

Overview

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!gnite

small business
start-ups
AN SSI INITIATIVE

This overview of Ignite provides details of how Ignite operates and the key components of the Ignite approach to facilitation.



01 Purpose of Ignite

SSI Ignite Small Business Start-Ups supports recently arrived refugees and other newcomers to start-up their own business or consolidate an existing one.

Ignite is designed to tap into the entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and experience of participants and support motivated individuals to navigate the local business environment, and design, develop and grow their own start-up.

Ignite has been developed and adapted from the successful Sirolli model of Enterprise Facilitation® and tailored specifically to newly arrived humanitarian refugees and other newcomers who wish to start a business in Australia.

The aim of Ignite is to enable entrepreneurs from refugee and other newcomer backgrounds to realise their business dream and start-up a viable business enterprise. To achieve this, Ignite primarily focuses on reducing barriers which prevent motivated entrepreneurs from starting a business.

This requires Ignite staff to work closely with referred entrepreneurs, to help them refine their business concept, and then link them to industry experts and other professionals and volunteers who can assist with specific aspects of their enterprise.



02 Target Group and Criteria

Ignite is specifically designed for people with refugee backgrounds and other newcomers to the country. To be eligible, a participant must:

1. Have arrived in the country as a refugee or under another category of Australia’s Humanitarian Program; OR
2. Be a newcomer to the country, having arrived in the last 10 years; AND
3. Be passionate about starting their own business.

Note:

- Although English language proficiency is not a prerequisite for admission into Ignite, an ongoing lack of proficiency can pose a barrier to being successful, especially where licensing or formal qualifications are required.
- Interpreters should be organised for any potential entrepreneur requiring assistance, however attendance at intensive language classes are strongly encouraged concurrent with Ignite participation.

Other Desirable Criteria

In addition to the above eligibility criteria, SSI has identified a number of common qualities which successful Ignite entrepreneurs generally demonstrate. These are summarised in Figure 1 (right).

Other desirable qualities of an Ignite entrepreneur include:

Ability to access the Ignite Space. While Ignite staff will travel to referred individuals during the early stages of the Program, direct access to the Resource Team, markets and facilities offered at the Ignite space is essential to benefit from the model. For this

reason, it is not advisable to accept referrals for individuals who are not in the same city/town.

Have a real passion and drive to establish their start-up.

Participants who have been referred to Ignite but are not particularly interested in being in business, tend to drop off once they are required to undertake homework and show independent initiative.

Have a base concept or “seed” about the type of business they wish to establish.

This means that individuals who have not yet formed a business concept (for example, those who may say “I want to start a business, any business”) would not usually proceed beyond Stage 1 until they have defined a specific business concept. These entrepreneurs can be referred to a business incubator and any other type of program for business concept development.

Have a commitment to running an ethical and legal business.

Ignite cannot assist eligible individuals who propose to operate illegal or unethical enterprises or use illegal or unethical business practices.

Have sufficient drive and capacity to take independent steps towards establishing their business.

Eligible individuals who are currently preoccupied with managing major settlement issues may wish to delay proceeding with Ignite until they have the capacity to focus on their business start-up. This criterion does not preclude referrals into Ignite, although it may delay individuals completing Stage 1 and becoming full Ignite entrepreneurs.

Have a capacity to learn and a willingness to seek advice and support when needed.

This requires an openness to new ideas and an ability to take advantage of the assistance provided by Ignite facilitators or the Resource Team, including professional advice and access to Ignite resources.

Further details about the Ignite target group can be found in the Ignite Handbook and Ignite Manual that is made available to all licencees.

Figure 1: Common Qualities of Successful Ignite Entrepreneurs



03 Ignite Operations

As systematically documented in the Ignite Manual, the Ignite model focuses on assisting each Ignite participant to design, develop and grow their start-up based on the Ignite Ecosystem of Support approach- see Figure 2.

