

The role of business incubators in supporting startups Case study innoest incubator

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Abstract:

This study explores the concept of startups and startup incubators, emphasizing their objectives and roles in supporting emerging institutions through a structured incubation process. The process comprises multiple stages designed to ensure the successful entry of startups into the market. The study highlights the case of Innoest Company, the first startup incubator in eastern Algeria, which provides a model for effective incubation practices.

The findings indicate that Innoest Company in Tebessa State offers comprehensive support to startups, from the initial idea phase to becoming fully operational and independent entities. Through a range of services, the incubator strengthens the institutional foundation, ensuring resilience and adaptability to market dynamics. This approach not only facilitates the successful market integration of startups but also enhances their capacity for growth and innovation in a rapidly changing business environment.

Keywords: Business incubator, startups, startup incubator, incubator Innoest.

Jel Classification Codes: M13,L26.O31.

1. INTRODUCTION

Startups are a pivotal factor in driving growth. Economic And enhance Innovation Globally, and in light of developments Economic Accelerating technology is making startups a force to be reckoned with and A policy capable of reshaping traditional markets and opening new horizons of opportunities. Economic

Business incubators are a vital part of the entrepreneurship ecosystem, playing an important role in supporting and developing emerging institutions as they seek to provide a supportive environment for them through the process of Hugging Which is considered a key factor in supporting and guiding these institutions to accelerate their growth and achieve success in the markets.

It is considered Innoest company is a pioneering model for a business incubator in Tebessa and across Algeria. It provides comprehensive support to start-ups in Tebessa and what Next to her and Seeking To win these institutions Startup brand.

Hence, the following problem can be raised:

How does the incubation process work at the incubator Innoset Company level?

Based on the above, a set of sub-questions can be raised:

- What is meant by business incubators?
- How The startup incubation process is done?
- How The process of incubating start-ups takes place at the business incubator Innoest Company level?

Research objectives: The objectives of this research is:

- Know what is meant by business incubators;
- Learn about the process incubating startups;
- Knowing how to incubate a startup on a global scale Innoest company.

Study method:

To comprehensively address the research topic and provide answers to the research problem, a descriptive-analytical approach was utilized. This approach aims to elucidate the concept of business incubators and their role in supporting and nurturing emerging institutions from their inception, drawing on diverse references and sources. Furthermore, the case study method was employed to investigate the incubation process of start-ups at the Tebessa Business Incubator, Innoest Company.

2.Theoretical literature How startups are embraced by a startup incubator

Startup incubators play a vital role in supporting the growth of emerging businesses by providing a structured environment for their development. This section explores the theoretical framework of how startups are embraced by incubators, focusing on the stages of incubation and the services provided to transform innovative ideas into sustainable enterprises. By examining these processes, the study highlights the mechanisms through which incubators foster entrepreneurial success.

2.1 Definition of startups:

The term start-up has been the focus of many studies and researches in recent periods. The latter, but there is no unified definition for it, so there are many definitions, including:

Startups are defined as: “those in which the leaders personally and directly assume the financial levels and social Technical and moral, whatever the legal nature of the institution "From this definition, we can say that they are institutions in which their leaders personally and directly assume all levels. (ehsan, 2021)

It is also known as a "young innovative company in the new technology sector". This definition means that a startup is a new, small business that arises in an innovative environment. (janguia, 2021)

Through the previous two definitions it can be said that A startup is a newly established organization that seeks to introduce a new aspect of its business. My innovation in its products or services, it is designed to grow rapidly according to its capabilities as it seeks to satisfy the needs of a large number of customers.

2.2. Definition of incubator Startups:

I knew incubators Startups With several definitions, the most important of which are: Business incubators are defined as “institutions dedicated to supporting entrepreneurs in establishing, managing, developing and supporting new projects for a specific period according to the nature of the activity in which they operate. They provide... They have a suitable work environment during the first years of the project’s life and increase the chance of success by utilizing the technical and administrative aspects. Your Symbolic wrap and push the project owner to focus on the core of the business for a specific period diminishing Then the relationship turns into a new initiative." (Group, 2009) From this definition, it can be said that a business incubator is an institution that supports those wishing to establish new projects and exploit the opportunity for success.

