

SUCCESS STORY

MOLDOVAN TECH ENTREPRENEUR CONNECTS YOUTH WITH JOBS

USAID and Sweden support strengthens world-changing start-up.

Moldova is a small country in Eastern Europe, with high youth unemployment, and high migration, as young people seek work elsewhere. At the same time, it is also home to a fast-growing ICT industry, with some of the brightest minds in gaming, technology and artificial intelligence. USAID and Sweden work to create an environment where more tech startups can emerge and thrive, providing opportunities for young Moldovans to stay and work at home.

Young Moldovan programmer Iulian Gulea has a passion for using technology to solve the problems he sees around him. In 2017, he came across the issue of recruitment, specifically how employers were struggling to connect youth with jobs, and vice versa. Gulea partnered with recruitment expert Eugeniu Girila, combining their expertise to create their startup GAUS. This app leverages Moldova's expertise in Artificial Intelligence to get millennials into work, using automated chatbots in Facebook Messenger to interview and match youth with jobs. However, like any startup, the road to success has not been simple.

Everything changed for Iulian when he attended "Founder Institute Chisinau", a tech accelerator funded by USAID and the Government of Sweden to spur innovation and entrepreneurship in Moldova's ICT sector. Iulian consolidated and reframed his business plan, and beat 25 other promising startups to win the accelerator's pitching event,

"First, we created an automatic resume scanning and analysis tool, but it didn't address the real problem facing companies - the lack of applications from candidates. We knew that we needed to change something if we wanted to keep GAUS alive"

Iulian Gulea,
founder of GAUS



Photo credit: Iulian Gulea Facebook page
Photo caption: Iulian Gulea, co-founder of Gaus startup.

As a prize, USAID and Sweden provided the young Moldovan entrepreneur with access to world class ideas at the Startup Grind Global Conference in Redwood City, CA, USA, in February 2018. Startup Grind is a global startup community designed to educate, inspire, and connect entrepreneurs, powered by Google for Entrepreneurs.

"Moldova is a great place to validate your assumptions about various product features, and because it is small you can cover a big part of it in a relative short period of time. But we have big ambitions. In five years we plan to operate in 10 countries, with populations of at least 10 million each".

Iulian Gulea,
founder of GAUS

Now, Iulian is on his way to take over the world, creating two more jobs in the company in May.

MCP is funded by USAID and Sweden, and supports competitiveness gains in Moldova's four key industries, including ICT, to create a sustainable and thriving economy in the poorest country in Europe. Gulea is one of almost 440 entrepreneurs who have received support within the project, which connects tech startups with the resources they need to develop value-added business models and create more, better quality jobs for Moldovan youth.