The Ecosystem of Support is provided directly by Ignite staff, referred to as Ignite Facilitators as well as through external industry experts, advisors, subject specialists and other volunteers – referred to as Resource team members.



Business Ecosystem of Support

As illustrated in Figure 2, any assistance with a business venture commences with ensuring the entrepreneur has access to required **settlement support services** - namely stable housing, income support, and access to counselling or other professional services. While Ignite staff are not responsible for delivering any of these services, the model is predicated on the entrepreneur being linked into services able to address these basic needs.

Figure 2: Ignite Ecosystem of Support

In the case of Sydney Ignite participants, settlement services are delivered by other parts of SSI, or through migrant support services, community based or mainstream organisations with expertise in settlement processes.

With appropriate consent, Ignite staff will liaise with nominated case workers in settlement support services if issues arise that prevent the entrepreneur from progressing their business venture. For this reason, Ignite views effective settlement services as the foundation of the model.

With settlement support services in place, referred entrepreneurs are encouraged through Ignite to develop and finesse four interconnected components of their business venture as illustrated in the Ecosystem of Support diagram:

- **Viable product or service** testing and development
- **Effective marketing** strategy, including branding and an online presence
- **Sound financial management** and access to business planning and resources
- **Quality administration and compliance** systems covering insurance, qualifications and other legal, registration or regulation issues.

Further details about how the Business Ecosystem of Support is facilitated through Ignite is available to Ignite licencees in the Ignite Manual.

04 Specialist Ignite Training and Capacity Building

In order to fully understand the Ecosystem of Support approach, and to gain business facilitation skills, SSI requires all Ignite personnel (and ideally their managers as well), to receive specialist training from SSI's Ignite Global Manager and Accredited Master Trainer.

Training is delivered after the licence has been signed and all personnel are recruited.

SSI Ignite training and capacity building is intensive, extending over a number of days. Personnel are required to learn the key principles of facilitation used in the Ignite model; observe highly skilled Ignite facilitators performing these roles, in different scenarios, before practicing and demonstrating their skills and techniques.

Organisational Chart

SSI recommends that Ignite be fully integrated into the host organisation's operations and ideally sit alongside other program areas, such as employment services.

As highlighted in Figure 3, the Ignite team should be overseen by a senior Program Manager or Divisional Head who reports directly to the host organisation's Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

To assist in planning and maintaining integration, some organisations may also wish to establish an **Ignite Project Coordination Group** chaired by the Program Manager and comprising senior managers from key

areas of the organisation. SSI Sydney has adopted this practice and reports positive benefits, particularly in terms of streamlining internal referrals to Ignite and whole of organisational promotions.

