Entrepreneurship education in Sweden

1 OVERVIEW

Sweden adopted an entrepreneurship education strategy in 2009, which has been revised in 2012. Skolverket, the Swedish Agency for Education is tasked with the implementation of the strategy. The Agency provides funding to municipalities, independent schools as well as different organisations working with entrepreneurship education to promote the implementation. The Agency also supports research activities and the development of guidance materials on entrepreneurship education. There are already multiple results available due to the work of the Agency. Its support led to the development of a comprehensive set of guidance materials, which include examples for teachers on how to integrate entrepreneurship in their everyday work.

Entrepreneurship education is embedded across all levels and types of education. It is part of compulsory education as a cross-curricular objective in primary, lower secondary and vocational education. It is often taught as a separate subject. Upon completion of education, students are expected to be able to understand what entrepreneurship means for individuals, organisations, businesses and communities. Although harmonised expectations exist, due to the decentralised structure of the Swedish school system, the teaching and learning methods and provisions vary across the country and even from school to school.

2 GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

Flashes of Genius (Snilleblixtarna)

2.1 SUMMARY OF THE INITIATIVE

Snilleblixtarna (Flashes of Genius) is an organisation which supports entrepreneurial education in practice by focusing on training school teachers to raise children’s interest in entrepreneurship, technology, natural sciences and inventions. It supports the Swedish Education plan for primary schools. The Snilleblixtarna concept is aimed primarily at teachers who would like to increase the interest of pupils in technology, natural sciences, inventions and entrepreneurialism. The programme has guidelines for teachers which they can use in their daily work and help them tackle the subjects ‘everyday technology’ and ‘entrepreneurship’.

2.2 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE

At the heart of this initiative is the “Snilleblixtarna concept”. The main objectives of the concept are to:

- Stimulate children’s creativity and ability to take initiatives
- Support children at thinking independently and creatively
- Extend children’s knowledge by letting them work with their own inventions

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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.
Help the schools’ learning processes to become more entrepreneurship-orientated

With the Snilleblixtarna programme, the teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to develop the skills and competences that characterise inventive, empathic and entrepreneurial individuals i.e. persons who are necessary for an entrepreneurial, independent and sustainable society. The Snilleblixtarna organisation works to spread the “Snilleblixtarna concept” to as many primary schools as possible. The special feature about Snilleblixtarna is the way it transmits knowledge in an innovative and enjoyable way by teaching teachers.

Snilleblixtarna in Sweden works through local and regional partners with whom they have signed an agreement. There are about 60 certified operators around Sweden and the operators are the extended arms of Snilleblixtarna at local schools, making the implementation easier. The certified operators are specifically trained as partners and accredited to train and certify teachers. The target set is to reach about 100 partners engaged in the work of the network. The organisation is operated by volunteers and is funded through different funds, including EU funding.

2.3 TARGET GROUP(S) ADDRESSED

The primary target group of Snilleblixtarna are the teachers. Creating ownership of the concept by teachers helps introduce the concept to students and they together year after year. If they succeed, the students develop their curiosity and interest in technology, natural sciences, innovations and entrepreneurship.

2.4 ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Snilleblixtarna works through local and regional partners. The role of the partners is to provide teaching materials, organise training sessions for Snilleblixtarna teachers and assist with arranging local or regional fairs. In addition, Snilleblixtarna cooperates with JA-YE Sweden. The advantage of Snilleblixtarna is that it provides a cost-effective model. The involved partners are funded by their respective municipalities and do not require many employees.

2.5 ACHIEVEMENTS, RESULTS

The results of the project so far have been very positive. Snilleblixtarna has over 90 partners in Sweden, the reason why the initiative was awarded the Knowledge Prize in 2009. It was also represented at the Swedish pavilion of the Shanghai World Exhibition in 2010. The key success factor of the project lays in the engagement of numerous individuals, mainly based on voluntary work. Today, over 40,000 young people are involved in the project and the concept has also spread to Norway.

2.6 LESSONS LEARNT

Associating the schools’ work on Snilleblixtarna with local companies is very important. Many companies depend on technically knowledgeable employees, innovators and entrepreneurs in the long term and Snilleblixtarna can help develop these skills in individuals.

Further information
Organisation: Snilleblixtarna
E-mail: info@snilleblixtarna.se
Website: http://www.snilleblixtarna.se/

Further documents:
http://www.clim-atic.org/documents/contest/The%20flashes%20of%20Genius.pdf

Note: the award is presented to those who transmit knowledge to others in an innovative, enjoyable and successful fashion
3 Examples of ongoing initiatives addressing entrepreneurship education

3.1 UF-Entreprise
The UF-enterprise initiative is for young people who wish to gain experience from the real business world, including learning about a company’s life cycle, writing a business plan, experiencing sales management and composing an annual report. The programme targets upper secondary school students between the age of 16 to 20 years. With help from teachers and business representatives, students start their own companies and run them in the course of the programme. The programme requires a high level of involvement of teachers coupled with significant motivation from the students. Out of the participants 24% of the students subsequently started their own company.

3.2 Summer Challenge
Summer Challenge is a programme implemented by Staffan High School in Sweden. The main aim is to develop the entrepreneurial skills of young people. Students spend a summer acquiring experience in various aspects of a life of an entrepreneur by attending courses as well as running their own companies. The companies can be run either by individuals or by teams. At the beginning of the programme, students have a financial grant and a mentor who will guide them through the programme. Summer Challenge targets secondary school students.

3.3 Future Seeds
A non-profit organisation, FramtidsFrön offers a complex approach to entrepreneurship at primary schools. The organisation supports and trains teachers and provides different tools to make it easier to start working with entrepreneurship in schools. FramtidsFrön works together with municipalities and schools to plan activities and training courses for teachers, especially adapted for each municipality. This leads to a greater impact on the organisation in the different settings. Teachers also work with FramtidsFrön in the generation of material to ensure it is pedagogically sound and of excellent quality.

3.4 Finn Up
Finn Up is a traditional Swedish competition for children aged 12-15. The students identify a problem in their everyday life and then try to solve it with an invention. By doing so, they learn about society, about technology and about themselves. The goal is to increase interest in science and technology among young people. Finn Up is funded by the Swedish government. The competition is open for both advanced technical inventions as well as simple and smart solutions to everyday problems. A range of pedagogical methods is applied - brainstorming, designing and implementation. The students can work in groups or individually.
### 3.5 Further Information and Contact Details on the Initiatives

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<tr>
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<th>UF-enterprise</th>
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