THE ATECH GUIDE TO GROWING ARUBA’S TECH ECOSYSTEM
INTRODUCTION

12 cities, 15 events, 36 months of research, 1000 ideas, 2500 cups of coffee, and many lessons learned… the dots are connecting.

In 2014, we ignited a grassroots movement that planted the seeds for a tech startup ecosystem in Aruba. We set out to revive the entrepreneurial spirit. To co-create the future with the believers. Three years later, we have a team of more than 50 awe-inspiring volunteers and we count some of the world’s most innovative organizations as partners. Our founders get invited to participate in top innovation and startup events, and regularly contribute to think tanks. Additionally, ATECH Conference was named one of the top global innovation and tech conferences in 2016 in Forbes. And we are just getting started! We offer a community and a voice to the change-makers. You can challenge us, disagree with us, but you cannot ignore us.

We believe Aruba has huge untapped opportunities and potential to lead the region in other industries, besides hospitality. How can we ensure the data scientist or machine learning engineer that graduates tomorrow has 10 local job offers or opportunities to start a business?

There is no silver bullet and it will take deliberate experimentation to develop Aruba’s tech startup economy. Our plans and strategies are constantly evolving through trial and error and our agile approach allows us to adapt quickly to an ever-changing environment. This document will guide our strategy and decisions going forward.

Our commitment is stronger than ever.

WE DO THIS, BECAUSE WE LOVE OUR ISLAND AND BELIEVE IN ITS POTENTIAL.

We are confident that together with our partners, mentors and volunteers we can drive innovation forward.

Be bold.

Team ATECH
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aruba's economy is highly dependent on tourism, a dynamic industry that is sensitive to several external factors. Diversification of Aruba’s economy is not a matter of growth or stability, it’s critical to survival in the 21st century.

A tech ecosystem has the potential to significantly contribute to the GDP of the Aruban economy, foster entrepreneurship, create new and exciting jobs in the private and public sector, limit brain drain, develop the knowledge economy, and stimulate established companies to innovate and to create new products and services for export. The spin-off and multiplier effect a tech ecosystem will have on the local economy is huge. Without a doubt, entrepreneurship and innovation are the key drivers for sustainable economic growth in the future economy.

Drawing upon hundreds of data sources, stakeholder discussions, mentors, other innovation ecosystems, entrepreneurs, and investors, we developed a blueprint for Aruba’s tech ecosystem. In Chapter 5, we present more than 30 specific initiatives, along with several strategies and actions that we are willing and able to take the lead on and/or co-develop with stakeholders. We love a challenge.

Collaboration

We created this document to serve as an open paper; a multi-purpose living collaborative document. It provides a roadmap for policy-making and tech ecosystem building initiatives. This document is open to comment and suggestions.

Who should read this?

Activists
Business and community leaders
Creatives
Entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs
Government
Innovators
Investors
Non-profit organizations
Policy-makers
Thinkers

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CHAPTER 1 – TECH AS A SOLUTION

Why a tech enabled startup ecosystem?

We believe that the creation of an ecosystem that supports tech, and which in turn supports entrepreneurship and startups is the answer and the critical next step in diversifying the economy.

» A Diversified Future

Tech startups have lower (startup) capital requirements than most industries and can leverage their human capital to reach exponential growth. An innovation ecosystem cultivated by tech entrepreneurs creates a new and diversified economy:

- New and unconventional business models
- High labor productivity
- Ambitious business climate
- Circular economy
- Knowledge capacity
- Cultivates and retains talent
- The multiplier effect

• A startup tech ecosystem supports and supplements other industries and areas of economic opportunity, including but not limited to:

  - Education
  - Financial Sector
  - Health
  - Logistics
  - Sustainability
  - Travel and Tourism

“Innovative industries bring good jobs and high salaries to communities where they cluster and their impact on the local economy is much deeper than their direct effect. Attracting a scientist or software engineer triggers a multiplier effect, increasing employment and salaries for those that provide local services. In essence, a high tech job is more than a job ... research shows for each high tech job, five additional jobs are created outside the high tech sector.” Source: Enrico Moretti (2012) The New Geography of Jobs
» **Speeds up Digital Transformation**
- Requires world-class WIFI network and data centers
- Accelerates digitization of private and public sectors
- Creates a knowledge-driven culture
- Drives better consumer experience

» **Triggers a Mindset Shift**
An entrepreneurial tech ecosystem drives not only innovation but also organically influences a mindset shift of the community over time.
- Experimental and risk-taking culture
- Heightened ambition
- Collaborative mindset
- Creative confidence
- Can-do attitude
- No fear of failure
CHAPTER 2 – MOMENTUM

We are in the middle of a new wave of technological disruption and it’s happening faster than we could have ever imagined. Do we want to ride this wave or stand on the sideline and wait to be disrupted?

