



Global Accelerator Learning Initiative

Building successful
researcher-practitioner
partnerships

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About GALI

What is it?

A partnership between the Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) and Emory University's Social Enterprise Center from 2015-2021.

Purpose:

To expand the evidence base on early-stage entrepreneurship and acceleration.

Who benefited?

- Researchers - publicly available dataset of 23,000+ entrepreneurs
- Accelerators - 120+ partners received regular analysis of cohort performance
- Policymakers, donors & other stakeholders - practical recommendations from several research reports, policy briefs and academic research





About GALI

Examples of research published with GALI data

Peter W. Roberts & Saurabh A. Lall. **Observing Acceleration: Uncovering the Effects of Accelerators on Impact-Oriented Entrepreneurs** *Palgrave-Macmillan*.

Saurabh Lall, Li-Wei Chen, and Abigayle Davidson. **The Expat Gap: Are Local-Born Entrepreneurs in Developing Countries at a Disadvantage When Seeking Grant Funding?** *Public Administration Review*.

Ana Venâncio & João Jorge. **The role of accelerator programmes on the capital structure of start-ups.** *Small Business Economics*.

Ikenna Uzuegbunam, et al. **How cultural tightness interacts with gender in founding teams: Insights from the commercialization of social ventures.** *Journal of Business Venturing*.

...and dozens more!



◆ How the partnership formed in 2012

Accelerators emerging around the world...

“Do accelerators work?” → “Do accelerators work for more diverse & impact-oriented ventures?”

Initial partnership with a handful of accelerators to **standardize their applications**

Yearly follow-up surveys to **selected and rejected** entrepreneurs

Interest from **donors, accelerators, and academics**

Funded through a public-private consortium of USAID, Omidyar Network, Argidius Foundation, Lemelson Foundation, and Kauffman Foundation in 2015





Key learnings

Acceleration is, on average, an effective way to support high-growth ventures, but cohort-level outcomes vary considerably program-to-program. High-performing programs tend to place extra emphasis on peer learning and the unstructured benefits of the program, as well as take ecosystem constraints into consideration.

In successful programs, a small number of high-growth entrepreneurs are responsible for driving up average performance of the cohort.

There is no one-size-fits-all “recipe” for an effective accelerator program, and it is important to consider how the elements of the program match the needs of the targeted entrepreneurs and the realities of the local ecosystem.

Acceleration will not benefit all types of entrepreneurs equally, and it is important to consider who might get left behind (e.g. women entrepreneurs, local entrepreneurs).

Conclusion...Accelerators work, but not everywhere, and not for all entrepreneurs





Researcher-practitioner collaborations

Best practices (based on our experience):

- Understanding incentives for all actors involved
- Co-creating project
- Setting expectations and timelines
- Establishing clear governance and roles

Other projects that have come out of GALI:

- ANDE's Advancing Women's Empowerment Fund
- Scale-X project of IFC and We-Fi
- (and it has informed/influenced the development of many others)



Learn more at www.galidata.org



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