

Travel Report for Sten A. Olsson Foundation Scholarship 2019

The thesis

Firstly, I am very grateful to have received the scholarship from Sten A. Olsson Foundation that made me possible to conduct my thesis research locally in Sydney, Australia. As an entrepreneurship student with international background, I was always interested in the different characteristics of countries that influence their startup industry in unique ways. I believe they can become either a burden or a blessing for the global growth of startups, therefore it is vital to identify elements that play a role in being successful.

In the beginning of March 2019, I flew to Sydney to spend three weeks researching the startup ecosystem and its relations specifically to the higher education system. Australia has one of the most promising scene with its private, public and academic actors; the startups are booming. Government and state grants are strongly supporting startups, organizations and coworking spaces; while education institutions produce talented individuals. These suppose a top-down approach in enhancing activities in the startup ecosystem: providing university students with entrepreneurial experiences regardless their field of study is essential for engaging them. On the other hand, a strong demand is appearing within the university students, creating a bottom-up effect as well. My research was based on the relevance of entrepreneurship education in the growth of startups and its evaluation by the different actors involved in the startup ecosystem.

My time in Sydney

During my three weeks in Sydney I established contacts with representatives of the major universities that offer entrepreneurship education, actors in the Sydney Startup Hub (government institutions, accelerators and incubators), individuals involved in startups and entrepreneurship students as well. I had personal interviews with 11 people, and attended several startup based events.

I wished to experience a positive attitude towards my work, because curiosity and communication are common within the startup scenes, but the level of support and openness I received was beyond my expectations! All the meetings were deep, yet rather informal conversations about opinions and experiences, in many cases discussing the Swedish startup

ecosystem and entrepreneurship education as well. These meetings helped me understand the connections and relations between academia and the startup ecosystem, seeing a bigger picture about the national factors that make Australia successful in producing startups.

For the data procession and analysis I was able to use the modern and advanced facilities of both the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) Business School and the Sydney Startup Hub, which I am grateful for. Being surrounded by an inspirational environment helped me proceed with my thesis work.

Conclusion

The best part of going to Sydney was to experience the student lifestyle there, hearing first-hand stories about the Australian startup scene, as well as representing my university and the Swedish startup mentality in general.

The scholarship from Sten A. Olsson Foundation has enabled me to conduct interviews in Sydney in person as well as broaden my understandings on the Australian characteristics, culture and startup world.



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