



## **COURSE MANUAL**

**Name of the Elective Course: Founders' Studio**

**Course Code:**

**Name of the responsible Faculty Instructor:**  
Prof. Spriha Bhandari

**FALL 2026  
(AY2026-27)**

This document is prepared by the course instructor and contains basic information relevant to the execution of the course. It is the official record for all intents and purposes as far the elective course, *Founders' Studio*, is concerned.

This course manual can be used as a general guide to the subject. However, the instructor can modify, extend or supplement the course (without tampering its basic framework and objectives) for the effective and efficient delivery of the course. The instructor will provide students with reasons for such changes.

## Part I

Course Title: **Founders' Studio**

Course Code:

Course Duration: **One semester, delivered in a weekend intensive format across 9 Saturdays.**

No. of Credit Units: **4 Credits**

Level: **Both**

Medium of Instruction: **English**

Pre-requisites (if applicable): **Prototype of a tech-enabled legal/justice/gov/policy/reg tech solution (Students must apply as a team with an existing idea and at least one early artefact, such as a prototype, clickable mock-up, landing page, workflow, chatbot flow, dashboard, repository, demo, or MVP. Mere interest in entrepreneurship shall not be sufficient.)**

Equivalent Courses: N/A

## Part II

### **1. Acknowledgement of Course Ideators**

This course has been conceptualized and designed by Prof. Spriha Bhandari, drawing on her work in legal technology, access to justice, service design and justice innovation.

### **2. Course Description**

Founders' Studio is an intensive elective designed for students who already have an idea and a working tech-enabled prototype in any of the following areas: legal tech, justice tech, regulatory tech, policy tech, government tech. It is a credit-bearing incubator studio for students who have already begun building and now need disciplined validation, prototype refinement, responsible product review, business model development and pitch readiness. The emphasis is not on surveying the field but on disciplined venture execution. It is for students who want to turn their prototypes into something that can be tested with real users, refined into a credible business proposition, examined against the legal, regulatory, accessibility, privacy and data considerations that responsible building requires, and pitched to investors at a Demo Day.

The course is structured in four arcs that map to the four assessments. The first arc is discovery and validation. Students refine their problem statement, build hypotheses about who the user is and what they actually need, run 10 to 15 customer conversations per cycle, synthesise findings using jobs-to-be-done and problem-solution-fit frames, and decide whether to persevere or pivot. The second arc is build and audit. Students sharpen their MVP, ship iterations using the smallest tool stack that fits the problem, and submit their prototype to a structured Build Audit examining the prototype against named dimensions of user experience, accessibility, plain language, data and privacy, regulatory and legal fit, safeguards and unintended consequences. This second arc is the distinctive contribution of the course: a credited course taught at a law school is the right place for students to learn to account for what they have built before they take it to investors. The third arc is business model and fundraising. Students define unit economics, size the market, design a go-to-market strategy, identify the metrics that matter, and learn how early-stage fundraising operates in India, including angels, micro-VCs, SAFEs, convertibles, cap tables and basic legal structuring. The fourth arc is pitch and Demo Day. Students learn how to construct an investor memo, design a pitch deck, deliver a Demo Day pitch, and respond to questions from an external jury of investors and founders.

The instructor functions as the founders' first investor and advisor: reviewing applications, running the Saturday studio days, reading Weekly Status Memos between

Saturdays, holding office hours, connecting students to the wider Demo Day and JGU's network of practitioners, and convening the external Demo Day jury at the end. Guest practitioners (founders, angels, VCs, legal and accounting professionals, product leaders, accessibility specialists) are integrated into specific Saturdays as part of the regular schedule, as permissible under University policies.

### **3. Course Aims**

This course aims to:

- 1) Train students in customer development as the central founder activity, including the design and conduct of user and stakeholder conversations, the synthesis of findings, the use of problem-solution-fit frames, and the discipline of pivot-or-persevere decisions based on evidence.
- 2) Equip students to ship and iterate a real product using the smallest tool stack that fits the problem, including MVP scoping, rapid prototyping, usability testing, the RITE method of rapid iterative testing and evaluation, and the discipline of doing things that do not scale in the early stage.
- 3) Develop students' ability to account for what they have built by examining their own prototype against named dimensions of user experience and HCI, accessibility, plain language, data and privacy, regulatory and legal fit, safeguards and unintended consequences, and to produce a defensible Build Audit document.
- 4) Equip students to design and defend a business model using the Business Model Canvas, unit economics, market sizing, go-to-market strategy, pricing, and the identification of the metrics that matter for a given venture.
- 5) Introduce students to the Indian fundraising landscape and the mechanics of early-stage investment, including angels and micro-VCs, accelerator and incubator programmes, government schemes and DPIIT recognition, term sheets, SAFEs and convertibles, cap-table logic, founder agreements and the basic legal infrastructure of an early-stage company.
- 6) Train students to construct and deliver an investor-grade pitch, including investor memo writing, pitch deck architecture, story arc, demo design, response to challenging questions from an external jury, and the management of the post-pitch follow-up.
- 7) Cultivate a founder mindset that values evidence over opinion, user contact, and intellectual honesty.

