

Farah Enein

Topic: AUC vs Non-AUC Startups.

**Lead-in:** Some people might have more opportunities than others. Being an AUC student or graduate has its perks starting from connections with professors that could help guide students in their startups, friends that help spread word about the project/startup and share it with the student body and the student body shares it with their other friends and so on, lastly the AUC Venture Lab which is an incubator that helps new startups by providing services like management training.

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Music: Softly Strumming Trio By Nigid

*Ahmed ElBayoumi(AE): "We give them sessions on accounting, finance, marketing, operation, digital marketing for example, everything that they would need to run their companies." (10 seconds)*

That was Ahmed ElBayoumi. He works at The Venture Lab known as VLab at The American University in Cairo (A-U-C). It's the first university-based startup incubator in Egypt that helps in accelerating startup companies to grow without using too much cash.

*Fade in Nat Sound from Venture Lab*

The V-Lab has been in A-UC since 2013. Their focus and strength is in offering trainings for entrepreneurs. They also give them tips on how to run their companies:

*(AE): "We start with them from day one when they start the cycle by working on their business models by introducing them to the entrepreneurship framework where the customer is always right and they have to build their product that fits the customers' needs and we work with them on the journey to identify the customers and then start tailoring their products to them." (22 seconds)*

*Fade in Rewind Sound Effect*

So to backup, a cycle is a 4 stage process that every startup goes through

Stage one:

*Fade in ding sound effect*

The application, Stage two:

*Fade in ding sound effect*

Then screening interviews, Stage 3:

*Fade in ding sound effect*

Chosen applicants go to bootcamp, and

And finally the last stage is the panel where around 10 startups are selected to join.

*Fade in celebrating sound effect*

The V-labs can also help fashion startups which began when Farida Temraz, an Egyptian fashion designer, who started her own fashion line. Nowadays, more young girls are becoming fashion designers and starting their own lines like Farah Wagdy.

*Farah Wagdy (FW): "I make statement pieces every piece has its own story. I want that every piece should somehow strike out, my signature is basically to make not normal blazer that we all know basically I use different cuts and fabrics. I choose fabrics that stirkeout the piece like I use fur, sequin, I use feathers to make the piece is a master piece. I want that every piece is a statement piece ." (40 seconds)*

Farah is a 21 year old, Communication and Media Arts student at A-U-C. She re-innovated the traditional blazer to make it unique. Thankfully, she was supported by the people around her to start her own fashion line. (add farah talking about her designs)

*(FW): "For me personally it was mainly my friends and the people that I know from all my courses and classes I felt really supported and they all shared by posts and the page of my line and they were really supportive" (25 seconds)*

On the hand, Shaymaa founder of Scandal, an online fashion line, graduated with a Business Degree from University of Modern Science and Arts. She also earned a post graduate degree from London Collage of Fashion. She had the support of her friends at first and then her family came along later on.

*Shaymaa Hamdy (SH): "Honestly my friends were supportive, my family they were worried because I've quite my corporate career which was also in fashion but I've*

*decided to start up this thing and you know how things are right now economically it is not stable, so they did see the opportunity in the situation but usually people in Egypt tend to play it safe.”(32 seconds)*

Luckily due to Farah's extensive support system, she was able to reach people outside of Egypt. On top of that she planned out her own strategy

*(FW): “I already started, like bloggers and celebrities that started wearing my designs in Dubai, Beirut and USA, so it is starting somehow to boost. We do limited pieces. I only do per design maximum 10 pieces because I want them to be statement pieces that will make you feel unique and different.” (27 seconds)*

Shaymaa also had her own strategy when it came to her brand, but still did not have the same success as Farah did.

*(SH): “Understand your consumer, the consumer dictates everything, how the brand works, your strategy, your collection, the colors, down to the single detail. Overall strategy is testing the market first, producing safe icons and not produce too much of the same icon”(21 seconds)*

Scandal is growing and Shaymaa has a male partner now who is adding a male fashion line to Scandal. She believes that something like The V-lab will be helpful to her startup.

*(SH): “I have a male partner now but he’s going to be working more on the men section when we develop it, which we have in plan to be developed sometime within the next year. Of course an AUC Venture Lab would be helpful like any kind of support when you’re starting up would be helpful.”*

Both girls might’ve had different ways when it came to their brands, but in the end they’re both successful brands with different styles and everyone has a chance at pursuing their dreams.

*(AE): “Everyone has an opportunity. We all have opportunities wherever we are, wherever we live whatever university we go to. There’s always opportunities around us, its finding the good one, finding the good opportunities and perusing them is what makes a difference.” (14 seconds)*

This audio documentary was produced by Farah Enein for the audio Production Course at The American University in Cairo, taught by Professor Kim Fox in the Spring semester of 2018.

Special thanks to:

Ahmed ElBayoumy, Farah Wagdy, and Shaymaa Hamdy.

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Music: Softly Strumming Trio By Nigid