



SeedLab Tasmania: Tasmanian Food, Drink & Agri Startups to Export

FINAL REPORT, MARCH 2022

Summary



The Seedlab Tasmania team recognises and appreciates the support from the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources through Incubator Support initiative funding as part of the Entrepreneurs' Programme. In addition to sponsorship from other institutes/ companies including Woolworths, the University of Tasmania, MacTavish West Pty. Ltd. as lead partner, and other Tasmanian and Australian companies and institutes and private sponsors.

Seedlab Tasmania is a unique incubator program founded and led by MacTavish West Pty. Ltd. Seedlab provided >105 startup Tasmanian food, drink and agritourism businesses with real world, practical and hands-on expertise, business support and training they need to start, scale and grow to be export-ready, throughout 2020 and 2021.



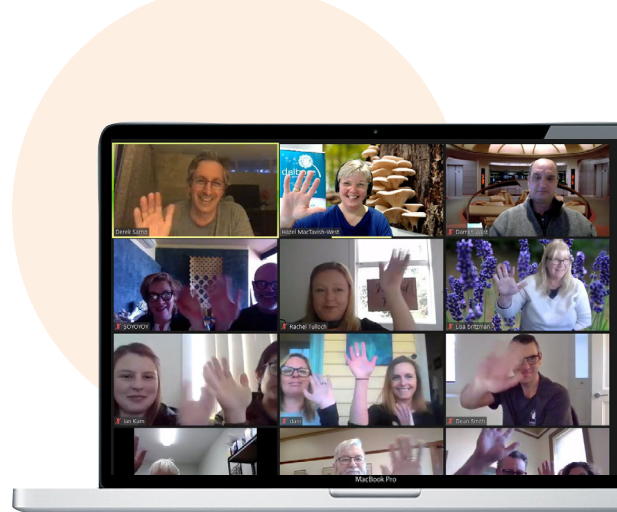
The Seedlab team comprises a diverse group of experienced, largely Tasmanian-based consultants, with a combined experience of over 200 years in business. We cover all aspects of business, including business and people management, development and marketing of both products and services, of food and non-food products, in agricultural, retail and technology industries, and in Startup, Small and Blue Chip Companies, in Australia and Internationally.

The Program: Seedlab Tasmania provided a three-phase Program, with all content built around a Lean Canvas Business Plan framework, covering core business skills and specific topics to help diverse agri-food businesses start, scale and grow. We have a proven structure and approach that is agile and responsive, and which meets individual business needs.



We use a combination of focused Workshops, an intense 6 week live online Bootcamp Incubator Program (Germinate) built around a Lean Startup Canvas, a competitive 6 month Accelerator Program (Cultivate) plus one-on-one coaching, private Facebook groups and social and informal events to build a connected, caring community of resilient, adaptable people growing sustainable, productive and profitable businesses. Faster, safer and bigger than they ever thought possible.

We use a variety of engagement platforms: face-to-face, live online, and hybrid events, augmented with on-demand audio/video content, and modifiable worksheets hosted on a user-friendly Online Learning Management System (The Seedlab Academy).



1

Bootcamp: an Incubator program, delivered over 2 weeks via 16 hours of live, online and additional on-demand pre-recorded content.



From the very first day Bootcamp helped me feel more confident in my idea. I knew I had a good idea but I lacked the confidence needed to start imagining my future, I was very much taking each day as it comes. Now I want to start planning my short term and long term success with more of a concrete vision in place". **Emily Quintin, OMNI Salt.**



2

Cultivate: an Accelerator program, delivered over 6 months, with a mix of live online and one-one-one coaching to help develop their business skills and their specific proposition: specifically developing a Minimum Viable Product, market testing this, and progressing to being Investor-Ready.

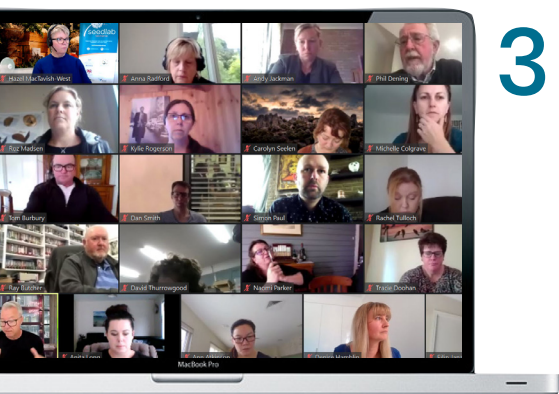
"Synergy: Where the combined effect is greater than the sum of the individual parts. Seedlab = Synergy. We knew we'd been given an incredible opportunity when we were offered a spot in Cultivate. So we committed to give 100% to the 6 month experience and soak up (and action!) our learnings. Our business has matured from 'toddler' to 'teenager' and we have exciting plans to 'grow up one day soon!!!. Thanks Seedlab Tasmania". **Roz Madsen, House of Fudge.**



3

Propagate: a series of Masterclasses and Workshops from topic specialists located locally, nationally and internationally (our so-called "Global Gurus and Local Legends") on a wide range of topics, designed to engage and connect with the wider food and beverage ecosystem in Tasmania and Australia (and globally).

