

Journey to the Centre of User Needs

A user-centred approach to building programmes

ASH WALLINGTON

GO!

Find one person in the room you haven't met

What is your experience of IEEC so far?

One thing liked?

Why?
What made it so?

Something to improve?

Why?
What made it so?

More/less of?

What?
By how much?

Level of energy?

How feeling?
Why?

What did we discover?

What are we trying to understand?

What makes a session impactful?

Where do people drop off?

How much is too much or not enough?

Are they in the right space to learn?

“Most misunderstandings in the world
could be avoided if people would simply
take the time to ask,
‘what else could this mean?’ ”

- Shannon L. Adler

3445 words

“The **ambiguity** around the assessment requirements created **unnecessary confusion**, wasted time and did not set students up for success...”

-past me

*How might we design the optimum
entrepreneurship learning
experience?*



A service of the Student Union



Home to Australia's leading startup accelerator

What are we about?

A woman with long, dark, curly hair is shown in profile, looking down at a bundle of wheat stalks she is holding. She is wearing a dark blazer. The background is a bright, sunny outdoor setting with green grass and trees, creating a bokeh effect.

Vision

To be a world-leading startup community accelerating founders who innovate for a better future.

Mission

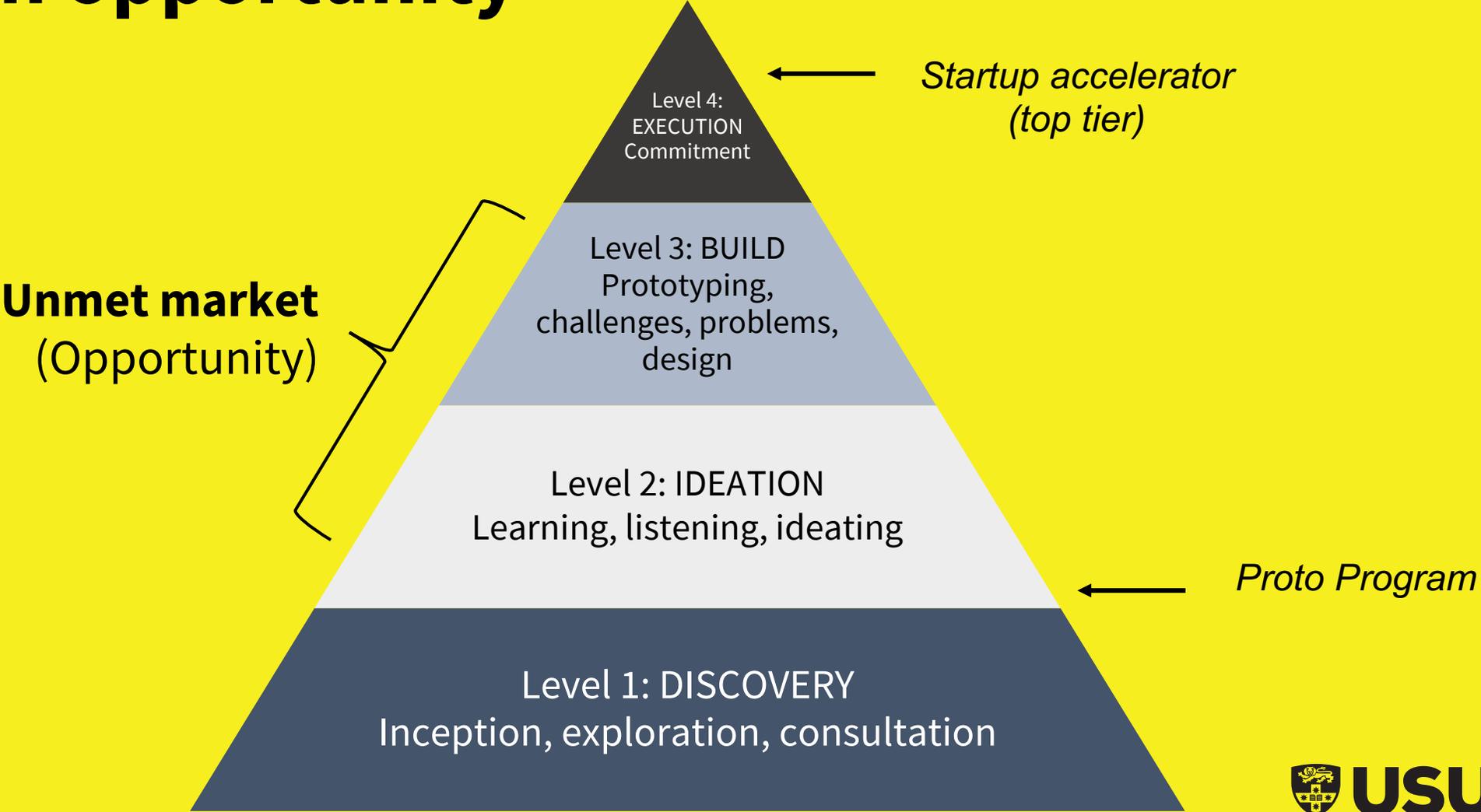
Empowering entrepreneurs at Sydney to turn good ideas into great businesses.

A man with short brown hair and glasses, wearing a bright blue t-shirt with a white logo, is smiling and pointing his right arm towards a whiteboard. The whiteboard is covered with several colorful sticky notes in various colors (pink, orange, yellow, green). The background is a dark blue wall.

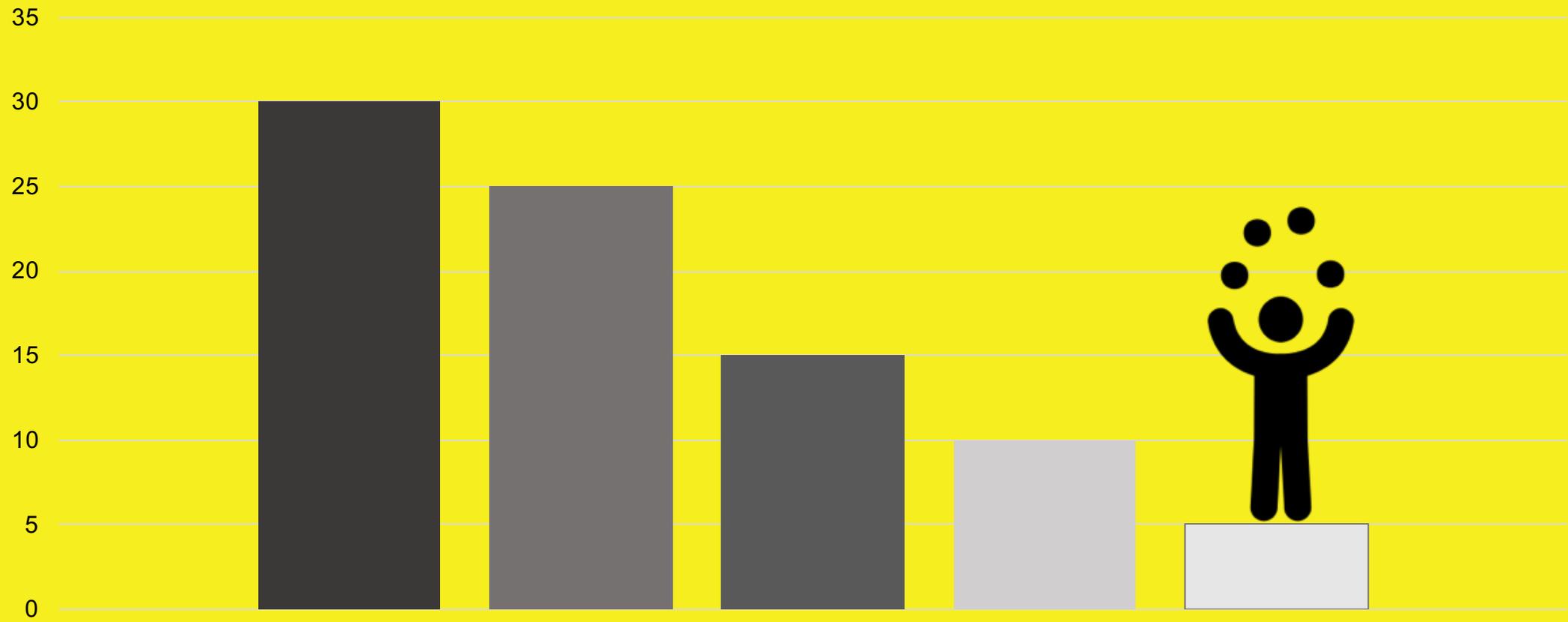
Guiding Principles

- We back first-time founders and entrepreneurial careers.
- We are the bridge between university entrepreneurship and industry.
- We lead in the practice of innovation and entrepreneurship.
- We are a diverse community.
- We foster a pay-it-forward mentality.