### **4. Teaching Methodology**

The course is taught through an accelerator-studio hybrid methodology. Eight Saturdays of six hours each, plus a ninth Saturday for Demo Day, totaling 54 to 56 contact hours. The methodology has six elements.

Each Saturday runs as roughly two hours of concept input, delivered in three to four short blocks of 30-45 minutes each rather than as one continuous lecture; four hours of applied team work in which students work on their own venture using the methods just

introduced; and a structured end-of-day deliverable presentation in which each team presents the day's output to the instructor for feedback in front of the cohort. The deliverable is different each Saturday (refined problem statement, hypothesis canvas, interview synthesis, MVP scope, Build Audit draft, Business Model Canvas, unit economics worksheet, GTM plan, pitch deck draft, and so on) and is captured on the team's Live Page (Live Page, which may be public, unlisted, password-protected, or redacted, depending on the nature of the venture.)

Each one-week gap between Saturdays carries explicit assignments. Students must conduct customer or expert conversations, ship product iterations, update their Live Page, and submit a Weekly Status Memo to the instructor following a fixed structure: what we thought going into the week, what we did, what we found, what we will do next, and what we need from the instructor. The Memo is around 500 words and is submitted by midnight on the Thursday before the next Saturday. There are seven Weekly Status Memos across the course plus a Pre-Demo-Day Memo in the week before Demo Day. Memos are not separately graded. They are a precondition for the rubric criterion within each IA that measures evidence, process and customer-development discipline. A team that submits no Memos in an IA block will be marked down on that criterion.

Each team maintains a single public page from Saturday 1 onwards, containing a one-line problem narrative, team members and roles, prototype link, current key metrics, a decisions log, and links to the most recent Weekly Status Memo. The Live Page is the team's working face to the world and is the document the instructor reads first before each Saturday. Live Page, which may be public, unlisted, password-protected, or redacted, depending on the nature of the venture. It is also the document linked into the Demo Day brochure.

The Demo Day jury on Saturday 9 comprises three to five external evaluators drawn from the investor, founder and senior-operator community. The jury asks questions during the pitch. The instructor observes the team's response and grades it; the jury does not grade.

The assessment sequence mirrors the teaching architecture. Students first complete a Discovery Dossier (IA 1) due after Saturday 2, then a Build Audit (IA 2) due after Saturday 5, then an Investor Memo with Business Model Canvas (IA 3) due after Saturday 7, then deliver a Demo Day Pitch on Saturday 9 (end term component). This is a build-and-pitch course and the deliverables are themselves the test.

## 5. Intended Learning Outcomes

Course Intended Learning Outcomes	Weightage in %	Teaching Learning Activities and	Assessment Tasks/Activities
Run a disciplined customer-discovery process, including the design and conduct of	15	Customer development workshops, user-	IA 1 Discovery Dossier.

<b>Course Intended Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Weightage in %</b>	<b>Teaching and Learning Activities</b>	<b>Assessment Tasks/ Activities</b>
user and stakeholder conversations, the synthesis of findings, the use of jobs-to-be-done and problem-solution-fit frames, and the documentation of evidence in a hypothesis log.		research labs, hypothesis canvas exercises, structured interview design, weekly synthesis sessions and instructor critique.	
Scope, ship and iterate a minimum viable product using the smallest tool stack that fits the problem, conduct rapid iterative usability testing, and demonstrate evidence of meaningful product change in response to user feedback.	15	MVP scoping labs, no-code and low-code prototyping clinics, usability testing using the RITE method, iteration sprints, desk critique by the instructor.	IA 1 Discovery Dossier and IA 2 Build Audit.
Account for the prototype by examining it against named dimensions of user experience and HCI, accessibility (WCAG 2.1 and GIGW 3.0 where applicable), plain language, data and privacy (including DPDP exposure where applicable), regulatory and legal fit, safeguards, human oversight, and unintended consequences, and produce a defensible Build Audit document.	20	UX and accessibility lab, plain language clinic, DPDP and data flow mapping exercise, regulatory and legal fit clinic, safeguards and audit workshop, Build Audit studio.	IA 2 Build Audit.
Design and defend a business model using the Business Model Canvas, unit economics, market sizing, pricing logic, go-to-market strategy and the key metrics that matter for the venture.	15	Business model canvas workshops, unit-economics exercises, market sizing labs (TAM, SAM, SOM), GTM design sessions and instructor critique.	IA 3 Investor Memo with Business Model Canvas.
Demonstrate working knowledge of how early-stage fundraising operates in India, including the investor	15	Fundraising masterclass, term-sheet read-along, cap-table simulation,	IA 3 Investor Memo with Business Model

Course Intended Learning Outcomes	Weightage in %	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Tasks/ Activities
landscape, term-sheet mechanics, SAFEs and convertibles, cap-table logic, founder agreements and the basic legal infrastructure of an early-stage company.		legal and structuring clinic.	Canvas and Demo Day Pitch.
Construct and deliver an investor-grade pitch, including investor memo, pitch deck, demo, and response to challenging questions from an external jury, judged at Demo Day.	20	Pitch architecture workshops, deck-design labs, story-arc exercises, one-on-one pitch coaching with the instructor, dress rehearsal with mock jury, final Demo Day delivery.	Demo Day Pitch (Pitch Deck and Presentation)

## 6. Grading of Student Achievement

To pass this course, students shall obtain a minimum of 40 percent in the cumulative aspects of coursework. Internal assessments shall carry a total of 70 marks. The Demo Day Pitch as end-semester component shall carry 30 marks, out of which students must obtain a minimum of 30 percent to fulfil the requirement of passing the course.