Seedlab Tasmania Masterclasses and Workshops have a **"Useful Rating" of 88.6%**, as rated by 83 participants.



Seed Counting in the 2 years of the Program:



105

startup businesses
(>130 individuals)
participated in
Bootcamp



40

businesses completed
the **six month**
Accelerator: Cultivate #1

660+

participants
engaged with our
13 Masterclasses
and 6 Workshops

325+

individuals and businesses
participated in our **Harvest**
Festivals to celebrate the
completion of Cultivate

160+

"Global Gurus and Local Legends" provided content across
the programs, in addition to 13 Seedlab Team members



690

hours of formal online
sessions presented by
team members and
other experts

373

hours of formal face-to-
face sessions presented
by team members and
other experts

65

hours of informal online
sessions supported by
team members



124

hours of informal
face-to-face sessions
supported by team
members

450

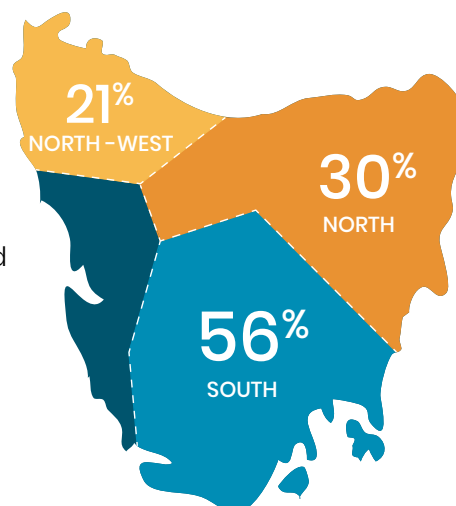
hours of recorded
content is now hosted on
the Seedlab Academy
Online Learning Platform

~1000

hours of one-on-one mentoring/coaching was provided
either face to face on-site, or live online via Zoom, 220 of
which was provided by experts other than the team.

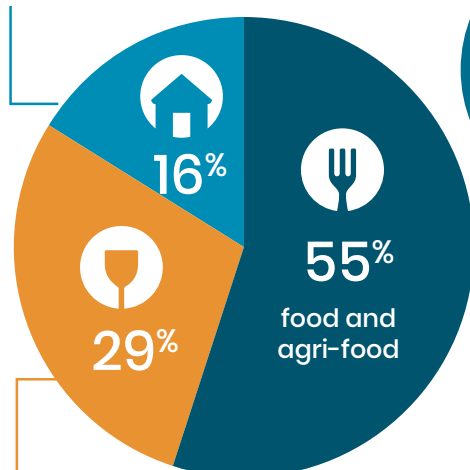
Outcomes:

Seedlab Tasmania is a unique program, demonstrably different from other business support resources available. The core of Seedlab is a “hands-on” mentoring and support program by experienced people who have previously walked the walk. We work with people, on their businesses. This is our sole focus. We have the organisational structure and personnel with the experience and ability to directly engage with our clients, to effect growth. Seedlab has supported businesses statewide in Tasmania, all of which counts as “regional” for the purposes of this grant:




All participants have been sole operators or family businesses, with:

agri-tourism, and a few service businesses too



beverage (11% distilled spirits)



65% 

were totally, or significantly and equally founded by women



Outcomes from Seedlab Tasmania have been extremely positive, and our [website](#) and social media are a testament to this.

The Seedlab Tasmania incubator program has supported start-up regional food, drink and agritourism businesses across Tasmania to survive and thrive through the difficult years of 2020 and 2021. Instead of giving up and relying on handouts, the businesses were guided to pivot, to use best practice tools and implement change to be resilient in the face of the changing business and social environment.

63% of the businesses recorded these real combined outcomes!

