

SMEs and start-ups participating in the Barcelona Mentoring Programme increase their turnover by an average of 22%

» It is the 10th anniversary of the Barcelona Mentoring Programme, a method that came from MIT in Boston and that helps consolidate hundreds of companies in the city

» Each entrepreneur meets with different mentors to guide them in the different strategic challenges: sales, international promotion and internal organisation



10 years ago, Barcelona City Council, through Barcelona Activa, set up an innovative programme which, following the 'Venture Mentoring Service' methodology of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston, was able to connect people with extensive business experience to mentor others who were either starting up their projects and businesses or SMEs in a situation of expansion. 2023 marks the 10th anniversary of a programme that has counted on 100 mentors who have passed on their experience to hundreds of projects from different sectors of activity.

The aim of the Barcelona Mentoring Programme is to promote the acceleration of new companies, providing them with strategic advice to promote their consolidation and faster



growth. Of the more than 220 companies that have received mentoring, over 4,400 people have been employed. In addition, at the end of the mentorships, the companies register an average increase of 22% in their turnover, with the forecast of entering new markets, mainly Europe, the United States of America and Latin America.

Currently, the programme has more than 50 active mentors. Hundreds of start-ups and SMEs have received expert advice and support. This type of mentoring is carried out selflessly by senior executives and entrepreneurs, leaders in their sector and with a recognised track record who have either retired or are still in the front line of business in the city and in the world, and who in most cases form part of advisory boards of other companies.

Examples are: Javier Cottet, president of the Cottet Group; Helena Torras, director of investments for Southern Europe at Hans(wo)men Group and partner of the PAO Capital fund; Núria Basi, president of the Basi Group; Aurorà Catà, independent director at Banc Sabadell, Repsol and president of Barcelona Global (from 2020 to 2022); Antoni Franquesa, director of Energy Efficiency, electric vehicles and self-consumption at Factor Energia; Jordi Carrasco, sales manager – at Ricoh; Xavier Marcos, general manager at Cafosa Gum (Agrolimen – Mars Incorporated) from 1997 to 2012; Ilda Martel, head of regional sales (2009-2021) at Naturgy; Carlos Román, director of International and regulatory affairs (until 2022) at SEAT; Clara Campas, managing partner and co-founder at Asabys; Pere Vicens, founder of Editorial Vicens Vives; amongst others.

Each company meets up with 3 mentors

Regarding companies that have been mentored, the following are worth highlighting: Heura (food), Clickedu (training), Hola Luz (energy); Textura (interiors); Bidones Graells (industrial), Puig Packaging (industrial), Veltia (industrial), Turco (Industrial in Zona Franca), Columat (TIC – Smart lockers), Abile corporate Events (corporate events), Party Fiesta (retail), Bernadí (retail office furniture), Facial (retail cosmetics and perfumery), Alba Sotorra (cinema producer), LOUD (audiovisual services), Fosca Films (cinema producer), I Love PDF (ICT), Slash Mobility (ICT), Mapit (ICT locator for motorbikes), Vortex (wind energy), Eticas consulting (consultancy in ethics, compliance and data management), Ide360 (communication agency for the Pharma sector), Aparca & Go (alternative parking service at airports and train stations), Imed3D (solutions and innovation in 3D).

As a characteristic feature, each edition of the programme lasts 8 months, which begins with a recruitment of candidates, according to the profile of the mentor and the leader of the new project. Entrepreneurs meet with 3 mentors who help them face challenges in sales, international promotion and internal organisation, among others. During this time, the connection involves around 6 meetings and follow-up by the person who accompanies them with full confidentiality.

Barcelona Activa has more mentoring programmes to accompany people in different life and professional moments, such as Rethinking or Mentoring Plus, to achieve an improvement in their working life.