“This important journey already started two years ago when a local group of young and courageous entrepreneurs, [under strong leadership…], brought us ATECH to foster a new vision of the future of extreme digitization that was already knocking on our doors.” – Excerpt from a speech by J.R. Semeleer, President of the Central Bank of Aruba at the Financial Technology and the Future of Money Conference in Aruba, November 2016. The full speech can be downloaded at cbaruba.org.

Our team and network continuously track, curate and explore emerging themes. To fully grasp the importance of a tech startup ecosystem, we also must consider the key signals and trends that are causing paradigm shifts and shaping our future.

PS: We hope these spark some insights and ignite innovative ideas.

Signals and Trends

Trust + Transparency
- Digital ethics and integrity
- Decentralization
- Fintech
- Blockchain and digital currencies / contracts
- Digital democracy
- Cyber security

People + Stories
- Living brands, ideas and content
- New media and story-doing
- Generation curious
- Experience economy (AR / VR / MR)

Man + Machine
- Smart machines
- Artificial intelligence
- Chatbots
- Humanization of tech
- Maker movement
- Culture
Agility + Adaptability
- Rewiring for change
- Future-proofing education
- Future skills

Creativity + Design
- Space for creative thinking
- Space for collaboration
- User experience (UX), user interaction (UI)

Open Data + Smart Everything
- Autonomous vehicles
- Smart cities and smart living
- Co-working, co-creating, co-experimenting
- Co-living
- Internet-of-things

Purpose + meaning
- Digital nomads
- Work that matters
- Social entrepreneurship
- Responsible companies and institutions
CHAPTER 3 - A TECH STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

What is a startup?

A startup is a company in its early stages (0 to 7 years on average) looking for a scalable, repeatable and sustainable business model.

Startups follow an early-stage trajectory towards success that includes several stages. The rate of progress may significantly be reduced by use of technology. Therefore, we are of the view that the primary focus for Aruba should be: technology enabled startups.

The key players

A startup ecosystem comprises an inter-dependent community of facilitators and entrepreneurs (startups) that are linked and feed off each other. As the community evolves, the ecosystem becomes more than just the sum of its parts.

A typical lifecycle of a tech startup

- Ideation / brainstorming
- Prototyping
- Incubation
- Validation and testing
- Product-market fit
- Scaling

Type of support provided to startups during a product-development lifecycle

- Mentorship
- Funding
- Consulting
- Network access
- Promotion
- Feedback and testing of products

Status update - various meetings were held over the past 3 years. Stakeholders generally agree that developing Aruba’s startup and tech economy is crucial to reaching sustainable and inclusive growth. As a next step, a firm commitment is required from stakeholders to take Aruba’s innovation economy to the next level.
The A-Ecosystem

Aruba at A Glance

- Population 110K
- GDP US$ 2.7 BLN
- Size 70 square miles
- 365 days of sunshine
- Happy people
- 90+ Nationalities = A foodie’s dream melting pot
- A Kitesurfing and Windsurfing mecca

The Aruba Advantage

- High quality of life
- Monetary and political stability
- Modern infrastructure
- Proximity and airlift to key tech hubs
- Dutch and EU connection
- Creative melting pot of people, taste and ideas
- Locals speak 4 to 5 languages, including English, Spanish and Dutch
CHAPTER 4 – THE ROLE OF ATECH

Where does ATECH fit in all of this?

ATECH Foundation was incorporated with the mission to facilitate the development of Aruba's startup ecosystem. How, you ask? Following is a summary of our key activities and how we approach things. We build an environment based on the following philosophies to ensure our community of entrepreneurs and innovators have the support they need to succeed.

