Startup Garage
Welcoming, informal, creative and dynamic

SUPSI



Startup Garage is an *Entreprenursery*, a welcoming, informal, creative, and dynamic space where students are free to experiment with their innovative ideas. They are encouraged to challenge themselves in a supportive environment without fear of making mistakes—because making mistakes is fundamental to personal and entrepreneurial growth. The extracurricular experiential training program *Management of entrepreneurial ideas* is structured into 3 steps:

Step In
Startup Garage

Step 1: Rethink
- Understand the potential of your intuition
- Deepen knowledge: preliminary technical and market analysis
- Pitch the idea to different audiences

Step 2: Build
- Understand concrete and validated potential (surveys)
- Develop the prototype
- Interact with experts
- Strengthen and empower the team
- Solve problems
- Update the development plan of the idea

Step 3: Consolidate
- Have a working prototype
- Understand your potential to become an entrepreneur or an innovation-driven collaborator
- Pitch to different audiences: companies, investors, banks, partners
- Manage the Step Out Step (exit from Startup Garage)

Step out

Dedicated Space

The environment recreates a sailing spirit. Students are "Skippers" navigating in search of new lands and opportunities. At the helm, initially inexperienced, they struggle to keep their course, drifting with the wind and moving in all directions, trying to understand "which way the wind blows." With practice and acquired skills, they learn to navigate, harness the wind's power, and maintain their desired course.

Support from Teachers and Professionals

During their extracurricular growth journey, Skippers are supported by the multidisciplinary Startup Garage Team, Standby Mentors (research professors), experts, and entrepreneurs. They guide idea development throughout the 3 experiential steps and stimulate creativity.

Startup Garage SUPSI Video

A 2-minute video illustrates the experiential training path and includes brief testimonials from the founder Mauro Citraro, a professional Standby Mentor, and the Skippers. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAgy28sEQBw)

Watch the video

Main Activities

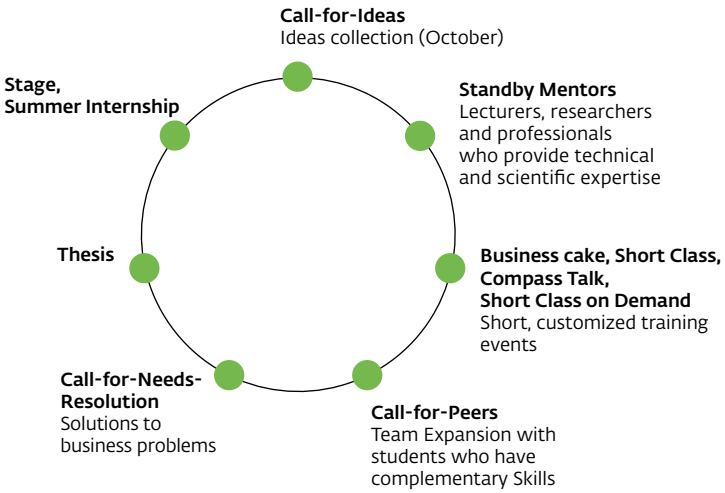
Call-for-Ideas
The students' innovative ideas are collected in October using a dedicated app - *Pingel@p* - which matches each idea with Standby Mentors who evaluate the idea and then provide scientific support during the Startup Garage journey.

Call-for-Needs-Resolution
An activity designed to stimulate students' creativity by involving them in solving real problems presented by local companies. To propose a problem/situation contact: startupgarage@supsi.ch

Call-for-Peers
Join Skippers and become part of their team by contributing your technical/scientific skills to the development of ideas and helping to create a multidisciplinary team.

Business cake, Short class, Compass Talk, Short Class on Demand
Short, customized training events (about one hour) with experts/ entrepreneurs on topics ranging from marketing to finance, business planning, and entrepreneurial skills.

Stage, Internship
Summer experiential support/internships in companies, often linked to implementing solutions developed through the Call-for-Needs-Resolution



Facts and Figures

In the academic year 2025/26, 42 Skippers are active, developing 30 ideas.
Overall, from 2017 to 2025 Startup Garage has involved:

- 227 ideas proposed
- 153 ideas accepted
- 22 ideas/year on average
- 100 Academic and Professional Standby Mentors

IT Platform

An IT platform called Pingel@p collects ideas - Call-for-Ideas matches them with relevant Standby Mentors, and stores evaluations on blockchain.
It also tracks Skippers' activities by issuing tokens (T-Skills) linked to entrepreneurial skills, contributing to their digital portfolio (E-LogBook).

Digital Portfolio

The E-LogBook filled in by Skippers throughout the year, records entrepreneurial skills acquired through training and experiential idea development.

Corporate Partnerships

Main collaboration activities with companies include:

- Call-for-Needs-Resolution: company problem-solving challenges
- Internships and stages
- Bachelor theses
- Adoption of Skippers' ideas: tutoring role

Customized initiatives are also developed to meet companies' needs, fostering creativity, entrepreneurship and regional engagement.
Contact: startupgarage@supsi.ch

Idea Startup Association

Founded in 2020, this non-profit association supports and promotes training initiatives, prototype development, and the creation of a strong and secure stakeholder network for student "Skippers."
Donations can be made to: Associazione Idea Startup, 6929 Via Grumo 6 – Gravesano, CH78 8080 8004 4745 6427 4

www.ideastartup.ch

Published Papers

- E-LogBook: Tracking skills acquisition through blockchain – SEFI 2025
- Organiblò: Engaging People in "Circular" Organizations and Enabling Social Sustainability – MDPI 2024
- The circus of innovation to represent the future of the economy – innovando.it
- Entreprenursery: Taking Care of Ideas – SEFI 2023 / IEEE 2023From creativity to value creation – SEFI 2022 - upc.edu
- From creativity to value creation – SEFI 2022
- The Startup Ideas Accelerator – researchgate.net
- Entrepreneur student within an academic Startup Garage – SEFI 2020
- Startup Garage: The Way to Apply Knowledge – SEFI 2019

Contact

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