

TOILET ACCELERATOR – TOILET BOARD COALITION

• Background

Founded in 2014, The Toilet Board Coalition (TBC) was created by sector leading businesses to bring a business view, approach and new solutions to the global sanitation crisis. We aim to bring speed and scale, by working in partnership, to achieve universal access to sanitation before 2030.

The TBC is a business platform enabling private sector engagement; connecting large and small companies; and ensuring close collaboration between private, public and non-profit sectors with the common goal to accelerate the business of sanitation for all.

They work by:

- Catalysing a robust business sector to deliver accessible sanitation to all, at speed, at scale, and at a level of profit which ensures sustainability across the value chain.
- Investing in emerging and frontier markets – including the provision of hands-on corporate mentorship and supporting access to capital to scale
- Bringing global marketing power to raise awareness of the crisis and to present business solutions that meet the needs of people today and satisfy our aspirations for the future

• Stage/Scale

Ongoing, Annual

• Objective of the assignment

To provide sanitation businesses for a duration of 12 months through a small business-large business mentorship programme model

• What was done

Since 2016, the corporate Accelerator has supported sanitation businesses and entrepreneurs serving low-income markets to help them overcome barriers to scale in order to bridge the gap of 2.4 billion people still lacking access to sanitation. More than toilets alone, we are supporting commercially viable businesses at every point in the sanitation value chain, including sanitation infrastructure, service providers, collection, treatment and transformation (up cycling of toilet resources - *waste*).

The Toilet Accelerator works with sanitation businesses in 3 ways:

- **Accelerating:** Identifying promising sanitation business models with prospect for scale – and matching expert mentors from across the TBC membership to address critical business issues to ensure access to capital and partnerships for scale.
- **Co-innovating:** Co-innovating new solutions where critical components of the system do not exist, i.e. leveraging the innovation & R&D departments of our sophisticated TBC member companies to solve business and technology issues.
- **Bundling:** Identifying opportunities to bundle sanitation with other solutions also target the same users, i.e. affordable housing, water, energy, and mobile for development.

The Toilet Accelerator is seeking to work with businesses that meet the following criteria:

- **Market-based:** Commercially viable businesses, at every point in the sanitation value chain, delivering sanitation to those without access, profitably.
- **Innovative:** Product offering that is aspirational for its target market and provides an improved solution to the market.
- **Scalable:** The business is positioned to deliver sanitation at scale and is connected to the full value chain of sanitation service delivery.
- **Emerging & Frontier Markets:** Target market includes populations most at risk in Asia and Africa.

Benefits The TBC Toilet Accelerator offers sanitation businesses:

- 6-12 months of in-kind business support and hands-on mentoring tailored to your needs and the challenges facing your business.
- Access to global and local mentors: business experts from leading multinational companies - sales, marketing, supply-chain, financial planning, etc and technical experts from leading companies and stakeholders – research & development, engineering, IT, mobile, etc
- A business intelligence & experiential learnings : consumer insights study; social & environmental audit; financial analysis
- Partnership brokering & brand building through affiliation with TBC member corporate, NGO and institutional brands
- Access to capital upon graduation from the Toilet Accelerator (Capital from TBC members and TBC investor network based on investment readiness)
- Membership to Toilet Entrepreneur Country, a global peer-to-peer network of sanitation business entrepreneurs and Alumni of the Toilet Accelerator Program

• **Challenges and Issues**

- Poor sanitation remains one of our planet's greatest challenges. 2.4 billion people do not have access to a safe toilet. Almost one billion of these practice open defecation. The consequences range from public health to nutrition, loss of dignity, gender inequality, education, water quality, and broader economic development.
- Government action and traditional philanthropy cannot solve the problem alone. The global sanitation community has been resounding in their call for increased private sector engagement. Innovative business models are starting to emerge that aim to improve access to sanitation through the market.
- In many sectors business approaches have enabled speed and scale by attracting commercial investments and catalysing robust private sector engagement. They offer products and services that people are willing to pay for; focusing on aspirations over needs. A business sector delivering sanitation to low-income markets has remained nascent however, with pioneering business models remaining small scale and unprofitable.

• **Innovation**

- The facilitation of a systems level approach to co-create the necessary ecosystem to support sanitation businesses to scale - together with leaders from business, governments, investment and civil society

- The management of a global pipeline and ongoing process to identify and support the acceleration of innovative market-based sanitation solutions at each point in the sanitation value chain
- The existence of a pre- investment capacity building program to enable the engagement of leading multinational businesses, global sanitation experts and social investors to mentor promising business models for a 6-12 month period with the aim that they will graduate to private investment or partnership to achieve commercial viability and scale
- The creation of a peer group of sanitation entrepreneurs to foster ongoing peer learning and cross fertilization between businesses that have gone through the TBC Toilet Accelerator (TBC Toilet Entrepreneur Country)
- The creation of a platform of knowledge about how to develop, pilot, refine and scale business models to deliver robust sanitation systems to the BoP.

• **Lessons learnt**

- Following its formation in 2014, the TBC carried out a landscaping exercise to identify promising sanitation business models. This study identified about 100 pioneering projects implementing or testing market-based approaches to deliver sanitation to low-income consumers based on ten distinct models.¹ Of the 100 projects, the TBC studied 15 projects and businesses more in-depth including on-site visits.
- From this, two models were prioritised by the TBC for a feasibility study phase which was undertaken in 2015: portable toilets services for densely populated urban areas and developing supply chains for rural and peri-urban areas (i.e. toilet entrepreneur networks). The TBC selected these two approaches based on the strong potential for financial sustainability, potential for added value from private-sector support, and the aspirational individual sanitation solutions for families on offer.
- The learning from this experimental feasibility phase has paved the way for the TBC Toilet Accelerator Program. The Toilet Accelerator Program allows the TBC to work with a new selection of promising sanitation business models each year. It is the aim that this annual program approach will allow us to monitor the progress of an emergent sector, connect learnings and build on successes year on year in order to accelerate impact.

• **Implementer Contact Persons**

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• **Sources and References**

- Toilet Board Coalition website – www.toiletboard.org