



Impact Report

ACIE - 2025

Tracking Progress
Measuring Results
Guiding Growth



Our Approach

Anchored in USEK's mission to advance innovation and entrepreneurship, we contribute by providing structured yet accessible pathways from early-stage to go-to-market ready startups. From initial exploration to first validation steps, entrepreneurs are supported in a safe and enabling setting that encourages progress at their own pace.

Our role extends beyond program delivery. We cultivate a connected and inclusive community that brings together aspiring founders, alumni, mentors, and ecosystem partners. Within this space, ideas are challenged, experiences are shared and through tailored guidance, mentorship, and exposure, we support initiatives at different stages and help them evolve into viable businesses.



Entrepreneurship at ACIE is supported through a holistic approach, starting with mindset-focused workshops, idea validation, market testing, and advancing through incubation and global acceleration opportunities. This integrated pathway equips participants with practical skills, real-world exposure, and the confidence to innovate, adapt, and grow, driving meaningful and sustainable impact within the ecosystem.



2025 Overview

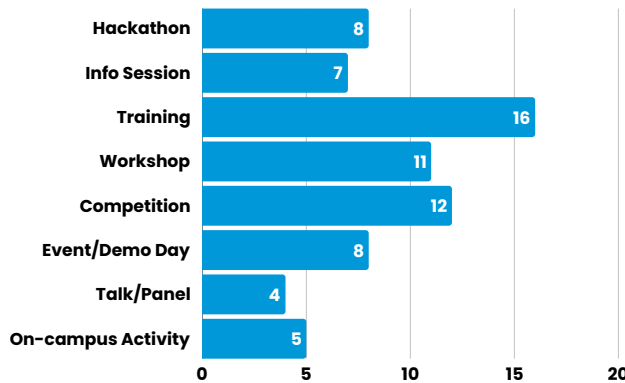
Total Activities

61

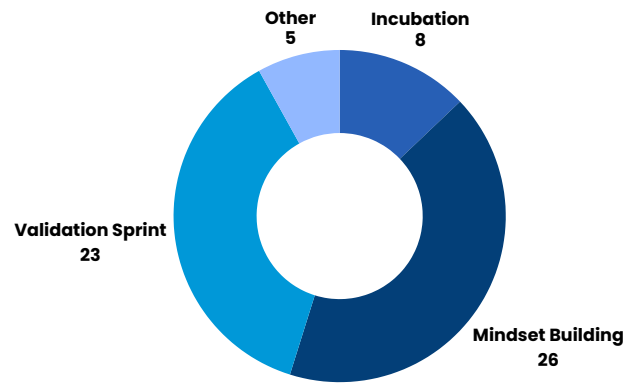
Total Participants

1535

Types of Activities



Activity per Program



Supported Startups

51

Market Validation

74.5%

Go-to-Market

25.5%

Total Grants Disbursed

\$58.5K

Number of Co-founders

108



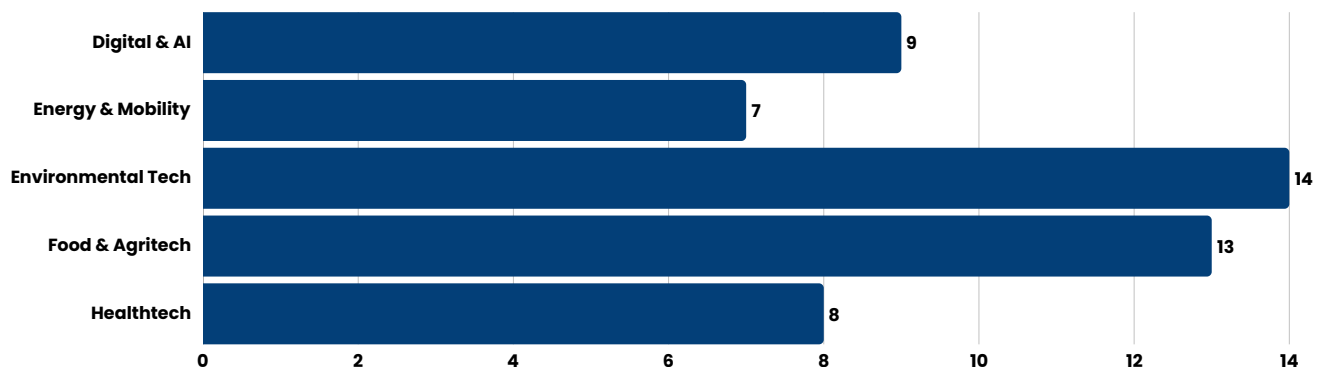
58.3%



41.7%

Trainers	Mentors	Experts	Coaches	Judges
21	17	22	3	36

Breakdown per Sector



Mindset Building

At the heart of our center's mission lies the cultivation of an entrepreneurial mindset, a way of thinking that emphasizes opportunity recognition, initiative, creativity, and resilience in the face of uncertainty. By fostering proactive problem-solving and a willingness to experiment, we equip our community not only with venture-building skills, but with a transformative mindset that enables them to create value and drive positive impact across sectors.

Classes Engaged

61

Students Reached

1324

Mindset Building Activities

26

Volunteers Involved

17

Info Sessions

Our online and offline info sessions provide an easy way to introduce our programs, competitions, and opportunities, raising awareness and encouraging early engagement in innovation and entrepreneurship.



Workshops

Our workshops are a key part of this pillar, offering hands-on experiences that develop skills, boost confidence, and encourage innovative thinking. Below are three highlighted workshops:

Public Speaking Workshop