Because this is an intensive studio course, assessments are based on live participation, team-based work, critique, iteration and Demo Day performance. Alternative assessments cannot ordinarily replicate the learning outcomes of the course. Any accommodation, make-up arrangement, or deferral shall be considered strictly in accordance with University policy and must preserve the same learning outcomes, including live presentation, prototype demonstration, questioning and evidence of continuous venture progress.

The course is letter-graded.

The details of the grades as well as the criteria for awarding such grades are provided below:

PERCENTAGE OF MARKS	GRADE	GRADE VALUE	GRADE DESCRIPTION
80 and above	O	8	<b>Outstanding</b> – Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to

PERCENTAGE OF MARKS	GRADE	GRADE VALUE	GRADE DESCRIPTION
			synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability
75 – 79	A+	7.5	<b>Excellent</b> - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability
70 – 74	A	7	<b>Very Good</b> - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyze existing materials and originality in thinking and presentation
65 – 69	A-	6	<b>Good</b> - Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills
60 – 64	B+	5	<b>Fair</b> – Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills
55 – 59	B	4	<b>Acceptable</b> - Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of study and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
50 – 54	B-	3	<b>Marginal</b> - Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials and, poor critical and analytical skills
45 – 49	P1	2	<b>Pass 1</b> – Pass with basic understanding of the subject matter
40 – 44	P2	1	<b>Pass 2</b> – Pass with rudimentary understanding of the subject matter
Below 40	F	0	<b>Fail</b> - Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant

PERCENTAGE OF MARKS	GRADE	GRADE VALUE	GRADE DESCRIPTION
			materials. Will require repeating the course
Absent	Ab	0	<b>Absent</b> - "Extenuating circumstances" preventing the student from taking the end- semester, or re-sit, examination as the case may be; the Vice Dean (Examinations) at their discretion assign the "Ab" grade. If an "Ab" grade is assigned, the student would appear for the end-semester, or re-sit examination, as the case may be, as and when the subsequent opportunity is provided by the University.

## 7. Criteria for Student Assessments

To pass this course, students shall obtain a minimum of 40 percent in the cumulative aspects of coursework. Internal assessments shall carry a total of 70 marks. The Demo Day Pitch as end-semester component shall carry 30 marks, out of which students must obtain a minimum of 30 percent to fulfil the requirement of passing the course.

Because this is an intensive studio course, assessments are based on live participation, team-based work, critique, iteration and Demo Day performance. Alternative assessments cannot ordinarily replicate the learning outcomes of the course. Any accommodation, make-up arrangement, or deferral shall be considered strictly in accordance with University policy and must preserve the same learning outcomes, including live presentation, prototype demonstration, questioning and evidence of continuous venture progress.

The course is letter-graded.

Assessment	Weightage	Remarks
IA 1: Discovery Dossier	20 Marks	Submitted by midnight on the Friday after Saturday 2.  Each team produces a Discovery Dossier covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. refined problem statement;</li> <li>2. hypothesis canvas;</li> <li>3. evidence from 10 to 15 customer or expert conversations conducted</li> </ul>

Assessment	Weightage	Remarks
		<p>between Saturday 1 and Saturday 2;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. synthesis using jobs-to-be-done and problem-solution-fit frames;</li> <li>5. user persona;</li> <li>6. refined target user segment;</li> <li>7. one round of usability testing on the current prototype with three to five users;</li> <li>8. documented pivot-or-persevere decision; and</li> <li>9. a one-page next-cycle plan.</li> </ol> <p>Length 2,500 words plus appendices. Accompanied by a 10-minute team presentation followed by questioning on Saturday 3.</p> <p><b>Grading criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and rigour of customer-discovery evidence: 5</li> <li>- Synthesis, problem-solution-fit reasoning and persona work: 5</li> <li>- Usability testing and product change in response to evidence: 3</li> <li>- Pivot-or-persevere reasoning and next-cycle plan: 3</li> <li>- Evidence and process (Live Page and Memos): 1</li> <li>- Presentation, communication and response to questions: 3</li> </ul>
IA 2: Build Audit	25	<p>Submitted by 11.59 PM on the Friday after Saturday 5.</p> <p>Each team produces a Build Audit examining the current prototype against named dimensions and presents the prototype together with the Audit document on Saturday 6.</p> <p>The Audit document is 2,500 words plus screenshots, flow diagrams and a data-flow map. The dimensions examined are: user experience and HCI (heuristic evaluation against Nielsen's 10, task completion, error handling, cognitive load); accessibility</p>

