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# Envisioning the Greater SINGA Lyon Entrepreneur Community

# Envisioning the Greater SINGA Lyon Entrepreneur Community

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## **Abstract**

SINGA Lyon is a branch of SINGA, a nonprofit organization committed to helping new arrivals integrate into host countries. SINGA Lyon's mission includes redefining who can be an entrepreneur through their six-month business incubation program. However, after the program ends, SINGA often loses contact with past members. Our goal: to develop a plan for the SINGA team to implement in creating the Greater SINGA Lyon Entrepreneurship Community. Using data collected in focus groups, interviews, participant observation, and literature reviews, we defined a comprehensive set of recommendations for SINGA. In this report, we provide a SWOT analysis of the current incubator and present an outline of a community structure for the incorporation of current and post-incubator entrepreneurs. Following this, we offer a communication strategy that focuses on online professional networks and event sharing. Lastly, we provide outlines for a series of events intended to engage and inspire the members of this greater entrepreneur community. Ultimately, our research and recommendations aim to support SINGA in growing and maintaining a robust and engaged greater entrepreneur community that works toward mutual success.

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

SINGA, a nonprofit organization committed to creating a rich and diverse society where anyone, regardless of their origin, can realize their potential dedicates their programs to creating links between new arrivals and local community members to challenge stereotypes surrounding immigration. SINGA Lyon furthers this mission through their housing, community, and entrepreneurship incubation programs.

### Our Work

We primarily worked with SINGA’s incubation program, which accompanies ten aspiring entrepreneurs through six months of workshops, consulting, and advice. This program has just finished its seventh promotion and is beginning its eighth group of entrepreneurs. Through our work, we provide an external review of the current incubator to help them understand how to create a community that spans multiple promotions and supports the entrepreneurs in the program.

To achieve this, we conducted interviews, a focus group, background research, and participant observation. Our formal interviews included 2 current incubatees, 5 post-creation entrepreneurs (post-incubatees), and 3 SINGA employees. Our focus group consisted of 5 entrepreneurs from multiple cohorts.

### Assessment of SINGA’s Current Entrepreneurship Programs

The data we collected from the entrepreneurs and SINGA’s employees revealed two main issues. Entrepreneurs have difficulty forming connections with peers in their incubation cohort and afterward. Additionally, SINGA has limited resources to maintain communication with all post-creation entrepreneurs. Both parties expressed desires to stay in contact for benefits such as resource sharing. We have condensed the data into a SWOT analysis which identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of SINGA’s current incubation program.

#### Condensed SWOT Analysis of SINGA’s Current Incubation Program

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Creates connections with valuable resources and contacts</li><li>● Better inclusiveness and diversity in members and projects</li><li>● SINGA inspires confidence and motivation throughout projects, always willing to help</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Lack of collaboration between entrepreneurs</li><li>● Need for more practical workshops, as their focus is theory-based</li><li>● SINGA does not have the resources to maintain contact with all entrepreneurs post-program</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adaptable and provides personalized help to entrepreneurs, including post-creation accompaniment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Entrepreneurs don't believe that they can take a full lead on future community formation</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communication platforms for community organization / outreach exist</li> <li>● Interest in collaborations with other incubation programs and other entrepreneurs</li> <li>● Entrepreneurs are enthusiastic to giving back and actively participate in the community</li> <li>● Entrepreneurs are seeking business connections, partnerships, collaborations, clients, and visibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensuring sustainable funding</li> <li>● Entrepreneurs don't see each other as a resource</li> <li>● SINGA's resources to maintain communication are diminished as the community grows</li> <li>● Barriers to creating connections between entrepreneurs exist</li> </ul>

From this analysis, we drew the following conclusions:

- SINGA needs better communication methods with entrepreneur
- SINGA needs to facilitate communication between entrepreneurs
- Encouraging collaboration and connection between entrepreneurs can reduce the burden on SINGA
- SINGA Lyon and its entrepreneurs expressed readiness to move forward with the creation of an entrepreneur community
- The community structure must allow entrepreneurs to engage while not forcing responsibilities on members

## The Greater SINGA Community of Entrepreneurs

To meet the goals of SINGA of growing and creating a semi-autonomous community, we have broken down our suggestions into community structure, communication strategy and events.

### Community Structure

After combining research and our field data, we have determined that the best approach for SINGA involves avoiding a more cumbersome and traditional management structure and instead to recruit help through volunteer based smaller committees. These committees will mainly serve to reduce the work it takes for SINGA to run the community and to take care of the minutiae of event and community management.

The following list provides the needed commitments from SINGA to ensure a functioning community:

- Encourage engagement through inspiration and resource sharing
- Provide responsive feedback to ideas and critics from members



- Provide resources, spaces and capital for events and event planning
- Plan events for community engagement
- Decide and disperse responsibility
- Step in or step back with responsibilities within the community

## **Communication**

Based on data collected through interviews, a focus group, and literature review, we determined a set of recommendations for the use of three communication platforms within the Greater SINGA Lyon Entrepreneur Community. The employment of these recommendations by SINGA Lyon involves a commitment to creating, maintaining, and moderating the use of the following communication platforms:

- A Private LinkedIn Group: for event sharing and sustainable communication
- A Directory of Entrepreneurs: for sharing information about communication and helping to provide a sense of identity as members of the SINGA community
- Email: for maintaining individual communication between SINGA and their entrepreneurs, and for distributing a monthly newsletter

## **Events**

Running events requires committing to spending money and time that might otherwise go to different events. We recognize this and have settled on six major events types that allow for various amounts of resource utilization:

- Community Reunion: to kickoff the community and reunite the entrepreneurs
- Incubator Community Introduction: introduce the current incubatees to the community
- Practical Collaborative Workshop: give the incubatees a space to work together
- Community Presentations: Unite the community and provide a space to speak
- Expert Presentations: Keep the community involved and interested
- Discussion Group Meetings: Provide motivation and support to post-creation entrepreneurs

## **Conclusion**

Ultimately, we conclude that SINGA Entrepreneurs are interested in these programs both as participants and future leaders. Our interviews and focus groups emphasized that the community craves more connection and more training, and they hope to continue work in the SINGA community. Next steps for SINGA Lyon may include creating the LinkedIn group and hosting the first community events. We anticipate that the launch of a greater entrepreneur community can both support current entrepreneurs and further SINGA's mission.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the SINGA team for their unending hospitality and kindness; Professor Jennifer deWinter for her brilliant insights and understanding help as our advisor; the SINGA entrepreneurs for their patience, kindness, and honest reflections; TUBA for providing us a space to work in this summer; Professor Alice Plane for preparing us to think on our feet; Paige Neumann for her help on how to use research sources; Estelle Fabbio for planning fun events and giving honest feedback; and Fabienne Miller for getting us started on this awesome project and introducing us to Lyon.

We have had a great time in Lyon this summer and are grateful for the opportunity to live in, work, and explore France. We hope to stay in contact and look forward to the next time we end up in Lyon! Thank you

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## **1.0 An Introduction to Current SINGA Entrepreneurship Programs and an Exploration of the Viability of a Greater Entrepreneur Community**

The United Nations estimated that 65 million people worldwide had been displaced by war as of 2017. This number has continued to increase as part of the ongoing “refugee crisis” (Silove, 2017). France plays an important role in relocating refugees and migrants in Europe, as its location bordering the Mediterranean Sea means it collects immigrants from both the Middle East and Africa. In 2019, France received over 130,000 applications for refugee status and accepted fewer than 30,000 (Statista, 2021).

SINGA Lyon, a branch of SINGA, commits its activities to help new arrivals integrate into host countries as a nonprofit organization. One of SINGA Lyon’s missions includes helping new arrivals create a livelihood in entrepreneurship through individual consulting and running an incubation program. The incubator runs for 6 months, twice a year, with an average number of ten participants within each promotion, or cohort. However, after the program ends, SINGA often loses contact with the members of their past incubation programs. Currently, SINGA does not have an official structure to organize and keep in contact with all the post-incubation entrepreneurs. In addition to this, they lack a way to continue engaging members of their community after incubation.

Our work focused on developing a plan for the SINGA team to implement in creating the Greater SINGA Lyon Entrepreneurship Community. In completing this goal we researched effective and practical ways to retain community engagement, convey information between members, and facilitate involvement. In addition to this, we surveyed members of SINGA’s community through interviews and a focus group to develop a set of recommendations for community structure, communication platforms, and event planning.

Within this chapter, we examine the current state of entrepreneur relationships with SINGA during and after the incubation program. Following this, we explore the prospect of a post-incubator program using SWOT analysis to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the creation of this new program. In the final section of this chapter, we provide a set of interpretive conclusions that consider frameworks for a SINGA Entrepreneur Community in accordance with what our SWOT analysis uncovers.

*Note: We worked with SINGA Lyon exclusively and as such, for the rest of the document, ‘SINGA’ will reference SINGA Lyon.*

### **1.1 Introducing the SWOT Analysis**

Through individual interviews with both current incubatees and post-creation entrepreneurs, we collected ethnographic data and feedback on the incubation program. To visualize the entrepreneur feedback, Table 1.1 shows a condensed form of a SWOT analysis to help guide the creation of this entrepreneur community.

Table 1.1: SWOT Analysis of SINGA’s Current Incubation Program

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Has connections with valuable resources and contacts</li> <li>● Teaches solid foundations in business theory</li> <li>● Better inclusiveness and diversity in members and projects</li> <li>● SINGA inspires confidence and motivation throughout projects, always willing to help</li> <li>● Adaptable and provides personalized help to entrepreneurs, including post-creation accompaniment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of collaboration between entrepreneurs</li> <li>● Need for more practical workshops, as their focus is theory based</li> <li>● SINGA does not have resources to maintain contact with all entrepreneurs post-program</li> <li>● Entrepreneurs feel like they can get more done in 6 months</li> <li>● Entrepreneurs don’t believe that they can take full lead on future community formation</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communication platforms for community organization / outreach exist</li> <li>● Interest in collaborations with other incubation programs</li> <li>● Entrepreneurs are enthusiastic to giving back and actively participate in the community</li> <li>● Entrepreneurs want to remain in the loop about both SINGA and external events</li> <li>● Maintain some structure and guidance after incubation</li> <li>● Entrepreneurs are seeking business connections, partnerships, collaborations, clients, and visibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lack of space to grow in TUBA</li> <li>● Ensuring sustainable funding</li> <li>● Entrepreneurs don’t see each other as a resource</li> <li>● SINGA’s resources to maintain communication are diminished as the community grows</li> <li>● Barriers to creating connections between entrepreneurs exist</li> <li>● Evolving market and culture, there are some things you can only learn through experience</li> </ul>

In the following section, we present the data that informed the concepts formed in Table 1. Tables 1.2 to 1.5 outline the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to realizing an expanded community of entrepreneurs, respectively. The left side of the following tables defines themes present in the data, while the right side lists verbatims and other relevant evidence. See the table of codified data at [A.5 Codified Interview Data](#).

