

## Overview: 'Affiancare le Startup in Ticino' Project

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## Introduction

This document provides an overview of the 'Supporting Startups in Ticino' project (hereinafter referred to as the 'Project'), outlining its operations, the methodologies adopted, and the procedures in place to ensure effective support for startups in the Ticino region or elsewhere.

## Origins and Project History

The Project was launched in 2020–2021 on the initiative of Jon Becker, then President of the Rotary Club Lugano-Lago. The initial objective was to create a bridge between the expertise of Rotary members and the needs of local startups, with particular attention to those supported by the USI Startup Centre.

Over the years, the Project has continued to evolve:

- **2021-2022:** First edition with 9 startups and over 300 hours of consulting provided by 19 Rotary coaches.
- **2022-2023:** Expansion with 10 startups and more than 100 hours of coaching, under the leadership of President Eleonora Cattaneo.
- **2023-2024:** Project growth supported by President Marco Strazzi and the involvement of Rotary Club Lugano and its President Gianni Mastroddi, increasing the number of members engaged and consolidating the support model.
- **2024-2025:** With the support of Presidents Matteo Bianda and Hamid-Reza Khoyi, the Project aims to gain recognition at the district and national level, promoting a replicable model for other Rotary clubs in Switzerland. Additionally, Rotaract Ticino has joined, with 2025/2026 President Lucio Alesiani choosing to support the Project.

## Goals of the Project

The main objective is to support Ticino-based startups by providing mentoring and coaching through the experience of Rotary members. The Project is built on five fundamental pillars:

1. **Analysis and selection** of startups to ensure **effective matching** with Rotary coaches.
2. **Personalized tutoring** through **regular meetings** between startups and Coaches.
3. **Monitoring and reporting** to **assess progress** and **optimize support**.
4. **Communication and networking** to foster knowledge exchange.
5. **Startup Events** to provide visibility and **networking opportunities**.



## Official Documents

The official documents of the Project include:

### TRAINING

- *Project Overview* (this document)
- *Project Managers Onboarding Document*: A practical guide for new Project Managers, detailing project management procedures.
- *Know How Tips*: A collection of conversation ideas and advice for coaches to use in their sessions with startups.

### OPERATIONS

- *Project Management Team*: A document—updated whenever the team changes—listing the current composition of the project management team.
- *Coach Competencies*: A document to be shared with new coaches interested in joining the project, where they can highlight their experience and interests to ensure more efficient matchmaking.
- *Startup Profile / Detailed Sheet for New Startups*: A form for startups wishing to join the project, used to later create their simplified profile slide.
- *Startups Summary / Simplified Profiles*: A presentation containing all the simplified profiles of the startups participating in the project.
- *Matchmaking Coaches-Startups*: A key document that must be kept up to date. It records all coach–startup relationships within the project.

### LEGAL

- *NDA for Project Managers*: To be signed by each member of the project management team at the beginning of their involvement in the project.
- *NDA for Coaches and Startups*: To be signed by each coach for every individual startup relationship. If a coach supports multiple startups, they must sign one NDA per startup. Once signed by both parties (Coach–Startup), the document is then signed by a Rotary representative to ensure its validity.

### COMMUNICATION

- *Project Presentation*: A presentation designed to introduce the project and its values at both the district and international levels.
- *“Monthly PowerPoint Update” Presentation*: Used by the project management team to update the club or to track progress internally. Although originally monthly, it can be adapted to a quarterly format as needed.
- *Job Posting USI / External*: A job ad to promote the position both through university portals (e.g., USI CareerGate) and more general platforms.



## Project Management Team

The “Working Group” of the Rotary Club Lugano-Lago, composed of Jon Becker, Nicola Moresi, Matteo Bianda, Marco Strazzi, and Stefano Colombo, leads the Project at the strategic level and defines its development guidelines.

The Project Management (“PM”) team handles day-to-day operations, coordinating activities, ensuring effective matchmaking between Rotary coaches and startups, and overseeing project monitoring.

PMs who are members of Rotaract can provide details about the coaches and help facilitate contact when challenges arise. To ensure continuity, a job posting is always published on USI CareerGate to recruit new candidates.

The current PM team members and their contact details are listed in the Project Management Team document, as the team is periodically updated.

New PMs rely on the following documents to begin their work:

- Overview – Supporting Startups Project (this document)
- Project Managers Onboarding Document
- Know-How Tips & Lessons Learned
- Job Posting USI / External

## Project Structure

The Project is structured into several operational phases:

### Analysis and Matchmaking

Rotary coaches (both members and authorized external participants) indicate:

- Available hours
- Areas of expertise
- Soft skills

#### Related documents:

- **Competenze Coach / Coach Skills:** form to be completed in order to map each Rotary coach's skills.
- **Matchmaking Coaches-Startups:** table managed by the PM team for coach-startup pairings.



Startups, in turn, provide a detailed description of their business.

**Related documents:**

- **Startup Profile / Scheda Dettagliata di Nuove Startup:** detailed intake form completed by the startup.
- **Startups Summary / Profili Semplificati:** simplified one-pagers for coaches, prepared by the PM team.

The PM team processes the matchmaking based on the information collected. Rotary coaches indicate the startup(s) they are interested in, but the initial contact is always initiated by the startup toward the Rotary coach.

## Coaching

Meetings can take place either online or in person, with a recommended minimum of 1 hour per week.

**Related documents:**

- **NDA Coaches and Startup:** signed by both parties to ensure confidentiality.
- **NDA Project Managers:** ensures confidentiality for internal project management.

## Reporting and Monitoring

The PM collects data and feedback to track the progress of the Project:

- Hours provided
- Quality of interactions
- Startup progress
- Observations and suggestions

**Related document:**

- **Monthly Update template:** template for monthly reports and internal visibility.



## Updates and Events

### Newsletter and Updates

Each month, a project update is prepared for internal sharing or broader communication. These updates can be included in the Rotary Club's monthly bulletin, alternating focus between new startups and key milestones (e.g., reaching 100 hours of mentoring).

### Startup Evenings

Startup Evenings are informal gatherings between startups, Rotary coaches, and other interested Rotarians. During these events, startups (both current and new) have the opportunity to share their progress, discuss new challenges, and exchange ideas with experienced professionals. The event encourages networking and facilitates coach–startup matchmaking in a relaxed and dynamic environment.

#### Related documents:

- **Project Presentation:** used to present the Project to new participants or guests.
- **Monthly Update Template:** used to share periodic updates and impact metrics.

## Conclusion

The “Affiancare le Startup in Ticino” Project is a constantly evolving initiative with the goal of becoming not only a national and potentially international model, but also a driver of economic growth in Ticino (and beyond), while demonstrating the importance of Rotary values.

*Rotary International President for 2021/22, Shekhar Mehta, encouraged members to be more engaged in service projects:*

*“Caring for and serving others is the best way to live because it changes not only the lives of others, but also our own.”*

*Serve to change lives!*

Thanks to the active collaboration of Rotary members, the Project continues to grow, strengthening the entrepreneurial fabric of Canton Ticino and creating development opportunities for local startups.

For any questions or suggestions, the Project Management Team in Lugano remains available..