**ICSB Academy assessment committee report**

**Committee task**: to perform an assessment of the ICSB academy and suggest improvement actions

**Committee members**: Eileen Figueroa (ICSB Puerto Rico), Eric Liguori (USASBE), Silke Tegtmeier (ECSB), Luca Iandoli

**Methodology**

The committee work was articulated in two steps. In the first step each committee member received materials regarding ICSB Academy (programs and reports of the last editions) and was asked to perform an individual analysis and assessment. The second step consisted in a brainstorming session that was performed through a conference call in early January. The committee was asked to consider the following questions:

1. Event format; does the present format work or what are the alternatives? More broadly, what pedagogic innovations are needed?
2. Should we run the academy in conjunction with the ICSB conference or separately?
3. How do we stand out in the crowd of similar initiatives?
4. How we recruit students, what is our target market and ho we approach it?
5. How do we make the academy appealing for the ICSB affiliates?

The results of the discussion were summarized in a report that was sent back to the committee members for validation and amendments. The final validated report is included below.

*a.* *Event format; does this work or what are the alternatives? More broadly, what pedagogic innovations are needed?*

The committee discussed and examined several alternative formats including both more long-term, diluted options such as i-core (six weekends full immersion), or full immersion, short-term formats such as Hackathon centered on a specific challenge, Start-up weekends, and Bootcamp (current format).

The committee recommends to maintain the current full immersion bootcamp format, but recommends to consider the following changes:

* Further reduction of podium/lecturing time and increase more hands on/interactive modules
* Include only live presentations, no videoconference intervention
* Make sure all the social events are included as integral part of the program – no add-ons
* Extend the duration to 4 days by diluting the content over the extended period of time (4 days with limited time allocated to afternoon sessions and more free time and group work sessions)
* Add more mentoring time, assign each team with a mentor
* More diverse faculty with entrepreneurs and practitioners

*b.* *Should we run the academy in conjunction with the ICSB conference or separately?*

The committee recognizes that there are significant benefits in running the program in conjunction with the conference. However, there are some significant disadvantages as well that arise from the need to coordinate with the conference organizers and deal with local specificities and constraints that are different every year. Additionally, the logistic difficulties to travel to locations that are expensive to reach can make the program less affordable and attractive. Another factor limiting the audience is time of the event since the dates of the conference are not compatible with the academic schedule in many countries.

The option to have the program in an attractive and more central location and at a different time should be considered. The Committee members agree that scheduling the program in the first two weeks of August could work for students in most countries. End of May option would work for US students, but hardly for Asian and Europeans. In June and July students are busy with finals (Europe, Asia) or Internships (US). Winter and Spring break would work only for the US, besides schools tend to differ regarding the dates for the break.

While the Committee does not suggest a location in particular, some criteria for its choice have been identified:

1. Central venue, easy and not too expensive to travel to
2. Major, attractive city with a thriving entrepreneurial scene
3. Availability of a local academic partner

A major European City (Barcelona, London, Paris, Rome, Berlin, Amsterdam) could be attractive to Asian and US students and less expensive to reach for European and Middle East students. Another option is to rotate the program yearly across more than one attractive location. Finally, once the new format is finalized and successfully tested it could be possible to replicate it through local or regional editions.

If the program is not run in conjunction with the conference, some adjustments to its design should be made to maintain the advantages deriving from the connection with the conference, such as the international dimensions, the networking with experts, the intercultural experience.

*c.* *How do we stand out in the crowd of similar initiatives?*

The committee identifies the following differentiating factors:

* International/global exposure and cultural experience
* Focus on UN Sustainable development goals
* Global Faculty

The committee recommends to stress these differentiating factors through consistent and early marketing to support the right positioning and visibility of the program. The focus on sustainable development should be enforced and reflected/enforced in the lectures.

A program syllabus outlining learning objectives, content, schedule, requirements, students’ workload, and academic expectations should be prepared and included in the promotion kit. The syllabus would help to clarify learning expectations and would help Schools and Professors to recruit the students with the right profile and the background and connect the program as study abroad extension of existing courses. A well done, detailed syllabus would help Instructors to integrate the Academy program within existing courses and curricula.

Promotion should start early enough (September for next August) in order to give time to Schools to add the Academy to their Study Abroad portfolio, advertise internally, and recruit students.

*d.* *How we recruit students, what is our target market and how do we approach it?*

The Committee agrees that the Price point is competitive and that the overall financial burden can be reduced by lowering travel and accommodation expenses (instead of reducing the registration fee).

Focus on Sustainable development could be leveraged to attract sponsorship and facilitate fundraising to support students through scholarships and financial aid.

The target market could still be undergrad and grad students if the program content and structure are designed to accommodate these different student types. The program should stay open to beginners and aim primarily at developing awareness towards entrepreneurship, but participation of students with ideas and more experience and that are actively committed to the implementation of those ideas should be encouraged. These students can function as innovation leaders and aggregators for the less experienced or committed ones. This should be clearly communicated with the marketing material so that the right expectations are raised.

Again, the availability of a detailed syllabus should help to recruit the right students regardless of their level or background.

ICSB Academy Alumni should be kept in the network. A Follow up survey could be sent to alumni to see if any idea developed at the academy has had any development after the program.

*e.* *How do we make the academy appealing for the ICSB affiliates?*

The internal diversity among Affiliates in terms of location, size, activities, and types of members makes it difficult to develop a youth program that will be of value for some of them for which the Academy may not be a core activity. The main target should be schools and institutions, which does not exclude involvement of Affiliates that want to collaborate.

This topic could be part of a broader discussion at the Board level about the value proposition that ICSB offers to its Affiliates.

Since the Academy serves an audience that is not included in the traditional ICSB audience, the Committee recommends that the Academy should have its own independence in terms of branding, promotion, logistics, and visibility and should not be conflated within other ICSB initiatives while achieving the necessary coordination with other activities and contributing positively to ICSB in financial, reputational, and value proposition terms. Of course, the involvement of Affiliates is welcome, but Affiliates should not be the core target.