We had an opportunity



Our current Proto offering wasn't working

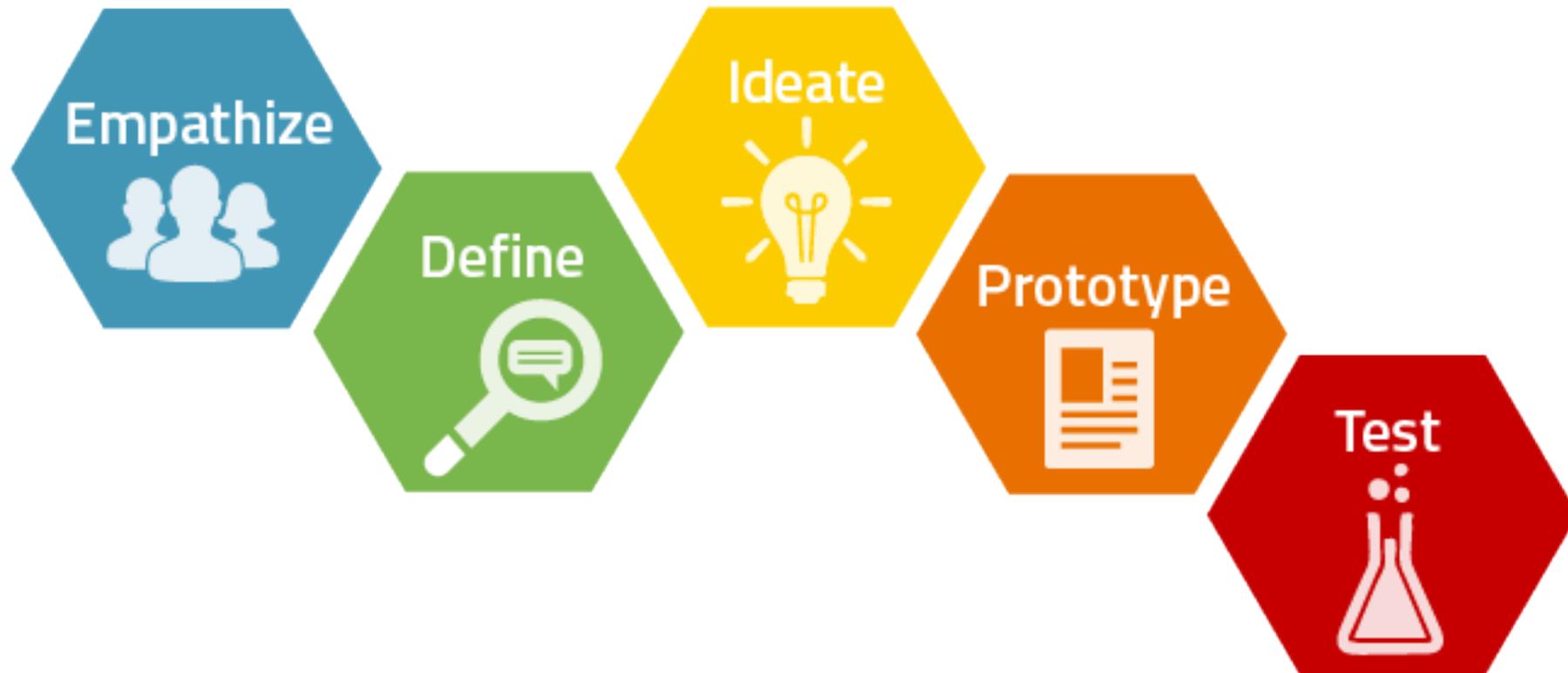


Attendance dropped as study loads increased throughout the semester



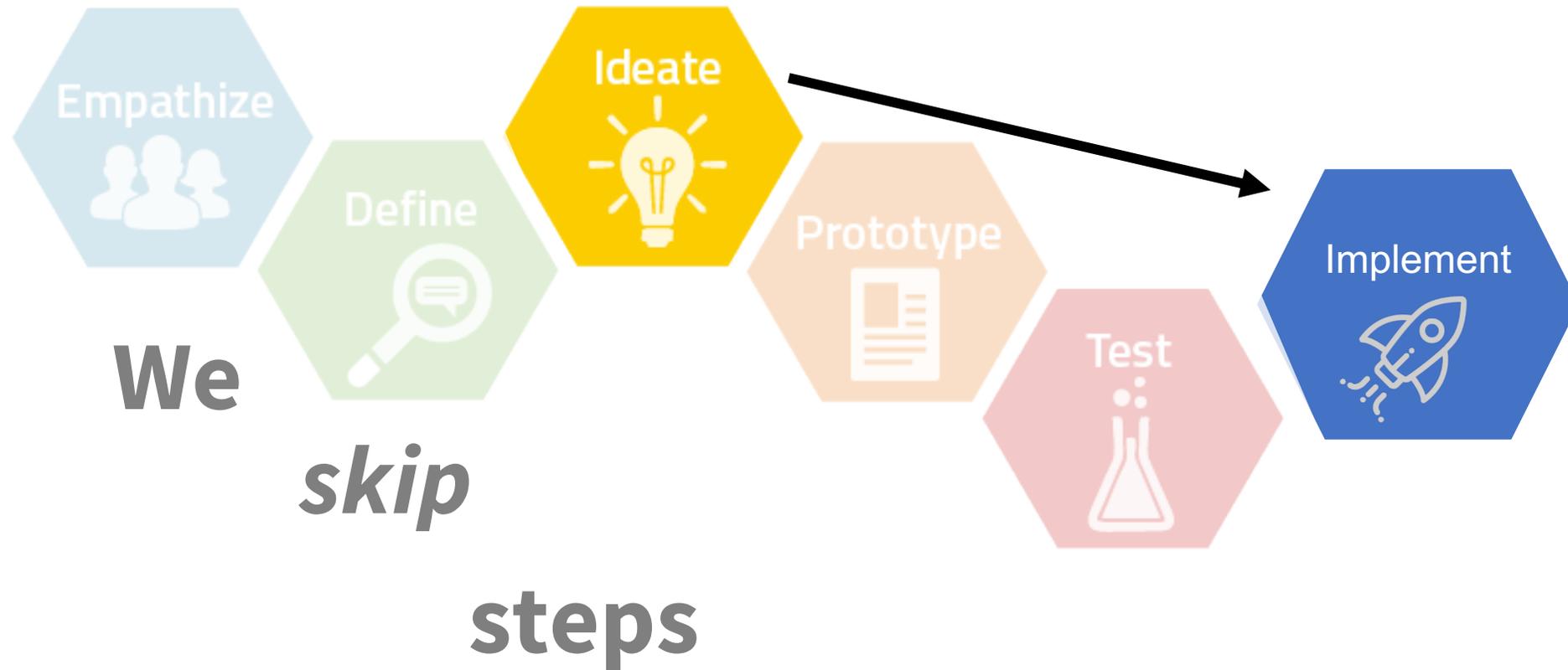
How INCUBATE embraced user-centred design to redevelop our programmes.

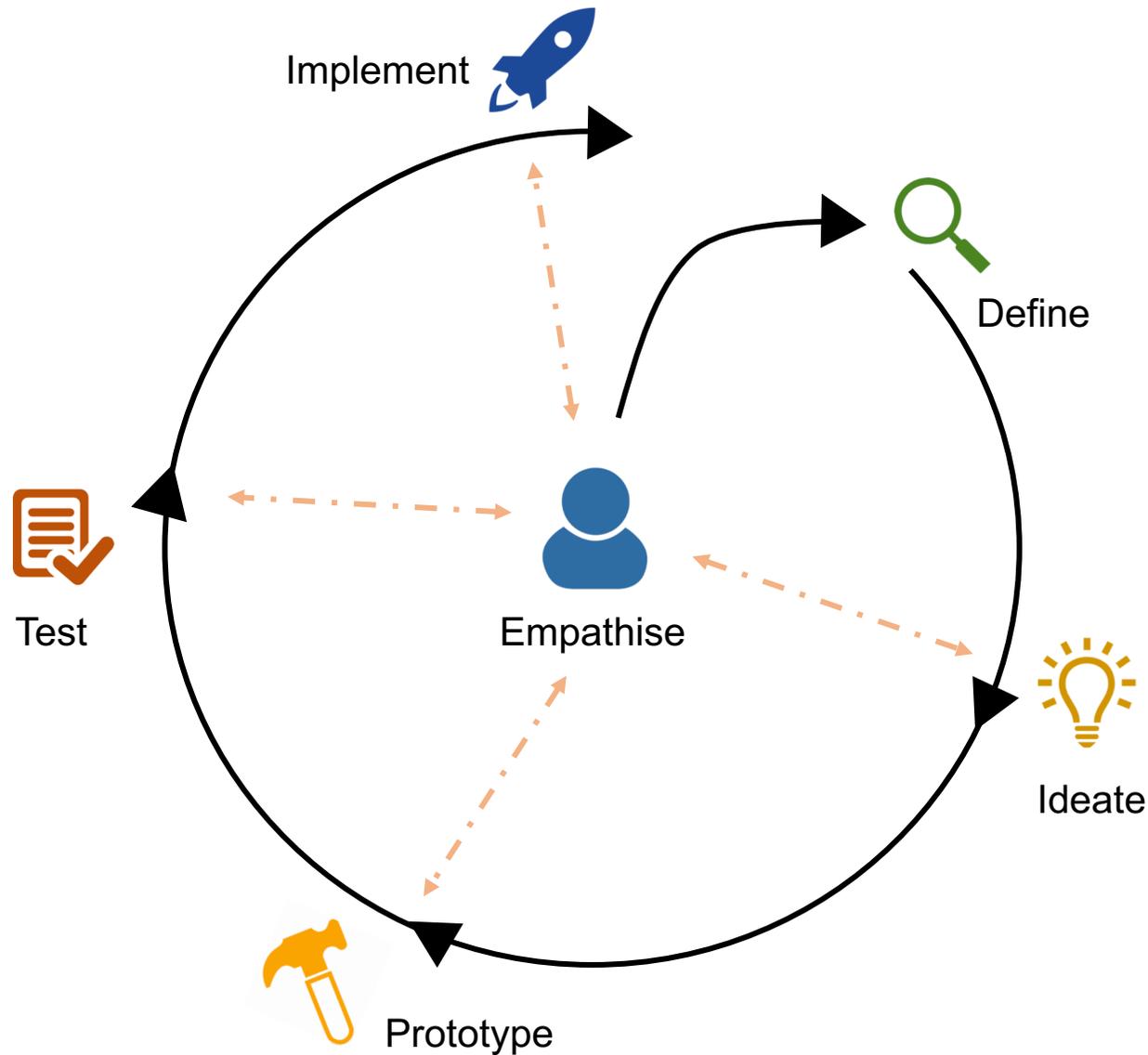
Design Thinking Methodology



Courtesy: Stanford D School

In our excitement...

