Worksheet Startup Collaboration Maturity

Each question has four answer prompts. Select from these the ones that most closely reflect your company's reality. For each question; answer one is 1 point, answer two is 2 points, answer three is 3 points and answer four is 4 points. In the end, add up your score and see where your company lands on the spectrum. Also, be aware of the questions where you scored the poorest; these are your company's main collaboration maturity blockers.

1

We have a clear innovation strategy that's helping us scout the startups we want to collaborate with.
1. We don't have an innovation strategy.
2. We have an innovation strategy, but we don't use it when we look for startups to collaborate with.
3. We sometimes check the innovation strategy when we look for startups to collaborate with.
4. We constantly check our startup collaborations against our company's innovation strategy.

2

Startup collaborations are an integral part of our growth strategy.
1. Startup collaborations are seen with much skepticism by the majority of our employees and leaders.
2. Startup collaborations are just a "nice to have thing" for our company; we mainly do it for marketing purposes.
3. We look at startup collaborations only for specific topics, and we deploy this vehicle only in certain contexts.
4. Startup collaborations are an essential vehicle for our company's growth, taken very seriously by our company's employees and leaders.

3

We have very clear and pragmatic goals for our startup collaborations.
1. We mainly do startup collaboration because it's "cool" and everyone else in the industry is doing it.
2. We have some goals for our startup collaborations, but they are neither clear nor pragmatic.
3. We have goals for our startup collaborations, but we don't use them in decision-making or evaluation.
4. The goals for our startup collaborations are clear, pragmatic, and constantly used to evaluate the activity.

4

We have a clear and transparent checklist that we use before entering any startup collaboration.
1. We don't have a checklist – the selection is made based on gut feel.
2. We have a checklist to evaluate startup collaboration, but we rarely use it as it's not that good/useful.
3. We sometimes use our checklist but not for every deal as the checklist is not developed.
4. We have a checklist, and we constantly evaluate every deal against it.

5

The legal department is involved early in the startup collaboration process, preventing issues from appearing later.
1. We don't run our startup collaborations deal by the legal department beyond just sending contracts.
2. We sometimes involve the legal department but only in selected collaborations.
3. We involve the legal department in all of our collaboration deals, but we don't get influenced by their advice that much.
4. We always involve legal, early in the deals and follow their advice.

6

The final decision for a deal for a startup collaboration rests with the individual business unit that would benefit the most from the collaboration.
1. No; the final decision for every collaboration rests with our C-level.
2. Not really; the final decisions for every collaboration are taken by a specifically proposed group in our company.
3. The final decision for collaboration sometimes involves the individual BU that would benefit the most from the collaboration.
4. Yes; the final decision for startup collaboration rests with the individual BU that would benefit the most from the collaboration.

7

Our tech infrastructure is set up to make collaboration and integration of 3rd party solutions easy.
1. Our tech infrastructure is something from the stone-age; no chance to run anything there.
2. As old as our tech infrastructure is, we do our best to run 3rd party solutions on it, but this is not easy, requiring much work from the IT department.
3. We have decent tech infrastructure, but the IT department still needs to be involved extensively in every integration.
4. Our tech infrastructure is state of the art, making integration with 3rd party solutions easy. On top of that, it's also very well documented, making the involvement from the IT department minimal.

8

We have a specific budget for startup collaborations on top of the internal innovation budget.
1. We don't have a specific budget for these activities. Money is usually taken from other budgets such as marketing, IT development, or internal innovation.
2. We have a specific budget for startup collaborations, but it's not adequate for our ambitions, so often we take money from other budgets.
3. Our internal innovation and startup collaboration budgets are one and the same, but they are distinct from other budgets in the company, like the ones for marketing or IT.
4. Our startup collaboration budget is separate from the other budgets, and it's adequate for what we plan on doing.

9

We have a very robust and analytical process to assess the degree of risk/uncertainty of startup collaborations.
1. We don't care about risk and uncertainty. This will be solved once the collaboration starts.
2. We have a process of assessing risk, but it's not analytical and it's based primarily on the talent of our employees to find the right startups to work with.
3. We have a fact-based process of assessing risk and uncertainty, but we don't use that often, preferring not to be slowed down by it.
4. We have a very clear analytical process to assess the degree of risk/uncertainty, and we use this with absolutely every collaboration

10

We offer specific training for the employees in our company responsible for startup collaborations.
1. We have a very inclusive approach to selecting people responsible for startup collaborations; everyone is accepted, and they learn this skill on the job.
2. The training we offer our employees responsible for startup collaborations is hardly sufficient for them to do their job well; they learn more on the job following the training.
3. We offer specific training for our employees responsible for startup collaborations, but we only do it once when we on-board them; the rest is going to be developed through experience.
4. We offer specific training for the employees in our company responsible for startup collaborations, and we make sure their skills are up to date every year.

11

We have clear documentation about what it takes to collaborate with our corporation, including specific payment terms, brand usage, access to customers, data privacy, etc.
1. Documentation?!? What documentation?!? We don't have time for that.
2. We have documentation, but we rarely send it to the startups ahead of the collaboration; we prefer to sign the deal first.
3. We have a sort of documentation, but it's not that up to date.
4. Our documentation is best-in-class, and we are very transparent about these things with the startups way ahead of signing any deal.

Scale:
<22 novice collaborator
22-35 competent collaborator
>35 expert collaborator

The scope of your maturity level determines how easy it will be to successfully collaborate with startups. If you are a novice collaborator, be aware of the pitfalls and weak spots. Determine your priorities and focus on what is needed right now to start collaborating. Even if you are more mature as a company, it makes sense to use this test to keep iterating and improving on your company's ability to collaborate with startups.