It is also known as “an integrated system that provides all means from an equipped, suitable place, it has all the capabilities required to start and develop a project. This system is managed by a specific specialized department that provides all types of support necessary to increase the success rates of emerging institutions. (mohamed, 2021, pp. 114-125) According to this definition, it can be said that the incubator is a system equipped with all the appropriate conditions to support emerging institutions and ensure their success at acceptable rates.

It is also known as “An organization that adopts and supports the ideas of entrepreneurs with creative ideas and guides them to produce and provide new and unique products and services or develop and update existing products and services and present them in a different way.” (researchers, 2020, p. 13) Based on the above, it can be concluded that the incubator is an institution that adopts new ideas to produce innovative and new products and services in the market.

From the above, we conclude that the business incubator is an institution that accompanies the owners of new and innovative ideas in the market, supports them, and provides the necessary conditions to ensure their success at significant rates.

2.3. Objectives of business incubators:

Business incubators have a set of objectives, the most important of which are:

- 1) Reduce start-up costs and initial risks that the business faces at the beginning,
 - 2) Increase success rates, support innovations and encourage unique and innovative ideas.
- (capital, 2024)

- 3) Increase in come growth,
- 4) Contribute to diversifying the local economy. (riens)

The incubator seeks to achieve many goals, the most important of which is increasing the success rates of innovative projects.

2. 4. Stages of the incubation process Startups:

The incubation process goes through three basic stages it consists of:

Pre-incubation period: In it, the idea is discovered, formulated and embodied into a project, and based on the awareness-raising process carried out by the incubator through marketing all its services and the teaching services in the field of entrepreneurship that it provides to the beneficiaries of its services, the owner of the idea begins to prepare the necessary file to enter the incubator as a beneficiary of the services it provides, and the projects are selected by a specialized committee. (capital, 2024)

Incubation period: It extends between two to three years, during which the incubator's managers Selectively Selected project files then come Directly follow up the project by conducting several studies, including the feasibility study. Economic Market studies are then prepared and a plan is developed to be implemented by the institution. Then strategic planning is done in an effort to ensure that Continuity Finally, it is supported by the Startup Support Fund. (unilasalle)

period of time After the hug: The project Innovative And localize it and seek to follow it up, and this is Hence, it can be said that the incubation process goes through three basic stages: the pre-incubation stage, the incubation stage, and the post-incubation stage. (Development, 2010)

The incubation process for startups consists of three stages: pre-incubation, where ideas are developed and prepared for entry; incubation, involving feasibility studies and strategic planning over 2-3 years; and post-incubation, focusing on project localization and sustainability. These stages collectively ensure startups' readiness and success in the market.

3. Applied study

This field study examines Innoest Company's role in implementing startup incubation stages, highlighting its services and impact on transforming ideas into market-ready enterprises. It serves as a practical model for fostering innovation and entrepreneurship.

3.1. Definition of the incubator innoest

Startup incubator established Innoest Company Within the framework of the President's program to encourage start-ups and create economy Knowledge as the first business incubator in eastern Algeria at the level of Tebessa State, and it also obtained the Business Incubator Label No. 0903213011 on March 11, 2021 from the Chairman of the National Committee, Dr. Yassin Walid, Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister in charge of the Knowledge Economy and Startups. (Prepared by The researchers According to the documents provided by the institution.)

3.2. Startup Incubator Jobs

The startup incubator provides a range of services, including:

- Providing a work space and an environment conducive to the emergence of projects;
- Accurate diagnosis to identify strengths and areas for development;
- Connect with strategic allies in the market and gain market share;

- Training programs in the field of entrepreneurship and business management;
- Supporting creative ideas and turning them into real projects;
- Accompanying in the search for capital and providing financial and administrative advice.

