

Diversity as an engine for growth, powered by technology and entrepreneurship

About The Shortcut

The Shortcut is the non-profit sister corporation of Slush, the most prominent startup conference in Europe and Asia. We are fully owned by the Startup Foundation.

The Shortcut aims to inspire and empower people from diverse backgrounds to take an active role in (re)building their own future. We want to activate under-utilised skills and lower the barriers of employment, especially for immigrants and others who find it difficult to integrate and find a job in Finland.

The three pillars of The Shortcut's activities are:

1- Creating a strong community by activating, inspiring and empowering people from diverse backgrounds. We arrange inspiring events and workshops, including talks by startup founders and others who've made the journey, peer learning environment activities and clubs, etc.

2- Providing hard and soft skills to make people more employable (School of Startups, Certification programmes, access to coding classes and other types of training, hackathons, hands-on information on how to create a startup or join one, legal aspects, funding, networking etc.)

3- Creating opportunities for employment by encouraging more people to create startups or work for one (volunteering, internships at tech companies, access to accelerator programmes, matchmaking events for employment opportunities at startups and high growth companies).



The Shortcut community

The community currently consists mostly of first and second generation immigrants, foreigners, asylum seekers, refugees, and multicultural people and youth, trying to integrate into Finnish society. We also have Finns who haven't quite yet found their place in their own country (e.g. expats returning to Finland after a long period

abroad) and people who wish to shift their area of expertise and are trying to acquire new skills.

In general, 90% of our community members are foreign-born and some 10% are Finns. There's a 50/50 gender balance. Our pool of volunteers is renewing and has increased since last year. Our active group of team members and interns, all on a volunteer basis, consist of nearly 70 people who represent over 35 nationalities.

The Shortcut Lab in Maria 0-1

The Shortcut Lab is a project of Suomi100 and in collaboration with various partners (e.g. Rlabs.org South Africa). The space has been renovated in the heart of the hottest startup hub in the Nordics. As The Shortcut belongs to Startup Foundation and is part of the same family, it was decided from its inception that the home of The Shortcut would be in Maria 0-1. We have 260sqm of community space and a training centre, which will be officially opened to the community in early September. Our training and programmes will be run from there. Most of the furniture and various other materials have been generously donated by startups in our network.

The Shortcut activities and achievements

In 2016, its first year of operations, The Shortcut had over 40 events, which gathered 680+ participants. More than 140 lecturers, mentors and event organisers made these happen by working pro bono. We built up a network of nearly a hundred volunteers and an active group of team members and interns of over 30 people, most of them of foreign background.

In Spring 2017, we already coordinated more than 50 weekly community gatherings, coding clubs and other events. Most recently, we ran The School of Startups, a three-week long series of 29 workshops and two bootcamps over weekends, with 166 participants representing 45+ nationalities (first and second generation immigrants, international students, asylum seekers, refugees, expats and Finns), of which most are between the age of 15-29 years old. However, we do also have some members who are 45+ year old.

In Autumn 2017, we are opening The Shortcut Lab in Maria 0-1. In addition to consolidating a more comprehensive offering of tried and tested events, we will run a second edition of The School of Startups with more participants, and develop certification programmes (for Google analytics, Facebook marketing etc) to increase people's chances of employment. We will also focus on developing programmes aiming at increasing/facilitating access to job opportunities (internship, training, task oriented freelance assignments, and job positions) in startups and scaleup companies.

Some of our supporters and partners: Aalto University, Futurice, Laurea University, Microsoft, PwC, Reaktor Ventures, Sitra, [Smartly.io](https://www.smartly.io), Startup Refugees, Suomi100, Supercell, Slush, Teknologiateollisuuden 100-vuotissäätiö and more.

Our endorsers include: Miki Kuusi, Linda Liukas, Kristo Ovaska, Ilkka Kivimäki, Pia-Henrietta Kekäläinen, Riku Asikainen and many others.

The Shortcut Manifesto

For you who are willing to change;

- seek new skills;
- need to find your place in society;
- want to utilize your full potential;
- want to add value to the community;

We lead you through a journey that empowers and inspires new people to join the startup community.

We are the safety net where testing ideas (and failing) is part of the development process.

We welcome and cherish diversity as an engine for growth.

For you who are the change.

We welcome you to The Shortcut.