Assessment	Weightage	Remarks
		<p>(WCAG 2.1 and GIGW 3.0 where applicable, including disability access, multilingual access and assisted digital access); plain language and information architecture; data and privacy (what is collected, why, consent, retention, who can access, DPDP exposure where applicable); regulatory fit (sector-specific compliance and any professional rules that apply); legal fit (statutory basis, mandate, contractual exposure, IP and licensing position); safeguards (human oversight, audit, grievance redress, sunset clauses, non-discrimination checks); and unintended consequences (a structured failure-mode analysis identifying who could be harmed, how, and what would prevent it).</p> <p>The Build Audit is the deliverable that distinguishes this course from a generic accelerator and the rubric reflects this.</p> <p><b>Grading criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UX, HCI and accessibility analysis: 5</li> <li>- Plain language and information architecture: 3</li> <li>- Data, privacy and DPDP analysis: 5</li> <li>- Regulatory and legal fit analysis: 5</li> <li>- Safeguards and unintended consequences analysis: 3</li> <li>- Evidence and process (Live Page and Memos): 1</li> <li>- Presentation, communication and response to questions: 3</li> </ul>
Investor Memo with Business Model Canvas	25	<p>Submitted by midnight on the Friday after Saturday 7.</p> <p>Each team produces an investor-grade memo covering problem, user, solution, market sizing (TAM, SAM, SOM), business model with unit economics, go-to-market strategy, key metrics dashboard, traction to date, competitive landscape, team, ask (with use of funds), and major risks.</p> <p>Length 2,500 words.</p>

Assessment	Weightage	Remarks
		<p>Accompanied by an updated Business Model Canvas. The expectation is that the memo is the document a real investor could read before a first meeting.</p> <p>Presented in a 10-minute team presentation followed by questioning on Saturday 8.</p> <p><b>Grading criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality of problem, user and solution articulation: 4</li> <li>- Market sizing, business model and unit economics: 6</li> <li>- Go-to-market strategy and key metrics: 5</li> <li>- Traction evidence and pivot history: 3</li> <li>- Team, ask, risks and overall investor-grade quality: 3</li> <li>- Evidence and process (Live Page and Memos): 1</li> <li>- Presentation, communication and response to questions: 3</li> </ul>
Continuous accountability instruments	Not separately graded but required for IA as well as end semester component to be marked at full strength.	<p>Students must maintain a <b>Live Page</b> from Saturday 1 onwards and submit a <b>Weekly Status Memo</b> of around 500 words to the instructor by midnight on the Thursday before each subsequent Saturday.</p> <p>The Memo follows a fixed structure: what we thought going into the week, what we did, what we found, what we will do next, and what we need from the instructor.</p> <p>The Live Page and Memos are not separately graded.</p> <p>A team that has not submitted Memos in an IA/end semester component's block will be marked down on the "evidence and process" criterion within that IA/end semester component's rubric. A team that submits all Memos in good faith will be marked accordingly.</p>

Assessment	Weightage	Remarks
Demo Day Pitch (end semester component)	30 Marks	<p>Delivered on Saturday 9 in front of an external jury comprising three to five investors and founders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pitch is 5 minutes followed by 15 minutes of jury questioning.</li> <li>- Includes a 10 to 12 slide pitch deck, a live demonstration of the working prototype, and a one-page handout.</li> <li>- The jury asks questions; the instructor observes the team's response and grades it.</li> <li>- The jury also provides each team with informal written feedback notes after the day, with no marks attached, for the team's own use.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grading criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality of pitch story, arc and clarity: 5</li> <li>- Strength of demo and product evidence: 5</li> <li>- Business defensibility under jury questioning (market, model, metrics, moat): 7</li> <li>- Founder credibility and response to challenging questions: 6</li> <li>- Visual and verbal communication, deck design, pacing and stage presence: 5</li> <li>- Evidence and process across the course (Live Page and Memos): 2</li> </ul>

## Part IV

### Course/Class Policies

Students retain ownership of their ideas and prototypes. The University/course does not claim ownership merely because the project is developed in class.

Teams are responsible for internal founder agreements and IP assignment where relevant. External mentors and jury members are not presumed to be bound by confidentiality unless a separate agreement is executed.

Students should not disclose trade secrets or sensitive user data in public-facing materials. Live Pages may be public, private, or redacted depending on the nature of the venture. Any real user/customer data must be anonymised unless consent has been obtained.

## **Cell Phones, Laptops and Similar Gadgets**

## **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Learning and knowledge production of any kind is a collaborative process. Collaboration demands an ethical responsibility to acknowledge who we have learnt from, what we have learned, and how reading and learning from others have helped us shape our own ideas. Even our own ideas demand an acknowledgement of the sources and processes through which those ideas have emerged. Thus, all ideas must be supported by citations. All ideas borrowed from articles, books, journals, magazines, case laws, statutes, photographs, films, paintings, etc., in print or online, must be credited with the original source. If the source or inspiration of your idea is a friend, a casual chat, something that you overheard, or heard being discussed at a conference or in class, even they must be duly credited. If you paraphrase or directly quote from a web source in the examination, presentation or essays, the source must be acknowledged. The university has a framework to deal with cases of plagiarism. All form of plagiarism will be taken seriously by the University and prescribed sanctions will be imposed on those who commit plagiarism.

