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Lester, Mary

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Highlights

MasterCard Start Path™

- We are helping startups with hands-on guidance, mentorship and engagement opportunities.
- In Europe, we've launched the [MasterCard Start Path accelerator](#); Our U.S. accelerator, [Commerce. Innovated.](#), is live.
- Employees across MasterCard can join a global mentor pool to be considered as a potential mentor.

MasterCard Start Path

Story contact: [Gioia, Amanda](#) on: 5/6/2014

Stephane Wyper and Steve Flinter are generating some exciting work for MasterCard – and leading the way on how we're interacting with startups. MC Central caught up with them to hear more about it.

MC Central: What is MasterCard Start Path?

SW: MasterCard Start Path is an effort to propel startups toward long-term success by offering hands-on guidance, mentorship and engagement opportunities. Initially available across North America and Europe, the program is targeted at startups that are making commerce more efficient, secure, simple and relevant. We are testing different approaches, for example, running our own startup accelerators and making small seed fund investments.

SF: In Europe, we've launched the [MasterCard Start Path accelerator](#). Our application process is open until May 16. This is a 12-month program, divided into two stages; a four-month onsite "accelerated" phase based in Dublin, and an eight-month "virtual" phase where each startup returns to their home market. Our focus is to help each startup scale quickly by providing opportunities to explore pilot opportunities with both MasterCard and selected MasterCard customers.

MC Central: What is in it for MasterCard?

SW: Obviously, a measure of success will be the success of startups themselves, if we have a positive impact on their businesses. For us, we see this helping us rapidly broaden our own commerce capabilities, integrating these leading-edge solutions with our own offerings, strengthening our engagement with the developer community and continuing to enhance our reputation as a technology innovator.

MC Central: Are we already working with any startups?

SW: Yes. Our U.S. accelerator, [Commerce. Innovated.](#), is live and we are working with our first class of six startups on innovative solutions across social payments, APIs and 'Uber'-like experiences.

MC Central: How is our approach different?

SW: I think it's three key things: (1) we have a "listen first" approach where we take the time to learn about each startup, their needs and create customized ways to help; (2) we have a specific focus on "getting to scale" by helping startups to address critical business challenges; and finally (3) MasterCard has a "platform for commerce," both as a testing ground for new startup technologies and enabling startups to build upon our capabilities to further innovation. There aren't a lot of companies that can offer this.

MC Central: How can MasterCard employees get involved?

SW: We have a global mentor pool and welcome employees across MasterCard to join it to be considered as a potential mentor. We need individuals across a wide range of operational areas including compliance, marketing and payment technology.

SF: As we plan for the launch of our Europe accelerator in July, we want strong representation from MasterCard mentors within the European market. Any European employee who wants more information should contact me directly to learn more.

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[Fitzpatrick, Lynn](#) 5/8/2014 12:33 PM



A very exciting initiative for MC to be involved with!



 [Clyne, Ann-Marie](#) 5/8/2014 8:31 AM

I'm very excited for these external projects, its a new approach for the organization and will certainly help in showing the external world that we really are a Technology Company. Good luck to everyone involved and I look forward to hearing the progress in the coming weeks and months - keep us posted!



 [Wyper, Stephane](#) 5/7/2014 9:57 AM

Thank you all for the support, look for more updates over the next few months!



 [Minelli, Michael](#) 5/7/2014 9:26 AM


This is a tremendous program and it's amazing how much the team has already accomplished. This will help us leapfrog competition and plug ourselves into the wave of innovation coming from the Valley and Alley!



 [Whelan, Caitriona](#) 5/7/2014 4:44 AM

Best of luck to Stephane and Steve on the launch of the Europe accelerator.



 [Fatenos, Jim](#) 5/6/2014 3:35 PM

Congrats. Sounds like a really interesting program.



 [Coban, Ozge](#) 5/6/2014 2:33 PM

This is very exciting!