(Prepared by The researchers According to the documents provided by the institution.)

3.3. Incubator activities related to the project incubation process (Prepared by The researchers According to the documents provided by the institution.)

The incubator carries out several purposeful activities, the most important of which is what it does to support leadership thinking and develop leaders.

3.3.1. Outcome of the incubator's work and activities

In this detailed summary of all the activities and works carried out by the Start-up Incubator (Tebessa) you will find and The headquarters will open on March 10, 2021. Until December 31 of the same year, as follows:

A. Number of people who obtained the Innovative Project Label:

15 innovative project owners were able to obtain the Innovative Project Label for the year 2021, as follows:

Table No. (01): Number of people who obtained the innovative project label.

Innovative Project Owner	Project Name	Innovative Project Definition
Boualag Yakoub	Innoponia	Focused on innovative hydroponics in Algeria using artificial intelligence and Internet of Things technology.
Walid Rahmouni and Ahmed Nasser	Snailligent	Smart farm for producing snails and their derivatives with high quality throughout the year.
Leazibi Abd el Wahab Bournai	Transgo	An application for nationwide transportation of goods
chawkii Maafa	Nutrisect	Production of animal protein as an alternative feed by rearing black soldier flies.
Kamal El Din khmaisia	Presto	An application for selling food supplies and delivering them to customers.
Abdul Aziz Rogii	Cooknero	A social networking application focused on the art of cooking.
Diaa KiZiz, Rami Labry, and Abdel Samee Bousbaa	Bustime	An application for booking tickets for travelers.
Bouzian Okba	Smartbinx	A smart container for waste containment and sorting.
Allag farid	Farpan	. Recycling palm fronds to produce wooden panels.
gatish Ahmed Al Rashid es.	Chemical	Ethanol production from corn residu

chawech Adlan	Rapi-bus	An electronic application for booking bus tickets
Zaghdoud Tarik	Station for Recuperation of Frigorigenes Fluids	Production of machines for the recovery of industrial gases.
Abd Raouf Saighi, Gasmi Fathi, Boualag Yacoub, Rahmouni Walid, Nasser Ahmed, and Moafa Shawki	Innoest Technology	Production of the first 100% Algerian-made oxygen generator.
Zakaria Bousbaa	BZbooking	A digital platform for hotel booking (B2B and B2C).
Rami Belkis	Drivemmes	A transportation application designed exclusively for women.

Source: (Prepared by The researchers According to the documents provided by the institution.)

B. Number of people who obtained the Startup Label: (Prepared by The researchers According to the documents provided by the institution.)

The Startup of the Year 2021 label was also obtained:

Table No. (02): Number of people who obtained the start-up label.

Startup Owner	Startup name	Definition of startup
Djbayli Tarek	iprobooking	Digital platform for hotel booking B to B. B to C

Source: (Prepared by The researchers According to the documents provided by the institution.)

C. Demonstrations and Activities Organized by the Startup Incubator, Innoest Company, During 2021

The Innoest Company Startup Incubator supervised and facilitated various events and activities throughout 2021, reflecting its commitment to supporting entrepreneurship and fostering innovation. These activities are detailed below:

1. February 23, 2021: An information day was organized in collaboration with the House of Support and Integration to raise awareness about start-ups and the incubator's role in fostering innovative projects.

2. March 10, 2021: Under the patronage of the Governor of Tebessa, the first media day for the business incubator was held. Distinguished attendees included the Secretary-General of Tebessa, executive directors, innovative project holders, and a representative from the Ministry of Transport.

3. March 28, 2021: A partnership agreement was signed between the Tebessa Startup Incubator and the Algerian Industrial University Complex to integrate start-ups with public industrial institutions.

4. March 31, 2021: An agreement with the Algerian National Institute for the Protection of Industrial Property was formalized to facilitate the registration of trademarks and inventions for affiliated projects.

5. April 21, 2021: A study day on the incubator's role in adopting innovative scientific projects in

energy and mining was conducted at Malek Bennabi Conference Hall in coordination with Tebessa University.