## **Use of Artificial Intelligence**

## **Disability Support and Accommodation Requirements**

JGU endeavours to make all its courses inclusive and accessible to students with different abilities. In accordance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016), the JGU Disability Support Committee (DSC) has identified conditions that could hinder a student's overall well-being. These include physical and mobility related difficulties, visual and hearing impairment, mental health conditions and intellectual/learning difficulties e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia. Students with any known disability needing academic and other support are required to register with the Disability Support Committee (DSC) by following the procedure specified at <https://jgu.edu.in/disability-support-committee/>

Students who need support may register before the deadline for registration ends, as communicated by the DSC via email each semester. Those students who wish to continue receiving support from the previous semester, must re-register every semester prior to the deadline for re-registration as communicated by the DSC via email. Last minute registrations and support are discouraged and might not be possible as sufficient time is required to make the arrangements for support.

The DSC maintains strict confidentiality about the identity of the student and the nature of their disability and the same is requested from faculty members and staff as well. The DSC takes a strong stance against in-class and out-of-class references made about a student's disability without their consent and disrespectful comments referring to a student's disability. With due respect for confidentiality, faculty and students are

encouraged to have honest conversations about the needs of students with disabilities and to discuss how a course may be better tailored to cater to a student with disability.

All general queries are to be addressed to [disabilitysupportcommittee@jgu.edu.in](mailto:disabilitysupportcommittee@jgu.edu.in)

### **Safe Space Pledge**

This course may discuss a range of issues and events that might result in distress for some students. Discussions in the course might also provoke strong emotional responses. To make sure that all students collectively benefit from the course, and do not feel disturbed due to either the content of the course or the conduct of the discussions. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all within the classroom to pledge to maintain respect towards our peers. This does not mean that you need to feel restrained about what you feel and what you want to say. Conversely, this is about creating a safe space where everyone can speak and learn without inhibitions and fear. This responsibility lies not only with students, but also with the instructor.

P.S. The course instructor, as part of introducing the course manual, will discuss the scope of the Safe Space Pledge with the class.

## **Part V**

### **Keywords Syllabus**

Legal Tech, Justice Tech, Policy Tech, Regulatory Tech, Gov Tech, startup, accelerator, incubator, Founder mindset, customer development, problem-solution fit, product-market fit, MVP, rapid iterative testing and evaluation, build audit, UX, HCI, accessibility, business model canvas, market sizing, TAM SAM SOM, go-to-market, key metrics, traction, North Star Metric, pitch deck, investor memo, demo day, Indian startup ecosystem, angels, venture capital, seed funding, SAFEs, convertible notes, term sheets, cap table, founder agreements, startup legal structuring.

