



**FOUNDATION FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP
YOUNG ENTERPRISE DENMARK**

The Danish Ministerial Partnership for Entrepreneurship Education

**Structure for enhancing entrepreneurship education in collaboration with
the Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship – Young Enterprise**

Foreword

This document serves to describe how the Danish Government has organized its entrepreneurship efforts in order to reach all educational institutions in Denmark. Special attention is given to the kind of relationship which has been built across Danish ministries and between the Partnership and the Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship – Young Enterprise.

The document can be used as a source of inspiration for other governments who would like to strengthen their focus on entrepreneurship education.

Background

During the past 10 years, the Danish government has proactively been focused on developing a more entrepreneurial education system – making use of external operators. The first decentralized initiative, which was government supported, was funded through individual ministries. These operators were to support the development of entrepreneurship education at different educational levels. Some of these organizations were private and other purely government funded – however at the beginning, there was little coordination between the ministries involved.

In 2010 the four (4) ministries involved, in education, joined forces and wrote a collective strategy highlighting the key visions for a united strategy. This strategy was later followed up by a supplementary Innovation Strategy in 2012.

Involved in the strategy were and still are the following ministries:

- Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs

The collective strategy had at least three key objectives:

- Entrepreneurship education should be imbedded in education from pre-school to PhD level.
- The ministries collected their financial resources in one operator: The Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship – Young Enterprise.
- A partnership structure was created across the 4 ministries involved.

The strategy has caused a significant rise in the number of students and teachers involved in entrepreneurship education – and it has also redirected many objectives of the educational system. While entrepreneurship was not on any educational agenda 10 years back, it is now among the top educational priorities.

Entrepreneurship education from pre-school to PhD

A key vision of the government is that students across all age groups should gain competencies in entrepreneurship. This vision is built on a well-documented understanding that entrepreneurship education has a significant impact on students with later general economic contributions to the society, but also that it affects students' personal attitudes to education, friends etc.

In the government strategy it is also a collective vision that by focusing on entrepreneurship education across all age groups, one stands a better chance of ensuring a progressive learning experience. Hence the Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship – Young Enterprise has also developed one of the first models for progression in entrepreneurial learning.

The Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship – Young Enterprise

In order to carry out the collective entrepreneurship strategy, the government decided to appoint an operator for its strategy. The private (NGO) Young Enterprise (founded in 1993) was asked to extend their focus to include a number of new areas of responsibility, and to operate on a national level as "The Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship".

Today the objectives of the Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship - Young Enterprise are to support educational institutions in accordance with the vision of the government which is to ensure that more students at all educational levels are introduced to - and participate in - entrepreneurship education, thus ensuring the integration of entrepreneurship in the Danish education system. The Foundation offers a number of "carrots" to the educational institutions to back the government "sticks". Hence some of the key activities of the foundation are to:

- Be a knowledge centre for entrepreneurship education.
- Fund projects on the development of new courses and educational practice.
- Ensure competence building of teachers.
- Create and distribute teaching materials.
- Offer networks among teachers at all levels
- Participate in international networks
- Administer competitions and other activities by supporting an entrepreneurial culture.
- Measure the development and effects of the initiative.

The Foundation is organized as a private organization with the legal status of an NGO. The strategic direction is set by a private board and operationalized by a professional CEO and staff. The organization is also supported by a board of representatives.

Financially the Foundation is mainly supported by government funding, private sponsorships and EU projects. The government funding is negotiated once a year at a political level, and later described in a key performance indicator based contract signed by the ministries and the CEO of the Foundation.

Partnership across the 4 ministries

The ministries behind the entrepreneurship initiative are organized in a partnership with an appointed chairman from the Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs (contact: Anders Hoffmann). The partnership has frequent bilateral meetings and 4 yearly official meetings with the Foundation.

The key objectives of the partnership are to:

- Develop common political objectives for entrepreneurship in the education sector.
- Monitor and support the Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship.
- Oversee the need for legal changes.
- Support the ministers in their knowledge on entrepreneurship subjects.

On a frequent basis the Foundation has interaction with members of the partnership to ensure a coherent view on a wide range of matters.

The Partnership also involves parties from the education sector on an ongoing basis to secure that there is backing for the strategy throughout the sector.

Factors of successful collaboration and implementation

Since the partnership between the government and the Foundation was established in 2010 a few learning outcomes can be extracted of what has made the partnership so effective:

- Make quantifiable measures of success: Every year the government and the Foundation have set quantifiable targets of what should be achieved. This has made it easy to argue for what is expected during the year.
- Trust in the relationship: Over the years a high level of trust has developed. This has made way for a more open dialogue about what key activities were needed and how these were best achieved.
- One operator: Before 2010 the government was sponsoring many fragmented activities. However, since the establishment of the Foundation it has been the role of the Foundation to fund all entrepreneurship activities which may accrue. This division of responsibility is important to ensure that a more targeted use of funding resources also clearly portrays the role of the foundation. This also ensures that resources for developments are put to the most efficient use.
- Coherence across ministries: Since the establishment of the partnership the urgency of a coherent perspective of needed actions to unfold entrepreneurship has emerged.