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Accelerator Program Accreditation

GUIDEBOOK

Global Innovation Institute

Accreditation Center

Accelerator Program Accreditation Guidebook

Introduction

The **GInI Accreditation Center**, under the direction of the **GInI Accreditation Program**, issues formal **accreditations** to properly-assessed innovation labs, business incubators, accelerator programs, innovation training programs, and innovation education programs, as well as endorsements to properly-verified innovations. Accreditation by GInI assures affected stakeholders that these have each been properly assessed, and that their quality and scope conform to GInI's accreditations standards.

GInI is fully committed to pursuing excellence and continuous improvement in all of the activities relating to its accreditation program. Accordingly, this guidebook sets forth the policies, procedures, and standards used to assess the quality and scope of the entities seeking GInI accreditation.

The Benefits of Accelerator Program Accreditation

The world as we know it is changing at an unprecedented pace. Our world today looks very little like the world of yesterday. And quite likely the world of tomorrow will look nothing at all like the world of today. As we move through the Fourth Industrial Revolution, countless new world-changing technologies will be developed and put to use for a broad range of new purposes. In many cases this is changing not only the products and services we consume, but also how society operates. For business organizations, this is opening up whole new worlds of opportunity, not only for new offerings, but for completely new business models that never existed before.

The time is ripe, therefore, for new entrepreneurial ventures to rise up – ventures who are prepared to deliver these fresh new business models and value propositions that stand to move us from the world of yesterday and today into the world of tomorrow. But for this to happen, the world needs resources capable of accelerating these nascent young ventures rapidly forward into the world. We need Accelerator Programs capable of giving these ventures the knowledge, resources, and leads they need to start life on solid ground and move quickly.

Yet how does one ensure that a given Accelerator Program has the capabilities, resources, and connections needed to get these new ventures up and running in a lean, agile, and effective manner? What indicators are there that a particular Accelerator has what it takes to succeed in getting new business ventures launched, operational, and on their way to scale? For this, a credible and reliable accreditation standard is required.

The **GInI Accelerator Program Accreditation** is such a credible and reliable accreditation standard – a means by which leaders the world over can develop confidence in the design, operation, and capabilities of their Accelerators. The GInI Accelerator Program Accreditation stands alone as the only such standard in the world, setting the benchmark against which all world-class Accelerators are to be measured.

Accreditation of an Accelerator Program by the GInI Accreditation Center offers several valuable benefits:

- Affirmation of the operating organization's ongoing commitment to entrepreneurship and the regional impact this offers.
 - Confidence that the design, operation, and capabilities of their Accelerator are fully optimized.
 - Peer recognition for achievement to a globally-recognized benchmark standard.
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GInI Accreditation Eligibility – Compliance Demonstration

In order for an **Accelerator Program** to be *eligible* for GInI accreditation, it must be able to demonstrate full compliance to GInI's eligibility requirements, as outlined below.

Compliance to these requirements is demonstrated through an independent third-party assessment process utilizing a GInI **Authorized Innovation Assessor**[®], or **AIInA**[®]. This process is explained below.

GInI Accreditation Eligibility Requirements

In order for an **Accelerator Program** to be eligible for GInI accreditation, it must be able to demonstrate full compliance to all of GInI's **Accelerator Program Accreditation Eligibility Requirements**.

What this means is that, per the **Accelerator Program Accreditation Assessment Tool** used, the Accelerator must have all of the requisite program elements in place, according to the following requirements list.

- **Accelerator Management** – 4 assessment questions.
- **People Resources** – 10 assessment questions.
- **Ecosystem Resources** – 8 assessment questions.
- **Community Resources** – 8 assessment questions.
- **Public Relations Resources** – 6 assessment questions.
- **Facilities Resources** – 9 assessment questions.
- **Historical Performance Results** – 11 assessment questions.

GInI awards three levels of accreditation for Accelerator Programs. These are:

- Novice
- Advanced
- Premier

Each of these represents an increasing level of **impact** the Accelerator Program produces for its **cohorts** and an increasing level of financial **return** it delivers to its **operating organization**.

The Accreditation Process for Accelerator Programs

Basis for Assessment

The GInI Accelerator Program Accreditation is an **assessment-based weighted-score accreditation**.

In this assessment, there are **seven (7) core sections** comprised altogether of **twenty (20) subsections**. Inside these twenty subsections are a total of **56 assessment questions**. Each question is scored on a scale of **0 - 10**. Each subsection has a preassigned **weighting value** ranging from **.01 to .10**.

Following the assessment, question scores are **averaged** within their respective subsections and these subsection averages are then **multiplied** by their respective subsection **weighting value**. These weighted subsection average scores are then **summed together** to arrive at the final **overall score**.

The On Site Assessment Process

In order to secure accreditation, the organization operating the Accelerator must engage and work through a GInI **Authorized Training & Assessment Provider® (ATAP®)**, who will in turn engage at least one (1) external GInI **Authorized Innovation Assessor® (AIInA®)** to come to the Accelerator and conduct an on-site assessment of its management practices, people resources, ecosystem resources, community resources, public relations resources, facilities resources, and historical performance results.

Once the Assessor has completed their assessment, they will compile a standardized **report** and submit to GInI. Based on the Assessor's **findings**, GInI will make the determination of whether or not to issue the Accelerator Program Accreditation.