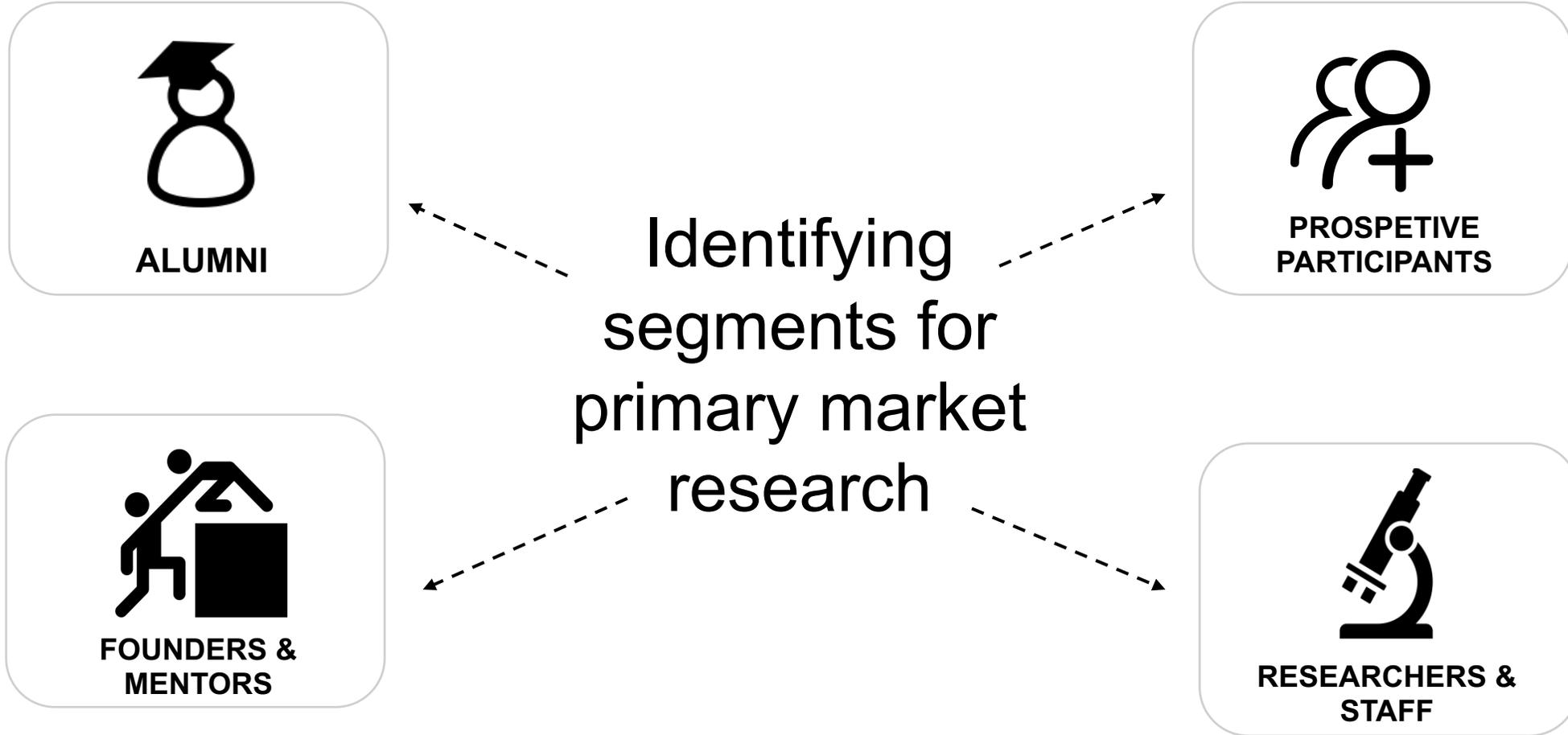




Placing **users** at the centre of every step in the design journey

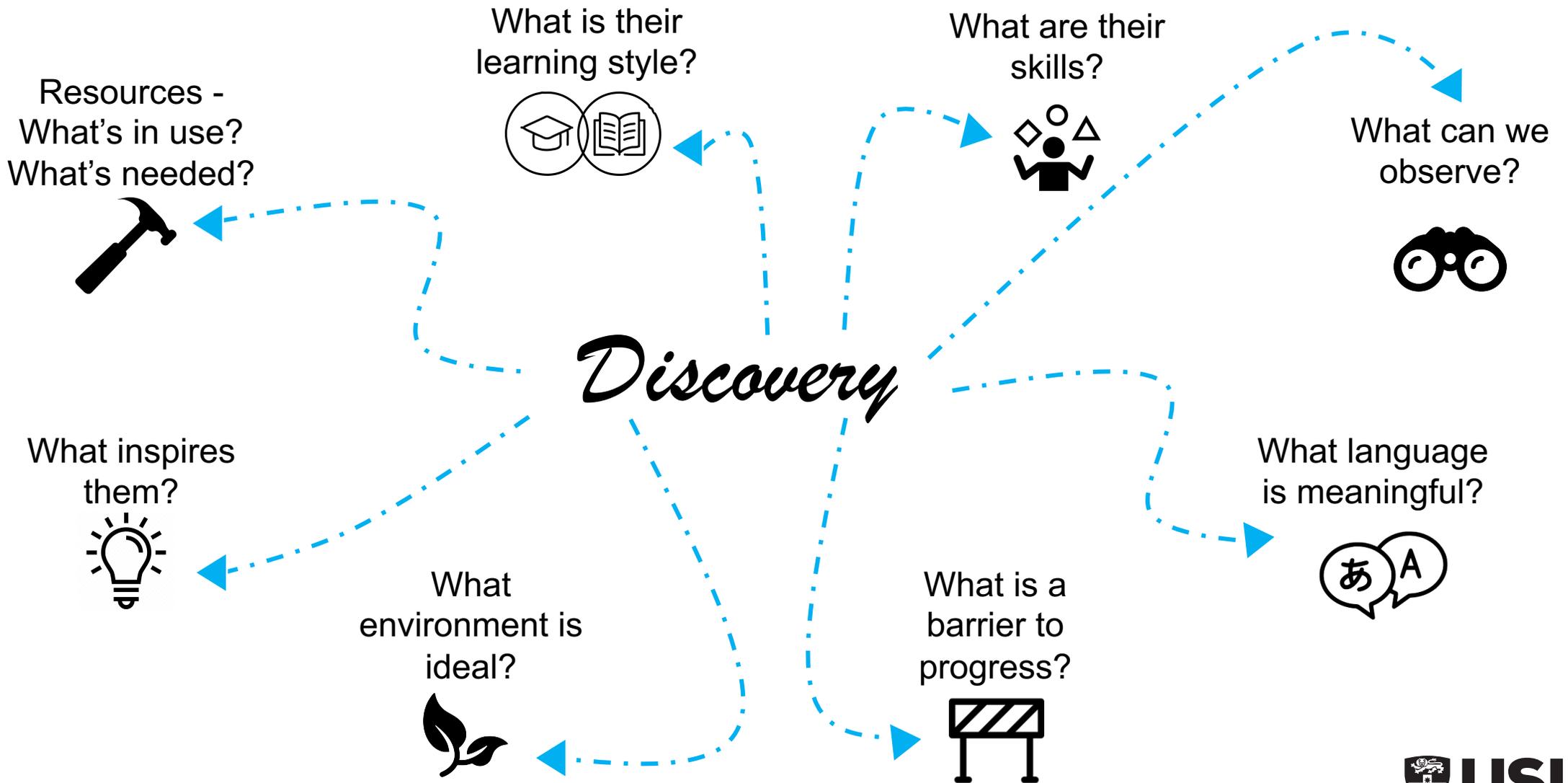
The art of asking questions

Discovery



“The Scientist is not a person who gives the right answers, he’s one who asks the right questions.”

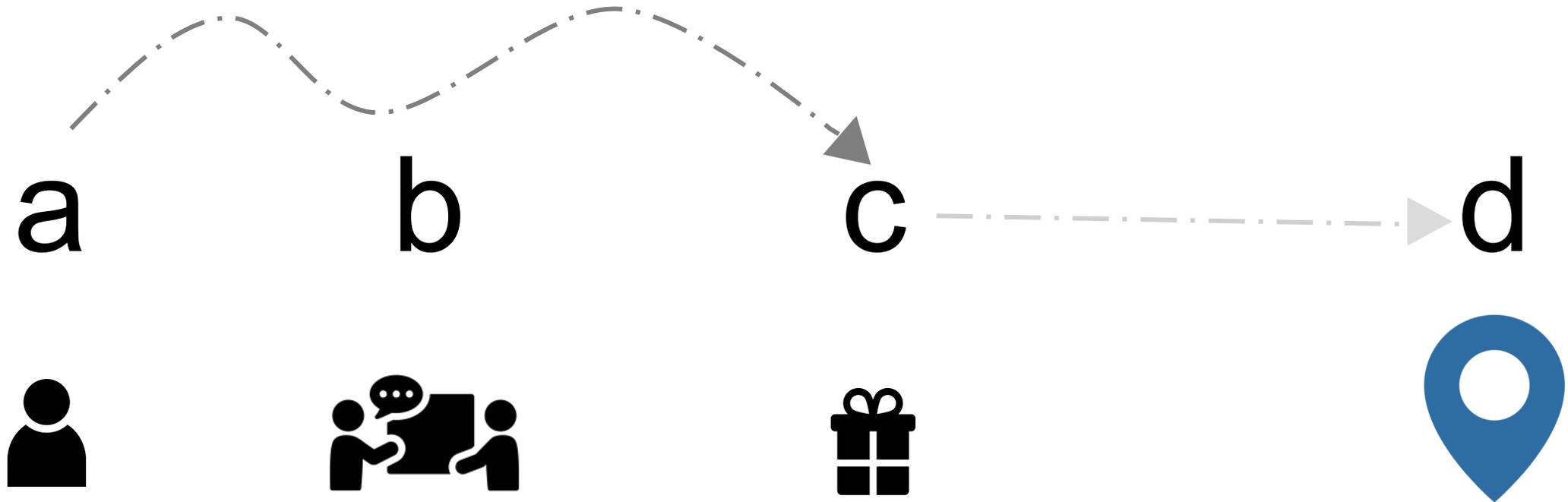
- Claude Levi-Strauss



“The currency to purchase the token of truth begins with the proper phrasing of the query.”

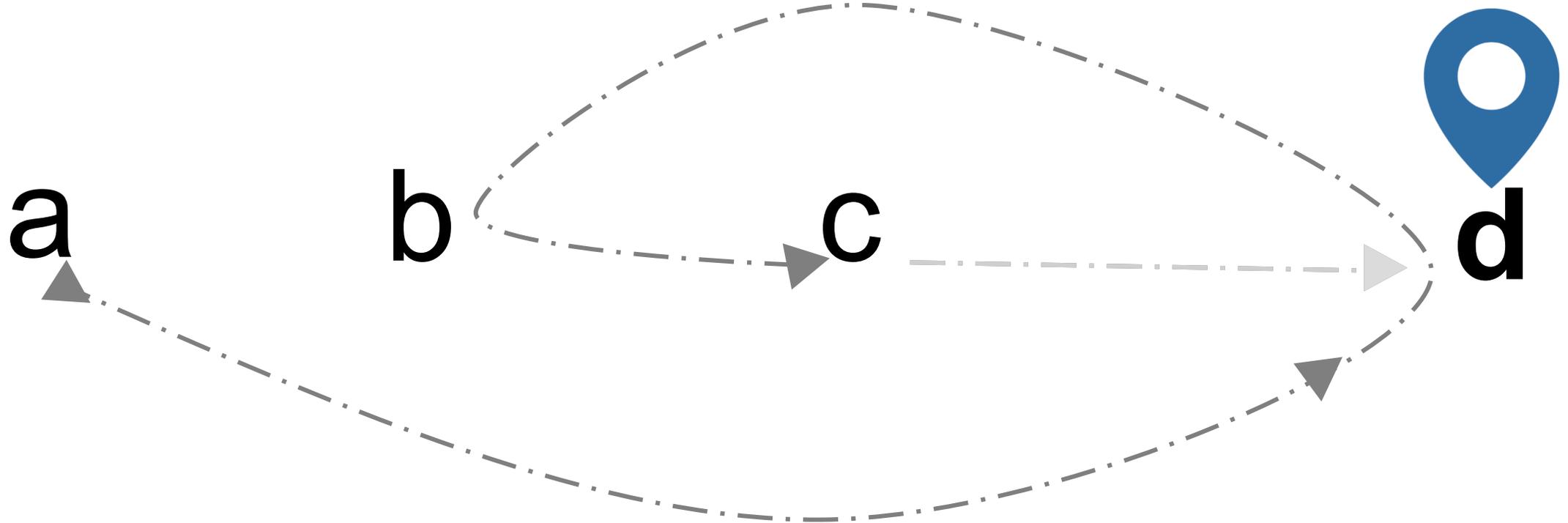
- Brian Goedken

Discovery



Instead of focusing on the **program** and the **project**...