6. April 28, 2021: A study day was held at the Hammamet Vocational Training Center to discuss the incubator's role in supporting professional projects and job creation.

7. April 29, 2021: A meeting to explore the development of an organic waste recycling model was held, attended by key stakeholders, including project bearers and directors of vocational training and landfill centers.

8. May 18, 2021: The Secretary-General of Tebessa State visited the incubator headquarters to review the innovative projects being hosted.

9. May 20, 2021: The technical committee was installed, and innovative projects were reviewed with the participation of state officials.

10. May 25, 2021: In collaboration with Tebessa University, the National Innovation Week was celebrated, showcasing the incubator's services and Tebessa's strategic sectors.

11. June 7, 2021: The National Scientific Innovation Week was organized under the supervision of the Governor, involving local authorities, the university community, and project owners.

12. June 15, 2021: The Star Tab competition was held to select the best innovative projects at several vocational training centers in Tebessa Province.

13. June 29, 2021: A meeting with the Tebessa Chamber of Commerce and Industry highlighted services provided to start-ups.

14. July 5, 2021: The final of the competition for the best five innovative projects was held at Mustafa Ben Boulaid Training Institute.

15. July 28, 2021: Amidst a critical health crisis, the incubator supported the installation of oxygen generators in Tebessa hospitals, addressing a severe shortage.

16. August 14-23, 2021: The incubator supported the implementation and installation of oxygen generators across various hospitals, including those in Sharia, Oum El Bouaghi, and Mostaganem.

17. September 5-6, 2021: Training programs in accounting basics commenced, and meetings were held to strategize the production of oxygen generators in Algeria.

18. October 19, 2021: Installation of oxygen generators in Tissemsilt and other locations as part of ongoing pandemic response efforts.

19. November 8-14, 2021: The Global Entrepreneurship Week was celebrated, featuring a 24-hour challenge competition for innovative projects in logistics, the environment, and tourism.

20. November 19, 2021: A partnership agreement was signed with the Tunisian Business Accelerator to enhance cooperation.

21. December 29-30, 2021: Meetings and visits were conducted to support innovative projects in aquaculture and feed manufacturing. (Prepared by The researchers According to the documents provided by the institution.)

D. Demonstrations and Events in Which the Tebessa Startup Incubator Participated in 2021

The Tebessa Startup Incubator actively engaged in numerous events and forums throughout 2021, showcasing its commitment to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. Below is a detailed account of these participations:

1. February 7–28, 2021: Participated in the Culture Challenge competition organized by the

Ministry of Culture in collaboration with the Ministry Delegate for the Knowledge Economy and Startups. The incubator guided participants from Tebessa Governorate.

2. February 18, 2021: Attended the official opening of the home of scholar Malek Bennabi, where an agreement was signed to support emerging institutions with training in domestic tourism.

3. February 23, 2021: Participated in a technical workshop organized by the Directorate of Vocational Training to study the needs of the marine fishing and aquaculture sector, encouraging youth to invest in the field.

4. March 16, 2021: Participated in the regional conference on startups in Oran, organized by the Minister Delegate for the Knowledge Economy and Startups.

5. March 29–30, 2021: Attended the National Conference on Startups and the Knowledge Economy at the International Conference Center.

6. April 13, 2021: Participated in the Ramadan Exhibition, inaugurated by the Governor of Tebessa, under the auspices of the Directorate of Trade.

7. May 18, 2021: Delivered a training course on the knowledge economy in education and scientific research at Khenchela University under the patronage of the Free Student Organization.

8. June 25, 2021: Presented pioneering projects at the National Tourism Day event organized by local authorities.

9. July 2, 2021: Participated in the first local Sudoku championship for children in Sharia, organized by the New Generation Association for Creative Childhood.

10. September 28, 2021: Engaged in the activities of the third edition of the Excellence Camp.

11. September 29, 2021: Participated in the Sixth Conference of the Scientific Council in Algiers at the invitation of the Minister Delegate for Startups and the Knowledge Economy.