### **Course Design and Overview (Weekly Plan)**

Weekend	Topic and Description	Reading/Course Materials (Tentative)
1.	<p><b><u>Foundations: Founder Mindset, Problem Framing and Customer Discovery Basics</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course orientation, manual walkthrough, IA structure, attendance, Live Page setup, Weekly Status Memo format, peer evaluation policy, AI use policy.</li> <li>• <b>Founder mindset:</b> what makes a startup work, evidence over opinion, speed over polish at the early stage, user contact over investor contact. The Paul Graham frame ("make something people want") and the YC discipline of doing things that do not scale. The customer development paradigm (Steve Blank): why startups search for business models rather than execute on plans.</li> <li>• <b>Refined problem framing:</b> who the user is, what the job is, what currently fails. Each team produces a refined problem statement and a hypothesis canvas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tool clinic</b> introducing the Live Page template and the Weekly Status Memo template.</p> <p><b>End-of-day deliverable:</b> refined problem statement, hypothesis canvas, Live Page set up.</p> <p><b>Week assignment (Memo 1 due Thursday):</b> conduct 5 to 8 user or expert conversations; bring synthesis to Saturday 2.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Graham, Paul. 2013. "Do Things That Don't Scale." July 2013. <a href="https://www.paulgraham.com/ds.html">https://www.paulgraham.com/ds.html</a></li> <li>2) Altman, Sam. n.d. Startup Playbook. Read in full. <a href="https://playbook.samaltman.com/">https://playbook.samaltman.com/</a></li> <li>3) Blank, Steve. n.d. "The Customer Development Manifesto." Posts on Blank's blog. <a href="https://steveblank.com/category/customer-development-manifesto/">https://steveblank.com/category/customer-development-manifesto/</a></li> </ol>
2.	<p><b><u>User Research, Interview Design and Synthesis</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview design (open questions, the five whys, behavioural rather than hypothetical questions), observation, expert conversations, secondary research.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Fitzpatrick, Rob. 2013. The Mom Test: How to Talk to Customers and Learn If Your Business Is a Good Idea When Everyone Is Lying to You. Chapters 1, 2 and 3. Author's site: <a href="https://www.momtestbook.com/">https://www.momtestbook.com/</a></li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synthesis methods: affinity mapping, jobs-to-be-done framing, problem-solution fit reasoning, user persona development.</li> <li>• Pivot-or-persevere logic: when to keep going and when to change direction, and how to document either decision.</li> </ul> <p><b>Studio time</b> in which each team works on synthesis from the week's interviews. End-of-day pin-up where each team presents their refined problem statement, persona, and one or two jobs-to-be-done.</p> <p><b>End-of-day deliverable:</b> persona, jobs-to-be-done synthesis, pivot-or-persevere note.</p> <p><b>Week assignment (Memo 2 due Thursday):</b> 10 to 15 more user or expert conversations; usability test prototype with 3 to 5 users; finalise Discovery Dossier; submit IA 1 by midnight Friday.</p>	<p>2) Christensen, Clayton M., Taddy Hall, Karen Dillon, and David S. Duncan. 2016. "Know Your Customers' Jobs to Be Done." Harvard Business Review, September 2016. <a href="https://hbr.org/2016/09/know-your-customers-jobs-to-be-done">https://hbr.org/2016/09/know-your-customers-jobs-to-be-done</a></p> <p>3) Y Combinator. 2018. "How to Talk to Users — Eric Migicovsky." YC Startup School. <a href="https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6g-how-to-talk-to-users">https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6g-how-to-talk-to-users</a></p>
3.	<p><b><u>Prototyping, MVP Scoping and Shipping</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IA 1 Discovery Dossier presentations and questioning in the morning. Each team presents for 10 minutes and is questioned for 5 minutes.</li> <li>• MVP scoping: what counts as an MVP, the smallest thing that proves the riskiest assumption, Wizard of Oz and concierge approaches, what to build versus what to fake.</li> <li>• Shipping fast: the discipline of frequent updates, the RITE method of rapid iterative testing and evaluation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tool clinic:</b> a refresher on Figma, Lovable, Landbot, Bubble, Airtable, Google Forms, and a brief look at AI-assisted coding tools (Cursor, Replit, Claude Code) for teams that wish to push further.</p>	<p>1) Ries, Eric. 2011. The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses. New York: Crown Business. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 (on MVP, Build-Measure-Learn, and validated learning). Publisher page: <a href="https://theleanstartup.com/book">https://theleanstartup.com/book</a></p> <p>2) Aulet, Bill. 2013 (updated edition 2024). Disciplined Entrepreneurship: 24 Steps to a Successful Startup. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. Read Steps 12 (Determine the Customer's Decision-Making Unit) and 14 (Define Your Minimum Viable Business Product).</p>

	<p><b>End-of-day deliverable:</b> MVP scope document, riskiest-assumption note, build plan for the next two weeks.</p> <p><b>Week assignment (Memo 3 due Thursday):</b> ship one prototype iteration; capture what changed and why.</p>	<p><a href="https://disciplinedentrepreneurship.com/the-book/">https://disciplinedentrepreneurship.com/the-book/</a></p> <p>3) Medlock, Michael C., Dennis Wixon, Mark Terrano, Ramon Romero, and Bill Fulton. 2002. "Using the RITE Method to Improve Products: A Definition and a Case Study." Microsoft Research. <a href="https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/publication/using-the-rite-method-to-improve-products-a-definition-and-a-case-study/">https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/publication/using-the-rite-method-to-improve-products-a-definition-and-a-case-study/</a></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b><u>UX, HCI, Accessibility, Plain Language and Information Design</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UX and HCI fundamentals for legal and public-facing products. Nielsen's 10 heuristics, cognitive load, task completion, error handling.</li> <li>• Accessibility: WCAG 2.1, GIGW 3.0, disability access, multilingual access, mobile-first realities in India, assisted digital access.</li> <li>• Plain language and information design: how to write notices, forms, FAQs, legal-rights explanations, chatbot answers and instructions for non-expert users.</li> <li>• Information architecture: navigation, sequence, trust signals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Studio time</b> in which each team conducts a heuristic evaluation and an accessibility audit of their own prototype, with the instructor doing desk critique table by table.</p> <p><b>End-of-day deliverable:</b> heuristic evaluation worksheet, accessibility audit worksheet, plain-language rewrites of one critical screen or form.</p> <p><b>Week assignment (Memo 4 due Thursday):</b> incorporate UX and accessibility</p>	<p>1) Nielsen, Jakob. 1994 (updated January 30, 2024). "10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design." Nielsen Norman Group. <a href="https://www.nngroup.com/articles/ten-usability-heuristics/">https://www.nngroup.com/articles/ten-usability-heuristics/</a></p> <p>2) Krug, Steve. 2014. Don't Make Me Think, Revisited: A Common Sense Approach to Web and Mobile Usability. 3rd ed. Berkeley, CA: New Riders. Chapters 1, 2, 5, 6 and 9.</p> <p>3) National Informatics Centre. n.d. "Guidelines for Indian Government Websites and Apps (GIGW 3.0)." <a href="https://guidelines.india.gov.in/gigw3/">https://guidelines.india.gov.in/gigw3/</a></p> <p>4) Plain Language Action and Information Network. 2011. Federal Plain Language Guidelines. Archived at the Center for Plain Language. <a href="https://centerforplainlanguage">https://centerforplainlanguage</a></p>