In partnership with **Loudspeakers Club** (Toastmasters Lebanon) and **Jounieh Municipality**, this workshop helped changemakers build public speaking skills to become confident leaders and communicators.

Growth Lab Series - Personal Branding Workshop



The Growth Lab workshop on Personal Branding, led by **Ghynwa Salem, Brand Manager at Cheese On Top**, in collaboration with the **USEK Career Center**, helped students develop their identity, presence, and personal story.

Creating Solutions for a Better World - UN SDGs Workshop



A workshop led by **Ms. Dalida Sneifer** from the **Green USEK** showed participants how to align their ideas with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and create purpose-driven impact.

Talks & Panels

Through talks and panels, we brought together founders, experts, and changemakers to share insights and inspire engagement in innovation and impact. Here are three examples:

E-Commerce Talk with Wolfobey



Jad Fakhani (Wolfobey) shared his e-commerce journey, giving students practical tips on building, growing, and scaling online businesses while inspiring them to develop their own ventures.

Ideas Worth Building: A Talk with Lebanese Founders

Panelists!



Omar Itani
GM of FabrikAid



Nisrine El Turkey
CEO of Iotree



Ralph Sbeih
CSO of PlastLab



Antoine Abou Moussa
Founder of Compost Beirut

A panel bringing together Lebanese entrepreneurs **Antoine Abou Moussa, Nisrine El Turkey, Omar Itani, and Ralph Sbeih**, all actively innovating within the circular economy, to share their journeys and practical insights with aspiring founders.

Voices of Change Series - Ed. 1



The first Voices of Change talk, organized in collaboration with the **Strategic Corporate Relations Office**, featured **Marina El Khawand**, a young Lebanese entrepreneur and founder of **Medonations**, who shared her journey of transforming a pressing social challenge into a scalable, impact-driven solution.

Ideathons

We hosted two three-day ideathons for IdeaLab Batches 4 and 5 in agrifoodtech and cleantech, held in March and July respectively. Participants formed teams, developed ideas, and received guidance throughout the process, concluding with pitch presentations. Two winning teams from each ideathon were shortlisted for the IdeaLab program.

45
Participants

20
Ideas Created

4
Winners

9
Workshops

Judges



Alain Abi Rizk



Jack Jendo



Jacob Ismail



Jana El Khoury



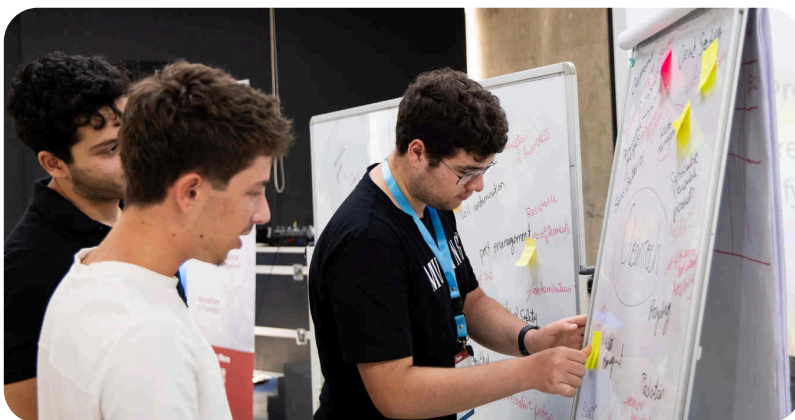
Lynda Achkouty



Nancy Saliba



Ralph Khairallah



Community Building & On-Campus Activities

These activities strengthened engagement with the university community through events such as the USEK Job Fair, Open Day, and Earth Day, where pop-up booths provided program information, answered questions, and inspired interest in entrepreneurship.

