DII WHAT WE OFFER

At Dii, we believe that successful incubation requires more than just resources; it demands a supportive ecosystem that evolves with the project. We offer a holistic service model anchored by **Deep Binding Mentorship**, enriched by the **Dii Start-up School** and **Community Engagement** initiatives, and sustained by essential **Financial Support**. This integrated framework ensures every team receives customized guidance and the necessary fuel throughout their innovation journey.

3.1 Deep Binding Mentorship (DBM)

Dii does not simply assign advisors; it connects project teams with dedicated partners for their entire incubation journey. Through the full journey **“Deep Binding”** mechanism, student teams receive consistent, high-quality guidance from vetted industry experts, investors, or experienced founders.

The Mentorship Process

1. **Transparent Selection:** Project teams have access to detailed Mentor Profiles, allowing them to review the experts' backgrounds, industry resources, and specific project preferences.
2. **Mentor Showcase:** Before the matching process, teams participate in a Mentor Showcase to interact directly with potential mentors and understand their advising styles.
3. **Mutual Selection:** Dii employs a double-blind preference system where both the project teams and the mentors rank their preferences. Dii facilitates the final matching to ensure the best fit for both parties.
4. **Formal Agreement:** Upon matching, the project team and the mentor sign an Engagement Agreement. This document formalizes the relationship, guaranteeing a minimum of two in-depth sessions per month and establishing clear milestones.

Value and Partnership

- **Actionable Support:** Mentors are committed to delivering tangible value—such as refining business plans, designing user interviews, or providing referrals to industry networks.
- **Long-Term Partnership:** Dii supports a framework for Future Equity Incentives. Should a project evolve into a commercial venture, this framework provides a pathway for teams to negotiate with mentors regarding independent commercial arrangements (e.g., advisory shares), fostering a long-term partnership aligned with the venture's success.

3.2 Teaching Assistant: A Peer Companion and Liaison

Recognizing the challenge of balancing innovation projects with academic life, Dii has established **Teaching Assistant** staffed by dedicated **student fellows**. Acting as "peer companions" and "buddies," the TA ensures that project teams feel supported and connected throughout the incubation process.

- **Operational Support & Accountability:** Each project team is paired with a TA fellow who serves as a dedicated accountability partner. These fellows closely monitor the project's timeline, providing friendly reminders and operational checks to help teams stay **on track** with their scheduled milestones and deliverables.
- **Liaison to Dii Administration:** The TA acts as a direct **bridge** between project teams and the Dii administrative staff. Fellows facilitate smooth communication, ensuring that the teams' feedback, resource requests, and operational questions are promptly conveyed to the Dii management team for resolution.
- **Process Navigation:** TA fellows assist teams in navigating the administrative procedures of the incubation program. They provide "on-the-ground" guidance on incubation workflows, ensuring teams understand how to complete quarterly reports, access facilities, and follow program protocols efficiently.

3.3 Dii Start-up School

3.3.1 Life-Cycle Lectures

Dii combines practical skill-building with expert insights to form a comprehensive curriculum tailored to the specific **Life Cycle Stage** of the projects. The curriculum covers eight core modules designed to equip project teams with the essential toolkit for innovation:

Phase 1: Mindset & Strategy

- **Value and Purpose:** Exploring "Why Start-up?" to build founder resilience and a mission-driven culture.
- **Business Model 101:** Transitioning from the Lean Canvas to a full Business Plan to ensure strategic viability.

Phase 2: Execution & Building

- **User Discovery:** Techniques for finding and verifying the first 100 "true love" users to validate market demand.
- **MVP Development:** Strategies for building and iterating a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) at low cost.
- **Team Dynamics:** Best practices for recruiting, managing, and incentivizing early-stage teams.
- **Legal Essentials:** Navigating equity structures, company incorporation, and Intellectual Property (IP) rights.

Phase 3: Growth & Communication

- **Branding & Storytelling:** Leveraging communication strategies and digital media to build a strong market presence.
- **Pitch Perfect:** Mastering the art of storytelling to deliver a compelling 3-minute pitch to investors and judges.