Discovery



Understanding **where** they want to be, and what kind of program will help them **build their business** to get there.

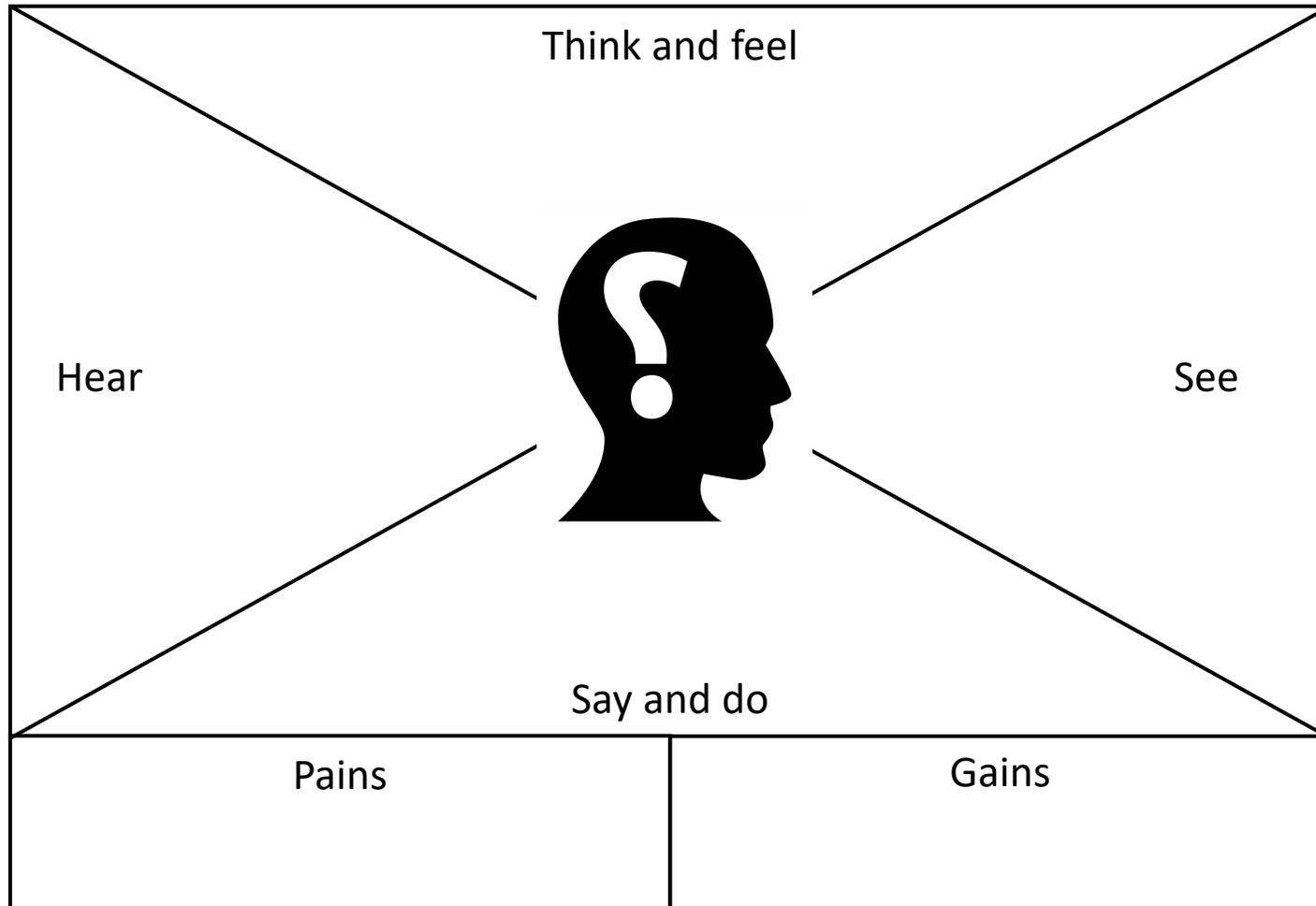
Define

Combine research

Observations

Identify problem sets

Identify personas



Problem statement

*How might we provide an
opportunity for participants
to explore, experiment and
build, in a mode that suits
their commitments?*

Ideation

Topics

Format

Duration

Style of activities

Level of difficulty

Timing

Content



Always keeping users
at the centre of our
problem solving

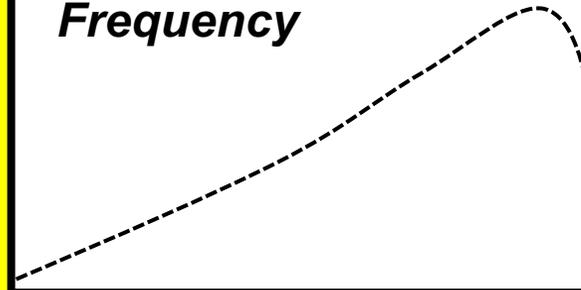
Prototyping

Proto workshops and events

Program

- Discover Startups
- Meet Customers
- Take your Idea Further
- Test with Prototypes

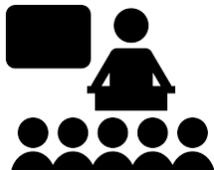
Frequency



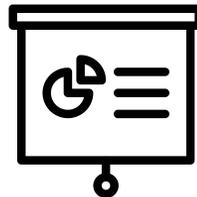
Timing



Format



Materials



Promotion



Testing – “Minimum Viable Proto”

Pilot sessions for each topic were run with test groups.

We iterated on the **timings**, **topics** and **activities**.

Feedback was taken.

Food was provided.



Testing Checklist



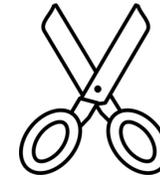
Language



Content



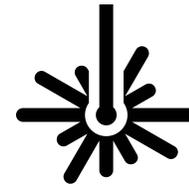
Duration



Activities



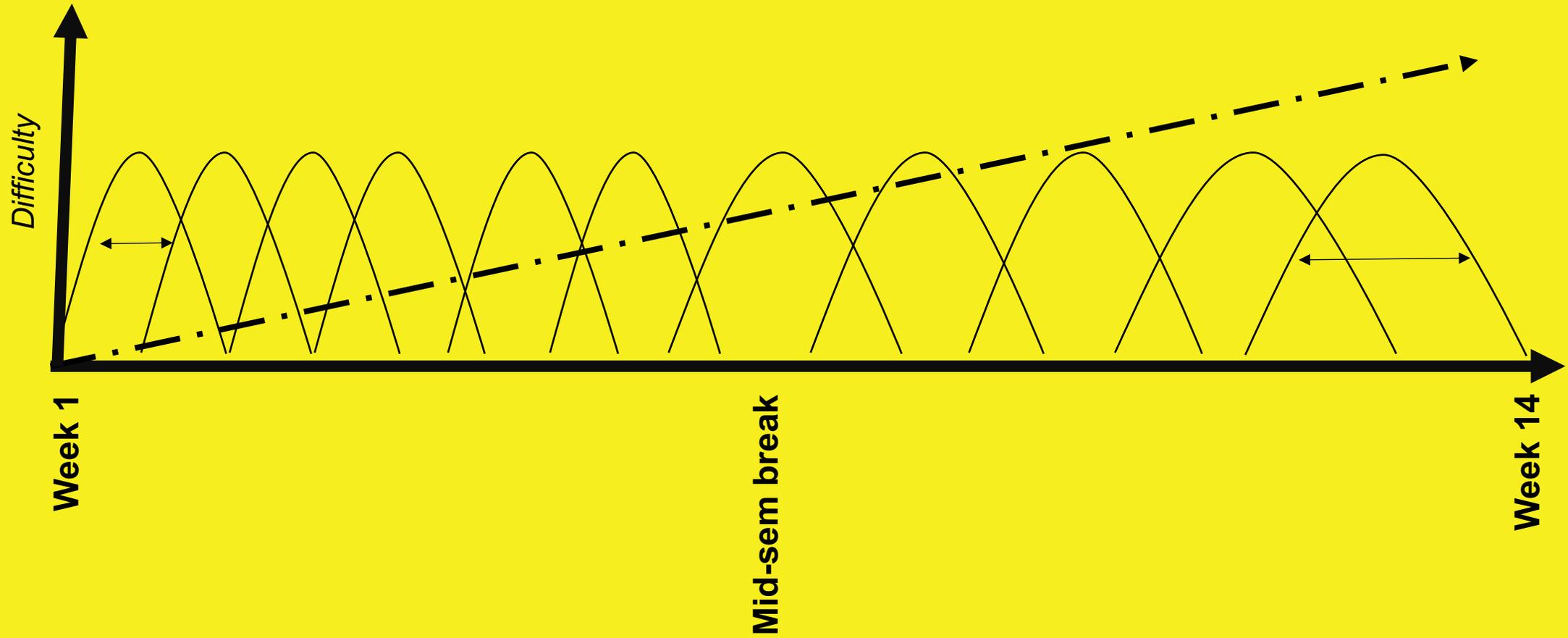
Flow



Impact



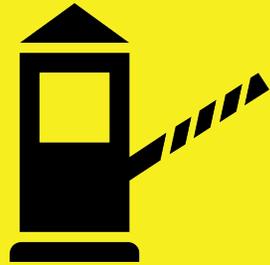
Implementation



Implementation



**Re-occurring
workshops**



**No barrier to
entry**



**Frequency
matches
progress**

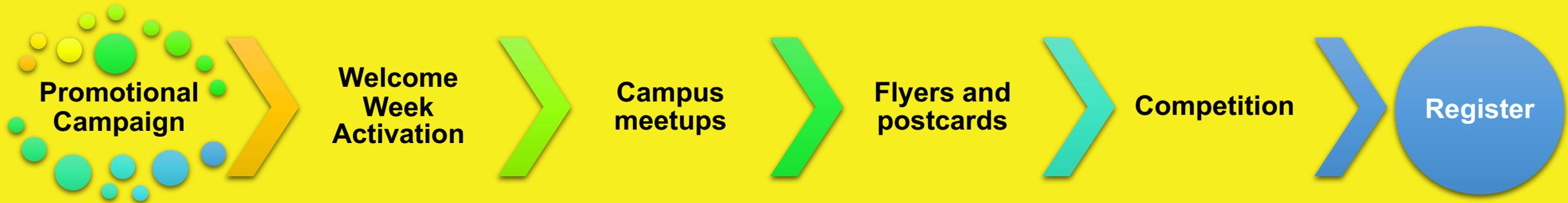


**Students as
co-producers**



**Regular
feedback loop**

Spreading the Word



The Message



Presented by **INCUBATE**, the leading Australian university startup program

proto

WORKSHOPS TO EVOLVE IDEAS AND BRING THEM TO LIFE

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PROTO?