12. October 16, 2021: Showcased affiliated projects at the International Salon event.

13. October 20, 2021: Took part in the World Food Day event, hosted at the Maritime Pine Exhibition Center by the Algerian Chamber of Agriculture.

14. November 29, 2021: Participated in a study day and local innovation exhibition titled "The Role of Innovation in Supporting Entrepreneurial Activity," introducing youth-driven innovative projects.

15. December 21, 2021: Contributed to a workshop on the role of innovation in food security in Algeria at the Center for Research and Applied Economics for Development.

16. December 28, 2021: Participated in the Youth Exhibition in Jijel State.

17. December 31, 2021: Engaged in the Innovation Exhibition in Tamanrasset, presenting startups including:

- Raqi Abdul Aziz with the startup Cooknero.
- Azizi Abdel Wahab with the startup Transgo.

18. December 31, 2021: Took part in the National Youth Innovator Meeting in Tindouf, represented by:

- Gatal Louay, a 9-year-old innovator of a solar-powered fountain.
- Okba Bouzian, founder of the startup SmartBinx. (Prepared by The researchers According to the documents provided by the institution.)

3.4. stages Hugging:

The incubation process takes place at the Innoest incubator as follows:

Phase Pre-incubation: The incubator receives and discovers the idea, and a plan of ideas is drawn up ready for implementation and embodiment into a project. The incubator offers all its services to the idea owner, including teaching services in the field of entrepreneurship and other fields that the idea owner needs in his field. After that, the idea owner prepares the necessary file to enter the incubator as a beneficiary of the services provided, and the projects are selected by a specialized committee.

Phase Hugging: Through this, the members of the selection committee at Innoest select the files of the selected projects, and their duration is between two to three years, where they then conduct several studies, including economic feasibility studies and market studies, then a plan is prepared to be implemented by the institution, then strategic planning is carried out in an effort to ensure continuity, and finally it is supported by the Emerging Enterprises Support Fund.

Phase Post-nursery: The innovative project, its localization and the pursuit of its follow-up, and this is done by evaluating the results obtained by the incubator. (gasmi, 2024)

3.5. Incubator activities within the process of incubating start-ups

The Foundation prepares training programs for leaders of start-ups that have obtained the label. These programs consist of a set of training courses as one of the privileges and accompanying means provided by the incubator. A training program has been developed with a duration of 1 hour.192 hours for the benefit of owners of innovative projects that were incubated by the start-up incubator in several fields that are directly related to them. Their goal is to develop their projects, raise their innovation capabilities, and motivate them to enter the world of entrepreneurship. The most important of these courses are the following:

- Marketing;
- Human resources;
- financial;
- Public transactions;
- commercial Law;
- Business Law;
- legislation;
- Market study (fethi, 2024).

3.6.Incubator Results (Statistics)

A. . Number of registered people on the incubator's website:

In this regard, 515 young people with innovative ideas registered their projects through the incubator's website during the year 2021 to be received at the incubator's headquarters, where Mr. Qasimi Fathi, Program Director for the incubator, studied the proposed projects.

B. Number of innovative projects incubated in 2021:

After studying the projects registered on the incubator's website, 38 innovative projects were accepted and incubated to benefit from the number of privileges available and provided by the incubator for the benefit of owners of innovative projects. (Prepared by The researchers According to the documents provided by the institution.)

Table No. (03): Number of innovative projects that were incubated

Number of registered projects	215
Projects under development	22
Projects outside Tebessa	46
Projects abroad	4
Number of training hours	56
Number of organized demonstrations	8

Source: (Prepared by The researchers According to the documents provided by the institution.).

4. CONCLUSION

Innoest Company is not only a role model as an incubator for start-ups in Tebessa but also a cornerstone in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in the region. By providing a holistic range of services, including tailored training programs, personalized mentorship, and strategic guidance, the company plays a pivotal role in nurturing entrepreneurial talent. Its comprehensive approach ensures that aspiring entrepreneurs are equipped with the necessary tools, knowledge, and networks to thrive in the competitive business environment.