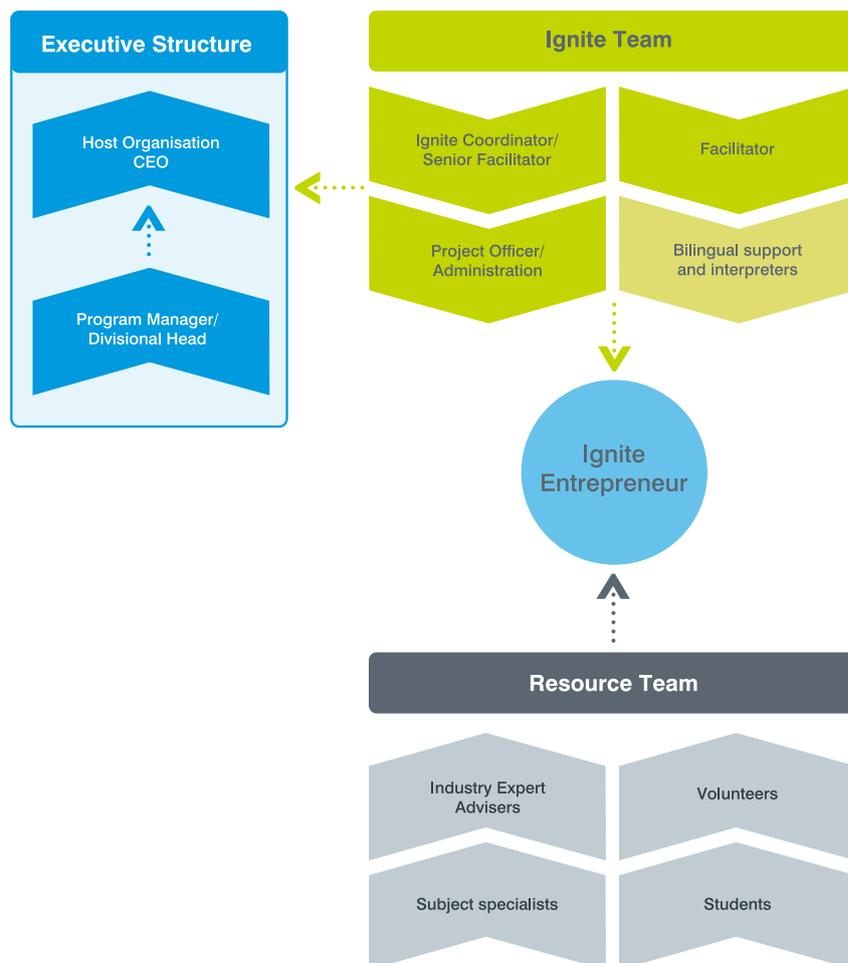


Figure 3: Ignite Organisational Chart

05 Ignite Delivery

Ignite is delivered to each entrepreneur by:

- a) specially trained Ignite Facilitators within the host organisation, and
- b) external experts and volunteers who are members of that participants Resource Team.

Ignite is delivered through the coordinated efforts of an internal Ignite Team based in the host organisation as well as external industry experts, subject specialists and other volunteers who form part of the Ignite Entrepreneur's Business Ecosystem of Support.

Together, these Ignite staff:

- Work with the Ignite participant to refine his or her business concept and identify a potentially viable business venture.
- Provide free and confidential advice and support focused on the Ignite Business Ecosystem of Support model.
- Deliver support and services to address barriers, including access to interpreters, access to professional meeting spaces, and help with business networking.
- Provide access to expert advice on local regulatory requirements, market trends and opportunities.

About the Ignite Team

Reporting to an Executive Structure, the Ignite Team is responsible for day-to-day operations of delivery in the host organisation. The team is comprised of the following specially trained personnel:

Ignite Coordinator (Senior Facilitator) who is responsible for coordinating the administrative and operational aspects of Ignite, performing the role of Senior Facilitator (see below) and regularly liaising with the SSI Ignite Global Manager on any issues where assistance is required.

Ignite Facilitator, who in conjunction with the Senior Facilitator, is responsible for engaging with referred individuals and supporting them throughout the Ignite journey.

Ignite Project Officer/ Administration Assistant who is responsible for small projects which value-add to the overall success of Ignite (i.e. the production of newsletters and monitoring of Ignite information for reports).

Where needed, these staff can draw on bilingual support staff and interpreters matched to the specific language or cultural background of the referred individual.

Role of Coordinator and Senior Ignite Facilitator

SSI recommends the Ignite Team be headed by an Ignite Coordinator who also performs the role of a Senior Facilitator.

This position is responsible for coordinating the administrative and operational aspects of Ignite within the host organisation, and regularly liaising with the SSI Ignite Global Manager.

In addition, the Coordinator is responsible for:

- Promoting Ignite to referring agencies and other stakeholders.
- Scoping high level partnerships and forging links with business bodies and other organisations who may be interested in providing members for the Resource Team.
- Reviewing and allocating all Ignite referrals (where the host organisation has more than one Ignite Facilitator).
- Determining when each entrepreneur is ready to graduate from Ignite.
- Overseeing all Ignite data collection and reporting requirements.
- Reporting to the Executive.

Further details about this role, including a sample job description, is available to licencees in the Ignite Organisation Handbook.