3.3.2 Entrepreneur Speaker Series (ESS)

The Entrepreneur Speaker Series (ESS) is an engaging program designed to educate, inspire, and empower aspiring student entrepreneurs and innovators. One of the key highlights of the ESS is the opportunity to learn from accomplished industry experts, successful entrepreneurs, and subject matter specialists. These guest speakers are carefully selected for their expertise, experience, and ability to inspire and motivate the audience. They share their personal stories of success and failure, providing valuable insights and lessons learned from their journeys. The ESS is organized into themes. Each theme focuses on a specific aspect of entrepreneurship, such as capital, business strategy, marketing, finance, or innovation, allowing participants to choose the topics that are most relevant to their interests and goals. It also offers a unique opportunity for attendees to connect with fellow entrepreneurs, potential investors, and industry professionals. These connections can lead to valuable partnerships, collaborations, and even investment opportunities.

3.3.3 Innovation and Entrepreneurship Essentials (IEE)

The Innovation and Entrepreneurship Essentials (IEE) is a massive online open course (MOOC) hosted on Canvas. Through a series of engaging video lessons, case studies, and interactive exercises, students will explore the key concepts and frameworks underpinning successful innovation and venture creation. The MOOC offers a flexible, self-guided learning experience ideal for those seeking to develop an entrepreneurial mindset or complement their existing knowledge with essential innovation and entrepreneurship concepts. All members of the teams applying for Dii's incubation program will be invited to enroll in the IEE. Students can also self-enroll for the course at any time on Canvas.

3.4 Start-up Community Engagement (SCE)

Innovation is rarely a solitary endeavor; it flourishes in dynamic ecosystems where diverse disciplines intersect, and theoretical knowledge meets practical application. Dii recognizes that a vibrant community is essential for fostering the serendipitous collisions of ideas that lead to breakthrough solutions. To bridge the gap between academic abstraction and real-world complexity, Dii curates a series of immersive experiences designed to cultivate a collaborative spirit and broaden the horizons of student innovators.

3.4.1 Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration (Dii Mix)

Central to this engagement is the **Dii Mix** initiative, which serves as a catalyst for interdisciplinary exchange. Dii organizes a variety of high-engagement community events that bring together students from the arts, sciences, and social sciences. These gatherings range from intensive problem-solving marathons and rapid prototyping workshops to casual gathering sessions and creative skills labs. By participating in these activities, project teams enter a psychological safe space for experimentation, allowing them to step outside their academic silos, exchange unique perspectives, and identify potential co-founders or teammates with complementary skill sets.

3.4.2 Industry Immersion (Field Trips)

Beyond the campus, Dii facilitates deep industry immersion to ground student projects in market reality. Through curated field visits, project teams gain direct access to the innovation value chain. These excursions typically cover critical sectors such as advanced manufacturing, digital technology, venture capital, and social innovation. By visiting industrial parks, R&D centers, and investment firms, students observe operational workflows firsthand, understand industry standards, and gain crucial insights into the supply chain and market dynamics that shape successful ventures.

3.5 Financial Support

Seed Funding

The DKU Innovation and Entrepreneurship Initiative provides seed funding opportunities to promising projects admitted into the incubation program. This seed funding is designed to support innovative research, and early-stage venture development activities, such as:

- Project research and development
- Data Acquisition and Analysis
- Participation in domestic and international academic conferences, seminars, workshops, etc.
- Prototype development and product testing
- Market research and customer validation
- Initial operational expenses (e.g., software licenses, equipment, and supplies)
- Legal and intellectual property protection costs
- Travel expenses for field research, customer meetings or industry events

Seed funding is typically awarded on a competitive basis and requires project teams to outline their funding requirements, milestones, and expected outcomes in the project proposal submitted at the time of application. Dii's selection committee evaluates these proposals based on the given selection criteria and the funding required by the project team. The amount of seed funding provided for different types and categories of projects is shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Funding for different levels and types of the Dachuang Project

Project Level	Institutional-level	Provincial-level	National-level
Funding			
ITP	≥2,500RMB	≥5,000RMB	≥20,000RMB
ETP	≥2,500RMB	≥5,000RMB	≥20,000RMB
EPP	≥10,000RMB	≥10,000RMB	≥50,000RMB

Depending on the level of financial support from DKU, the amount of project funding for each class of the Dachuang program will be adjusted appropriately. Successful recipients of seed funding are expected to adhere to strict reporting and accountability measures, including regular progress updates, financial reporting, and achievement of agreed-upon milestones.