- I want to improve the world
- I'm excited about startups
- I have game-changing ideas
- Something else (let us know!)

Sign up for workshops at incubate.org.au/proto or leave us your email:

THERE'S A **PROTO** WORKSHOP FOR EVERY EARLY-STAGE FOUNDER

INCUBATE



DISCOVER STARTUPS

You're excited about startups, or have an idea. You don't know where to begin but you have a passion for making an impact!

First Workshop: 6 March
Then runs every four weeks



MEET CUSTOMERS

This is where the magic happens! Discover who your first customer will be and how to build something they really want.

First Workshop: 13 March
Then runs every four weeks



TAKE YOUR IDEA FURTHER

You've found a real problem with a market, but now it's time to test this and discover what a viable solution might look like.

First Workshop: 19 March
Runs twice per semester



TEST WITH PROTOTYPES

You know there is a need, but will your solution satisfy it? The only way to find out is to test with customers. Time to prototype!

First Workshop: 25 March
Runs twice per semester

DISCOVERING ————— IDEATING ————— BUILDING

Sign up for workshops at incubate.org.au/proto

IN PARTNERSHIP



THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY



Dedicated marketing materials to encourage exploration and engagement with Proto



De-coded

It is a series of workshops

Not using
“entrepreneur”

Plain English
and icons

THERE'S A **PROTO** WORKSHOP
FOR EVERY EARLY-STAGE FOUNDER

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DISCOVERING

IDEATING

BUILDING

Stage of maturity

Clear call to
action

Sign up for workshops at incubate.org.au/proto

IN PARTNERSHIP



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

USU



YOU ARE THE NEXT GENERATION OF MAKERS, INNOVATORS, AND LEADERS.

WE HELP YOU GET GOING

incubate.org.au

INCUBATE



AWARDS

2018 Startcon Startup Accelerator of the Year
2016 Startcon Startup Accelerator of the Year
2013 ACUMA Best Student Development Program

IN PARTNERSHIP



Founded in 2012, INCUBATE is Australia's leading on-campus startup program.

INCUBATE
ACCELERATOR

The multi-award winning accelerator helps top entrepreneurs launch their startups:

- Proven program, 99+ startups graduated with over \$20m invested
- Access to our comprehensive mentor network and resident entrepreneurs
- \$5k grant
- Access to a world class co-working space

pr^oto

Free workshops to launch you into the world of startups and innovation.

- Advance your ideas
- Build your network
- Learn about the startup ecosystem

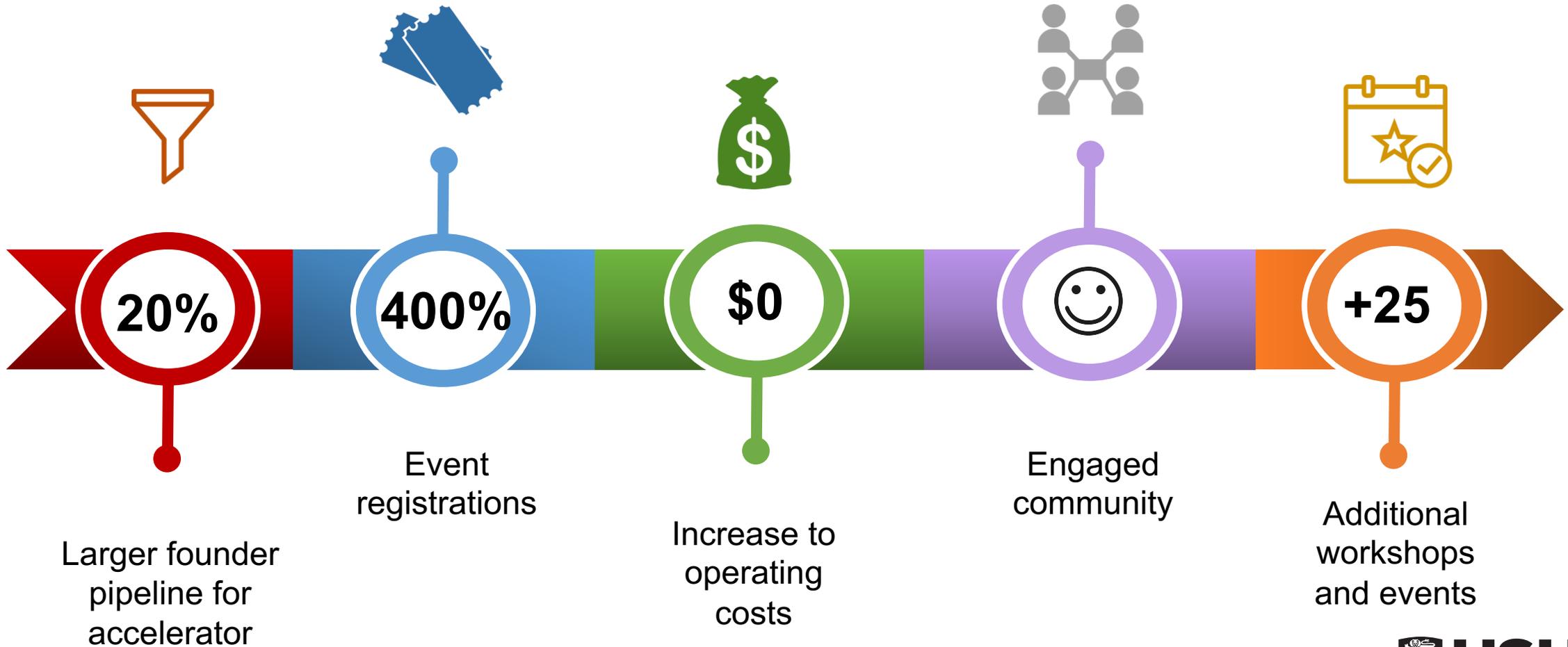
Get involved and stay up to date:



incubate.org.au
incubate.org.au/alerts
[@SydneyIncubate](https://twitter.com/SydneyIncubate)
hello@incubate.org.au



Semester 1 Results



Lessons Learned



Setting expectations



Language used



Test everything



Test again!



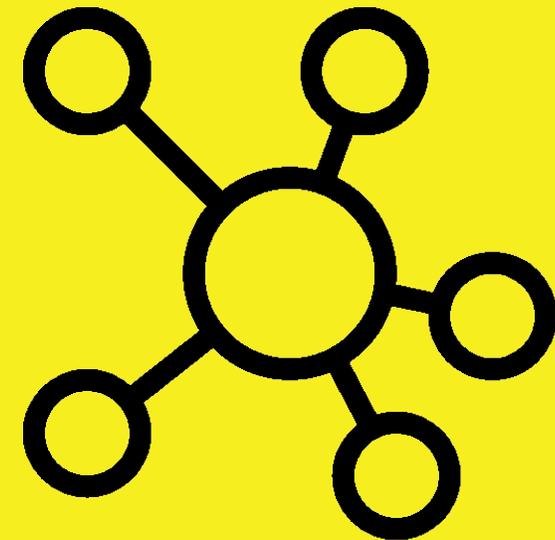
Users feel like part of the solution



Now it's your turn

What and Who
are you solving
for?

List the key areas for
exploration



How will you
gather the
information?

How will you find user groups?

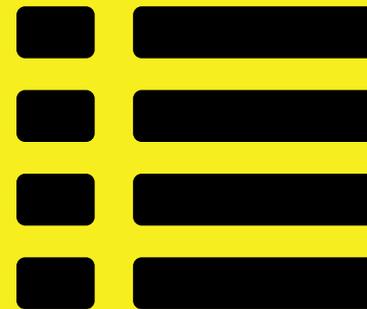
How will you collect the data?

How will the data be measured?



Map your areas of enquiry

What do you need to understand?



*“Judge a man by his questions
rather than by his answers.”*

- Voltaire

Design the questions for your users

How should the questions be
structured?



**Test your
questions**



Reflection

What worked well?

What could be improved?

Which language was effective?

What did you learn from asking the questions?

What would you do differently?

Proto V.2

Semester 2, 2019

Collecting Feedback



Topics



Content



Duration



Activities



Flow



Difficulty

Startup Stage

What stage are you at in your startup journey?

- Learning more and thinking of ideas
- Working on an idea
- Building prototypes
- Developing a product
- Making sales

Are you most interested in:

- High growth startup
- Small business or consultancy
- Business for social good
- Not-for-profit
- Getting a job

What are the barriers you're finding to building your startup?

Collecting feedback

TEST SURVEY

Startup Needs

If you had to prioritise these, what would you pick?

- Help building product (no-code solutions)
- Help with basic coding skills
- Pitching skills workshop
- Finding your first customers
- Building your business model
- Other

Which of these would help you find more time to work on your startup?

- Accreditation or certificate I can show potential employers - e.g. LinkedIn badge
- An internship for credit where I work on my own startup
- An internship for credit where I work on someone else's startup
- Online course content to work through in my own time
- More scheduled sessions at INCUBATE where I can get help

Persona development

TEST SURVEY

Prioritisation

TEST SURVEY

What's most important?

If you had to prioritise these improvements to current workshops, which would you pick?