05 Ignite Delivery

Role of Ignite Facilitator

In conjunction with the Senior Ignite Facilitator, the primary role of the Ignite Facilitator is to firstly engage with referred individuals and then support them through the Ignite journey.

Specifically, Senior Ignite Facilitator is responsible for:

- Working with the entrepreneur to develop their start-up business based on the Ignite Business Ecosystem of Support model.
- Identifying and connecting the entrepreneur to Resource Team members who are able to fill in identified gaps.
- Maintaining participant records and reporting to the Coordinator on any issues or challenges arising.

Further details about this role, including a sample job description, is available to licencees in the Ignite Organisation Handbook.

Role of Project Officer/ Administration Assistant

The role of the Ignite Project Officer/ Administrative Assistant is to manage small projects and provide administrative support to the Ignite Coordinator (Senior Facilitator) and Facilitators. This includes:

- Being the first point of contact for Ignite referrals.
- Supporting the Ignite Coordinator (Senior Facilitator) with media requests and promotional opportunities.

- Managing the files and supplies needed to run Ignite.
- Entering data and preparing reports as required.

Further details about this role, plus a sample job description, is available to licencees in the Ignite Organisation Handbook.

Bilingual Support Officers and Interpreters

As many refugees and other newcomers referred to Ignite will be new to the country and not proficient or confident in English, it is important that they be supported by bilingual workers and interpreters.

SSI recommends that host organisations have in place established procedures for accessing bilingual workers, volunteers or paid interpreters for participants who are not confident or proficient in English and/or who request a bicultural support person to be present.

The Resource Team

Resource Team members are external industry experts, subject specialists and other volunteers who are matched to individual Ignite entrepreneurs to address identified gaps in the Business Ecosystem of Support. They are sourced and then introduced to the Ignite entrepreneur by the Ignite Facilitator.

Most commonly, Resource Team members offer entrepreneur advice and support in areas such as:

- Product testing and development
- Professional advice, support and networking
- Marketing and sales strategy
- Financial planning and management
- Preparation of professional promotional materials
- Website design and development
- Assistance and advice regarding licensing, qualifications and association memberships
- Advice on regulatory or legal requirements and other compliance issues
- Work experience relevant to their enterprise
- Other business specific requirements.

Resource Team members can be sourced from a wide range of organisations and generally include professionals working in the community, in small or large-scale businesses, local chambers of commerce, and local government. Resource members may also be subject specialists who are able to provide specific expertise on a venture or business sector or serve as conduits to link entrepreneurs to wider business networks.

Further details about the roles and responsibilities of Resource Team members, and how to engage them, is provided in the Ignite Organisation Handbook.

06 Ignite Resources



The major ongoing costs associated with hosting Ignite relates to covering staffing expenses, however there are some other resources needed to successfully run Ignite. These include:

1) Sufficient office space, equipment and supplies to accommodate the Ignite Team members and support all program activities. This includes:

- Reception and waiting area to receive participants
- Workstations, computers and mobile phones
- Standard office equipment including printers and locked filing cabinets
- Private meeting rooms for Ignite Facilitators to meet with entrepreneurs
- Training or conference room to run group activities.

2) Access to vehicle(s) to enable the Program Coordinator and Facilitators to meet with Ignite participants off-site and/or assist them to make contact with members of their Resource Team, especially for the first time

3) Access to brokerage funding to seed or fund small items needed by an individual entrepreneur and not available through other channels such as:

- web design, hosting and domain name registration
- items such as business cards and flyers
- minor tools for trade.