## 1.2 Strengths

Table 1.2: Strengths of Current SINGA Incubation Program

Theme	Ethnographic Data
Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “SINGA can solicit local people who are important that would be very hard for a entrepreneur to meet”*               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For example “trouver des financeurs”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Business Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “SINGA helped give me a comprehensive understanding of all of the things important to start a business, almost start to finish”*               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ They helped me create a framework to guide my decisions in marketing, financing, business model, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SINGA encourages human values like “inclusion” and “solidarity”. These people are more kind, open, and willing to help each other. This is very different from other entrepreneurial events [and incubators].</li> <li>● Better inclusiveness and diversity of projects than other incubators</li> <li>● “Very kind and interested in working with me. Additionally, SINGA Lyon was very quick to respond to me.”*</li> </ul>
Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SINGA was a friend to keep me honest, a motivating figure.</li> <li>● “[Post-incubation,] I tried to go to events that SINGA held. Going to these events is like a ‘refresh’. Listening to others' experiences is important and helpful and motivates you.”*</li> <li>● “If someone is pushing you to complete your things, you get your confidence, and that little confidence does become a big thing when it comes around to get your investment. [...] Once you get to a certain point it becomes easier, but getting there is hard, that is what SINGA helped with.”</li> </ul>
Adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● [Post-incubator perspective:] SINGA staff was extremely helpful, attending meetings with banks/investors, helping me prepare, pushing me. These are “little things that are hard to categorize” [in terms of importance]</li> <li>● Adaptable: “SINGA will help find a solution that works”</li> <li>● Individualized: “the fashion in which SINGA works depends on each project”* (so they mold their programs to each individual project)</li> </ul>

\* Translations from French to English done by: Elliot, Zack

### 1.3 Weaknesses

Table 1.3: Weaknesses of Current SINGA Incubation Program

Theme	Ethnographic Data
Lack of intra-entrepreneur collaboration	<p>Quantitative: 7 out of 7 of the interviewed entrepreneurs identified a lack of connection or collaboration between entrepreneurs both during the incubation and post creation, especially concerning connections across different cohorts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Communication entre les entrepreneurs, c’est presque nul”</li> <li>● “There’s 70 or so people who have passed through the SINGA incubator. However I really know about 1 or 2.”*</li> <li>● No - did not create links with other people in the program. “Il y a beaucoup d’ entrepreneurs avec SINGA, mais pas de connection entre promotions, c’est incroyable!”</li> <li>● Yes I created a few [during incubation] but after the incubation, less.*</li> <li>● “Since I am [working on my project] all alone, so it is hard to get feedback on [my] ideas”* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implies that SINGA does not hold space for entrepreneurs to give each other feedback during incubation, a result of minimal collaboration</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
SINGA does not have resources to maintain contact with all entrepreneurs post-program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Many entrepreneurs don’t keep in contact with SINGA, but this doesn’t mean they don’t face problems. They may be too shy to reach out.”</li> <li>● Another entrepreneur offered the explanation that entrepreneurs might not be comfortable asking for further help, but followed with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “If you create a company and after 6 months you don’t feel comfortable asking for help, do something else.”*</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Need for practical workshops, currently focused on theory based learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Yes, there is a need for practical workshops. [...] You can learn the theory while practicing but you can’t learn the practice while learning”*</li> <li>● “There is a need for someone in the SINGA incubator to have created an enterprise, who has done that, who has worked through mistakes, who has experience.”*</li> <li>● “The thing that I am missing is the ‘pratique,’ I have lots of theory.”</li> <li>● “Something like the ‘elevator pitch’ workshop is great! [...] The program needs this kind of workshop throughout the program.”* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Suggested to format workshops to learn techniques/theory before attending a practical workshop</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Time commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Incubators take too much time, 1 month between workshops is too long. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Note: this remark is critical of the timelines of most incubators, not targeted at SINGA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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\* Translations from French to English done by: Elliot, Zack

## 1.4 Opportunities

Table 1.4: Opportunities for the Expansion of the SINGA Entrepreneur Community

Themes	Ethnographic Data
Communication platforms for community organization/outreach exist and are relatively easy to implement, if not already implemented.	<p>Options considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● LinkedIn, Whatsapp, Facebook, Slack, Spiky Community, Superconnectr, email (newsletter), website</li> <li>● 5 out of 7 interviewed entrepreneurs (as well as 2 SINGA team members) firmly believe that WhatsApp is too casual and not the correct app for forming a community of entrepreneurs</li> </ul>
Collaboration with other incubation programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Ils doivent utiliser leur contexte entrepreneurial au moins pour nous orienter vers d'autres incubateurs, c'est pas forcément de garder l'entrepreneur chez toi. Donc créer un lien avec un incubateur qui travaille dans mon domaine.”</li> </ul>
Entrepreneurs want to remain in the loop about both SINGA and external events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “I would like more communication about events that [SINGA is] going to, especially if they are open to the public and other entrepreneurs. [...] Même à SINGA il faut partager aux entrepreneurs ce qui existe.”*</li> <li>● One entrepreneur would like to see a map (‘carte entrepreneuriale’) of the entrepreneur organizations / other resources that SINGA is connected to.</li> </ul>
SINGA entrepreneurs are interested in having more visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Donner plus de la visibilité à mon projet, ca m' aide toujours.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SINGA can leverage their status to help entrepreneurs further like this</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Entrepreneurs find themselves at a point where they are seeking business connections, partnerships, collaborations, clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seeking collaborations to complement their line of work and domain</li> <li>● I want to go to the events where I can meet people who can help me with my job</li> <li>● “I’m not closed off to finding a partner who could help me with (growing) my project”*</li> <li>● I’m in the realization phase of my project, gathering clients is important. Needs to be put in contact with local</li> </ul>



	<p>stakeholders in the community or with more opportunities that exist in Lyon and in France.</p>
<p>Entrepreneurs want to keep some structure and continued guidance after the incubation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “I have a fear of not having the structure that [the SINGA incubator] has provided.”* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The structure brings you in contact with experts and with knowledgeable people. “To be out ‘in nature’ again is scary”*</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Entrepreneurs want influence the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “On est pas impliqué dans la parcours de l’incubation, on est là pour consommer”</li> <li>● “Using alumni, we can also envision improvements for the current program for the new incubatees, this also creates a connection between them. Thanks to alumni and their experience in the field, their difficulties and challenges overcome, you can improve the program. They think that the program is important and therefore want to help improve it”*</li> </ul>
<p>Entrepreneurs are enthusiastic to giving back and actively participate in the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Moi je me rendrai disponible après ma période d’incubation pour aider” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stated that entrepreneurs should not forget the aid that you have received, and should be open to paying it forward</li> </ul> </li> <li>● “I leave the [workspace I own] open to the entrepreneurs if they need a space to work”* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “When I can help out in any way I will try”*</li> </ul> </li> <li>● “[Simply sharing experiences] is motivating to hear about their stories in entrepreneurship. I talked with [SINGA entrepreneur team and] said it would be great if I could meet more entrepreneurs. [Talking about problems, roadblocks, and breakthroughs] can help lots of people. And I can also help some people with some things in that way.”*</li> <li>● “I’m interested in sharing my experience (incubation and other) with other entrepreneurs [and to help them understand that] there are other platforms and people to reach out to to attain goals.”*</li> <li>● “[Les entrepreneurs post-création] peuvent jouer cette role des bénévoles par exemple. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Suggests integrating alumni into [the SINGA Lyon entrepreneur incubator], it might be from a perspective of volunteers (benevoles).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

\* Translations from French to English done by: Elliot

## 1.5 Threats

Table 1.5: Threats to Consider During Creation of the SINGA Entrepreneur Community

Themes	Ethnographic Data
Lack of space to grow in TUBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This point is gathered from our observation. However, SINGA will be moving into a new space in September.</li> </ul>
Ensuring sustainable funding	<p>From the SINGA entrepreneur team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Setting up this network up costs money and lots of time. However, high return on investment can help them find new money and persuade investors. Allows them to employ KPIs and keep track of the success of the businesses that passed through the incubator. Data and lasting communication is helpful for their fundraising efforts.</li> </ul>
Entrepreneurs usually don't see each other as a resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"[Entrepreneurs] should look within the SINGA community for help, expertise, etc." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrepreneurs need to see each other as entrepreneurs, not just SINGA seeing them as such</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Community grows, SINGA's resources to maintain lines of communication are diminished further	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some entrepreneurs have expressed that they are "not tech-savvy" and that they "do not have time to reach out"</li> </ul> <p>From the SINGA entrepreneur team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Current problem: very individual contact with entrepreneurs. At the beginning, SINGA stays in contact with many people for the last few promotions, but in the end they only really stay in contact with the entrepreneurs that are individually more proactive with outreach." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We see this as a threat to SINGA Lyon's productivity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
There are barriers to creating links between entrepreneurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrepreneurs expressed that post incubation, everyone is going everywhere and is busy. "Being together as a group is missing"*</li> <li>"The difficulty is that we are not at the same level of development, and we have all come for different reasons. Some come to create an association and others are just creating ideas. There is a possibility of having a connection across different levels, 'cela pourrait être sympa'"*</li> <li>Might be their level of French that keeps people from sharing resources via online chats.</li> </ul>
Evolving market and culture, there are some things you can only learn through experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One entrepreneur gave the example of not knowing about the number of taxes, rules, and licenses that you would only know about if you had already gone through the process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There will always be subjects that can't be taught theoretically, must be learned through experience.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

\* Translations from French to English done by: Elliot, Zack

## 1.6 Conclusions & Explanation

The feedback about the current SINGA incubator program as seen in Tables 1.2-1.5, paired with participant observation of an incubation workshop, provided our team with insight into the dynamics of SINGA-entrepreneur and intra-entrepreneur relationships. The following presents our major analysis and conclusion from the SWOT analysis:

### 1. SINGA needs better communication methods with entrepreneurs

The SINGA entrepreneurship team has demonstrated its willingness to continue providing resources and support to entrepreneurs even after their incubation. As shown by entrepreneurial testimonials, SINGA's accompaniment motivates the entrepreneurs. Many have stated that SINGA played an important role in their success, demonstrating the organization's strength in providing personalized help (Table 1.2). SINGA's entrepreneurship team stated the importance of maintaining contact with post-creation entrepreneurs to evaluate the effectiveness of the incubator after 3 and 5 years. Collecting this data can help inform necessary adjustments to the incubator and advance fundraising initiatives for SINGA. As outlined in Table 1.4, SINGA can capitalize on the opportunity to implement inexpensive platforms to communicate with a community of entrepreneurs. Since entrepreneurs explained that they seek a greater sharing of resources (events by SINGA and in the greater community), these platforms could provide a solution to connecting entrepreneurs online. The communication recommendations discussed in 3.0 ensure a strategy that considers these needs.

### 2. SINGA needs to facilitate entrepreneur communication

Multiple entrepreneurs state that they do not stay in contact with each other after the incubation period (Table 1.3), although they expressed a desire for collaboration and maintaining connections. The communication structure we present can address these needs. We have considered many communication platform options (Table 1.4) to encourage community communication and information sharing.

### 3. Encouraging collaboration and connection between entrepreneurs can reduce the burden on SINGA.

Every entrepreneur our team interviewed expressed a lack of communication or connection between entrepreneurs both during the incubation and post-creation, especially concerning connections across different cohorts (Table 1.3). Similarly, during workshops and incubation, entrepreneurs see an opportunity for collaboration between themselves to collectively work through problems or set business theory into practice in their projects (Table 1.4).

Entrepreneurs rarely view each other as another resource for advice, guidance, or a sounding board which threatens entrepreneurship collaboration. Further, as the number of post-incubatees grows steadily every year, SINGA will continue to have

reduced bandwidth when it comes to personally maintaining lines of communication with each entrepreneur of previous promotions (Table 1.5).

The SINGA entrepreneurship team can lean on its strength in connecting people to encourage the use of other entrepreneurs as resources during incubation and post-creation, which will allow entrepreneurs to see each other as knowledgeable, skilled peers as a support system. Projecting into the future, this will reduce the burden on SINGA to act as intermediary figures, allowing them to focus their time and resources on more pressing aspects of the organization. The communication strategy outlined in [3.0 Communication Strategy](#) paired with suggested events in [4.0 Suggested Events](#) take into consideration the burden on SINGA.

#### **4. SINGA Lyon and its entrepreneurs expressed readiness to move forward with the creation of an entrepreneur community.**

Entrepreneurs we've interviewed expressed enthusiasm to participate in a SINGA community and in playing roles and obtaining some responsibility (Table 1.4). Some examples include assuming mentorship roles to current incubatees, participating in peer-to-peer events, and attending or even leading educational presentations and discussions.