- More relatable examples from early-stage startups
- More inspiring examples from highly successful startups
- More about validating my ideas
- **Show me how to find customers**
- More on how to test my prototypes
- More focus on technical skills
- **More about how to plan the development of my product**
- More frameworks & methodologies
- More resources I can take away in my own time
- **More about building a viable business model**

Time Allocation

TEST SURVEY

What are the trade-offs for time?

Lots of people asked us for more time to do the activities and meet others. How would you prefer to get this extra time?

- Spread the content over a larger number of short workshops (2hrs)
- Run longer workshops (4hrs +)
- Scheduled “extension” time for questions & working
- Extra networking time during workshops
- Make this a for-credit part of my degree
- Separate networking events

If we took something away, what would make you no longer want to attend the workshops?

The Barriers to Showing Up

Who has the time?

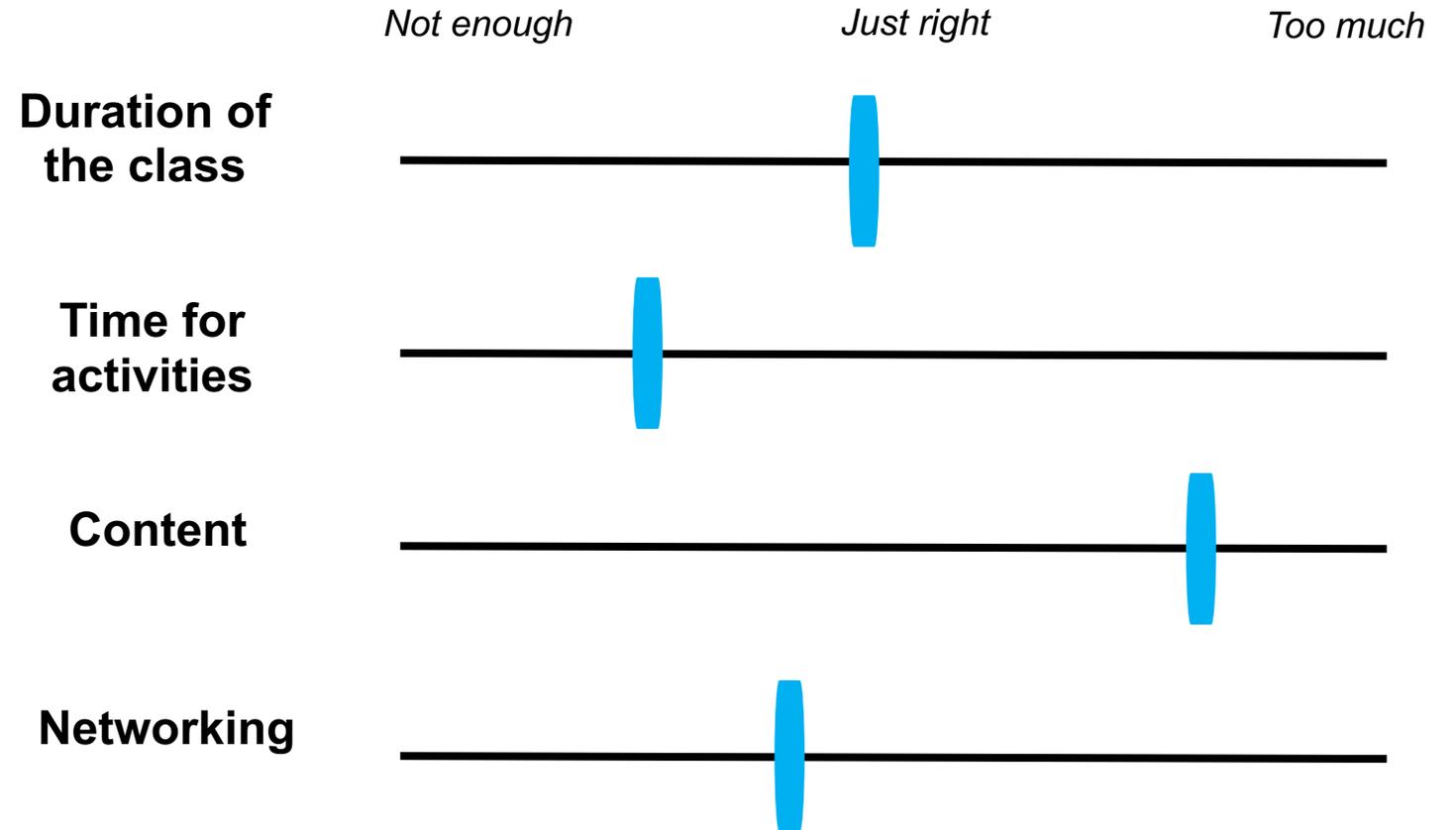
If you signed up and didn't end up attending, how come?

- Timing didn't work
- Too busy with paid work
- Too busy with University
- Didn't feel like I was ready
- Didn't feel like I would fit in

Testing our Measurement

What is the best mechanism for capturing feedback?

How much is “more”?



Testing the Survey

What is the best mechanism for capturing feedback?

How was Proto?

Some aspects to consider:

- What were you expecting to get out of the workshop?
- Has your understanding of startup methodologies changed?
- How did you feel about your social interactions with other attendees?
- How did you feel about interactions with the facilitator, Lucas?
- How did the content and activities work together?
- How was the duration and pacing of the workshop?

Which session did you attend? *

- Proto: Discover Startups on 6/3/19
- Proto: Meet Customers on 13/3/19

What went well?

Long-answer text

What could have been better?

Long-answer text

Your email address (optional)

If you're happy for me to contact you about your survey responses, please leave your email here.

Operational Analysis

What worked well?

What could be better?

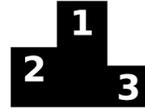
What's something new?

What should be stopped?

