3 INSTITUTIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

The Foundation has a management structure and a board of representatives in which business and industry, the education sector, and trade unions are represented along with representatives from the Partnership for Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Education consisting of four Danish ministries, namely the Ministry of Business and Growth, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education.

2.4 ACHIEVEMENTS, RESULTS

There are on-going monitoring activities which are reported on the Foundation's website. In the last four years the Foundation has mapped the spread of entrepreneurship teaching in the education

system. The results of the mapping show that almost 1.2 million pupils and students have been exposed to entrepreneurship, a significant increase compared to the previous years. A report called 'Evaluation of the Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship – Young Enterprise' was published in May 2012. The evaluation by an external consultant highlights that entrepreneurship in the Danish educational sector has been strengthened and a coherent set of national initiatives was created as a consequence of the Foundation. The evidence from impact assessments state that 15% of Danish school children and youth participate in entrepreneurship education.

The change is also reflected in the 2014 Danish results of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor project, which show entrepreneurship education is now far more widespread than in the past. The younger generation has been exposed to entrepreneurship education twice as frequently as the older generation in primary school, in high school, in vocational education, in higher education, outside the educational system as well as in competitions that train entrepreneurs.

2.5 LESSONS LEARNT

The annual studies on the impact of entrepreneurship education provide significant insight into how to best develop and deliver skills and competences to students and pupils. In primary school, entrepreneurship is taught as both a method and an occupation, with both working at different stages. Ownership of projects is important in higher education, including taking into account contextual experiences. There is often a link between the types of skills acquired in relation to students' intention to start a career as an entrepreneur.

Further information

Organisation: The Foundation for Entrepreneurship – Young Enterprise (Danish: Fonden for Entreprenørskab)

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Further documents:

Nordic Innovation Report 2012: 24 December 2012: Entrepreneurship education in the Nordic countries: http://www.nordicinnovation.org/Global/_Publications/Reports/2013/Entrepreneurship_Education_in_Nordics_web.pdf

Impact of entrepreneurship education in Denmark: <http://eng.ffe-ye.dk/media/202218/impact-assessment-of-ee-in-dk-2013.pdf>

3 EXAMPLES OF ON-GOING INITIATIVES ADDRESSING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

3.1 NEXTLEVEL

NextLevel is an educational programme led by Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship. NextLevel targets the 8th and 10th grade (secondary school). The aim of the programme is to provide an opportunity for the participants to develop their entrepreneurial skills through a learning-by-doing methodology. The programme runs in four stages, starting from development of ideas to development of an enterprise. Pupils work by trying to address real-time problems and in the final stage are invited to compete for the best project. Participation in NextLevel gives pupils the opportunity and motivation to think creatively and to see and use school subjects in other contexts.

There are four categories / themes which pupils can explore: Movement; Knowledge and the world; Welfare and Society; Language and culture.

3.2 THE START UP PROGRAMME

The Start Up programme is a flagship programme of Junior Achievement - Young Enterprise (JA-YE). This entrepreneurship education initiative involves teachers, students and business representatives to work together and explore how the entrepreneurial mind-set can be developed and promoted. The educational course follows the pattern of understanding entrepreneurship through the bringing together of theoretical input and experiential learning. Students form teams to develop their ideas and prepare them to the market. A group of experts and well-trained teachers help the participants through the process. The programme also makes guiding materials available for professionals working with the students which cover theoretical content and further learning links and practical exercises.

3.3 PROJECT EDISON

Project Edison is an inventor competition which is offered to secondary education pupils in the sixth and seventh grades. The programme is led by the Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship. The concept of the Edison project started as a pilot in few schools in Western Jutland in 2006, and by 2008 successfully spread across the country. This is a long-term programme through which students gain theoretical and practical knowledge and develop their creativity and ability to work independently. In addition, the programme puts major emphasis on skills development through offering students the possibility to experience idea creation, teamwork, concept and product development. Students work on broad themes selected by the Foundation. The work is carried out in collaboration with a number of stakeholders, mainly from participating municipalities. At the end of the competition student groups have the opportunity to present their final product at a major national fair in front of parents, teachers and judges. Teachers are also an integral part of the process. They provide guidance and support to the student teams.

3.4 FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS ON THE INITIATIVES

Title of initiative in English	NextLevel	Start Up Programme	Project Edison
Title of the initiative in the local language	NextLevel	Start Up Programme	Project Edison
Type of initiative	Experiential learning, competition	Experiential learning, guidance, material	Student competition
Launch date of the initiative	N/A	N/A	2006
Name of implementing body	Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship - Young Enterprise	Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship - Young Enterprise	Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship - Young Enterprise
Level of education	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary
Target group	Pupils	Pupils, Teachers	Pupils
Link to further information	http://eng.ffe-ye.dk/programmes/nextlevel/about-nextlevel	http://eng.ffe-ye.dk/programmes/start-up-programme/about-start-up-programme	http://eng.ffe-ye.dk/programmes/project-edison/about-project-edison
Language in which further information is available	Danish, English	Danish, English	English, Danish
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