Beyond events, our efforts fostered lasting connections by creating a shared space for participants, alumni, and entrepreneurs to exchange ideas, share opportunities, and learn together.



The Hustle Hub - Student Entrepreneurs Exhibition

In collaboration with the **USEK Student Council** and **Student Affairs Office**, we hosted The Hustle Hub, showcasing 12 student-run ventures and featuring a fireside chat with digital marketing expert **Mo Hakim** on online growth.



IdeaLab - Startup Alumni Gathering

This gathering, organized in collaboration with the **Lebanese Entrepreneurs Network (LEN)**, offered IdeaLab alumni the opportunity to reconnect, reflect on their journeys, and expand their professional networks.

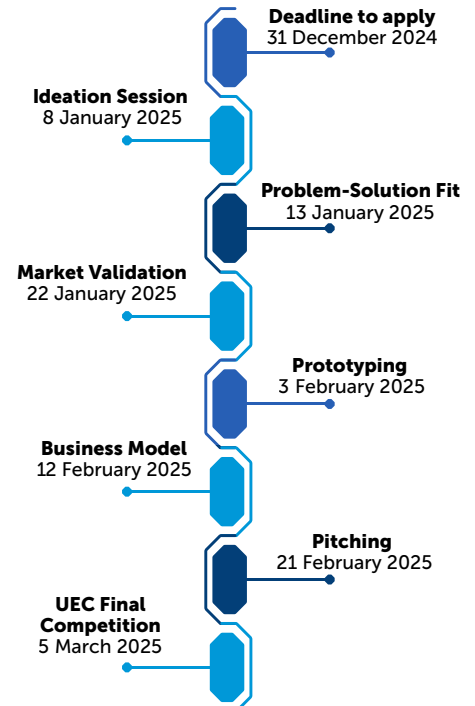


USEK Entrepreneurship Challenge 2025

The USEK Entrepreneurship Challenge 2025, part of the Babson Collaborative Student Challenge, gave students an international entrepreneurship experience focused on teamwork, real-world problem solving, and impact-driven innovation, while connecting them to a global network.



Competition Timeline



Winning Team



Li-Stick

A smart assistive device that enhances mobility and safety for visually impaired individuals through obstacle detection, GPS tracking, and Li-Fi technology.

Judges



Joseph Al Assad, PhD



Nancy Saliba, PhD



Pascal Damien, PhD



Ranya Salameh, PhD



Samar Azzi, PhD

Mentors



Adib Abboud



Amir Saab



Cendrella Antoun



Hasan Jaafar



Margot Wehbe



Marc Bou Mansour



Rida Abdallah



Yasmine Darwiche

IdeaLab Validation Program



The IdeaLab program ended in 2025 after completing Batch 4 and Batch 5, closing a three-year initiative across Lebanon. Organized by **Berytech** and co-funded by the **Embassy of the Netherlands in Lebanon**, the program was delivered through partner organizations. We supported its implementation in North Mount Lebanon, focusing on agrifoodtech and cleantech.

The final batches supported idea-stage teams through market validation, solution testing, and business model development, with training, mentorship, and feedback that strengthened their innovative solutions.

Supported Startups

19

Total Cash Grants

\$28.5K

Workshops

10

Training Hours

+35

Business Follow-ups

+150

Experts Support

21



CO-FUNDED BY
Kingdom of the Netherlands

Berytech
powering potential



ACIE
ASHER CENTER
for Innovation and
Entrepreneurship

Agrytech

Clyntech

Batch 4

Böhm

sustainable soap-based solution

Bohm

Creates zero waste solid liquid hybrid soap using upcycled olive oil to eliminate plastic packaging.

Airguard

Airguard

Optimizes wireless infrastructure with AI to reduce energy use, extend hardware lifespan, and cut e-waste.