SINGA has an opportunity in utilizing entrepreneur input and feedback in the formation of the community and its events. Members who feel valued and heard are more likely to continue to stay active in the community, though they seek an identity as SINGA Entrepreneur Community members. To achieve this, we received suggestions such as adding a section to the SINGA Lyon website that garners importance and value to the prospect of being a member of the SINGA Entrepreneur Community.

We believe that all stakeholders benefit from the creation of the entrepreneur community. SINGA already has the knowledge and resources to organize events and communication, as well as interest from entrepreneurs to manage the community. Creating an extended community can prolong the relationship between SINGA and entrepreneurs, one that some entrepreneurs have described as a “family”.

#### **5. Structure must allow entrepreneurs to engage while not forcing responsibilities on members**

Forcing responsibilities upon entrepreneurs will discourage participation, lead to unfulfilled tasks, and may have a negative impact on the community. Awareness of other obligations and varying levels of interest over time must be considered (Table 1.3).

Current incubatees also expressed worry about losing the structure that incubation provides (Table 1.4). Initializing this community capitalizes on the opportunity to

provide post-creation entrepreneurs with this sense of structure. A volunteer-based structure allows interested members to contribute when they can commit the time.

**6. Entrepreneur feedback can help define additional opportunities and can be considered even as anecdotal or low number yet significant feedback.**

In our interviews and focus groups, we collected a lot of ideas that formed many of our suggestions. However, the data can help SINGA think through additional opportunities and ideas for future planning, and as such, we included it here:

- During brainstorming workshop, entrepreneurs expressed interest in learning about the following topics:
  - **Decision-making** for entrepreneurs workshop
    - “Entrepreneurs can be bad at making decisions. It could be important to learn [decision making] at the beginning of the program since this is not a subject taught in many incubators”
  - Techniques in **exposure** and increasing business **visibility**
  - Learning new websites
  - **Finding clients/client outreach**
  - **Managing press**
  - Understanding French data **laws** (like GDPR)
  - Other workshops that encourage problem-solving between the entrepreneurs
- Lots of incubators in Lyon are missing a second part of the program, **acceleration**. This could be ~3 years long, to accompany the enterprise in its development. Other individuals voiced needs related to the following areas:
  - Logistics
  - Product placement
  - Distribution
- Provide a “**carte entrepreneuriale**” highlighting the connections SINGA has with other organizations, the metropole, etc. to get entrepreneurs thinking about what connections exist
- To encourage collaboration during incubation, SINGA should highlight entrepreneurs’ skills, rather than project “level”. If entrepreneurs can find reasons to work together through skill-sharing, it can eliminate barriers to working together based on perceived differences in project advancement
- “Do a day with another entrepreneur to learn about their experience”
- Projects with the other incubatees of incubators
  - Soirées en rencontre
- Hire an ex-entrepreneur who has expertise building an enterprise from the ground up

## **2.0 An Easily Manageable and Resilient Community Structure**

One consideration in the development of a post-incubator entrepreneurial community includes the structure of the community. The structure provides community members with direction and maintains order within the community. For SINGA, a coordinated community will improve efficiency in communication and give members a purpose, which will help create links in the community (Nagy).

### **2.1 Choosing An Effective Structure**

Within an organization, a horizontal structure, otherwise known as a flat management structure, includes few managers for large numbers of members, allowing more feelings of empowerment amongst members (Indeed Editorial Team). Vertical structures act as a pyramid, in which those on top have the most power, with each level having more power than the one below it (Indeed Editorial Team). This type of structure allows for fewer feelings of empowerment, but gives a clear chain of command, with each member having a specific role.

Speaking with entrepreneurs made it clear that we need to minimize power differentials among members, while also maintaining clear roles within the community. Members need to feel comfortable with accessing the resources provided within the entrepreneurship network while also having clear responsibilities.

By implementing a structure that shares a mix between horizontal and vertical, we can provide an efficient low-overhead structure that maintains clear roles for those in the community that want to help. While different needs and resources inspire different structures, The University of Kansas identifies the following as essential components of any community structure: governance, rules for operation, and distribution of work (Nagy).

### **2.2 Encouraging Entrepreneur Engagement**

SINGA defines its main priority as increasing the quality and quantity of engagement within the community. SINGA must engage its community for necessary feedback, brand expansion, outreach, and using other resources the community can provide. And as experts suggest, communities that have well-defined roles and purposes tend to see more engagement (Nagy).

Introducing the idea of the SINGA Entrepreneur Community at an early stage in the program will help acclimate new incubatees to the value this community holds. Educating both new and old members will help them have clear understandings of their roles and how to utilize the resources the community provides. This knowledge in the members' hands is a good strategy for increasing active members in the community (Nagy).



## 2.3 Member Participation in Online Communication Structures

SINGA is responsible for encouraging engagement from its community members. Research we have conducted shows that encouragement based on a member's interest, sense of purpose, benefits, or simply enjoyment illicit engagement from community members (Becker et al., 2021). Ways to encourage engagement include methods of responsiveness, individualization, linguistic style, and intellectual stimulation as outlined further below.

**Responsiveness:** Research suggests that responsiveness to community ideas and feedback makes community members feel valued and therefore encourages engagement (Nagy). A possible way to implement this would include evaluation such as “How are you doing?” polls on LinkedIn. In anonymous polls, the facilitator can respond to the group by reporting the data and conclusions gathered from the poll. The importance lies in thoughtful responses. Continued interactions and even negative but explained responses can elicit inspiration for further activity from members (Becker et al., 2021).

**Individualization:** Consideration of members' needs may help them feel important. In addition, expressing confidence in members and giving constructive feedback can help members develop feelings of competence and importance.

**Linguistic Style:** Matching the language in the responses (such as word choice) can help eliminate the feeling of power differentials

**Intellectual Stimulation:** Developing new methods, activities, events, and ways to solve problems through events, discussion, and education. This teaches entrepreneurs new ways of thinking and stimulates new ideas.

## 2.4 Envisioned Role of the Community

### Reducing Strain on SINGA

- Aiding in the creation and running of events
- Providing resources for SINGA such as expertise and time

### Providing Data for SINGA

- Remaining in contact with SINGA allows them to assess the success of their incubator in future years
- Collecting feedback and ideas through events and communication platforms

### Benefiting the Entrepreneurs

- Serving as a responsive resource for other entrepreneurs
- Fostering communication between entrepreneurs
- Encouraging business collaborations between entrepreneurs
- Using their own network and knowledge to share with the community

## 2.5 Event Committees

Forming open committees around community planned/run events allows involvement from any interested members of the community. This encourages interested members to engage in the event, while not forcing engagement from uninterested individuals.

We created this structure to enable flexibility within each committee while also keeping the needs of the events in mind. We modeled this structure after a guide created by the University of New Brunswick. The following table describes what such a committee would look like and its members:

Table 2.1: Outline of Roles in a Committee

Purpose	Reduce load on SINGA and encourage community engagement
Members	3-8 individuals satisfying the following roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chairperson/Leader</li> <li>- Outreach/communication</li> <li>- Coordinator</li> <li>- Services &amp; Activity Planning</li> </ul>
Chairperson/Leader	An event, whether the idea came from SINGA or entrepreneurs, needs an executive who can come to final decisions and provide resources and knowledge from SINGA that the committee might need. A SINGA employee would be ideal for this role, or a knowledgeable and willing community member.
Outreach/Communication	A person/group who can spread information about the event to the community using email or LinkedIn, and answer any questions about the event. This will encourage attendance and attract more committee members.
Coordinator	A person/group who can assign roles to committee members, making sure members stay on track, motivating members, and facilitating contact between the Leader and others. The leader could do this however this role can also exist alone to reduce load.
Services & Activity Planning	A person/group in charge of planning activities, catering, venue, and setup/clean-up.

## 2.6 Boards vs Smaller Committees

We mainly considered either a board of directors or pop-up committees for the community.

## **Boards**

Boards carry a lot of power within the organization. Board members may have roles such as director, treasurer, and secretary. Some responsibilities of a board may include developing policy, hiring and firing (or choosing roles), overseeing operations, and supervising members (Nagy).

Boards offer distinct roles, where officials may participate for a set length of time. SINGA could either choose the board members or allow the community to vote them in. We have gathered concerns from our discussions with entrepreneurs that a governing body led by entrepreneurs, such as a board of directors, could lead to power differentials in entrepreneurs. This may cause unwanted community politics and tension within the community.

## **Pop-Up Committees**

Our literature review indicates that smaller pop-up style committees would fit SINGA's needs more accurately than a board because of the spontaneous style. This allows entrepreneurs to focus their attention on matters that they are interested in or passionate about, without forcing them to have to work on unrelated projects.

However, pop-up committees have their drawbacks.

- More difficult to organize and keep track of
- Likely many committees running at once
- Hard to assign roles and have entrepreneurs fill undesired roles

## **Comparing**

For event planning, the spontaneous aspect of committees allows better community engagement and balance of power. However, if SINGA feels the community can take on more responsibilities, a board or committees that take on board responsibilities could help keep track and manage committees, as well as keep records, act as a treasury, and manage resources.

### 3.0 Communication Strategy to Support a Greater SINGA Entrepreneur Community

Companies must establish a successful network of communication to create a fluid and responsive community. Ideally, any platform within this network will cater to the members of this community in an easy-to-use and non-intrusive way. The following section analyzes the communication needs of entrepreneurs and outlines our recommendations for platforms and strategies that are most fit for an entrepreneurship community.

#### 3.1 Communication Strategy Needs

The communication platforms used should:

- **Provide a space to promote connection and interactions** between pre, post, and current members of SINGA's incubation programs
- **Be easy to use**, small or no learning curve due to the use of a new platform
- Allows for **direct communication** between members of the community
- **Be professional**, separates business and personal lives
- **Includes space for information or posts** regarding SINGA and greater Lyon community events
- **Allows members to post subject-specific questions and receive responses** from other community members who have skills in the area of question
- **Supports the ability of SINGA to monitor** and understand how the community interacts
- **Ensure the ability to expand upon or change communication platforms** as necessary for the community
- **Engage previous incubatees** and inform them about events and updates in SINGA
- **Limit the number of notifications and spam** received by community members

#### 3.2 Communication Platform Comparison

Following the development of the above set of communication needs, we compared eight different communication platforms through a decision matrix shown in Table 3.1. Within this table, check marks indicate that the platform successfully meets given criteria, while question marks indicate that it may or may not meet the criteria depending on the community, and no mark indicates that the platform will not meet the criteria.

Table 3.1: Decision Matrix Comparing Various Online Community Platforms for SINGA Lyon

Platform	Professional	Easy to Use	Allows for direct communication	Well Known	Good for Sharing Events
Whatsapp		✓	✓	✓	
LinkedIn	✓	?	✓	✓	✓
Facebook		?	✓	✓	✓
Slack	✓		✓		?
Email	?	✓	✓	✓	?
Website	✓		?	✓	
Spiky	?	?	✓		✓
SuperConnectr	✓		✓		✓

### 3.3 Recommended Communication Platforms

Based on the above data shown in Table 3.1, we chose the following platforms: a private LinkedIn group, an online directory of entrepreneurs (website), and email. These common platforms provide a professional space for members of the community to share community events and establish direct communication with other entrepreneurs while remaining easy to use. Each of these platforms provides additional pieces of support for the community and together form a complete network of communication.

#### 3.3.1: A Private LinkedIn Group

A private LinkedIn group will allow members of the community to post business-related questions and receive answers in a professional environment. It also will provide a space that enables members to promote and share events hosted by both SINGA and the greater Lyon area. The organization will control the ability to enter the group by sending invitations to members of the SINGA community and approving or denying requests to join the group.