The assessment will be conducted **live** inside the Accelerator, such that over the course of working through the assessment questionnaire the Assessor will move throughout the Accelerator facility and that of its operating organization – potentially multiple times.

The **management** and **performance sections** of the assessment will be conducted both with the operating organization's leadership and the Accelerator's management and staff. For the five **resource sections** of the assessment, the Assessor will engage directly with select **Accelerator cohort teams** to aid in scoring these questions, to ensure their answers agree with those of the operating organization's leadership. This serves to ensure appropriate transparency and objectivity in the assessment.

The typical in-Accelerator assessment generally requires **one working day** to complete. Thereafter the AIInA® will invest additional time in compiling and submitting their final report to GInI.

Prior to conducting the formal on-site assessment, the ATAP® will provide the operating organization with a copy of the **AxPAAT questionnaire** – so that it can adequately prepare for the assessment ahead of time. This gives the organization an opportunity to prepare clear evidence of its answers to each of the questions posed.

Pre-Assessments

If desired, the operating organization may also engage an AIInA® to conduct a **pre-assessment** of its Accelerator Program prior to the formal assessment – so as to improve its confidence in passing the formal assessment once it occurs. Pre-assessments do not have to be coordinated through an ATAP®, though doing so is recommended.

The GInI Accelerator Program Assessment Tool & Questions

The assessment tool associated with GInI Accelerator Program Accreditation – known as the **Accelerator Program Accreditation Assessment Tool**, or **AxPAAT** – is comprised of **56 assessment questions**.

These are grouped into **twelve (12) sections**, namely:

1. **Profile of the Accelerator & Operating Organization** – 8 informational questions.
2. **Operating Context** – 9 informational questions.
3. **Accelerator Management** – 4 assessment questions.
4. **People Resources** – 10 assessment questions.
5. **Ecosystem Resources** – 8 assessment questions.
6. **Community Resources** – 8 assessment questions.
7. **Public Relations Resources** – 6 assessment questions.
8. **Facilities Resources** – 9 assessment questions.
9. **Historical Performance Results** – 11 assessment questions.
10. **Organization's Target Scores** – Used to record the operating organization's target scores – if established.
11. **Comments** – Assessor records additional details here wherever these offer added value to the assessment.
12. **Score Calculation** – Used to record subsection average scores, subsection weighted scores, & overall score.

The first two sections – ***Profile of the Accelerator & Operating Organization*** and ***Operating Context*** – are for information only. Their questions do not constitute a part of the assessment. They exist to help establish an appropriate context for the assessment questions that follow in Sections 3 - 9, the seven core sections.

All questions in the seven core sections **will** be assigned a **score** (0 - 10). No questions will be left unscored.

GInI awards **three levels** of accreditation for Accelerator Programs, namely **Novice**, **Advanced**, and **Premier**.

- If an Accelerator scores **below 3.00**, it is **not eligible** for accreditation by GInI.
- In order to achieve the **Novice level**, the Accelerator must score between **3.00** and **4.99**.
- In order to achieve the **Advanced level**, the Accelerator must score between **5.00** and **7.99**.
- In order to achieve the **Premier level**, the Accelerator must score between **8.00** and **10.00**.

In either case of passing or failing the assessment, GInI will forward to the operating organization a copy of the Assessor's final report – known as the **Accelerator Program Accreditation Assessment Report**, or **AxPAAR**.

This report will be received directly from GInI only, and not from the AIInA®. If questions arise out of the report however, the operating organization may contact the AIInA® to seek clarification.

Application Fee / Renewal Process / Maintenance Fee

Application Fee for Initial GInI Accelerator Program Accreditation

The **initial fee** for GInI Accelerator Program Accreditation is **3,500 USD**.

This is to be remitted to GInI at the same time as the Assessor submits their final assessment report – the AxPAAR – to GInI. Upon request, GInI will issue an invoice to the applicant operating organization for this fee.

Biennial Re-Assessment / Re-Accreditation

In order to **maintain** ongoing Accelerator Program Accreditation, GInI Accredited Accelerator Programs must submit to a **biennial** (every two years) **re-assessment** using the same process as the *initial* assessment.

Failure to secure a biennial re-assessment will result in the **expiration** and **suspension** of that Accelerator's accreditation, until such time as it submits to a new assessment and becomes **re-accredited**.

Maintenance Fee for Continued GInI Accelerator Program Accreditation

The **biennial maintenance fee** to maintain GInI Accelerator Program Accreditation is **3,500 USD**, to be paid every two years upon re-assessment.

This is to be remitted to GInI at the same time as the Assessor submits their final re-assessment report – the AxPAAR – to GInI. Upon request, GInI will issue an invoice to the applicant operating organization for this fee.

Disclaimer Concerning GInI Accreditation

GInI's accreditation of an organization's **Accelerator Program** is not an accreditation of that organization in its entirety.

GInI reserves the right to accredit the Accelerator Program of any organization without regard for their competitive status with other organizations whose Accelerator Programs GInI may have also accredited, or may accredit in the future.

About Global Innovation Institute

Global Innovation Institute (GInI) is the world's leading professional certification, business accreditation, and membership organization in the field of innovation.

The Institute aims to advance individual careers and transform organizational achievements by advancing the profession of innovation leadership. It does this through its globally recognized standards, tools, publications, resources, professional development courses, certifications, applied research, and networking opportunities.

Learn more at: www.gini.org.



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