FAM

Delivers ready to heat Lebanese comfort dishes like Moghrabiye and Mouloukhiye, blending convenience with tradition.

Forest Folks

Living with the Land. Growing a Sustainable Future

Forest Folks

Develops a Black Soldier Fly larvae kit for small-scale, sustainable organic waste conversion for farms and households.



ELECTRIDE

ElectRide

Offers an easy to install e bike conversion kit that makes green transport affordable and accessible.



Fresh Drop Tech

Your smart partner in Freshness

Fresh Drop Tech

Builds a smart device that monitors food freshness and detects spoilage in real time.



Mashrou3 Protein

Introduces the high-protein mankoushe, merging Lebanese bakery heritage with functional fitness nutrition.



Dura Pavé

Develops durable, cost-effective asphalt using recycled polymers for sustainable road repair.

Batch 5



HeaTape

Generates clean electricity from temperature differences using a thermoelectric energy harvesting device.



Jnoun

Produces healthy plant based extruded snack chips using local ingredients and an innovative process.



SIMAR

Runs a digital marketplace connecting farmers and consumers through transparent, traceable, and fair bidding.



EcoSense

Deploys AI powered forest monitoring to predict wildfires and enable rapid response.



Karobon

Converts carob molasses residue into high-value activated carbon using a zero waste process.



CorPu

A natural water purification solution using coriander's heavy metal binding properties to deliver safer drinking water.



SPACIOUS

Provides modular, customizable prefabricated units paired with a digital design platform for fast, sustainable spaces.



Ovitech

Offers a precision artificial insemination device that improves breeding efficiency in sheep.



SyntrumAI

Enables remote monitoring through an offline first mesh network with edge AI.



Prozap

Builds an AI powered pest control device that detects and eliminates pests using precise, chemical free laser technology.

PowerUp Incubation Program

Launched in 2025, our incubation program is designed around proven go-to-market and venture-building methodologies used by leading incubators globally. Supporting 12 early-stage startups, the program delivers structured, milestone-driven support focused on customer validation, business modeling, operational readiness, and founder execution, ensuring ventures are equipped to enter the market with sustainable growth potential.

Supported Startups

12

Total Cash Grants

\$24K

Workshops

6

Training Hours

+18

Coaching Sessions

+70

PowerUp Bootcamp

The program began with a three-day bootcamp featuring intensive workshops, speed-mentoring, and hands-on sessions to help teams refine their ideas and prepare for incubation.

Workshops

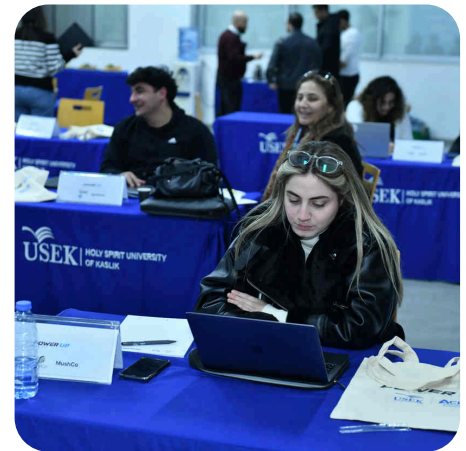
5

Mentors

11

Training Hours

15



PowerUp Startup Showcase

12 teams pitched their solutions to **ACIE board members, business leaders,** and the community, showcasing their progress and gaining access to investors, markets, and growth opportunities.



Startups



Agri Smart

Develops a freemium WhatsApp-based service that provides agricultural advice to Lebanese farmers in Arabic or Latin script.



DDSS

Develops a safety system for rental companies, insurers, and fleet operators to prevent drunk driving incidents.



Dental Companion

Develops a digital platform that enables freelancers and creatives to showcase their portfolios and connect with work opportunities.



Meta Formula Lab

Develops eco-friendly facial cleanser tablets designed to reduce packaging waste and simplify skincare routines.



Nazar Eyewear

Develops modular, customizable eyewear combining functionality with flexible design.



ReSource

Develops pyrolysis-based machines that convert plastic waste into fuel and gas.



AYKI

Develops a smart garden application supporting small-scale farmers and gardeners with planning tools, yield calculators, and personalized guidance.



De Casa

Develops clean-label, protein-rich food products by transforming leftover whey from cheese-making.