Below, in Figure 3.1, you will find an example of what a private LinkedIn group could look like for SINGA Lyon’s Greater Entrepreneur Community.

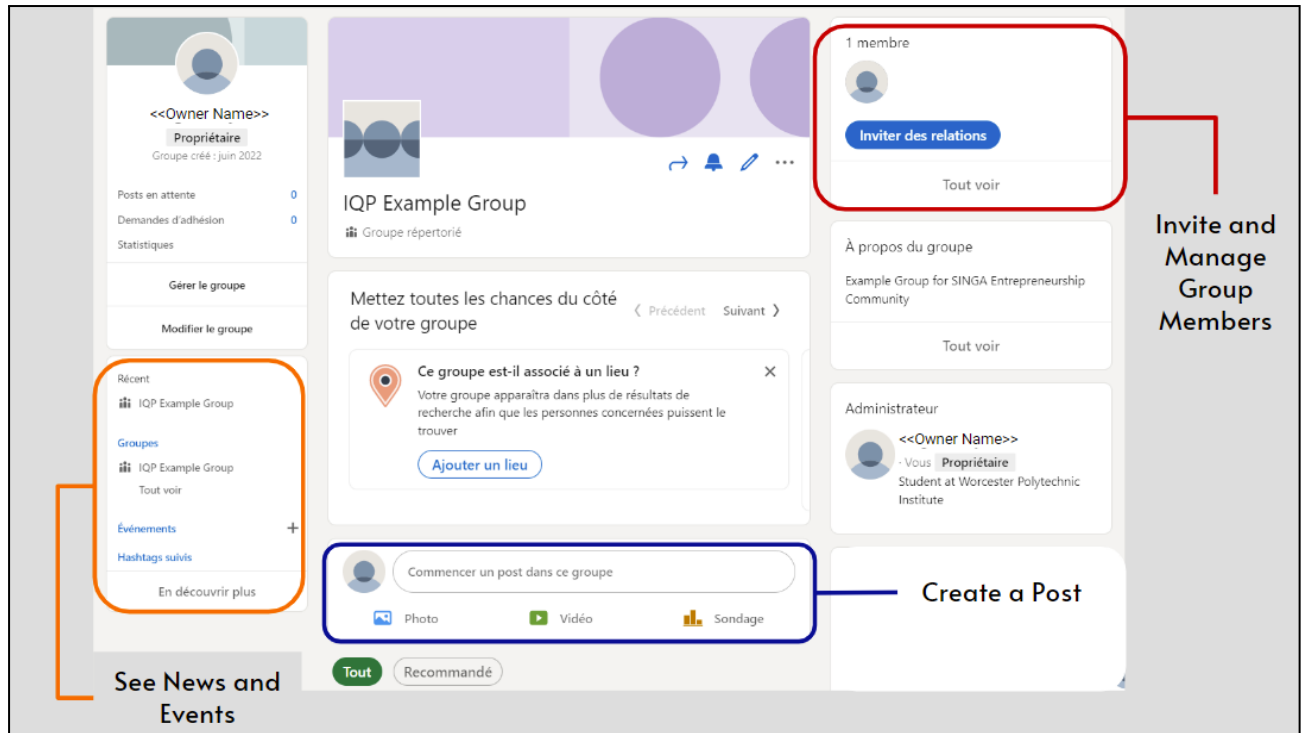


Figure 3.1 Example of a Private LinkedIn group created by SINGA

As shown above, a private LinkedIn group allows members of the community to see information about news and events within the community. It also provides a space where members can create posts about events or ask questions and receive answers in a professional environment. Lastly, it ensures a space dedicated for use by SINGA entrepreneurs through the inclusion of a space for SINGA Lyon to send invitations and to approve or deny people who wish to join the private group. Read more about creating events at [A.2 A Guide to Creating Events on LinkedIn](#).

### 3.3.2: An Online Directory of Entrepreneurs

A directory of entrepreneurs will increase the visibility of entrepreneurs and their businesses by including a description of their business, along with their skills and interests. It will also include a point of contact so that entrepreneurs can establish direct communication with other entrepreneurs within the community. This point of contact invigorates the development of mentorship and collaborative relationships among members of the community. We suggest incorporating it into the already established SINGA Lyon website while exploring the possibility of developing a standalone website.



Below, in Figure 3.2, you will find an example of what one person’s profile could look like in the online directory of entrepreneurs created for SINGA Lyon’s Greater Entrepreneurship Community.

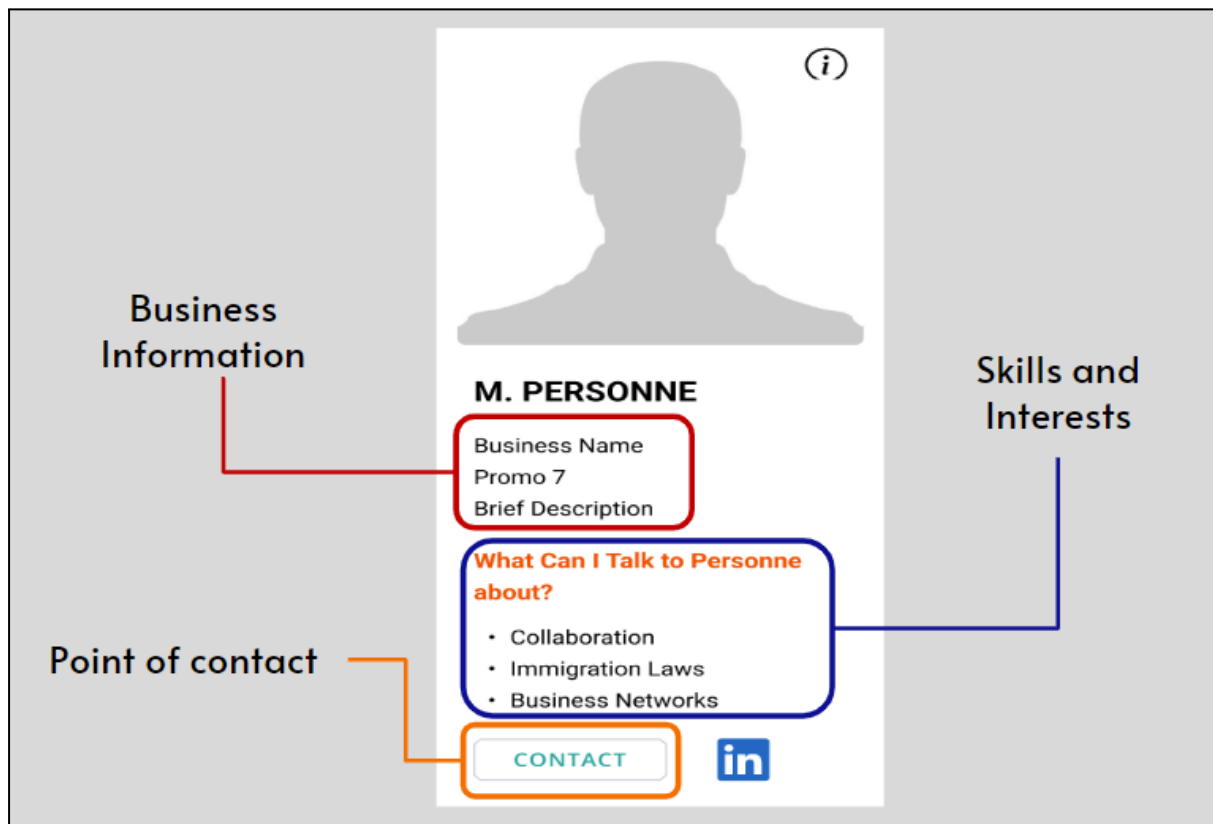


Figure 3.2 Example of one person listed in SINGA Lyon’s Online Directory of Entrepreneurs

As shown above, the directory of entrepreneurs starts with information about the entrepreneur including their name and picture, their business, and SINGA promotion number. Following this, the “What Can I Talk to This Person About?” section includes details about their skills and interests. We modeled this section after WPI’s Mentors and Residence webpage, a place where members of WPI’s Innovation and Entrepreneurship program can easily connect with mentors about common interests (WPI). This also aligns with a suggestion from one of our interviews: to encourage intra-group community and collaboration in terms of skill-sharing rather than project advancement. Lastly, this directory provides a point of contact for members of SINGA Lyon’s greater entrepreneur community to connect over shared interests, skills, and business ventures.

### 3.3.3: Email

SINGA Lyon currently uses email for the majority of their communication with entrepreneurs outside of their posts on social media. While we recommend the continued use of email for communication within SINGA Lyon, we want to specify how and when to use email as a platform within this community. As such, we recommend the use of email to fulfill the following purposes:

- Maintaining individual relationships between SINGA and their entrepreneurs
- Sharing news about the SINGA community, events, and business opportunities through a monthly newsletter

Below, in Figure 3.3, you will find an example of the major points included in a monthly newsletter sent to SINGA Lyon’s Greater Entrepreneur Community in June 2022.



Figure 3.3 Example of part of the SINGA newsletter that is sent to members of the greater entrepreneur community

The newsletter includes information about the news of SINGA, entrepreneur and community events, and an “appels à projets” to help finance projects and early-stage businesses. Each of these aspects of the newsletter contributes to the maintenance of connections between post-incubator entrepreneurs and the SINGA Lyon community. The use of email to distribute this newsletter provides an easy-to-use, well-known, and professional platform for both SINGA Lyon and members of their greater entrepreneur community.

## 4.0 Suggested Events for a Greater SINGA Entrepreneur Community

To help SINGA develop and maintain this community, we designed a set of six events to implement for the Greater SINGA Lyon Entrepreneur Community. While designing these events we focused on ease of implementation and access to necessary resources for the SINGA team. The following section outlines our recommendations for events that are most fit for an entrepreneurship community.

Below, in Table 4.1, you will find an introduction to these six event suggestions and their target attendees.

Table 4.1: Brief Overview of Suggested Events

Event	Objective	SINGA	Incubatees	Post-Creation Entrepreneurs
Community Reunion	First event to kickoff the community	✓	✓	✓
Incubator Community Introduction	Introduce the current promotion to the larger community	✓	✓	✓
Practical Collaborative Workshop	Give the current promotion space to work		✓	
Community Presentations	Unite the community and involve the entrepreneurs	?	✓	✓
Expert Presentation	Keep the community involved and interested	?	✓	✓
Discussion Group Meetings	Provide motivation and support to entrepreneurs		?	✓

### 4.1 Community Reunion: “Rendez-vous Entre Entrepreneurs” or “What’s up Alumni?”

#### Overview

The community reunion acts as a one-time first event for the community where SINGA presents their vision for the community and reconnects with the post-creation entrepreneurs.

#### Purpose

- Act as a first event to reconnect and unite the community
- Inform them of the plans SINGA has for the community

- Provide an event that has a very low barrier to entry so that more of the community attends

### **Raison d'être:**

This event exists in many different forms in other corporate and school alumni events, and serves as an introductory event separate from other events. Similarly, entrepreneurs have mentioned meeting other SINGA entrepreneurs at both SINGA and TUBA events and expressed their pleasure at getting to meet other SINGA entrepreneurs.

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## **Community Reunion Event Planning**

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### **Organizer**

SINGA

### **Location and Time**

This would ideally take place in the coming months (September or August).

~1 - 1.5 hours

Location: similar to the blablas (like La Friche Lamartine (21 rue Saint Victorien))

### **Attendees (10-20 people)**

- SINGA (2-3?)
- Post-incubation members of the community (“Generally 10 to 20% of the total potential reunion group will decide to attend the reunion” (UNB,11). This data comes from a university so SINGA might have significantly higher attendance but unknown)

### **Event Promotion**

- Email to all previous entrepreneurs. Something like:

“Dear {Name},

SINGA Lyon is looking to unite its entrepreneurs and build a larger and more connected community. We see this as an opportunity to give you new business connections, provide a space to talk with each other, and to run new informational events to keep you up to date in the market.