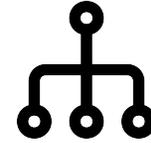
Ideation



Program redesign



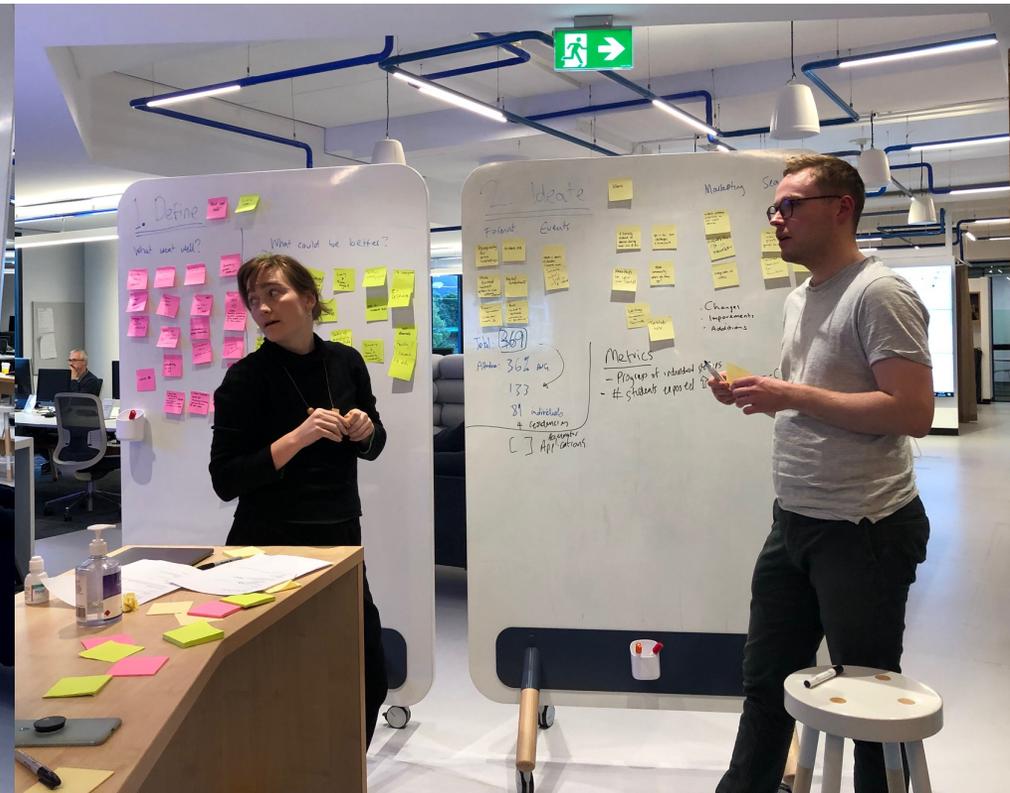
Tiered based on semester



Cadence varies on level of complexity



Resource planning



We Test Again



Topics



Content



Duration



Activities



Flow



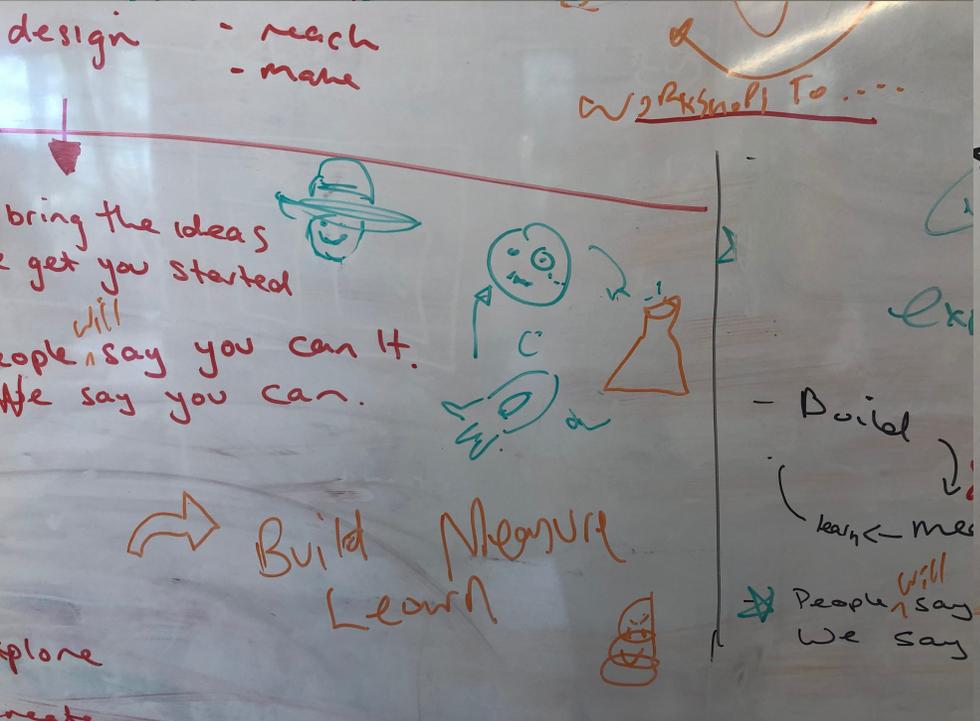
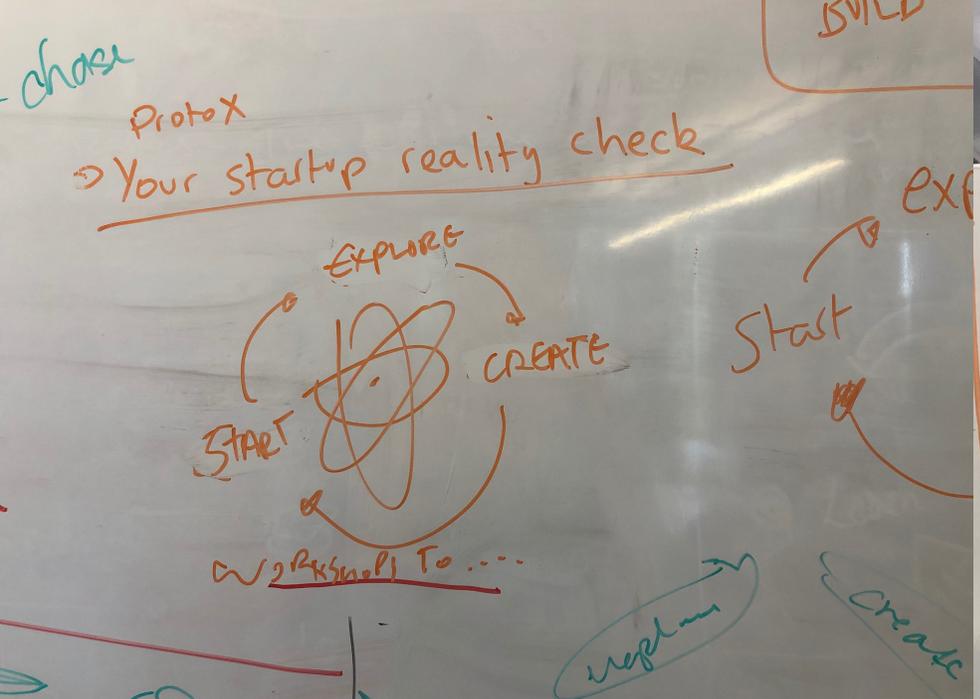
Difficulty



Prototyping Workshops



Communication Planning



Be the one
who changes
the way we

Glow Food
TRANSPORTATE
Change the world.

TURN YOUR IDEAS INTO
MONEY

BUILD STUFF THAT MATTERS

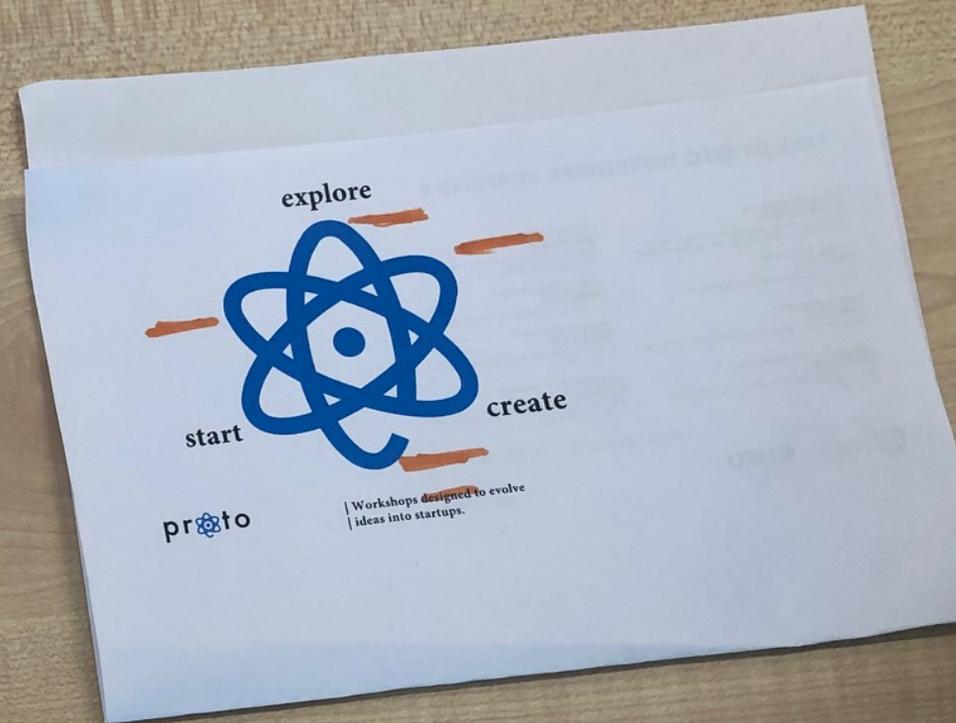
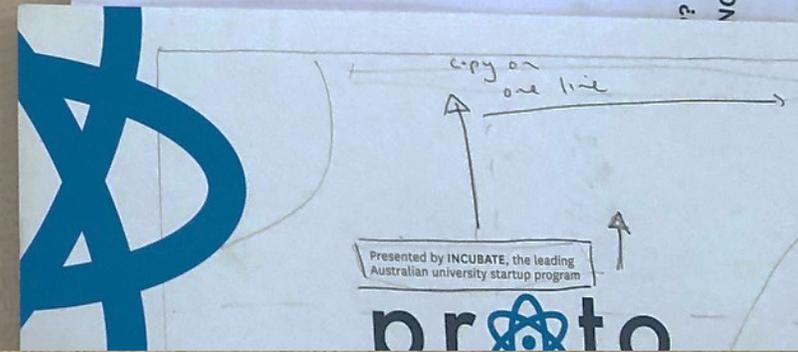
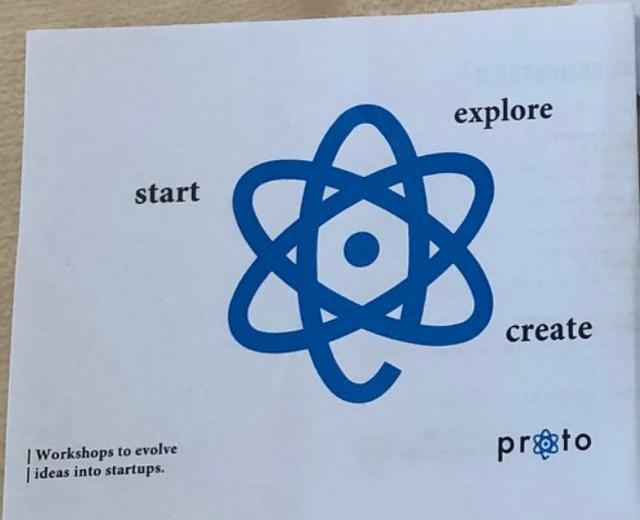
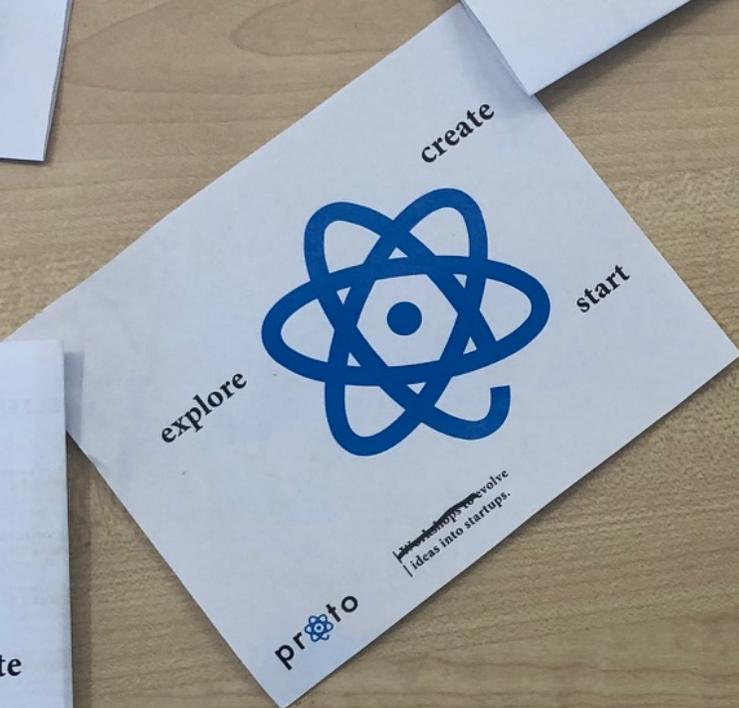
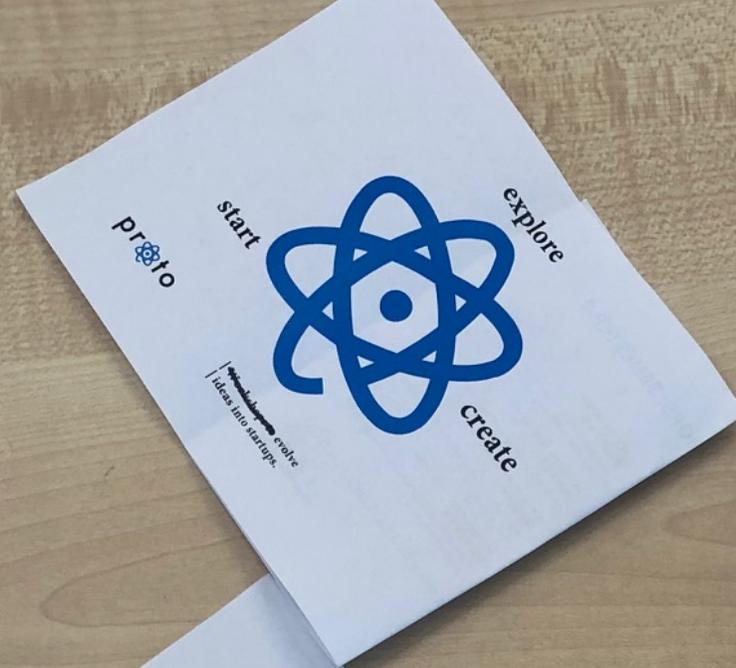
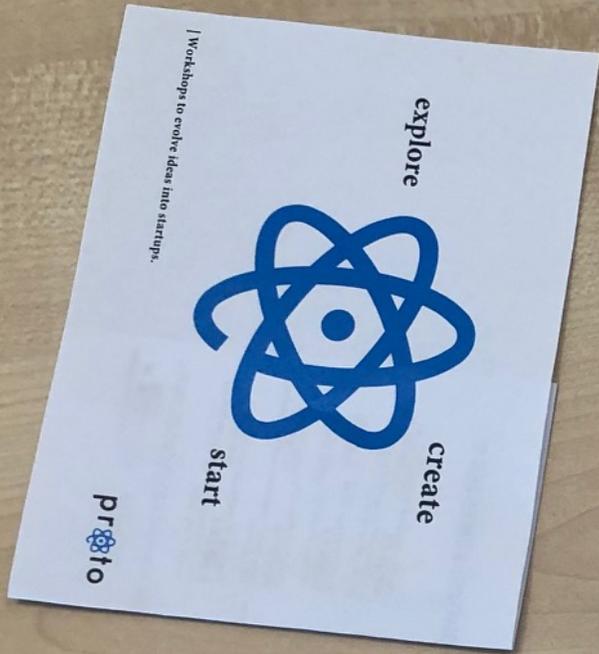
ideas started.