EVX Showroom

Develops a centralized digital platform offering information, listings, and services related to electric vehicles.



MushCo

Develops high-protein mushroom snacks by upcycling coffee waste into sustainable food products.



Pawfuel

Develops eco-friendly dog food kibbles made from sustainable ingredients.



Wiggles

Develops sustainable protein products derived from insects by upcycling food waste into high-quality protein, oil, and chitin.



Community & Ecosystem Engagement

Achieving Breakthroughs in 100 Days

This workshop brought together ecosystem partners, CEOs, industry experts, and faculty for a collaborative learning experience on accelerating impact.

Hosted at USEK by ACIE, participants explored the Rapid Results Approach, generously delivered by **Ronnie Hammad** and **Gillian Rai** from **The Sublime Institute**, focusing on hands-on application, problem-solving to drive meaningful change in startups and organizations.



Babson Collaborative for Entrepreneurship Education

ACIE was present at the **Babson Collaborative Global Summit** in Paris, bringing together entrepreneurship educators from over 40 institutions worldwide.

The summit highlighted best practices in teaching, research, and partnerships, and celebrated **USEK's recognition as a Circle of Influence member**, after seven years of impact in global entrepreneurship education.

Through the Collaborative Student Challenge (UEC), USEK continues to work with **global institutions within the Babson Collaborative**, using research, webinars, and community initiatives to connect local innovators to the international ecosystem.



EcoSwitch Festival

It gathered Lebanon's green entrepreneurs for a day of networking, knowledge-sharing, and celebrating eco-innovation. Organized by the **EcoSwitch Coalition**, of which ACIE is a member, the festival brought together founders, partners, and experts supporting sustainable startups and strengthening the **circular economy** ecosystem in Lebanon.



In December, **Reda Helbawi, ACIE Programs Manager** at **ACIE**, was elected to the **Coalition's Executive Committee**, reinforcing ACIE's active role in impact-driven entrepreneurship and ecosystem coordination.



Info Session - Energy Innovation Lab



Funded by the **European Union** and implemented by **UNDP** in partnership with **Nucleus Ventures**, the Energy Innovation Lab supports startups in developing scalable solutions for Lebanon's energy challenges.

An info session was hosted for USEK students in collaboration with the **School of Engineering**, promoting this opportunity in energy innovation, sustainability, and entrepreneurship.



ACIE at Start Mashreq Forum - Jordan

ACIE maintains a collaborative partnership with **Fla6Labs** as a knowledge and outreach partner, supporting ecosystem connection and cross-border collaboration.



As part of this engagement, Reda Helbawi attended the **Start Mashreq Forum Demo Day 2025** in Amman, strengthening ACIE's regional exposure and relationships within the MENA entrepreneurship ecosystem.



LEAN Consortium

The **Lebanese Entrepreneurship Acceleration Network (LEAN)** brings together leading entrepreneurship and innovation actors to align efforts, share resources, and strengthen support for startups across Lebanon. Through its engagement in LEAN, ACIE contributes to collective efforts that aim to accelerate venture growth, reinforce ecosystem collaboration, and position Lebanese entrepreneurship on a broader regional and global stage.



Smart Seating Competition

Organized by **Spot Design** with ACIE and **USEK's School of Architecture and Design**, this national competition invited participants to design smart, culturally inspired seating.

Maya Karkour led a workshop on Circular Thinking in Design. Winners receive production, promotion, IP ownership, and a showcase at Spot Design and USEK.

PowerX Summit 2025

Organized by **Berytech**, the summit brought together key stakeholders from Lebanon’s entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem. ACIE participated alongside USEK’s Technology Transfer Office and the School of Engineering, contributing to ecosystem engagement and cross-sector collaboration.

The event also marked the conclusion of **The Last Bang**, a collaborative outreach activity delivered with **Berytech** and the **IdeaLab implementing partners** for Batch 5, during which winning 15 teams were recognized and awarded.

In addition, Dr. Nancy Saliba, Director of ACIE, participated in the panel “**Collaborative Growth: Navigating Lebanon’s Entrepreneurial Ecosystem**,” highlighting the role of Business Support Organizations in strengthening collaboration and supporting startup growth.



Seeds of Innovation

Held under the **EU-funded Lebanon Innovate Program**, this event brought together academia, industry, and policymakers to advance agri-food innovation.

