

Employee Engagement at a Global Scale

— Case Study

Along with ChangemakerXchange, a flagship program of Ashoka, BMW set out to create a mentoring program for global changemakers that would leverage the skills & expertise of top BMW employees to have an impact. The goals of the program were to give social entrepreneurs from the global ChangemakerXchange community a chance to get quality mentorship, to allow both mentors and entrepreneurs to develop new innovation skills and a more agile mindset, and to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

 Multi-Sector

 Oct. 2018 to Jan. 2019

 Global

 Type: Impact

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Challenge

Enable mutual learning between BMW employees and global social entrepreneurs

In 2018, BMW, like many companies today looking for ways to connect to innovators and incorporate entrepreneurial thinking, wanted to develop their own entrepreneurship support and mentoring program. However, the costs for global reaching, in-person entrepreneurship programs add up quickly due to the dispersed network of people involved, event and transportation costs, and all of the required planning. At the same time BMW was facing other questions like, What core methodology would the participants follow? How would they make sure their employees were trained for the task and had the right tools to be the best mentors possible? How would they coordinate meaningful collaboration across many countries?

Solution

BMW builds an entrepreneurship mentoring program from scratch

When it came to creating a program that guides employees to become mentors, BMW knew that we had all of the right tools already in place. Our entrepreneurship mentoring process fit perfectly with busy schedules and the easy-to-use online platform eliminated physical constraints and time limitations for this international group. In the first edition of BMW's program in partnership with ChangemakerXchange, 10 BMW employees mentored 10 entrepreneurs via the Bridge for Billions platform. The mentor-entrepreneur teams not only got all of our remote collaboration benefits like a shared online workspace, the ability to leave comments on the business tools, and a private video room, but we organized specialized calls for the mentors and entrepreneurs with tailored content for each. We ran an initial mentors training call for the BMW mentors, weekly group check-ins throughout the 3 months, and a closing session, all of which allowed the BMW employees to get to know new coworkers of theirs from around the world. The mentors were able to further develop their leadership and management abilities and take pride in their work by giving back in a meaningful way.



Jonas Nipkow

ChangemakerXchange, Program Admin

“Bridge for Billions should be the backbone of any mentoring program. Without the well-structured platform and its guiding role, the program would not have been a success! What differs Bridge from any other program is the human aspect; the support received from Bridge staff throughout the program was outstanding and influenced the overall satisfaction highly positive.”



George Bogey

BMW Group France,
Marketing Service Specialist

“Using Bridge for Billions was very important; the program would not have been successful without it. ... It makes sure both the mentor and the mentee get the best out of the program and the final result is a ready to use business case.”

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Result

10 BMW employees volunteered to mentor 10 entrepreneurs from around the world whose projects ranged from providing mental health aid in India to reducing waste in Japan. Entrepreneurs & mentors work together while being guided by the platform and with regular check-ins from Bridge for Billions and CXC staff to ensure that the experience was smooth, efficient, and productive.

Mentors stated that with the guidance of Bridge for Billions they gained more confidence in their work and took pride in the company they work for while learning how to become more flexible and open-minded. Meanwhile, the entrepreneurs were able to develop a business plan and new skills that they could use to improve their business idea. Thanks to the volunteer mentors, they developed the confidence and structure needed to move their ventures forward.



10

Changemakers Supported



10

BMW Mentors Involved



92%

Average program satisfaction score



50%

Female Founders



11

Countries Represented



About the Clients

BMW is one of the most recognizable luxury automobile brands in the world. With such global brand recognition and production offices in 14 countries, leveraging their visibility to develop an entrepreneurship program was a strategic decision for the company. The initiative was championed by BMW Group France but the mentors that participated in the program hailed from different international offices, further promoting collaboration between the different teams.

ChangemakerXchange is a community created by Ashoka which connects and empowers over 600 young social innovators across 80 countries – all dedicating their lives to making the world a better place.





Do you want to build a bridge with us?

partnerships@bridgeforbillions.org