check

explore

Communication Iteration



Implementation



**4 x new
subject areas**



**Expanded
events**



**Frequency
reset**



**New 1:1
mentoring
stream**



**Utilise
resident
entrepreneur**

Semester 2 Relaunch

USU | PROTOGRAMS

Get more out of uni life!



proto
SEMESTER 2 WORKSHOPS
WORKSHOPS TO EVOLVE YOUR IDEAS

FREE
for USYD
students,
alumni and
staff

WEEK 1
Discover Startups / 5 August 3-4.30pm

WEEK 2
Design a Business / 12 August 3-5pm
Discover Startups / 14 August 12-1.30pm

WEEK 3
Find your Market / 19 August 3-5pm
Design a Business / 21 August 12-2pm

WEEK 4
Understand your Customers / 26 August 3-5pm
Find your Market / 28 August 12-2pm

WEEK 5
Create a Product / 2 September 3-5pm
Understand your Customers / 4 September 12-2pm

WEEK 6
Prototype your Ideas / 9 September 3-5pm
Create a Product / 11 September 12-2pm

WEEK 7
Build your Product / 16 September 3-5pm
Prototype your Ideas / 18 September 12-2pm
Discover Startups / 19 September 1-2.30pm

WEEK 8
Communicate your Ideas / 23 September 3-5pm
Build your Product / 25 September 12-2pm

MID SEMESTER BREAK

WEEK 9
Communicate your Ideas / 9 October 12-2pm

WEEK 10
INCUBATE Demo Day / 16 October 5.30-9pm

WEEK 11
Discover Startups / 24 October 12-1.30pm

Get your tickets at [INCUBATE.ORG.AU/PROTO](https://incubate.org.au/proto)

f i t
@SydneyIncubate

proto
SEMESTER 2 WORKSHOPS
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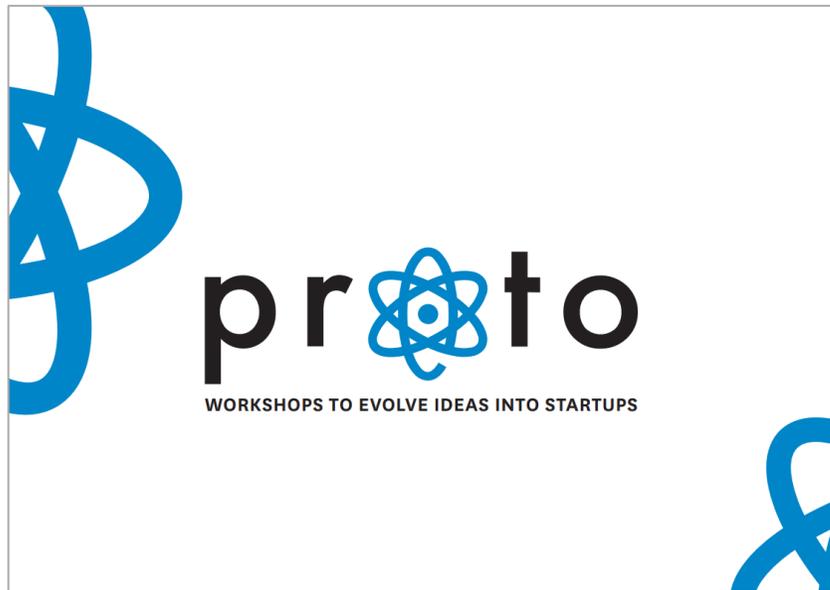
Who are the

PARTY ON THE VERGE
JOIN US TO CELEBRATE
VERGE GALLERY'S 10TH BIRTHDAY
8 AUGUST, 6-9PM
Jane Foss Russell Plaza, University of Sydney

VERGE GALLERY | USU



Semester 2 Relaunch



FREE **pr**o **to** WORKSHOPS: SEMESTER 2

DISCOVER STARTUPS

WEEKS 1, 2, 7 & 11

Discover startup concepts explore your Ideas and find out how Proto can help you get started.

DESIGN A BUSINESS

WEEKS 2 & 3

Explore the elements that make a great business model.

FIND YOUR MARKET

WEEKS 3 & 4

Discover your first customers and how to reach them.

UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMERS

WEEKS 4 & 5

Find out how to build something your customers really need.

CREATE A PRODUCT

WEEKS 5 & 6

Unlock your ability to develop creative solutions to customer problems.

PROTOTYPE YOUR IDEAS

WEEKS 6 & 7

Practise prototyping a product in minutes.

BUILD YOUR PRODUCT

WEEKS 7 & 8

Explore how founders test their early product with real customers.

COMMUNICATE YOUR IDEAS

WEEKS 8 & 9

Learn how founders effectively communicate and pitch their ideas.

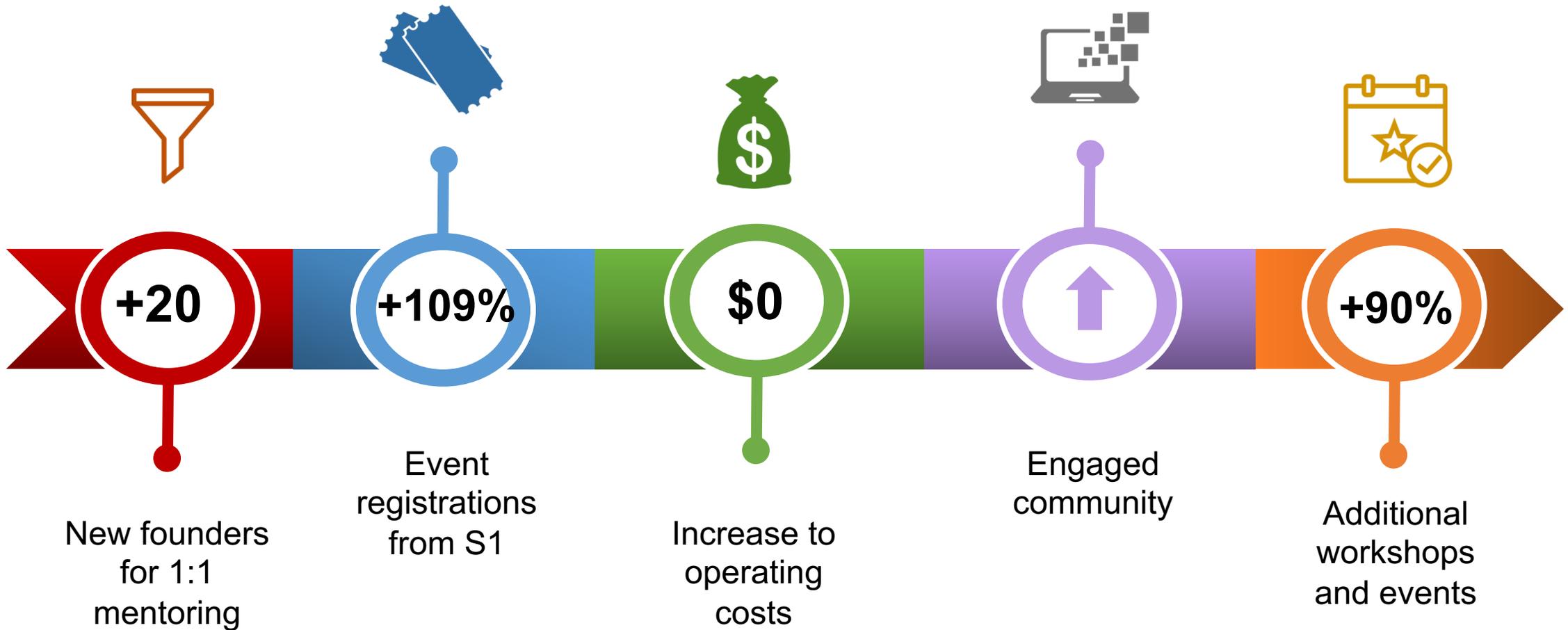
IN PARTNERSHIP



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@SydneyIncubate

Semester 2 Results to-date



2019 Program Offering

prto

FREE
Workshops and events for everyone

- Discover Startups
- Design a Business
- Find your Market
- Understand your Customers
- Create a Product
- Prototype your Ideas
- Build your Product
- Communicate your Ideas

prto X

FREE
Mentoring to get startups accelerator ready

- 2 x strands per semester
- Fortnightly goals and check-ins
- Intensive mentoring

INCUBATE

Grants
Mentoring + Workshops

Intensive mentoring and goal setting

- Accounting + P&Ls
- Sales + cold contacts
 - Law + privacy
- Financial Modelling
 - Digital Channels
 - Networking
 - Pitching
- Investment and valuation
- Hardware roundtables
 - Ask Me Anything

spark
AN INCUBATE INITIATIVE

Sponsorships and Event Support

Support for clubs and societies

- Grants
- Space hire
- Workshops
- Mixers
- Sponsorship

Ongoing throughout the year

Proto V.3

2020 and beyond



How might INCUBATE embrace user-centred design to develop an **arts and culture entrepreneurship** offering?

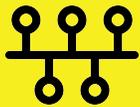
**BRIGHT
— IDEAS**

Your springboard to creative success

Tips



Continuous improvement environment



Build space into planning timelines



Work with marketing



Test everything



WIFM - incentives



Final Thoughts



How can you place users at the centre of your program?



How can you take this back to your team?



How do we embed this in our practice?

Thank you



ASH WALLINGTON

**DIRECTOR OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION
INCUBATE | UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY UNION**

a.wallington@usu.edu.au

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ashlea-wallington/>