	findings into prototype; begin drafting Build Audit.	age.org/learning-training/tools-training/
5.	<p><b><u>Data, Privacy, DPDP, AI Use, Regulatory and Legal Fit, Safeguards</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What data is collected, from whom, for what purpose, where it flows, who verifies it, who accesses it, how it is stored, when it should be deleted.</li> <li>• DPDP Act 2023: consent, purpose limitation, data minimisation, data principal rights, data fiduciary obligations, and the DPDP Rules notified in early 2025.</li> <li>• AI use: when a product uses AI-assisted classification, triage, drafting, summarisation, eligibility screening or risk scoring, what safeguards are required, how human oversight is built in.</li> <li>• Regulatory and legal fit: sector-specific compliance for the venture, professional rules where applicable (legal services, medical advice, financial advice, education), terms of service, IP and licensing, and the difference between regulated and unregulated activity.</li> <li>• Safeguards: human oversight, audit, grievance redress, sunset clauses, non-discrimination checks.</li> <li>• Unintended consequences: a structured failure-mode analysis (who could be harmed, how, and what would prevent it).</li> </ul> <p><b>Studio time</b> in which each team maps the data flow of their prototype and works on the data, privacy and regulatory sections of the Build Audit.</p> <p><b>End-of-day deliverable:</b> data-flow map, DPDP exposure note, regulatory and legal fit note, safeguards and unintended-consequences note.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Burman, Anirudh. 2023. Understanding India's New Data Protection Law. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <a href="https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2023/10/understanding-indias-new-data-protection-law">https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2023/10/understanding-indias-new-data-protection-law</a></li> <li>2) NITI Aayog. 2021. Approach Document for India, Part 1: Principles for Responsible AI. New Delhi: NITI Aayog. <a href="https://www.niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-02/Responsible-AI-22022021.pdf">https://www.niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-02/Responsible-AI-22022021.pdf</a></li> <li>3) NITI Aayog. 2021. Approach Document for India, Part 2: Operationalizing Principles for Responsible AI. <a href="https://niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-08/Part2-Responsible-AI-12082021.pdf">https://niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-08/Part2-Responsible-AI-12082021.pdf</a></li> <li>4) International Association of Privacy Professionals. 2026. "With Rules Finalized, India's DPDP Takes Force." February 17. <a href="https://iapp.org/news/a/with-rules-finalized-india-s-dpdp-takes-force">https://iapp.org/news/a/with-rules-finalized-india-s-dpdp-takes-force</a></li> </ol>

	<p><b>Week assignment (Memo 5 due Thursday):</b> finalise Build Audit; submit IA 2 by midnight Friday.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><b><u>Business Model, Unit Economics, Market Sizing, Go-to-Market and Metrics</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IA 2 Build Audit presentations and questioning in the morning. Each team presents for 10 minutes and is questioned for 5 minutes.</li> <li>• Business model design using Osterwalder's Business Model Canvas, marching through the nine blocks (customer segments, value propositions, channels, customer relationships, revenue streams, key resources, key activities, key partners, cost structure).</li> <li>• Unit economics: contribution margin, CAC, LTV, payback period, what makes a business model viable at scale.</li> <li>• Market sizing: TAM, SAM, SOM, bottom-up and top-down approaches, the honest version versus the slide-deck version.</li> <li>• Go-to-market strategy: channels, sales for founders, pricing, the difference between distribution and acquisition.</li> <li>• Key metrics: identifying the North Star Metric and the supporting metrics, designing a simple metrics dashboard.</li> </ul> <p><b>Studio time</b> in which each team works on their Business Model Canvas and unit-economics worksheet.</p> <p><b>End-of-day deliverable:</b> Business Model Canvas v1, unit economics worksheet, market sizing worksheet, key metrics dashboard sketch.</p> <p><b>Week assignment (Memo 6 due Thursday):</b> finalise GTM plan; track key metrics for the week.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Osterwalder, Alexander, and Yves Pigneur. 2010. Business Model Generation: A Handbook for Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. Read the introduction to the Business Model Canvas and the chapter on the nine building blocks. Publisher page: <a href="https://www.strategyzer.com/library/business-model-generation-book">https://www.strategyzer.com/library/business-model-generation-book</a></li> <li>2) Andreessen, Marc. 2007. "The Only Thing That Matters." June 25, 2007. Archived at <a href="https://pmarchive.com/guide_to_startups_part4.html">https://pmarchive.com/guide_to_startups_part4.html</a></li> <li>3) Y Combinator. 2018. "How to Set KPIs and Goals – Adora Cheung." YC Startup Library. <a href="https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6f-how-to-set-kpis-and-goals">https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6f-how-to-set-kpis-and-goals</a></li> <li>4) Skok, David. 2009 (updated). "SaaS Metrics 2.0 – A Guide to Measuring and Improving What Matters." For Entrepreneurs. <a href="https://www.forentrepreneurs.com/saas-metrics-2/">https://www.forentrepreneurs.com/saas-metrics-2/</a></li> </ol>