BE A REBEL WITH A CAUSE

We Disrupt

We are allergic to status-quo
We don’t push boundaries, they just don’t exist in our galaxy

“*You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete*.“ – R. Buckminster Fuller

We Innovate

We track signals and trends, and curate content
We experiment and test new business models
We partner with innovators to work on groundbreaking ideas

We Create

We offer a hands-on and playful environment for experimentation
We bring you the best-in-class through our events
We create a vibrant environment anchored in entrepreneurial energy

Our Core activities

1. Incubation and Acceleration
   - Innovation labs
   - Startup incubator or accelerator
   - Hackathons
   - Smart match-making

2. Skill Development and Learning
   - Events, workshops and think tanks
   - Track signals and trends
   - Curate knowledge
   - Cultivate volunteers
   - Entrepreneurship-In-Residence programs
3. Global Ecosystem Building

- Community building
- Deal-flow access and investment vetting
- Connect and support global ecosystem builders
- Knowledge and best-practice sharing
- Strategic advisory

Alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals

Our goals are in alignment with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Namely goals 4, 8, 9, 11 and 17.
Where are we?

ATECH Foundation is naturally headquartered in Aruba, but with centers of gravity in Amsterdam and New York and a fast-growing global network.

A GROWING GLOBAL NETWORK

Grand Central Tech, New York
Voyager, New York
Galvanize, New York
WeWork, New York
Google Ventures, New York
United Nations, New York
Citi ‘Tech 4 Integrity’, New York
StartupBootcamp Amsterdam / New York
Rockstart, Amsterdam
Haarlem Valley Capital, Haarlem
Startup Curaçao, Willemstad
TechCo, New Orleans
VilCap, Washington D.C.
Silicon Valley Bank, Silicon Valley
Accelerate Korea, South Korea
Ruta N, Medellin
UNDP, Aruba
Startup Delta, Amsterdam
TNW, Amsterdam
Impact Hub, Venezuela
Wayra, Venezuela
Launch Academy, Vancouver
Global Entrepreneurship Summit, Washington D.C.
Build, Detroit
Caribbean Startups, The Caribbean
Singularity University, Amsterdam
3836, Nashville
SXSW, Austin
NZTE, Auckland
Cubo, Sao Paulo
CHAPTER 5 - THE ACTION PLAN

How do we build a startup ecosystem?

1 – Create a vision
2 – Set the strategy
3 – TAKE ACTION

Vision

A vibrant innovation ecosystem that attracts and retains talent while diversifying the Aruban economy

Strategy

THE HARDWARE
The following pages include a blueprint that, if properly implemented, will create the framework for a vibrant innovation ecosystem where entrepreneurs can thrive. This is what we call the HARDWARE that holds it all together.

» Reliable internet access and speed

To sustain an innovation economy and accelerate growth, we must make a serious commitment to investing in the best-in-class digital infrastructure.

Actions:

- Declare internet access a primary need
- Develop and discuss 10-year plan upgrade with local tech entrepreneurs and experts to ensure minimum capacity requirements and future requirements
» Engaged and Empowered Stakeholders

Actions:

- Setup a collaborative public-private initiative to facilitate open discussions amongst key stakeholders and planning at national level to remove red tape and influence policy (e.g., Startup Aruba)
- Hold semi-annual forum to agree on action agenda

» Government Hacking

In addition to being a facilitator, the Aruba government can help fast-track innovation by acting as a partner to entrepreneurs and innovators. Even though the materialization of a startup ecosystem will be led by entrepreneurs and the private sector, the traditional passive government role should be reconsidered. A 21st century government should in our perspective be an innovation partner.

Actions:

- Show leadership and commit to the innovation economy by carving out a Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- A Chief Innovation Officer and/or Entrepreneur-in-Residence program for key public departments
- Build the public sector’s innovation capacity
- Leap toward becoming a digital society with support from local entrepreneurs
- Invest as a venture capital partner in a Strategic Innovation Fund
- Create a tech startup within the Government of Aruba (GOA) to disrupt internally, the GO-A Lab. This lab will consist of experts, entrepreneurs and key public sector employees
- Develop a Data Commons to facilitate open-data and innovation. Data gathered from citizens belong to them, not governments
- Introduce Aruba for Entrepreneurs database that tracks local talent and competencies of entrepreneurs and startups
- Young entrepreneurs / talent to have a seat at the table during policy-making and be heard by the Aruba Government and Parliament during a fixed quarterly meeting

FREE OUR DATA!
The Estonia digital society model

“The roots of this revolution began in 1991, the year of Estonian independence, Estonian policy makers were given the rare gift of a bureaucratic clean slate. Placing their faith in the burgeoning possibilities of the internet and value of innovation, they steered the country into a position where it could leapfrog to become one of the most advanced e-societies in the world. Nowadays everyday Estonians have no need to look back as they enjoy a wide range of e-solutions. The Estonian state currently offers 600 e-services to its citizens and 2,400 to businesses. Utilizing a locally developed Electronic ID card, which effectively acts as an online passport, a large proportion of Estonians can and regularly do:

- Sign contracts remotely.
- Use ID cards to pay for public transportation.
- Pay for parking using a mobile phone.
- Vote online.
- Conduct bank transactions online.
- Receive digital prescriptions from the Doctor, even remotely.
- Declare tax online.
- Students can check grades, learning progress and access learning materials.
- Create a new company within 18 minutes on your PC.
- Apply for government aid.