To start off with, we are hosting a reunion with all previous promotions **at {location} on {date}**. This will be a casual event to both learn about this community and to meet other entrepreneurs who went through the incubator at SINGA.

If you cannot attend in person but still want to learn about this community and its events, we will have a recording you can watch.

We can't wait to see you there!

SINGA “

[+ include calendar invite in email]

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## Event Orchestration

### Prepwork

- Identify the next event to run after this. We suggest either the Community Introduction Event or the Community Presentations depending on when this event is run
- Acquire snacks and drinks (standard cheap aperitifs like breads and cheeses)
- Post the next event to be run on LinkedIn so that they can try signing up for something once they join the group and so that the group isn't empty
- Prepare to record the event

### Event Plan

- **5m:** If you decide to record, you should set up the recording now.
- **10m:** People have arrived. Thank them for coming and give a speech on:
  - The purpose of the community
  - What some events look like (we suggest giving a very brief overview of all of them as different entrepreneurs have expressed different preferences)
  - The different roles in the community and what a committee could look like. Emphasize that participating in this community does not mean you have to serve part of a committee, there exist many ways to give back including just participating actively in the community.
  - The major communication platforms and how to use them. **Especially important:** mention that the community via LinkedIn or the annuaire can act as the default resource for a lot of questions and help.
- **20-25m:** Ask if they have any questions or comments
- **30m:** Stop the recording and put up 2 QR codes or links. One to join the LinkedIn group, and the other to fill out a form asking them if they are interested in the newsletter and the annuaire. The survey could look like the following:
  - What is your name? [text field]
  - Are you interested in the newsletter [yes/no]
  - Are you interested in being publicly listed as an entrepreneur on SINGAs website? [yes/no]
    - If yes, what kinds of things would you be interested in talking about with other entrepreneurs
- Tell them that the next event for the community is {event} and that they can sign up for it on the LinkedIn
- **45m:** Wait till they are finished. Then thank them and invite them to remain so that they can enjoy some of the provided snacks and talk to each other.
- **1h:** Could end the event here if everyone has left.
- **1h30m:** Event is finished

## Followup

Email to post-creation entrepreneurs:

“Thank you so much for attending!

In case you missed it, here is the link to the LinkedIn {link} and here is the link to the survey about the newsletter and the annulaire {link}.

We also have a recording available at {link}

Again, the next event is {event} on the {date} and the signup is on LinkedIn.

We hope to see you again soon!

SINGA”

## Measure of Effectiveness

We propose to measure the event in terms of:

- % of attendance who joined the LinkedIn
- % of attendance that filled out the survey
- # of people who joined the LinkedIn group after 2 days (Target: 10+)
- # of them decided to come to the next event. (Target depends on event)

## 4.2 Incubator Community Introduction: “Meet the New Entrepreneurs!” or “Présentation des nouveaux entrepreneurs”

### Overview

The incubator community introduction serves as an opportunity for the current incubator to briefly present their projects and to meet the larger community.

### Purpose

- Provide current incubatees a chance to practice their pitches and talk with other entrepreneurs
- Encourage the current incubatees to form a bond with the community before the end of the promotion
- Engage and interest the post-incubatee community

### Raison d'être:

This event got a particularly positive reception during the focus group and the interviews. As one entrepreneur mentioned “many people stop talking with [SINGA] / fall off. You have to force yourself to ask [SINGA] / send [SINGA] an email asking for help.” Similarly, 3 of the entrepreneurs we talked to explicitly mentioned the concept of mentoring another entrepreneur to either form business connections or to give back.

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## Community Introduction Event Planning

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## Organizer

SINGA

## Location and Time

We expect this event to occur 4-8 weeks into the promotion to ensure that the entrepreneurs can answer hard questions and give a well-thought-out presentation.

1.5 hours

Hosted at TUBA or another large casual space.

## Attendees (20-30 people)

- SINGA (2+ employees)
  - One event host
  - The others can help inspire conversation after the presentation
- Current promotion
- Members of the previous promotions (10+)

## Event Promotion

- Broad platform (LinkedIn): 1 post
- Newsletter
- Individual emails to specific entrepreneurs who would enjoy going or whose attendance could improve the event

---

## Event Orchestration

### Prepwork

- Book bottom floor of TUBA or other large room elsewhere
- Acquire snacks (cheeses, breads, meats, fruits) for them to eat while conversing
- If entrepreneurs are going to use a visual aid, ensure that you are prepared to display it (setting up projector, downloading powerpoints, etc)
- Ensure the entrepreneurs are prepared to give their 3 minute pitches
- Setup chairs and a stage / presenting area

### Event Plan

- **0m:** People have started arriving.
- **5-10m:** People should have finished arriving. Event-host should give 1-2 min thank-you address and briefly describe the current incubator. Then have each entrepreneur give a 3 minute pitch presentation.
- **45m-50m:** (3 minutes \* 10 projects = 30 minutes). Give a brief summary of the projects and inform them that the informative part of the event is over but encourage the entrepreneurs to hang out and chat. Bring out snacks / water.
- **1hr15m:** People will have started to leave. Still leave time for those who are building strong connections to continue talking.

- **1hr30m:** Event is over

### **Followup**

Email from SINGA that says something along the lines of: "Merci d'avoir participé! Si vous avez rencontré quelqu'un avec qui vous souhaitez parler en plus, n'hésitez pas à utiliser le groupe LinkedIn {link} ou à les rechercher dans l'annuaire {link} ! "

### **Measure of Effectiveness**

- The attendance of this event (after the first one to two events). Ideally at least one post incubatee would be present for every person presenting.
- Individually asking every single current incubatee if it was useful to present to others, and if they made bonds (done during the regular checkups of SINGA and the entrepreneurs).
- The number of current incubatees that go to the community events (over the next 2-3 community events)

## **4.3 Practical Collaborative Workshop : “Atelier Collaboratif: Rédaction de plans d'affaires” or “Atelier Collaboratif” or “Créons nos sites web”**

### **Overview**

The practical collaborative workshops serve as a free-form workshop where entrepreneurs work together on aspects of their projects that they could all benefit from (like writing a business plan or making websites).

### **Purpose**

- Give entrepreneurs a space to work collaboratively and build emotional links to other members in the community.
- Give them motivation and a space to work on aspects of their project that they otherwise would put off

### **Raison d'être:**

Entrepreneurs both current and post creation have identified the lack of practical workshops as a significant hole in SINGA's program and as one entrepreneur said, “you can learn the theory while practicing but you can't learn the practice while learning.” As another said “the solution to most problems can be found in a group. You don't have to be in the same domain or the same level of competence.” This event attempts to both establish entrepreneurs as a resource for each other and to give them as space to get things done.



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## Practical Collaborative Workshop Planning

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### Organizer

SINGA

### Location and Time

We expect this event to run 1-3 times during the incubation on an as-needed basis.  
2 hours (people might leave early)  
Hosted in a large casual space like a TUBA conference room.

### Attendees (2-10 people)

Current incubatees (do not have a SINGA employee present. They will dominate the space if they are present)

### Event Promotion

- Current communication methods for workshops

---

## Event Orchestration

### Prepwork

- Identify a subject that each person can work on individually, yet one which they can give feedback on each other's work. Examples include: **Business plan writing and critique, financial form filling, website creation, etc.**
- Book a room at TUBA / event space

### Event Plan

- Give them a space, a task, and a purpose. Let them try and use that space collaboratively

### Followup

No immediate followup for this event. However it during the semi-regular check ins between entrepreneurs and SINGA, it would make sense to ask some of the questions in "Measure of Effectiveness" to determine if the event works

### Measure of Effectiveness

- How many entrepreneurs attended? Target: half of group (similar to other events we have seen)
- Did the entrepreneurs make progress on their project? Target: all of them made some progress
- Did you get feedback on your work and/or provide feedback to others during the event? Target: half of them received or gave feedback during the workshop.
- Would you go to another collaborative workshop if it was run again? Consider augmenting this event to have a member of SINGA present if people lack interest in

this event.

## 4.4 Community Presentations: “Talk & Snack” or “Apéritifs de la communauté”

### Overview

Community presentations serve as casual events in which one entrepreneur does a short presentation and then the entrepreneurs stay around and snack. The presentation mainly serves as a discussion point for further conversation and gives them a chance to connect over a shared interest or shared experience.

### Purpose

- Give entrepreneurs a space to talk about their projects and problems
- Connect the community and encourage involvement

### Raison d'être:

The entrepreneurs have expressed an interest in both presenting their own projects and in learning about others. One entrepreneur mentioned this event exactly and another simply said that “I’m interested in sharing my experience (incubation and other) with other entrepreneurs [and to help them understand that] there are other platforms and people to reach out to to attain goals.” Two other entrepreneurs echoed this sentiment. The entrepreneurs are also interested in listening to people who have had similar experiences.

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## Community Presentation Event Planning

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### Organizer

SINGA / Event planning committee. (Originally SINGA runs this event however this could this event may make a great event for an event planning committee)

### Location and Time

When possible, once a month as a late-afternoon event

1 hour

Hosted in a place like the TUBA downstairs

Note: Federic from TUBA explicitly expressed interest in merging this event with some of TUBAs and using their space. I am not sure if SINGA wants to do this; however, we recommend considering this offer.

### Attendees (? people)

- Members of the community (we don’t have solid data on how many people to expect)
- SINGA is welcome but not required

## Event Promotion

- LinkedIn
    - Event signup on LinkedIn
  - Newsletter subheading.
    - Exemple: “Ce mois-ci, nous avons une présentation de [entrepreneur] sur [sujet] ! Cette présentation abordera [sujets]. Si vous souhaitez participer, veuillez vous inscrire sur LinkedIn ici [lien]. En espérant vous y voir !”
- 

## Event Orchestration

### Prepwork

- Book a room
- Acquire snacks & drinks
- If the presenter is using a visual aid, ensure the equipment is setup
- Ensure that there is a table for the presenter to place their products on in case they also want to sell or show off their products

### Event Plan

- **0m:** Ensure the presenter is ready / ask them if there is anything they need
- **5m:** (optional) Event host commands the attention of the audience and directs attention towards the presenter. The presentation begins now.
- **15-25m:** Presentation is finished. Event host thanks them, and invites audience to get snacks and hang around to talk
- **60m:** Event is finished

### Followup

- Thank you email to presenter and event committee

### Measure of Effectiveness

- The number of people who attend
- The number of people who are interested in giving talks

## 4.5 Expert Presentation : “Séminaires d'experts” or “Rendez-vous avec les experts” or “Professionnels pour nous”

### Overview

Expert presentations involve inviting an expert to give a longer presentation about something the entrepreneurs want to learn more about for their business. The entrepreneurs have time at the end to ask questions and meet the presenter if it interests them.

### Purpose

- Excite members of the community about being a part of the community
- Leverage the SINGA brand to help the entrepreneurs.

### **Raison d'être:**

Entrepreneurs have identified this as a key event that would encourage them to partake in the event. Post-creation entrepreneurs have mentioned a missing “second part” of the program which would include information about topics such as “managing press”, “logistics”, “product placement”, “distribution”, etc. They have also identified that they struggle as solo entrepreneurs when talking to people important to their business (like the metropole) and that meeting these experts in more casual settings would allow them to let down their guard and help their business succeed.

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## **Expert Presentation Event Planning**

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### **Topic of the Presentation**

Entrepreneurs have given us a few example topics such as:

- New online tools for business orchestration
- New innovative business practices
- Marketing
- French data laws (like GDPR)
- Inclusivity
- Foreign culture / how that affects business practices

Occasionally ask the community (in person and online) if there are any topics they would appreciate to have workshops on.