Angel Investors and Venture Capitalists

Dii actively collaborates with a network of angel investors and venture capital firms interested in supporting promising student-led ventures. Through organized pitch events, investor showcases, and facilitated introductions, project teams have the opportunity to present their business plans and seek investment capital.

To prepare for these investment opportunities, Dii provides training on pitching techniques, investor deck development, and term sheet negotiation. Additionally, mentors and advisors offer guidance on navigating the due diligence process and structuring favorable investment terms.

Grants and Government Funding

Project teams are encouraged to explore various grant programs and government funding opportunities relevant to their industry or focus area. The Dii team assists in identifying suitable grant programs, providing guidance on application processes, and ensuring compliance with funding requirements.

Examples of potential grant sources include:

- Provincial, municipal and local economic development grants
- Industry-specific research and development grants
- Foundation-sponsored research or entrepreneurship grants

Effective Utilization and Management of Funds

Regardless of the funding source, Dii emphasizes the importance of effective fund utilization and financial management. Project teams receive training and guidance on budgeting, cash flow management, and financial reporting to ensure responsible and transparent use of funds. Details, see the attached Guideline for Funding Utilization:

3.6 Space and Facilities

Dii recognizes the importance of providing a conducive and well-equipped environment for student innovators and entrepreneurs to bring their ideas to life. To support the various stages of technology/product development and business operations, Dii, in collaboration with the Innovation Lab, offers state-of-the-art laboratory and workspace facilities.

Prototyping Lab and Maker Space

For projects involving physical product development or hardware components, Dii provides access to the fully-equipped Prototyping Lab (LIB 1121) and Maker Space (LIB 1131). These facilities are designed to support a wide range of activities. The Prototyping Lab provides training, guidance, and support to project teams throughout the prototyping process. Safety protocols and best practices are strictly enforced to ensure a secure and productive working environment.

Co-Working Space

Recognizing the importance and value of cross-pollination of ideas and interdisciplinary collaboration, teamwork, and professional workspace, Innovation Lab provides dedicated shared office spaces and co-working areas (IB 2049) designed to foster interaction and knowledge sharing among student innovators and entrepreneurs.
These collaborative spaces feature:

- Dedicated workstations with computer and internet access
- Collaborative workspaces for team meetings and brainstorming sessions
- Open floor plans with flexible seating arrangements
- Whiteboards and ideation tools for brainstorming sessions

Access and Utilization

Access to the laboratory and co-working is granted to project teams admitted into the incubation program. Teams are required to complete safety training and adhere to established protocols and guidelines for facility usage. Lab access can be requested through https://ine.dukekunshan.edu.cn/innovation-lab/lab-access-application.

To ensure fair and efficient utilization of resources, the Innovation Lab implements a reservation system for shared spaces and equipment. Project teams can book facilities and resources based on their specific needs and project timelines.

Additionally, Dii encourages cross-collaboration and resource sharing among teams, fostering an environment of knowledge exchange and mutual support.

3.7 Other Resources

Beyond the core offerings of the training program, mentorship, financial support, and physical facilities, Dii provides access to a wide range of additional resources to support student entrepreneurs throughout their journey.

Branding and Marketing Support

Effective branding and marketing are essential for establishing a strong market presence and attracting customers. Dii offers branding and marketing support services to **Entrepreneurship Practice Projects at the provincial level and above**, to assist student teams in developing and executing effective strategies.

These services may include:

- Brand identity development (e.g., logo design, brand guidelines)
- Website design and development
- Social media management and content creation
- Digital marketing and search engine optimization (SEO) strategies
- Promotional material design (e.g., brochures, flyers, trade show materials)
- Public relations and media outreach support

Legal and Accounting Advisory Services

Navigating the legal and financial complexities of starting and operating a business can be challenging for student entrepreneurs. To address these needs, Dii offers access to legal and accounting advisory services for **Entrepreneurship Practice Projects at the provincial level and above** through partnerships with professional firms and subject matter experts.

These services may include:

- Entity formation and structuring advice
- Intellectual property protection and licensing guidance
- Contract review and negotiation support
- Tax planning and compliance assistance
- Bookkeeping and financial reporting guidance