» Extermination of Bureaucracy

If we had a list of forbidden words, bureaucracy would be the first one on the list (aside from perhaps, impossible, or politically correct). Entrepreneurs can only thrive in a place where doing business is as easy, accessible and intuitive as ordering a cappuccino at Starbucks (with the occasional name misspelling).

Actions:

Doing business in Aruba should be:

Cost-effective – Registering a new business should not cost more than a dinner and a movie. Ways to achieve this:

- Introduce a Notarisloos VBA for startups
- Reduce chamber of commerce (KvK) fees for first two years of business
- Tax exemptions and/or credits (versus a reduced tax rate)
- Startups that qualify for the Notarisloos VBA also get their first IP registration for free
- Introduce flexible pension and social security plans for entrepreneurs: Entrepreneur Freedom Fund Program
- Introduce flexible health insurance plans or allow entrepreneurs to ‘opt-out’ of AZV and choose their own health insurance provider: Entrepreneur Health Program

Intuitive – Information about doing or starting a business in Aruba should be clear, concise and easy to find. Great user-experience (UX) / user-interaction (UI) is a must for digital communication, including websites and apps, applying the latest trends and technology available (e.g., chatbots, machine learning, storytelling with Augmented Reality, and interactive reports).
Digital – It’s 2017! There is no acceptable excuse for not having an e-government. Going digital is more than just setting up websites. We are talking, Estonia-like e-government on cutting-edge technology like blockchain and leveraging machine learning / artificial intelligence.

**Actions:**

- Digital payments infrastructure (ongoing; CBA already kicked this off)
- A single digital application for a Notarisloos VBA, business license, director’s license, IP registration, chamber of commerce registration and other permits
- Digital application for A-Pass (entrepreneur visa; in progress)
- Open-access to data collected by government
- 48-hour simplified online application process for a startup business license (refer to recent steps taken by Censo toward digital transformation)

Transparent – The lack of trust in institutions is a global phenomenon and Aruba is no exception. In a world of fake news, alternative ‘facts’ and unheeded corruption, it leaves us no choice but to do things differently and to demand for things to be done differently. This is not about fixing democracy, it’s about having the will to test new business and operational models, to question decisions and public policies. To ask critical questions and honor our native intelligence.

*Source: [Shapersurvey.org](http://www.shaperssurvey.org)*

A recent survey conducted by World Economic Forum, Global Shapers indicates that the biggest concern of millennials in Aruba when it comes to inequality is Corruption and the Lack of Transparency. On the other hand, Aruban millennials believe the most important factor contributing to Youth Empowerment in Aruba is a startup ecosystem and entrepreneurship!
THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION HAS SPOKEN. WE SHOULD LISTEN AND ENGAGE THIS INSPIRING GENERATION.

Actions:

- Digital procurement process to create a fair playing field and avoid corruption (use of blockchain): Open Government Project
- Digital Democracy program for citizen participation; an open and participatory budgeting system for neighborhoods to decide on public spending (their tax dollars) and to engage citizens in the procurement process
- A whistleblower tool for public workers and citizens to denounce cases of corruption: Prikichi
- Introduce a Tech for Good program to engage millennials and youth in solving local programs using latest tech

ATECH is already active in the technology for good space. Earlier this year we partnered with Citi for the global Citi Tech 4 Integrity challenge. We are honored to be a part of this global initiative and our goal is to help entrepreneurs be ready to apply for the next challenge round. We are also collaborating with the World Bank Group to co-host a Tech for Good Hackathon in Washington D.C. this fall.

» Incubators and Accelerators

We are laser-focused on helping seed stage companies succeed by connecting entrepreneurs with the tech, resources and community they need to reach scale. We offer our expertise and have access to a broad network of startup accelerators in our key geographic focus areas that our portfolio companies can tap into. We offer facilitated and curated access to individuals with broad and deep expertise across multiple disciplines, in addition to educational workshops and demo events and our annual marque event; ATECH Conference. That said, we also believe in the added value of structured incubation and acceleration programs.