- If any good ones come up, send a poll in LinkedIn asking about preferences for topics (to gauge interest). An example poll could look like:

“Would you be interested in attending an event with an expert in:

- Lyon Restaurant Taxes
  - Online Marketing
  - Online Retail
  - Interviewing and Recruiting
  - None of the above”
- If people are interested then look into planning this event.

### **Organizer**

SINGA or the community (SINGA must lead most of these events, however if members of the community know connections then they should feel free to invite them)

### **Location and Time**

We haven't collected data on how often entrepreneurs want this type of event  
However we are imagining every 2-3 months.  
1-2 hours depending on the presenter

Hosted at TUBA or other SINGA space. Entrepreneurs have identified that they prefer to have face to face contact in these situations.

### **Attendees (10-20 people)**

- Members of the current promotion and extended community (10+)
- SINGA employees if they want to attend (0-3+)

### **Event Promotion**

- Broad Communication Platform (LinkedIn):
  - Send event invite at least 3 weeks in advance
  - One reminder one week in advance
- Newsletter: Small blurb with a link to the (LinkedIn) event so they can get more information and sign up.

---

## **Event Orchestration**

### **Prepwork**

- Identify a willing and able person to present on this topic at a reasonable time and price
- Ensure they have a calendar invite to the event
- Encourage the presenter that while the event is {duration}, save 15 minutes at the end for casual discussion, questions, and interaction.
- Book a room
- If the presenter is using a visual aid, ensure the equipment is working
- Get water for event and ensure the presenter has water nearby

### **Event Plan**

- **0m:** Event started, due to the nature of this event, we expect people to show up closer to on-time.
- Let presenter run the event
- While the presenter is presenting, ensure to record the number of people who attend this type of event. It may be useful in funding tasks.
- Once the presenter has finished, the event host should thank them and then inform the group that the event is not over and that the participants are encouraged to stay for a bit and talk.
- **60-120m:** Event is finished

### **Followup**

- Send thank you note to presenter

### **Measure of Effectiveness**

We propose emailing a poll similar to the following to all attendees:  
Did you enjoy this seminar?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

How much did you learn from this seminar?

- A lot
- A little
- None

Do you feel more confident in your knowledge of this subject?

- A lot more confident
- A bit more confident
- Less confident
- No difference

Are you interested in attending future seminars like this?

- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not interested

Do you have any suggestions:

[text field]

## 4.6 Discussion Group Meetups : “Groupes de Discussion”

### Overview

The discussion groups serve as casual meetups between a group of close entrepreneurs who meet on a regular basis to talk about their projects, their struggles, and what they need to succeed.

### Purpose

- Provide entrepreneurs with a place to talk about their projects
- Provide entrepreneurs with a source of accountability and motivation after having left the program

### Raison d'être:

This event responds to a problem multiple entrepreneurs have identified after they finish the program. Entrepreneurs have noticed how “many people stop talking with [SINGA] / fall off. You have to force yourself to ask [SINGA] / send [SINGA] an email asking for help.” While many parts of the community help with this, 3 of the 7 entrepreneurs explicitly suggested that a form of discussion groups would have helped them transition after the program.

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## Discussion Group Meetup Planning

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### Organizer

The entrepreneurs in the group (ideally one leader figure).

### Location and Time

Due to the customizability of the event, we cannot give a precise location, however we imagine a bar or casual restaurant. As per how often they should meet, the answer depends on the group however we have heard between once a week and once a month.

### Attendees (3-5 entrepreneurs)

The same 3-5 entrepreneurs each time they meet.

### Event Promotion

- Ideally these groups would form by themselves, however unless suggested by SINGA, it may never happen. SINGA's role in facilitating these groups is to introduce both the concept of a discussion group, and to introduce new entrepreneurs to the current discussion groups where they would fit in.

---

## Event Orchestration

### Prework

- When creating a group, ensure each group has a de-facto event-manager to make reservations and send reminders

### Event Plan

- Up to the group. Likely just chatting over food.

### Followup

Check in with the groups (in person with one of the entrepreneurs) every month or so

### Measure of Effectiveness

- How many discussion groups are there?
- How many meetings have they had?
- If you have just suggested a new member to a group, is the new member fitting in and has it helped them? (ask them)

## 4.7 Example Calendar

We have provided a 6 month sample calendar (to match up with SINGA's 6 month incubator) in the hope to illustrate what time commitments look like to run this community. We have intentionally left out certain side events that run on a more as-needed or as-possible basis like the Community Reunion or the Practical Collaborative Workshop. Notice how multiple

months like November or December have only one event that could be run entirely by a committee.



*Figure 4.1 An Example Calendar of Events Relating to the Entrepreneur Community*



## 5.0 Next Steps to Realize the Community

We conclude by stating how we envision realizing this community. Doing so involves the following major steps: preparation with a small group of entrepreneurs, running the first event, and keeping motivation in the community. This should serve as a guide even if the actual path differs.

The preparation with a small group of entrepreneurs has already begun. Multiple entrepreneurs have identified themselves as willing to participate in the community and have already donated their time to help us understand their desires. We caution against using them as a resource for too much further idle chatter and rather propose to use them as a sounding board as you go about making decisions. This includes adding them to the LinkedIn group, adding them to the directory, and asking how they feel about any major decisions.

Running the first event kicks off the community and tests if the community will work as we envision. To streamline and guide this process, we created the “Community Reunion” event as a template for what a first event could look like. When running this event, to maintain momentum, you should have already begun to plan the second event. We think that the Incubator Community Introduction event or the Community Presentations (Talk & Snack) would make a great second event. This first event also serves as a great opportunity to introduce the second, more “normal” event.

Finally, keeping motivation in the community will entail diligent use of the LinkedIn group and the newsletter to ensure that entrepreneurs feel like they belong to a vibrant and living community. This may include encouraging the current promotion to reach out via the LinkedIn group or simply encouraging entrepreneurs to share the events that they plan to attend in the LinkedIn group. Discussion groups may occur over time but you might have to plant the seed in their imagination.

All our time and conversations with entrepreneurs have repeatedly emphasized that SINGA entrepreneurs are thrilled to have the opportunity to partake in this community. We hope that this helps to reduce the burden of starting this community. Thank you!

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## A.0 Appendix

### A.1 Methods

Our goal was to work with SINGA Lyon to develop an innovative approach to strengthen and expand their alumni network and to further connect current SINGA members with past members in a way that supports their philosophy surrounding the inclusion of new arrivals.

We did this with regards to the following objectives:

1. To gain a better understanding of the problem
2. To gather information specific to SINGA's programs
3. To evaluate and update our proposed recommendations
4. To effectively communicate our findings

This project's field of inquiry involves the Lyon community including new arrivals, city locals, SINGA program members and alumni, SINGA's organizational team and incubation programs. The following sections describe methods used for completing the objectives listed above. This included interviewing past program participants and leadership, running focus groups, and an analysis of gathered data and of proposed recommendations.

*Note: Because the methodologies involved in completing these objectives involved human participants, the Internal Review Board (IRB) at WPI first reviewed and approved our methods to ensure that the team follows ethical standards, including the use of consent forms prior to recording and conducting interviews and focus groups.*

#### A.1.1 Interviews

We have conducted seven individual interviews with past members of SINGA Lyon's entrepreneurial incubator program. We have left their names out of the document for the sake of anonymity as it does not add to the document to have their names.

We conducted the interviews conducted with members of past and current members of the SINGA incubator to gauge their interest, visions, and needs for an alumni network. This information helped us formulate more specific questions and discussion themes for the focus group which we hosted on June 16th, 2022. We made initial contact with these entrepreneurs via an email introduction from SINGA's Incubator Coordinator, soliciting interest to participate in discussions from an alumni newsletter, or maintained contact after meeting them in person at SINGA events.

#### A.1.2 Focus Groups

Focus groups allowed us to gather a large amount of qualitative data in a short period of time. We used a focus group to leverage the collaboration between current incubation members and program alumni to ideate the base design of an alumni network for SINGA's entrepreneurship program. The discussion served to understand the needs of each entrepreneurial sub-group and determine how the network should be organized, managed, and maintained.

### **A.1.3 Participant Observation**

Observing SINGA's events helped to identify the environment that SINGA creates between themselves and the people in their community. We set goals to discover the following:

- General response and engagement to the events SINGA hosts
- What type of people attend these events
- Are these events successful
- Establish contact with members of SINGA's community

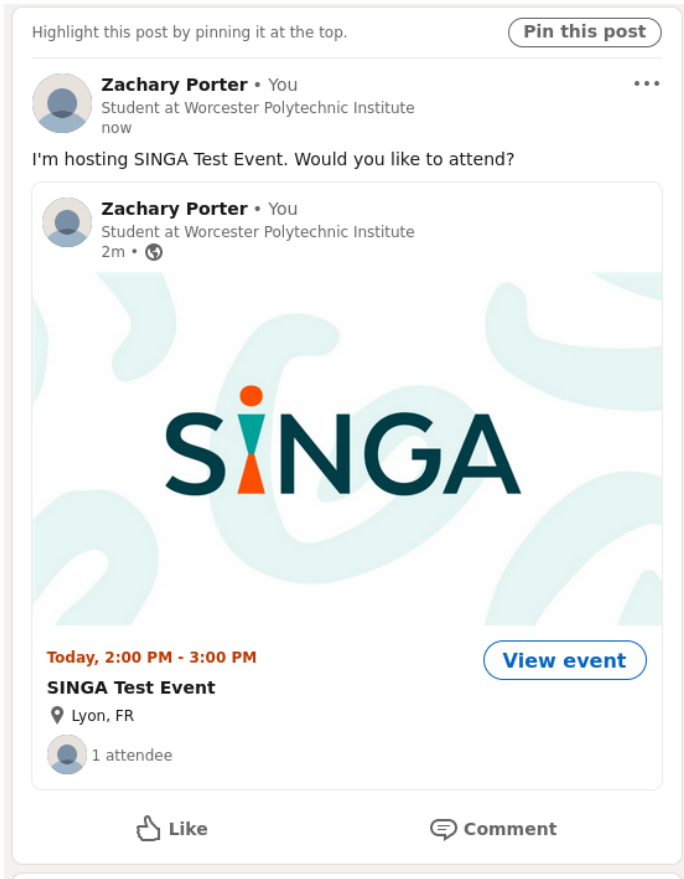
We attended several events run by SINGA. Including their community blablas, going to the OFII, incubator workshops, and other major events. We succeeded in understanding the community and its needs in a more human and realistic manner.