<p>7.</p>	<p><b><u>Indian Fundraising Landscape, Term Sheets, Cap Tables, Founder Agreements, Legal Structuring</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Indian fundraising landscape: angels, angel networks, micro-VCs, seed-stage VCs, growth-stage VCs, family offices, government grants and schemes, DPIIT recognition, accelerator and incubator programmes, what each is looking for at each stage.</li> <li>• The mechanics of an early-stage round: term sheets, SAFEs, convertible notes, priced rounds, valuation, dilution, pro-rata rights, liquidation preference.</li> <li>• Cap tables in outline: founder split, ESOP pool, investor share, dilution through subsequent rounds.</li> <li>• Founder agreements: vesting, cliff, IP assignment, non-compete, exit clauses.</li> <li>• Basic legal structuring for an Indian startup: private limited company, shareholder agreement, statutory compliances.</li> </ul> <p><b>Studio time</b> in which each team works on the funding ask, use of funds, and risks section of the Investor Memo.</p> <p><b>End-of-day deliverable:</b> Investor Memo draft v1, cap table outline, term-sheet read-through note.</p> <p><b>Week assignment (Memo 7 due Thursday):</b> finalise Investor Memo; submit IA 3 by midnight Friday.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Indian Angel Network and Inc42. 2024. Indian Startup Ecosystem Report 2024. Inc42 Plus. <a href="https://inc42.com/reports/">https://inc42.com/reports/</a> (read whichever annual report is the most current at the time of the cohort).</li> <li>2) Y Combinator. n.d. "Safe Financing Documents and Primer." <a href="https://www.ycombinator.com/documents">https://www.ycombinator.com/documents</a> (read the post-money SAFE and the user guide).</li> <li>3) Indian Private Equity and Venture Capital Association (IVCA). n.d. "Model Term Sheets and Documentation." Founder education resources. <a href="https://ivca.in/">https://ivca.in/</a></li> <li>4) Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade. n.d. "Startup India: Recognition, Tax Exemptions, Schemes." Government of India. <a href="https://www.startupindia.gov.in/">https://www.startupindia.gov.in/</a></li> </ol>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b><u>Pitch Architecture, Deck Design, Storytelling, Demo Design and One-on-One Pitch Coaching</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IA 3 Investor Memo presentations and questioning in the morning. Each team presents for 10 minutes and is questioned for 5 minutes.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Y Combinator. 2018. "How to Pitch Your Startup — Kevin Hale." YC Startup Library. <a href="https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6q-how-to-pitch-your-startup">https://www.ycombinator.com/library/6q-how-to-pitch-your-startup</a></li> <li>2) Y Combinator. 2018. "How to Design a Better Pitch Deck — Kevin Hale." YC</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pitch architecture: the 10-slide structure (problem, user, solution, demo, market, business model, traction, competition, team, ask), the story arc, the opening line, the closing line, what to leave out.</li> <li>• Deck design: visual hierarchy, slide density, fonts, charts, screenshots.</li> <li>• Storytelling: how to make the founders the protagonists, how to anchor the pitch in one user's story, how to handle questions on metrics that are not yet strong.</li> <li>• Demo design: choosing the slice of the product that demonstrates the riskiest assumption resolved, scripting the demo, fallback plans for live failures.</li> </ul> <p><b>One-on-one pitch coaching:</b> the instructor works with each team for 30 to 45 minutes on their deck and delivery.</p> <p><b>End-of-day deliverable:</b> pitch deck v1, demo script, one-page handout draft.</p> <p><b>Week assignment (Pre-Demo-Day Memo due Thursday):</b> final dress rehearsal; pitch deck v2; demo flow finalised.</p>	<p>Startup Library.  <a href="https://www.ycombinator.com/library/2u-how-to-design-a-better-pitch-deck">https://www.ycombinator.com/library/2u-how-to-design-a-better-pitch-deck</a></p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b><u>Demo Day</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demo Day with the external jury. Each team delivers an 5-minute pitch followed by 15 minutes of jury questioning.</li> <li>• The instructor observes, questions, and grades.</li> <li>• The jury asks and provides each team with informal written feedback notes after the day.</li> <li>• After the pitches, a brief debrief session with each team.</li> <li>• Cohort group photo, Demo Day brochure distributed to the jury and other attendees, and warm-introduction emails to investors initiated for teams that are ready.</li> </ul>	<p>Final dress rehearsal in the week before, on the deck and demo developed in Saturday 8. Each team re-reads its own IA 3 Investor Memo as the source document for the pitch.</p>

	<b>End-of-day deliverable:</b> live Demo Day pitch.	
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