

Youth Employment Project (YEP) supported by the Government of Switzerland, contributes to reform of public employment services and development of entrepreneurial ecosystem in BiH since 2008. By 2020, YEP will support an establishment of 60 startups. Within this aim, attention will be given to social enterprises – business endeavours operating on the open market but targeting social impact as well as profit.

More info: yep.ba, facebook.com/yepbih

A social enterprise is an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involve employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities.

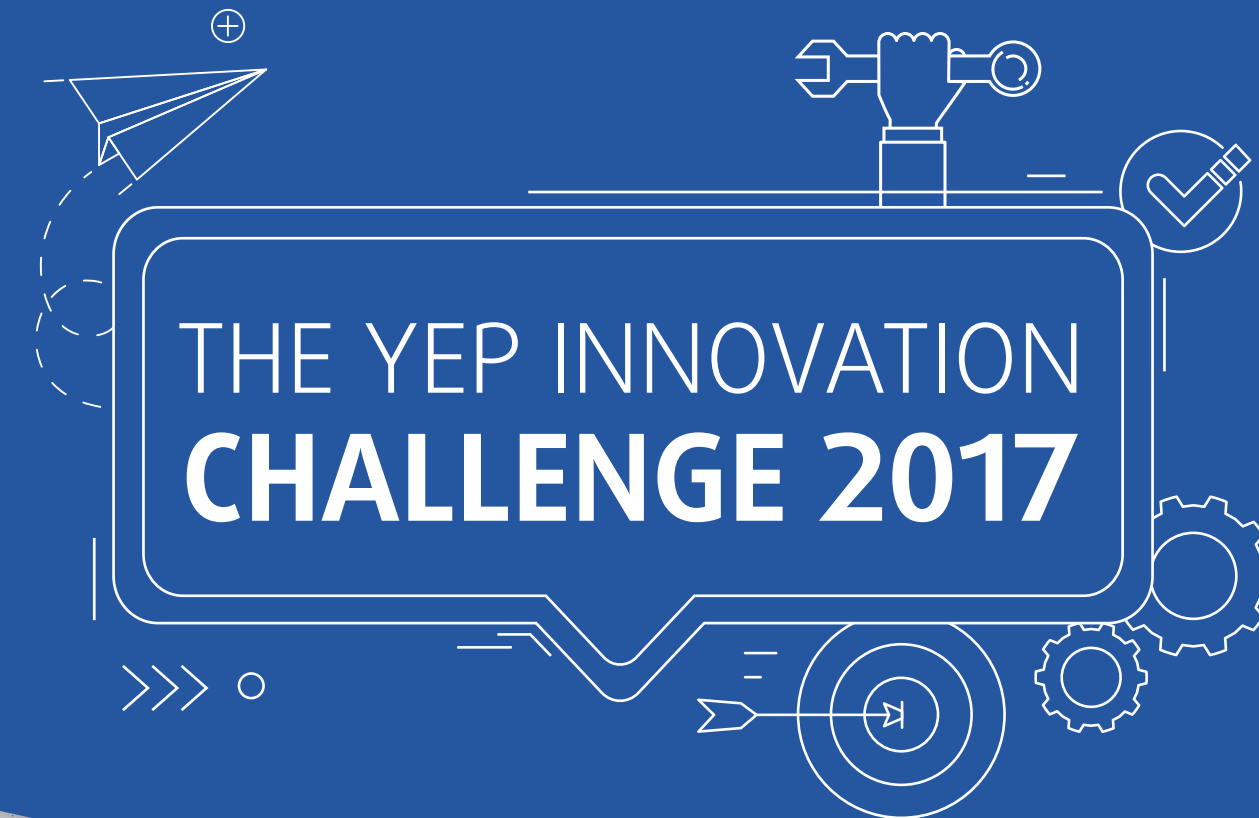
Social Business Initiative, European Commission

Youth Employment Project (YEP) supported by the Government of Switzerland is providing an opportunity for cooperation to interested innovators, or potential entrepreneurs. The YEP Innovation Challenge 2017 promotes entrepreneurial attitudes by supporting people with the ambition to become entrepreneur and helping existing entrepreneurs to realise their full potential in today's global economy. The aim is transformation of technical innovations and business ideas into validated business models and, consequently, successful start-ups.

FOR THIS PURPOSE, YEP IS PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT IN:

- Development of entrepreneurial skills
- Business idea refinement and validation
- Business plan preparation
- Seed capital for prototype development or business registration
- Mentorship in developing and positioning the businesses on the market
- Investment capital, development and expansion of the business to worldwide market.

The program has demonstrated a positive impact in stimulating innovative business practices, the development of new products and services and expansion into new national markets.



PROGRAMME AND TIMELINE:

PHASE 1: IDEA

Introductory Presentation: The Innovation Challenge commenced with a short presentation on submitted business ideas.

Initial Selection: YEP will select business ideas with commercial potential. Teams behind the ideas will be invited to participate in the business development programme.



PHASE 2: BLUEPRINT

Entrepreneurial Skills Training: For selected teams, YEP will provide a two-month training based on the CEFE methodology.

Through this process, teams are to enhance their personal entrepreneurial potential, refine business ideas and validate an approach.



PHASE 3: VALIDATE

Business Plan Development: Teams successfully completing the entrepreneurial training will be guided through an evolution of tailored business plans. During this process, limited funds might be awarded, on as-needed basis, for product prototype development. Teams are expected to have complete business plans and working prototypes developed prior to the commencement of Phase 4.

Public Promotion and Business Pitching: Teams/businesses successfully executing the previous process, will present to interested investors who can bring forth technical and expert support in business registration, development and expansion to markets worldwide.

PHASE 4: PREPARE AND START

Business Mentoring, consulting and development, ongoing: Continuous mentoring by YEP (or other Swiss funded programme) in order to facilitate business expansion and increase social impact. Selected entrepreneurs will have five months of ongoing mentorship from entrepreneurs and subject matter experts along with online peer-to-peer networking.

This phase of the programme empowers entrepreneurs to get feedback pertaining to their ventures and offers extended hands-on learning critical to success.



PHASE 5: SCALE

YEP Investment: The greatest challenge of young entrepreneurs is access to capital. Finance is the lifeblood of every company, but for new firms, capital is especially critical. Under the early stage business development YEP supplies equity investments and co-investments. Equity means 'shares' of the company; equity as an investment instrument entails selling a share of the start-up for a certain price based on an agreed upon valuation. Gathered funds will be used for business development purposes. For financing a start-up venture, equity investment is preferred as the financial risk is shared with the investor. The exit strategy lies in the repayment to the investors if the noted business turns a profit. YEP's intention is to be a minority shareholder, paving the way and then exiting the start-up as soon as possible.