### **A.2 A Guide to Creating Events on LinkedIn**

To create an event on LinkedIn, please follow the steps below:

- 1) Go to your "events homepage"  
(<https://www.linkedin.com/mynetwork/network-manager/events/>)
- 2) Press the "Create" button and fill out the information
- 3) When it says "Share", you can post it, but it won't go to the group.
- 4) To share it with the group, refresh the page until the event pops up
- 5) Then click on the event.
- 6) Click the "Manage" drop down next to "Invite" and "Edit"
- 7) Press "Share Event"
- 8) Press "Group Members >"
- 9) Select the SINGA Group and then share

You should then have an event in the group that might look like:



(based off of <https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a552254>)

### A.3 Authorship

Section	Writer(s)	Reviewer(s)
<b>Abstract</b>	Abigail Bartynski Elliot Irving	All Members
<b>Executive Summary</b>	All Members	All Members
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	Zachary Porter Abigail Bartynski	Abigail Bartynski
<b>1.0 An Introduction to Current SINGA Entrepreneurship</b>	Elliot Irving Gabriel Camacho	Abigail Bartynski

<b>Programs and an Exploration of the Viability of a Greater Entrepreneur Community</b>		
<b>2.0 A Community Structure that is Both Easily Manageable and Resilient to Membership Changes</b>	Gabriel Camacho	Elliot Irving Zachary Porter
<b>3.0 Communication Strategy to Support a Greater SINGA Entrepreneur Community</b>	Abigail Bartynski	Elliot Irving Gabriel Camacho
<b>4.0 Suggested Events for a Greater SINGA Entrepreneur Community</b>	Zachary Porter	Abigail Bartynski
<b>5.0 Next Steps to Realize the Community</b>	Zachary Porter	Gabriel Camacho Abigail Bartynski

#### **A.4 List of Figures and Tables**

Table: Condensed SWOT Analysis of SINGA’s Current Incubation Program

Table 1.1: SWOT Analysis of SINGA’s Current Incubation Program

Table 1.2: Strengths of Current SINGA Incubation Program

Table 1.3: Weaknesses of Current SINGA Incubation Program

Table 1.4: Opportunities for the Expansion of the SINGA Entrepreneur Community

Table 1.5: Threats to Consider During Creation of the SINGA Entrepreneur Community

Table 2.1: Outline of Roles in a Committee

Table 3.1: Decision Matrix Comparing Various Online Community Platforms for SINGA Lyon

*Figure 3.1 Example of a Private LinkedIn group created by SINGA Lyon*

*Figure 3.2 Example of one person listed in SINGA Lyon’s Online Directory of Entrepreneurs*

*Figure 3.3 Example of part of the SINGA newsletter that is sent to members of the greater entrepreneur community*



Table 4.1: Brief Overview of Suggested Events

Figure 4.1 An Example Calendar of Events Relating to the Entrepreneur Community

### A.5 Codified Interview Data

Code	Evidence  [Qualitative data, explanations Quantitative data, # of entrepreneurs bringing up a subject or certain point]
Information on SINGA’s Current Incubation Program	
<p>SINGA’s Strengths</p> <p>{May need <b>Sub codes:</b> creating unlikely connections, theory in business planning, personalized guidance, etc.}</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> SWOT Analysis Strengths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SINGA can solicit people local who are important that would be very hard for a entrepreneur to meet               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Can meet these people in an informal setting first</li> <li>○ “Eventments cle”</li> <li>○ “Trouver des financeurs”</li> <li>○ Politicians that can stick with her</li> </ul> </li> <li>● SINGA helped do the A→Z for the startup (a comprehensive understanding of all of the things important to start a business)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ They helped create a framework (6:40) to guide my decisions in marketing, financing, business model, etc</li> </ul> </li> <li>● SINGA has human values like “inclusion” and “solidarity” the people are more sympa and more open and much more open to help each other(18:15).               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This is very different from other entrepreneurial events</li> </ul> </li> <li>● SINGA was a friend to <b>keep him honest, motivating</b> figure. When he had the idea for cosmetic company and came to SINGA,</li> <li>● Better inclusiveness and diversity of projects than other incubators</li> <li>● SINGA staff was extremely helpful for him, attending meetings with banks/investors, helping him prepare, pushing him, “little things that are hard to categorize”</li> <li>● “If someone is pushing you to push your things, you get your confidence, and that little confidence does become a big thing when it comes around to get your investment” helping him build from the ground up.</li> </ul>

	<p>Once you get to a certain point it becomes easier, but getting there is hard, that is what SINGA helped with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Met a lot of people &amp; mentors</li> <li>● SINGA will help find a solution that works → adaptable</li> <li>● Individualized; the fashion in which SINGA works depends on each project (so they mold their programs to each individual project)</li> <li>● Super gentil and wanted to work with me, and SINGA Lyon were <b>quick to respond to me</b></li> <li>● <b>SINGA was the sole incubator that gave me ideas</b></li> </ul>
<p>Areas of Improvement for SINGA's incubation program</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> SWOT Analysis Weaknesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunity for greater partage between entrepreneurs</li> <li>● I search for, attend, and assist at lots of events that happen in Lyon without SINGA having told me about them. Sometimes when I go to these events, I see SINGA there and I had no idea that they were going, they did not share the information with me. <b>I would like more communication about events that they are going to</b>, especially if they are open to the public and other entrepreneurs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>“Même à SINGA il faut partager aux entrepreneurs ce qui existe.”</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Sharing carte entrepreneuriale of the entrepreneur organizations (or other resources) that SINGA is connected to.</b></li> <li>● Entrepreneurs can be bad at making decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>It could be important to learn [decision making] this at the beginning of the program</b>, since this is not a subject taught in many incubators</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Incubators take too much time.</b> 1 month between workshops is too long. [Critical of all incubators, not just SINGA]</li> <li>● Need for someone in the SINGA incubator to have created an enterprise, who has done that, who has worked through mistakes. Experience</li> </ul>
<p>How can SINGA leverage their brand to help entrepreneurs?</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> SWOT Analysis Opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue to help connecting entrepreneurs with specific / hard to reach contacts, allows entrepreneurs to just send a direct email asking for help</li> <li>● Donner la visibilité au projet</li> </ul>
Needs	

<p>Entrepreneur Needs Post-Creation (a.k.a post-incubation)</p> <p>{May need sub-codes}</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> SWOT Analysis Opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Needed help with taxes and laws</li> <li>● SINGA stands apart because it continues to support its entrepreneurs after the program has ended. “SINGA continues to counsel me through the process”</li> <li>● No lasting contact with other entrepreneurs after the program</li> <li>● “Services are kind of fusing together.” “Experiential services”</li> <li>● SINGA does a little of this, sees that they have a lot of inner reach and potential to bring different services together.</li> <li>● If there is something that is missing from SINGA today, it is after the program, <b>everything works and is good. But when there is a moment of down, you need motivation and contact.</b> (19:01)</li> <li>● Crowdsourcing feedback on projects/business since working on it alone. “I really want the ability to talk with other entrepreneurs and hear their ideas about my project.”</li> <li>● Is in the amorcage phase of his project, gathering clients. Needs to be <b>Mettre en contact avec les acteurs locaux.</b> Put us in contact with more opportunities that exist in Lyon and in France.</li> </ul>
<p>Desire for SINGA Entrepreneur Identity Post-Incubation</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> Online directory development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>On peut déjà donner l'identité: SINGA Alumni (or to be a part of SINGA Entrepreneur Community).</b> Intégrer une rubrique sur le site internet, donc l'identité institutionnelle existe. Maintenant que vous avez terminé l'incubation vous êtes alumni. Doit définir sur le site les questions en bas pour les motiver à intégrer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>C'est quoi un alumni? C'est quoi la vision? On gagne quoi avec les alumni?</b></li> <li>○ Au moins on commence par des petits formations, des focus groupes, avec les entrepreneurs qui existent dans la communauté</li> <li>○ Organiser des séminaires pour partager le vision globale du programme</li> <li>○ <b>Send something out like “Vous êtes invité à contribuer à l'élaboration de la stratégie SINGA alumni”</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Need for More Practical Workshops (compared to theory-based workshops)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes, need for practical works</li> <li>● The thing that I am <b>missing is the “pratique,” I have lots of “theory.”</b></li> <li>● Something like the <b>“elevator pitch” workshop is great!</b> But not just at the beginning, the program needs this kind of workshop throughout the program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Learn techniques/theory before a practical</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<b>workshop?</b>
<b>Creating Links</b>	
<p>Lack of Intra-Entrepreneur Connections (both within promotions and cross-promotions)</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> SWOT Analysis Weaknesses evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Communication entre les entrepreneurs, c’est presque nul”</li> <li>● “Maybe SINGA can help encourage more links between entrepreneurs in promotions”</li> <li>● “There’s 70 or so people who have passed through the SINGA incubator. However I really know about 1 or 2.”</li> <li>● More collaboration between entrepreneurs [from the aspect of needing more collaboration]</li> <li>● No – did not create links with other people in the program</li> <li>● There are plenty of SINGA incubatees but there is no cross promotion. “C'est incroyable!”</li> <li>● “Pas beaucoup” de connections within promotions</li> <li>● We don’t have connections with people from other promotions</li> <li>● Yes I created a few [during incubation] but after the incubation, less.</li> <li>● Yes, lack of connections during incubation</li> </ul>
<p>Barriers for Creating Links Between Entrepreneurs during the SINGA Incubator</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> SWOT Analysis Threats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Everyone is going everywhere and is busy. That is missing a bit to not be together as a group.</li> <li>● The difficulty is that we are <b>not at the same level of development</b>, and we have all come for different reasons. Some come to create an association and others are just creating ideas. There is a possibility of having a connection across different levels</li> </ul>
<p>Interest in Creating Links with Entrepreneurs in <i>Other</i> Domains</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> Collaboration across domains is positive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Yes, it is useful because we all have different projects and we can share synergy and contacts, and partnerships”</li> <li>● “meeting with other entrepreneurs [outside my domain] may be helpful if they have experience with financiers, and they can tell me what I need to do and who to speak to to help finance my project”</li> <li>● “So if I have the chance to show my project to more people, they can give me links, and showing my project to more people gives me a <b>better chance of</b></li> </ul>

	<p><b>being connected to the right person.</b> For me it's important to go to collective workshops because normally there's people there that know lots of people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes [it's important to mix with entrepreneurs from other domains], because it is always helpful to hear new points of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “The solution to most problems can be found in a group. You don't have to be in the same domain or the same level of competence.” (And some people are better at some things than others)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Communication</p>	
<p>Lack of SINGA-Entrepreneur Communication (both during incubation and post-incubation)</p> <p><u>Uses:</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Many entrepreneurs don't keep in contact w/ SINGA, but this doesn't mean they don't face problems, may be too shy to reach out</li> <li>● The cool thing is that he is always in contact with SINGA, even if he is no longer in the program</li> <li>● Might be that they aren't comfortable asking for further help? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “If you create a company and after 6 months you don't feel comfortable asking for help, do something else.”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Qualitative: Creating links between entrepreneurs is important because...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collaboration between businesses is very beneficial. Helps spread word and helps you meet new businesses to collaborate with.</li> </ul>
<p>Entrepreneurs Seeking Business Connections, Partnerships, Collaborations from Community</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> Evidence for what the value this community will bring to entrepreneurs (incubation and post-creation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seeking collaborations (for example, festivals to complement his line of work)</li> <li>● Want to go to the events where I can meet people who can help me in my job</li> <li>● “I'm not closed off to finding a partner who could help me with (growing) my project”</li> <li>● Looking for clients</li> </ul>
<p>Quantitative: How many entrepreneurs specifically want to be a part of a community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There was a soiree at TUBA and I could see old entrepreneurs and it was cool (8:35)</li> <li>● It would be super cool to have these links</li> <li>● “I receive emails for formations, appels à projets, etc. from [a previous 3-month program I participated in]. I</li> </ul>

	<p><b>really feel like an alumni, and this is what I'd like from SINGA."</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ See "Identity" code in "Needs" category</li> </ul>
<p>Communication Tool Needs</p> <p>Sub-codes: How many people wanted to adopt a new platform etc. (pull from focus group but also if it came up in any interviews)</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> Communication Needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is not tech-savvy, and does not have time to reach out. Makes connections out face-to-face through his business</li> <li>● Not opposed to another way, but needs someone else to set things up</li> <li>● They should have a <b>page on the internet for each entrepreneur</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Area to say "Hey I need help with..."</li> <li>○ Each mentor has a "grade" and a set of badges</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Need for Event and Information Sharing</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> Anywhere we mention event sharing (communication needs, platform, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Need for appel a projets and information sharing</li> <li>● I'm on LinkedIn constantly and think that it's a great place to be sharing events. There's a great concurrence between associations on LinkedIn and it's strong. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ I know of more events from TUBA's LinkedIn than I do from SINGA's LinkedIn. <b>I would at least like to see SINGA sharing events on their LinkedIn like TUBA does.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>● Sharing information needs to be a greater part of SINGA's strategy</li> </ul>
<p>Quantitative: Number of Entrepreneurs Against WhatsApp</p>	<p>4 entrepreneurs, one other community member, one employee of SINGA</p>
<p>Events</p>	
<p>Entrepreneurs Interested in Influencing Events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● "Using alumni, we can also envision improvements for the current program for the new incubatees, this also creates a connection between them. Thanks to alumni and their experience in the field, their difficulties and challenges overcome, you can improve the program. They think that the program is important and therefore want to help improve it"</li> </ul>
<p>Events Suggested by Entrepreneurs</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> Event inspiration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Would be interested in teaching in a classroom setting</li> <li>● Interested in discussion groups, see "Interested in Discussion Groups" code for explanation on structure</li> <li>● "Do a day with another entrepreneur to learn about their experience"</li> <li>● Inspired by previous event between TUBA and</li> </ul>