10 had secured investment; total \$2,901,000

44 had made significant new collaborations and partnerships

47 had increased revenue; total \$4.1m

\$3.54m was invested on expanding their businesses

9 had engaged in international trade; total \$15k

\$4.1m new revenue

62 new FTE jobs were created

What Seedlab Sponsors said:



“

We were proud to support Seedlab Tasmania as a trial. Tasmania is renowned for its food culture and innovation and coupled with the reputation of the team that started Seedlab Tasmania for being leaders in their fields, made it very hard to resist! We have really noticed the energy and the enthusiasm of the participants and the Seedlab team. They are very passionate and engaging and all supportive of each other. They have even got our store teams energised!”

Paul Harker
Chief Commercial Officer,
Woolworths Supermarkets
& Metro

“



I see food, beverage and agritourism as a very important part of Tasmania's economic future. People involved in these industries have a wonderful passion for their products and a will to share it with others. Small business is a brave venture today and I feel if those of us that have experience share it, we can help people turn their passion into something that can be successfully shared with the world. I love the Seedlab village. The fantastic levels of support for each other in the village has been achieved in such a short time, but I've no doubt will now last many a lifetime of caring and sharing with each other”.

Ray Butcher InoPlus Pty. Ltd.

“

We work to ensure local brilliance thrives, and Seedlab Tasmania recognised that Tasmania is rich in amazing food, drink and agri-tourism businesses and we wanted to help Seedlab Tasmania start-ups to grow and flourish by supporting them to protect and leverage their intellectual property. The business owners are inspired and passionate about their products and we have noticed that Seedlab Tasmania has brought structure and discipline to their business operations, creating clarity of purpose and providing a springboard for greater achievements in a collaborative environment. Intellectual property is a building block of business success and we have valued partnering early with Seedlab Tasmania business owners to help identify and protect their intellectual property to support their success, which has been incredibly satisfying for us”.

Sally Foreman Davies Collison Cave

“

NTDC sees Tasmania's boutique food and beverages as a huge competitive advantage and Seedlab's aim to help participants grow their business and exports aligns perfectly with our economic development goals. What we have valued is the real collaborative spirit that exists in Seedlab, and how so many people with different skillsets work together with a common purpose. NTDC believes in competition but we believe the competitor isn't the business around the corner, it's the business around the world and for Northern Tasmania to succeed as a relatively small region, we must work together.”

Mark Baker CEO Northern Tasmania Development Corporation

“

FermenTasmania supported Seedlab as it too recognised the lack of industry wide support and advocacy to grow and empower the agrifood and beverage sector in Tasmania, and was happy to help the fledgling program get off the ground. The problems solved and opportunities realised through the collaborative nature of Seedlab is impressive, from improved packaging and brand work to new sales channels and innovative new products.”

Kim Seagram FermenTasmania



“

The University of Tasmania is part of a developing Tasmanian entrepreneurial ecosystem focused on the creation of new enterprises that leverage place-based assets across the regions of Tasmania. We supported Seedlab Tasmania as it is also part of the Tasmanian entrepreneurial ecosystem. Seedlab Tasmania has successfully supported the founders as they are the ones that have developed start-ups and new enterprises. The University of Tasmania looks forward to these new enterprises driving job generation, increasing productivity and increasing the number and value of exports, to increase off-island income back to our island, so that it can be shared across our Tasmanian peoples and communities”.

Prof Anthony Koutoulis
Deputy Vice Chancellor Research, UTas



“

Seedlab moves in the innovative, value add and farming sector a perfect fit for Regional Investment Corporation with our vision to support farmers and assist in building stronger communities.

“The Seedlab Village is so exciting all the time, with new things to eat, drink and enjoy. It's about enriching people's lives whether they are building a brand or styling their life to better understand what being in business means, and how to not get burnt out when growing your business. In this Village everyone has a voice, in fact it's a global voice which is what we have come to expect. Hazel has a very long reach to people all over the world, dying to be picked to be a part of Seedlab Tasmania and the Village. We wouldn't want to be anywhere else”.

Susie Lohrey Regional Investment Corporation.

The Seedlab Village: incorporates Alumni from Bootcamp and Cultivate, the Seedlab Team, and the over 160 “Global Gurus and Local Legends” who have come and presented to our participants. We have an active and engaged social media fan base, and extremely active private Facebook groups where the community shares opportunities, outcomes and challenges.



Seedlab Tasmania is the greatest thing I have achieved in my professional life, and it has both taken a village to achieve it, and has become its own Village.

It is now my mission to build on what we have done here, and create a sustainable future for the approach, the program, the resources and the team we have established.

Thank you for this opportunity to help make business dreams real for our participants”.



Dr Hazel MacTavish-West,
Founder of Seedlab Tasmania
March, 2022.

Some of our Seedlab Village at Third Harvest, Willie Smith's Apple Shed, November 2021.





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