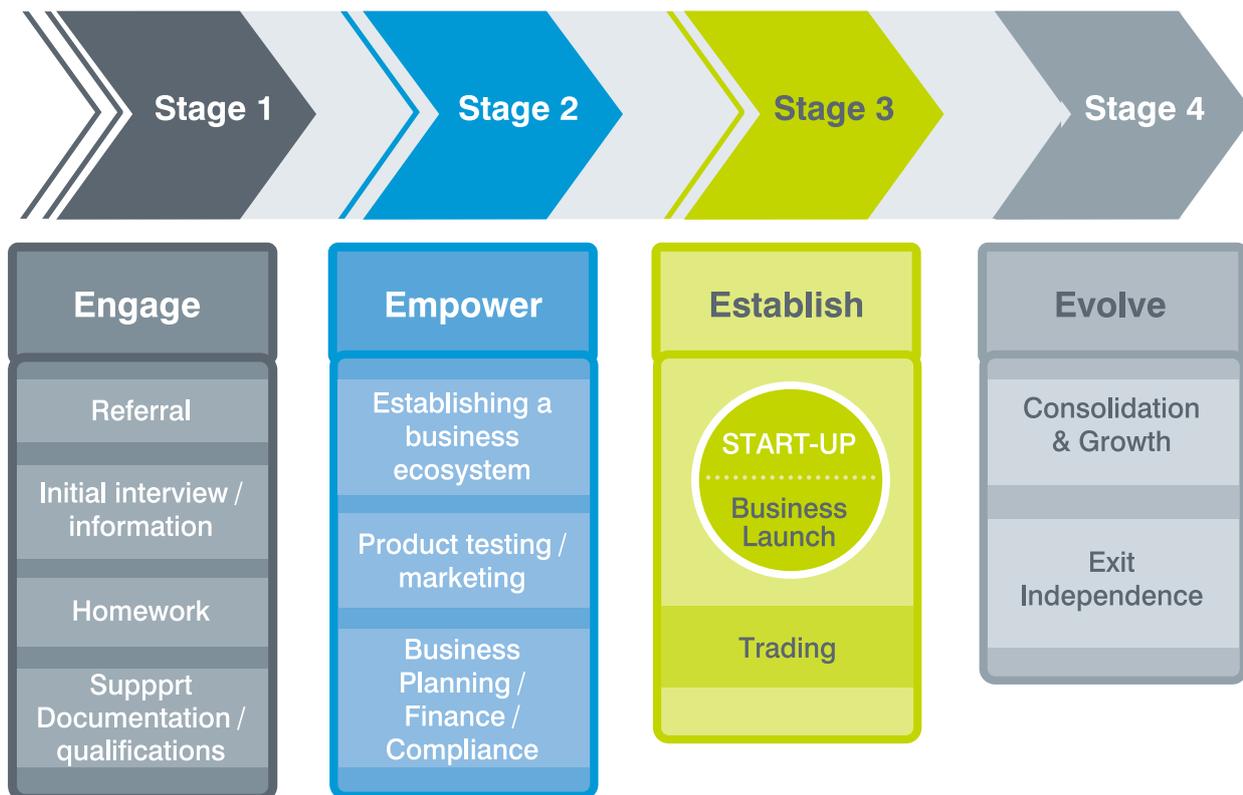
Note:

Ignite Entrepreneurs are not made aware of the availability or quantity of the brokerage funds to avoid creating expectations. This also allows flexibility in how the brokerage fund is allocated, based on need.

SSI Ignite Global Manager is available to provide further information on Ignite Resources. This will vary from organisation to organisation depending on the location of the office and scale of Ignite operations.

07 Ignite Stages

Ignite is divided into four stages of support as detailed in Figure 4 below.



Stage 1 focuses on engaging prospective participants and confirming their interest and commitment to pursuing a specific start-up.

Stage 2 focuses on assisting entrepreneurs with their business ecosystem of support and honing all facets of their business. This stage includes working closely with the Resource Team to address gaps in skills and experience and address other barriers to developing a successful business venture.

Stage 3 focuses on establishing the start-up, including a business launch and a commencement of trading.

Stage 4 focuses on evolving and growing the start-up to operate independently of Ignite.

Figure 4: Ignite Program Stages

contact



For further information and advice or any Ignite query, please contact:

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