	<p>“French tech one” → “c’etait hyper-interessant”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Small presentation of 30-40 minutes</li> <li>○ Then we could chat and we had something in common because we all went to the same presentation</li> <li>○ The people who go to an event like this are all interested in this kind of event. I would be interested in going again</li> <li>● Interested in learning topics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Exposure / learning new websites</li> <li>○ <b>Finding clients / client outreach</b></li> <li>○ <b>Managing press</b></li> <li>○ What do you have to do within French data laws (like GDPR)?</li> <li>○ Larger topics: Inclusivity, Culture, and Foreign culture</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Lots of incubators in Lyon are missing a second part of the program, <b>acceleration</b>. The second part of the program should be 3 years long. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Accompany the enterprise along their development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Logistics</li> <li>■ Product placement</li> <li>■ Distribution</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ After there are more individual needs</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Projects with the other incubatees of incubators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Soirées en rencontre</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Decision making workshop</b></li> <li>● You should create discussion groups</li> </ul>
<p>Entrepreneur Interest in Discussion Groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes, Friday after work rendez-vous.</li> <li>● Atelier where there is only entrepreneurs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Something without a consultant, try to solve problems with their group</b></li> <li>○ “I have a problem I don’t have a contable” → someone else responds</li> <li>○ Create a virtuous cycle</li> <li>○ However, difficult for people who live 2hrs from Lyon</li> </ul> </li> <li>● What could work is to have a <b>brainstorming group</b>. Where there are 2-3 people then there are solutions that otherwise would never arise. And then there would be a mentor that helps guide the whole group. Because having one mentor per person would be very complicated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Small groups of 3-4 people (from the same or maybe different promotions) who get together weekly to talk about their progress on their</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1x a month meeting to talk about projects</li> <li>● <b>Come to the focus group with prepared issues and questions</b></li> <li>● I really want the ability to talk with other entrepreneurs and hear their ideas about my project. Looking to use a discussion group like this to crowdsource feedback.</li> </ul>
<p>Structure and Entrepreneur Involvement</p>	
<p>Entrepreneurs Expressing Interest in Leadership or Providing Help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Moi je rendrai disponible après ma période d'incubation pour aider” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Should not forget the aid that you have received</li> </ul> </li> <li>● I leave the space [the tea salon] open to the entrepreneurs if they need a space to work, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “When I can help out in any way I will try”</li> </ul> </li> <li>● [Simply sharing experiences] is motivating to hear about their stories in entrepreneurship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ I talked with [SINGA entrepreneur team and ] said it would be great if I could meet more entrepreneurs. [Talking about problems, roadblocks, and breakthroughs] can help lots of people. <b>And I can also help some people with some things.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>“I’m interested in sharing my experience (incubation and other) with other entrepreneurs [and to help them understand that] there are other platforms and people to reach out to to attain goals.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Suggests integrating alumni into [the SINGA Lyon entrepreneur incubator], it might be from a perspective of volunteers (benevoles). Ils peuvent jouer cette role des bénévoles par exemple.</li> </ul>
<p>Value Creation for Entrepreneurs to Stay Engaged with the Community</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> Initiatives so that entrepreneurs can find value in being a part of the community other than giving back</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes, entrepreneurs need something of value to step up into positions of leadership.</li> <li>● Peut-être que les <b>mêmes acteurs qui sont là à l’incubateur peuvent aussi être des clients des alumni. Déjà mettre en contacte les autres de cette manière la.</b></li> <li>● <b>Appels à projets, concours pour gagner des prix.</b> On peut mettre un budget pour créer un prix alumni-SINGA, pour booster les entrepreneurs alumni, les motiver, ou au moins motiver les nouveaux incubateurs à s’intégrer avec la communauté.</li> <li>● [Faire partie d’un] labo de recherche (comme un Think Tank), ou les alumni joue cette role de thinktank. Ils développent des idées, les testent au labo, les</li> </ul>



	<p>exploitent avec les alumni.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This is a vision for the future but an interesting goal</li> <li>● <b>Post-incubation entrepreneurs need a sense of identity and feeling a part of a community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ See “Identity” code in “Needs” category</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Expressed Desire to Meet Experts in the Field / Chefs d’Entreprises</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> Event inspiration such as “Meet the Experts”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Good idea to bring chefs d’entreprises to come and talk with us to hear about their experience. Not just for workshops but for just rencontres. I want to learn about their perspectives, and while we have some experience, “we are still in the beginning”. There’s a big gap to reach where they are; we have much to learn. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We [SINGA entrepreneurs] are not big enterprises, so that’s the perspective I want to learn about</li> </ul> </li> <li>● [Also expressed interest] in bringing in chefs d’entreprises</li> <li>● Leveraging SINGA reputation to bring in Metropole de Lyon</li> <li>● Acceleration, where you learn about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Logistics</li> <li>○ Product placement</li> <li>○ Distribution</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Expressed Interest in Mentorship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes</li> <li>● It would be cool to have each project have a mentor work with [one or 8, I can't tell] people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ See they problems they have</li> <li>○ Very specific</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Interested in being a mentor</li> <li>● Yes mentors are great but <b>“doivent porter aussi des competences” (1:01:25). The mentors have to be skilled as well in mentoring the correct domain.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Meet every 2-3 weeks</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Suggests SINGA to implement mentorship post incubation:</b> “Your incubation is finished but we will give you the ability to say for another 6 months and to be accompanied by a mentor.”</li> <li>● Every day I am a bit less in contact but it is very cool to have this mentor.</li> <li>● To be a mentor, that would be “wow!”; I would love to help people</li> <li>● As an entrepreneur there are lots of challenges. It would help save other people time and she is happy to</li> </ul>

	<p>do that. Recognizes that it's always good to know someone who has done it and can help you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I'm <b>not really available all the time to mentor but would be interested in helping</b> [for example helping someone who is at the beginning of their project or someone that needs help in my area of expertise] as I like helping people</li> </ul>
Struggles	
<p>Difficulties Acclimating (culturally, language, etc)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Did not know French, no connections</li> <li>● “Je ne me sentais pas à l'aise, je ne connaissais pas la culture, je ne connaissais pas la langue”, only once she became more comfortable with these aspects did she feel better about life here and consider starting a business.</li> </ul>
<p>Struggles with Motivation or Accountability</p> <p><u>Uses:</u> Event inspiration for motivation and accountability, added value for entrepreneurs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SINGA was a friend to <b>keep him honest, motivating</b> figure. When he had the idea for cosmetic company and came to SINGA, he “lied and said he had a business plan and everything and it forced him to actually get it done and do it”</li> <li>● Though sometimes “well I don't think I'll continue,” but [SINGA] encouraged me. Requires patience, and believing in our potential/capacity/deal and marching toward objectives: it's all hard at the beginning. I'm not good at talking about myself but they helped me <b>develop some confidence</b></li> <li>● I tried to go to events that SINGA held. Going to these events is like a “refresh”. <b>Listening to others' experiences is important and helpful and motivates you.</b> Even if you're tired, this helps</li> </ul>
<p>Roadblocks to Starting their Businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Turning an idea into a reality. Tech businesses get more funding. Need to change your idea based on the resources you have</li> <li>● “Faire connaître ma marque c'était le plus grand challenge, et c'est difficile même maintenant.”</li> <li>● Keeping my self-confidence up with this business has also been hard</li> <li>● Motivation</li> <li>● “I have a fear of not having the structure that [the SINGA incubator] has provided.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The structure brings you in contact with experts and with knowledgeable people</li> <li>○ To be out “in nature” again is scary</li> </ul> </li> <li>● I am [working on my project] all alone, so it is hard to get feedback on your ideas</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For me, it's complicated for me to get connections with [acteurs et les agriculteurs], <b>they're very very closed off</b>. It's not sufficient to tell [financers] about my project, they need someone else in the sector agricultural to back them up.</li></ul>
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## A.6 Research Consent Form

We can provide signed versions of this document by the entrepreneurs upon request.

Informed Consent Agreement for Participation in a Research Study

Investigator: Abigail Bartynski, Gabriel Camacho, Elliot Irving, Zachary Porter.

Contact Information: gr-singa-e22@wpi.edu

Title of Research Study: Recommendations for SINGA Lyon's Alumni Network

Sponsor: SINGA Lyon

Introduction: You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you agree, however, you must be fully informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and any benefits, risks or discomfort that you may experience as a result of your participation.

This form presents information about the study so that you may make a fully informed decision regarding your participation.

Purpose of the study: Our project aims to recommend implementations or structure changes to SINGA's entrepreneurial alumni network to energize the community. This will strengthen personal connections and program value perception of current and past members, which only helps to create a more impactful entrepreneurial environment for business incubation.

Procedures to be followed: Question and answer in focus groups, interviews, and surveys. All of these are intended to be open, clear, and will never be designed to deceive you.

Risks to study participants: None or very little. We will not collect or record any information surrounding legal status or information that does not directly relate to our project. Similarly, we will not share any of your answers with anyone else (including the SINGA organization) unless you explicitly give permission.

Benefits to research participants: Improvements of the SINGA Lyon alumni network.

Record keeping and confidentiality: The information collected in this study will only identify you or include direct quotes if you expressly consent to it. Records of your participation in this study will be held confidential so far as permitted by law. However, the study investigators, the

Sponsor or its designee and, under certain circumstances, the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Institutional Review Board (WPI IRB) will be able to inspect and have access to confidential

data that identify you by name. Any publication or presentation of the data will not identify you.

Compensation or treatment in the event of injury: This study involves minimal risk however If you are concerned, please let us know. You do not give up any of your legal rights by signing this statement.

Indemnisation ou traitement en cas de blessure : Cette étude comporte un risque minime mais si vous êtes inquiet, merci de nous le faire savoir. Vous ne renoncez à aucun de vos droits légaux en signant cette déclaration.

For more information about this research or about the rights of research participants, or in case of research-related injury, contact:

Us: [gr-singa-e22@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-singa-e22@wpi.edu)

Our instructor Jennifer deWinter: [jdewinter@wpi.edu](mailto:jdewinter@wpi.edu)

The IRB Chair: Professor Kent Rissmiller, Tel. +1-508-831-5019, Email: [kjr@wpi.edu](mailto:kjr@wpi.edu)

Human Protection Administrator: Gabriel Johnson, Tel. +1-508-831-4989, Email: [gjohnson@wpi.edu](mailto:gjohnson@wpi.edu)

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will not result in any penalty to your or any loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. You may decide to stop participating in the research at any time without penalty or loss of other benefits.

The project investigators retain the right to cancel or postpone the experimental procedures at any time they see fit.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have been informed about and consent to be a participant in the study described above. Make sure that your questions are answered to your satisfaction before signing. You are entitled to retain a copy of this consent agreement.

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Study Participant Signature Date (ex: 2022-05-01)

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Study Participant Name (Printed)

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Signature of Person who explained this study Date (ex: 2022-05-01)