

Start-ups Accelerators in Europe

3 Leading Cities

London



Paris



Berlin



6 Characteristics Identified

41 Accelerators in Europe have been identified with these 6 characteristics:



Upfront investment in start-ups (£10k – £50k), often in exchange for equity (5–10%).



Time-limited support (3 to 6 months) incl. events and intensive mentoring.



Open application process, yet highly competitive.



Cohorts or classes of start-ups rather than individual companies.



Focus on **small teams**, not individual founders.



Periodic graduation with a **demo day** or investor day.

5 Building Blocks

1. Strategic focus

5 key components shape the structure and design of an accelerator



Key objectives
Strongly shaped by the type of funders or stakeholders supporting the programme.



Geographic focus
Local or international
Techstars | Global



Sector focus
Diversified vs specialisation. From very generic to very specific industry.
Fintech Innovation Lab | Financial sector
L'Accélérateur | Retail oriented

2. Programme package

Standardised curriculum



Training programme: finance, user design, PR, marketing, legal aspects, etc.



Events, such as expert workshops and inspiring talks.



Regular counselling, weekly 'office hours', 'weekly' review, etc.



Investor demo days. pitch business to investors or customers.

Coworking space, peer to peer learning and collaboration.



Mentoring package

Mentors are often experienced entrepreneurs, heavily vetted. Help to define the business model of startups and to connect with customers & investors.



3. Funding



Funding of the accelerator working capital come from shareholders, such as investors, corporate and public authorities. Additional revenues can be generated
-The Family sells tickets of their events
-Scientipôle charges a symbolic €190/year

Funding of start-ups a small amount of funding in exchange for equity: £3,600–£50,000 for 3–10%.
Le Camping, Paris: €4,500 for 3% equity
Bethnal Green Ventures, London: £15,000 for 6% equity.

Post acceleration funding is often a challenge. Some accelerators offer follow-on funding for their startups.
Healthbox Europe has an **Angel Fund** that acts as a co-investment fund to be invested alongside the accelerator.

4. Selection process

From a simple two-staged process to a rigorous multi-staged process



Open call to register and apply online via **F6S.com**, **Fundacity** and **Angel.co**



Actively scout start-up events before application period. **Startupbootcamp** and **Climate-KIC**.



Standardised screening process with external stakeholders (mentors, investors and alumni) to help shortlist. Companies' founders screened in person **Healthbox**.



Selection processes Teams are preferred instead of solo founders. Some accelerators help founders with matchmaking and team formation, to recruit for a specific skillset.
Le Camping, Paris organises 'Adopt a CTO' event before opening the call to submit applications.

5. Alumni service

Accelerators keep **close and active relations** with the companies that graduated from their programmes.



Regular events for alumni and invite them back to share their experiences.

Accelerators that take equity have added incentive to **help start-up succeed**.

3 Types of Accelerators



Investors-led accelerator

Funded by investors such as business angels, venture capital funds or corporate venture capital.



Matchmakers accelerator

Set up by corporates. Often offer no finance to the start-ups but help them to connect with potential customers.



Ecosystems builders

Funded by government agencies interested in stimulating start up activity,

Funding sources
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Objectives



Look for investment opportunity.

Want to provide a service to their own customers or stakeholders.

Develop an ecosystem of start-ups within the region or the technology. Often interested in job creation.

Stage of startup



Very selective. Focus on start-ups in **later stages** of development, or with some proven track record, Tend to favour ventures that will raise more capital in future.

Ventures selected are those that **attracted the attention** of highly placed individuals in the corporate that funds the accelerator.

Select ventures in a **very early stage** in the lifecycle. Often, no developed value proposition, sometimes it is just an individual with an idea.

Specific industry or global focus



Specialise within a specific industry to develop sector specific knowledge and expertise to identify and exploit economic potential of the startups teams.

Specific Industry focussed. Senior executives of large financial banks sit in on the selection process of **FinTech Innovation Lab**.

Selection criteria and processes organised to attract companies that fit within their vision.

Mentors



Mentors are often active business angels and play a further role in follow up investments.

Mentors are often selected from within the corporate. Play an important role in helping the start-ups find their way through the internal decision-making system of the corporate.

Very hands on mentors or internal coaches. Mentors can be consultants or business developers, who help to commercialise the technology or sell the product/service idea.

Example of accelerators



Axel Springer Plug & Play Accelerator | Berlin
Techstars | London
Startupbootcamp | Berlin
L'Accélérateur | Paris

FinTech Innovation Lab | London
Microsoft Ventures | Berlin

Le Camping | Paris
Bethnal Green Ventures | London

