

Nairobi's C4dlab To Adopt Lean Model



The C4DLab startup incubation hub at the University of Nairobi has said it is looking to run on a lean model until it reaches a break-even point.

Prototyping and innovative incubator C4DLab was launched in 2013 and took in 11 startups last year, including Chura.

The hub, alongside the University of Nairobi, has been rethinking its business model of late, with the university developing an incubation policy it says will allow it to better support young entrepreneurs, while C4DLab itself has said it plans to run as both an incubator and an accelerator.

It has now said it plans to run on a lean model for the foreseeable future, until it reaches a break-even point, with the hub having considered a number of different models. The models debated by the C4DLab research team were Eric Ries' The Lean Startup, Ash Maurya's Running Lean and Lean Canvas, and Alex Osterwalder and others' Value Proposition Design.

"Though The Lean Startup and Running Lean are good in themselves, they are not practical enough. That leaves us with Value Proposition Design and Lean Canvas, which C4DLab is relying on to come up with a fruitful business model," the hub said.

Maurya's Lean Canvas proposes nine elements of an effective business model, while Osterwalder's Value Proposition Design dedicates four chapters to explaining how to create products and services customers want.

Hub sustainability has rapidly become a serious issue over the past year, with Tayo Akinyemi, director of AfriLabs, a network of 36 technology innovation hubs in 18 countries across Africa, saying last year African tech hubs were fragile and had no clear path towards long-term sustainability.

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Akinyemi said hubs must work together and innovate in order to prosper, with hundreds of hubs springing up across the continent with a variety of names, service models and missions.

She said this “staggering” amount of diversity meant hub sustainability was a “ubiquitous” problem.

“As a result, we have 200 fragile young organisations with noble intentions but no clear path to long-term survival. Charting a sustainability plan for entities we don't fully understand is no small task – a sobering thought to say the least,” she said.

Jackson Tom. Nairobi's C4DLab to adopt lean model. (2015, March 11). Disrupt Africa [website]. Retrieved from http://disrupt-africa.com/2015/03/nairobis-c4dlab-adopt-lean-model/?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter

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