Paper ID: 75692
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IAF BUSINESSES AND INNOVATION SYMPOSIUM (E6)
Interactive Presentations - IAF BUSINESS INNOVATION SYMPOSIUM (IPB)

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ACCELERATORS AND INCUBATORS - AN AUSTRALIAN CASE STUDY

Abstract

Accelerators and incubators act as convergence points for entrepreneurs, investors and mentors. Long the exclusive dominion of Silicon Valley's internet and software industries, there are now an increasing number of programs around the world focusing on developing a vibrant commercial space sector and capitalising on the new unprecedented entrepreneurial leadership and private investment opportunities within the space economy. With so many now emerging, all in different shapes, sizes and styles, the question remains about their efficacy and whether they truly help space start-ups succeed. This paper will detail the experience of QL Space, an emerging Australian start up, on the University of South Australia's Innovation and Collaboration Centre's (ICC) Venture Catalyst Space program – Australia's first of its kind space accelerator and incubator. Through exploring the approach taken by the ICC as it seeks to support new space ventures within Australia's emerging space ecosystem, as well as the ultimate results it had in developing and growing QL Space, this paper will identify the beneficial practices of this specific incubator and accelerator program. The aim in doing so, will be to showcase the replicable forms of intervention that may also have relevance for other entrepreneurs and corporate innovation programs within the international space economy, that can help act as catalysts for supporting new space ventures in other countries.