

NEW HAPPENINGS.

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What has been happening lately with V-Lab?

December Newsletter

June - December 2023

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

-  The GROW program
-  Yut Pawa - Youth Empowerment Program
-  First time crash course in Santo
-  The V-Lab 'Social Club'
-  EMCC Accreditation
-  YGV Cohort 3 Launching in 2024!

V-Lab's Year in Review:

Dear V-Lab Community,

As we bid farewell to another remarkable year at V-Lab, we are thrilled to share the incredible journey we've embarked on together. This year has been nothing short of extraordinary, filled with groundbreaking achievements, meaningful collaborations, and a growing sense of innovation.

One of the highlights of the year was hosting Vanuatu's inaugural *hackathon*, a momentous occasion that brought together bright minds and creative thinkers to tackle challenges and push the boundaries of technology in our community. The energy and enthusiasm during this event were palpable, setting the stage for future endeavors in the tech realm.

In addition to the hackathon, we proudly launched *two new incubation programs, GROW and Yut Pawa*, designed to nurture and support the next generation of entrepreneurs in Vanuatu. These programs represent our commitment to fostering innovation and providing a platform for aspiring visionaries to turn their ideas into reality.

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Furthermore, we celebrate the outstanding achievements of three members of our coaching team who attained their **EMCC accreditation**. Their dedication to professional development reflects the high standards we uphold at V-Lab, ensuring that our entrepreneurs receive top-notch guidance and mentorship.

This year has also seen a surge in **partnerships** as organizations recognized the impactful work V-Lab is doing in Vanuatu. We welcomed numerous visits from external entities eager to collaborate and contribute to our shared mission. These partnerships strengthen our foundation and amplify our collective impact on the local innovation ecosystem.

As we reflect on the eventful year that has passed, we extend our heartfelt **gratitude** to the entire V-Lab community – our incubees, coaches, partners, and supporters. Your passion and commitment continue to drive the success and vibrancy of V-Lab, making it a hub of innovation and growth in Vanuatu.

Here's to another year of pushing boundaries, fostering creativity, and building a brighter future together. Wishing you a joyous holiday season and a prosperous New Year!

Sincerely, The V-Lab Team

THE GROW PROGRAM

In June 2023, the GROW program was launched to support **young and women farmers** with the view to enhance food security and boost the local economy. Designed as a 6-month incubation journey, the program seamlessly integrates capacity training and one-on-one business coaching, fostering a holistic approach to entrepreneurship. As we celebrate the closure of our inaugural cohort on December 14th, 2023, the journey has been nothing short of transformative.



Throughout the incubation period, our dedicated team conducted two onsite assessments, closely monitoring the growth of our incubees. Beyond witnessing significant strides in business development, these assessments revealed a profound impact on personal growth among the entrepreneurs. Participants have embraced the program's teachings, applying newfound concepts and tools to enhance their businesses. From meticulous business planning to innovative farming techniques and improved budgeting skills, the program has instilled a paradigm shift, particularly evident in the agricultural sector where participants are envisioning a transition from subsistence to commercial farming.

One notable achievement has been the **establishment of a robust partnership with the Department of Agriculture**, solidifying our commitment to providing comprehensive support to our incubees. The collaboration has facilitated the supply of resources and government subsidies to our entrepreneurs, opening doors for them to feature in the department's national database of farmers.

This not only enhances their visibility but also positions them for continued support post-program completion. Looking ahead, with the successful closure of our first cohort, we anticipate a second cohort in March 2024, extending the transformative impact of the GROW program to new horizons in the North Efate community.



The lessons learned from this initial phase, including considerations for family circumstances and the importance of creating a supportive environment, will shape the evolution of the program as it continues to sow the seeds of entrepreneurship and growth in the V-Lab community.

'YUT PAWA' (YEP) PROGRAM



This program is designed to empower the youth of Vanuatu to take their life into their own hands by providing them with the necessary skill and development opportunities. It stems on the recognition that there are many young people in Vanuatu who have either dropped out of school or completed secondary education but who are unable to have access to employment opportunities. As a consequence of this situation, many of these young people are left without hope and without the means that are necessary for them to start their lives. In this context, accompanying these youth and providing them with basics training and opportunities becomes a priority.

To implement the Yut Pawa program, V-Lab has partnered with two local organizations: **Marama Youth Foundation (MYF)** and **Youth Challenge Vanuatu (YCV)** to identify 300 youths in different communities around Efate and provide them with training opportunities.

The program occurred in two phases with Marama Youth Foundation taking lead in phase 1 to train 300 young people on leadership skills and self confidence. From these 300, 100 of them were selected to go through phase 2 where they can decide to either attend a 'Ready for Work' program with Youth Challenge Vanuatu or the 'Ready for Business' program with V-Lab.

(Ready for Business participants with V-Lab)



(Ready for Work participants with Youth Challenge Vanuatu)

The trainings in this project are part of the Pacific Partnership for ODFL project and funded by the Commonwealth of Learning ✨.

The V-Lab 'Social Club'

🌟 Celebrating a Year of Success at V-Lab Social Club! 🌟

What a fantastic year it has been for our V-Lab family! 🎉

We're thrilled to share that we hosted a total of five successful events throughout the year, bringing our incredible alumni community together for learning, connecting, and growing.

Each event featured informative presentations that proved to be incredibly helpful, especially for our small business owners. 🚀 We want to express our heartfelt gratitude to the amazing guest speakers who generously shared their time and expertise with our community:

- For the month of February: Keven Manbit from the Department of Customs & Inland Revenue 🌐 🇻🇺
- March: Coaches Chris Elphick and Joel David 🤝 🚀
- May: Ellis Silas from Vanuatu Skills & Partnership 📖 🌱
- October: Daniel William from Vanuatu Rural Development Bank 💰 🏦
- November: Katrina Sali from Business Link Pacific 🌐 💡



For all our entrepreneur programs we always deliver a mix of training in groups and coaching on an individual basis.

Our coaching team is made up exclusively of Ni Vanuatu who either run their own businesses or who work in managerial roles with local private sector organizations. All the coaches are committed to helping Ni Vanuatu entrepreneurs grow and develop and are passionate about developing the local economy.

To ensure our coaches operate to the highest standards they will all eventually achieve international accreditation with EMCC APR (European Mentoring & Coaching Council Asia Pacific Region).



Velenie Jacob

So far Velenie and Anita are accredited with Joel, Joe and JP close behind. The rest of the team will follow this year and the V Lab/ B Smart coaching team will be the only accredited team of local business coaches in the Pacific.

This is a fantastic achievement for V Lab, for the individuals and for Vanuatu. Well done everyone – more information is available from V Lab.



Anita Tahi Ambong

Yumi Growem Vanuatu (YGV) Cohort 3 to launch in 2024!

Closing off, V-LAB eagerly anticipates the launch of Cohort 3 for the Yumi Growem Vanuatu Programme. Following the tremendous success of the last two cohorts, we are thrilled to embark on this new journey.



A heartfelt thank you to all our partners for sharing the vision and believing in the impactful nature of this program.

Together, we look forward to fostering growth and empowerment in the upcoming cohort.



As we come to the end of another successful year, V-Lab would like to wish all of its partners, sponsors, staffs, incubees, members of our alumni community, trainers, coaches and friends;

A wonderful Christmas Holiday and a prosperous New Year 2024!!



Season's Greetings



Thank you to all our Partners and sponsors!!



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