Organized by **Agri-Food KIC** with **EBRD**, **ACIE**, and **Berytech**, it featured Design Thinking and IP workshops delivered by Nancy Saliba and Nisrine Haddad, and a panel on bridging sectors followed by a networking session.



Agri-Food Innovation Award (AFIA)

Under the patronage of H.E. Prime Minister Judge Nawaf Salam, USEK partnered with **QOOT Cluster** for the **Agri-Food Innovation Award (AFIA)** at the Sursock Museum.

Dr. Nancy Saliba, ACIE Director, served as a judge, supporting innovative agri-food solutions and reinforcing USEK's role in Lebanon's innovation ecosystem.



Youth Community Entrepreneurs - YCE 2025

For the second year, ACIE actively supported the competition organized by **Jounieh Municipality**, the **Federation of Keserwan-Ftouh Municipalities**, and **Ville de Metz (France)**, delivering a Business Model Canvas workshop to help participants strengthen their projects.

Six of the nine finalist teams were from USEK, with **Li Stick** and **EcoSense** emerging as winners. Li Stick received a **one-week incubation at PEEL**, the University of Lorraine's incubator, while EcoSense was **awarded a cash prize**.



Ecosystem Dialogues

Women In Tech Roadshow

As part of the **Women in Tech Roadshow** at AUB, a session on business, technology, and career pathways in the tech sector was moderated by Dr. Nancy Saliba Boueri, Director of ACIE, highlighting opportunities and challenges for women in the field.



WOMEN IN TECH ROADSHOW
BEIRUT, LEBANON

American University of Beirut
February 22, 2025
10:30 - 11:00 AM

Join our panel discussion on
Business Tech Strategy - Our Careers In Tech

MODERATOR

Hanady Karam
Group COO of Potech

Gardenia Homsy
Tech Product Manager at Wakilni

Nancy Saliba
Director of Asher Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship
ACIE

Seeds of Innovation Webinar

An interactive **Lebanon Innovate** webinar focused on ideation, design thinking, and Intellectual Property in the agrifood sector, featuring Dr. Nancy Saliba Boueri (ACIE) and Dr. Marc Bou Zeidan (**QOOT Cluster**).



LEBANON INNOVATE

ORGANIZED BY Agri-Food KIC IN COLLABORATION WITH European Bank IRA Berytech

SEEDS OF INNOVATION
FROM IDEATION TO IP IN THE AGRIFOOD SECTOR

DR. NANCY SALIBA
Director of the ACIE at USEK

DR. MARC BOU ZEIDAN
Executive Director of the QOOT Cluster

WED, 6th August 2025
3:00 pm
[Register Today](#)

Conversations on Entrepreneurship by EBRD

Dr. Nancy Saliba joined a fireside chat at Villa Audi during the **EBRD Star Venture Lebanon 2025 Event**, discussing Lebanon's entrepreneurial landscape with founders, investors, and ecosystem stakeholders.



European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Co-funded by the European Union EBRD Star Venture

BUILDING FORWARD: VOICES FROM LEBANON'S STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

Startups Spotlight

Throughout the year, ACIE-supported startups demonstrated strong progress across validation, incubation, and external ecosystem opportunities, reflecting ACIE's role in nurturing innovative projects and guiding startups through the innovation and entrepreneurship pipeline.



Startups in the Ecosystem

accepted in **Clyntech Berytech Accelerator**



accepted in **Argytech Berytech Accelerator**



accepted in **Energy Innovation Lab NV Program**



Participated in **Prix Entrepreneur ESA-HEC Finals**



Participated in **LAU Innovate Incubation LAU Program**



Competition Achievement



SecondShot, an ACIE alumnus startup, won 1st place at the **2025 Mediterranean Start Cup** in Italy, organized by **UNIMED**. The competition gathers student-led ventures from across the Mediterranean to showcase innovative solutions.



International Exposure

Li-Stick, a UEC winner at USEK, joined a **one-week incubation at PEEL**, part of the **University of Lorraine**, gaining mentoring, training, and support to refine its market strategy and develop its innovation.



Meet the ACIE Team



Nancy Saliba, PhD
Director



Reda Helbawi
Programs Manager



Jad Akl
Finance & Business Support
Coordinator



Rita Kassab
Community & Outreach
Officer



Nare Manouchian
Communication & Outreach
Officer



Maria Kassatly
Student Job



Theresia Rahme
Student Job



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