The incubator's structured framework spanning pre-incubation, incubation, and post-incubation phases addresses the specific needs of startups at different stages of their development. During the pre-incubation phase, the focus is on refining ideas, conducting market research, and crafting robust business models. This phase lays a strong foundation for sustainable growth. In the incubation phase, startups benefit from access to resources such as co-working spaces, technical support, and financial planning, enabling them to build and test their products or services effectively. Finally, the post-incubation phase ensures that startups are market-ready, with support in scaling operations, accessing funding, and establishing a solid market presence.

Through its integrated and supportive ecosystem, Innoest Company not only empowers startups to overcome challenges but also contributes significantly to the economic and social fabric of Tebessa. By fostering innovation and encouraging entrepreneurial risk-taking, the incubator helps create jobs, diversify the local economy, and inspire a culture of creativity and resilience. Its efforts to support innovative youth are instrumental in shaping a generation of leaders capable of addressing pressing local and global challenges.

Innoest's commitment to transforming ideas into thriving businesses underscores its role as a catalyst for economic growth and a beacon of hope for aspiring entrepreneurs. By continually adapting to the evolving needs of the entrepreneurial landscape, the company ensures its lasting impact on the regional business ecosystem and solidifies its reputation as a leader in fostering innovation and opportunity.

Recommendations

Based on the study that highlights the role of Innoest in supporting entrepreneurship and startups in Tebessa, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance its outcomes and

achieve greater impact:

1. Strengthen Strategic Partnerships

- Foster collaboration with universities, educational institutions, and chambers of commerce in Tebessa to develop specialized training programs focused on innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Build partnerships with local and international investors to ensure sustainable funding and additional support for startups.

2. Expand Service Offerings

- Provide tailored support programs targeting specific sectors, such as technology, sustainable agriculture, and creative industries.
- Develop mentorship programs involving local and international experts to offer specialized consultations to startups at various stages.
- Create a digital platform connecting startups, investors, and experts to facilitate networking and knowledge exchange.

3. Monitor and Optimize Performance

- Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the incubator's success and its impact on the local economy, such as the number of supported startups, success rates, and job creation figures.
- Conduct periodic evaluations to refine programs and services based on feedback from startups and beneficiaries.

4. Promote an Entrepreneurial Culture

- Organize regular events such as workshops, idea competitions, and business expos to inspire innovation among young people.
- Raise public awareness about the importance of entrepreneurship and its role in driving local economic growth.

5. Ensure Sustainable Funding

- Launch seed funding programs for startups in collaboration with investors and financial partners.
- Support the creation of venture capital funds dedicated to startups in Tebessa, emphasizing innovation and technology.

6. Geographic Expansion

- Expand the incubator's reach to neighboring regions, contributing to a wider dissemination of entrepreneurial culture.
- Support the establishment of local branches in smaller towns, ensuring equal opportunities for innovators across the area.

7. Leverage Technology and Digital Transformation

- Introduce advanced training programs in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, digital transformation, and software development.
- Provide a comprehensive digital infrastructure to support tech-driven startups.

8. Enhance Engagement with Government Bodies

- Collaborate with local authorities to create a regulatory and legal environment conducive to startup operations.

- Seek additional governmental support through developmental initiatives.

9. Focus on Research and Development

- Encourage research studies on the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Tebessa to identify future opportunities and challenges.
- Support innovation-driven research projects with the potential to transform into viable businesses.

10. Empower Youth

- Launch awareness programs in schools and universities to introduce entrepreneurship as a promising career path.
- Offer financial and moral incentives to innovative youth to encourage them to launch their ventures.

Implementing these recommendations will help Innoest solidify its position as a leading business incubator, fostering an integrated entrepreneurial ecosystem that promotes innovation, attracts investment, and drives economic and social development in Tebessa and surrounding areas.

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