Actions:

- Launch Aruba’s first startup accelerator and/or incubator program
- Introduce a platform that will allow established international accelerators to use Aruba as their incubation place and/or to host retreats and branded programs
- Develop database of international entrepreneurship, startup, and fellowship programs available. Create calendar of competitions and awards, and encourage local entrepreneurs to apply and provide support with their application
» **Venture Capital Funding**

Venture capital funding is an integral part of any startup ecosystem. Equity investment or risk capital is key for startups to scale beyond the local market. We also see big opportunity for investment in the Caribbean, with Aruba as a key entry point. There is a large arbitrage opportunity in the Caribbean. Many companies in the region are massively under-valued. Further, it is on average much cheaper to start a company and get it to scale in the Caribbean, compared to established markets like New York, Miami or Amsterdam.

**Actions:**

- Introduce a **Strategic Investment Fund** to offer seed-stage and late seed-stage funding to technology enabled companies
- Host periodic trainings for ‘how to become an Angel Investor’
- Create an **Aruba Angels** network and/or link the Aruban investor community to established international communities of angel investors
- Introduce an **Investor Incentive Program** to unlock liquidity and stimulate high-net worth individuals and/or companies to invest in startups or startup investment funds
- Introduce **Strategic Fund Regime**; a tax-exempt fund vehicle for venture investments to stimulate the Aruba startup ecosystem

» **Reimagining O’stad as the Innovation District**

From historic monuments to cozy craft coffee and pastechi shops that double as work spaces. An innovation hub like nowhere else. A place where culture, food, arts and design intersect. A melting pot of people and icons. In this creative hive, innovation and culture blend into one cohesive whole. Quaint Oranjestad has all the right elements to become the world’s best innovation district, lead by creativity and design. Digital nomads and generation curious seek places where like-minded people live and work. A re-imagined **O’stad** can offer this and much more…..

**Actions:**

**O’Stad Innovation District**

Let’s make downtown O’Stad a place of inspiration, entrepreneurial energy, creativity, innovation.

**A CREATIVE HIVE** based on the following elements:

- Geographic clustering (proximity / walking distance) is key to ecosystems as it creates networks through social collision (e.g., quick chats passing someone on the street, grabbing coffee at a café, co-working, organic interaction, sharing of ideas etc.)
- Housing for young professionals, expats and entrepreneurs
- Micro city lifestyle hotel focused on communal design for ‘hotel living’ and local community interaction (not more than 20-25 rooms)
- Urban renewal – this is much more than just urban innovation. The idea of returning to village-centric lifestyle creates a sense of belonging
- Livelihood and place-making to attract creatives, innovators, entrepreneurs and visitors
- Co-working and collaborative spaces
- Maker-spaces
- Solar-powered data and mining centers
- Ubiquitous connectivity / WIFI
- A place for digital nomads and remote workers

**A ready-to-join community of like-minded peers**

*A close-knit community provides the right conditions for a ‘network effect’*

*A new story to be told and shared by entrepreneurs around the world*

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**O’Stad Urban Labs**

Transforming O’Stad into a living lab for urban tech and smart data projects: **O’Stad Urban Labs.** This will accelerate urban innovation and help solve existing challenges (e.g., the Caya Grandi conundrum), while exploring what’s possible in the future. Key features of the lab:

- Physically (walking distance) and strategically connected to the University of Aruba
- Creates an environment to stimulate the network-effect
- Open data
**THE SOFTWARE**

The hardware is the framework and pillars that will hold the ecosystem together. And like computers, you can have the best and most expensive computer in the world, but without the software, it’s just a pretty box. The software is the core DNA of the ecosystem, without it, there is no economy. The software is our people. Our people is at the heart of the Aruba startup ecosystem and Aruba’s innovation economy. If we don’t develop our human capacity in tandem with the ecosystem framework, we might as well do nothing. That is not an option.

**OUR PEOPLE = PRIORITY #1**

**We need**

- More entrepreneurs
- The right skills
- A growth mindset

**Culture Matters**

According to a PwC study, entrepreneurship can thrive with the right culture and perceptions, regardless of regulatory conditions. Entrepreneurial activity is influenced by the cultural environment surrounding entrepreneurs. That said, each ecosystem should embrace the culture in which it incubates. We do not want to emulate Silicon Valley. There is no better time to be an entrepreneur in Aruba than today. Aruba is at the cusp of a technological renaissance and will lead the region in digital transformation. Local entrepreneurs and startups are smart to embrace the best of Aruban culture and traditions and let themselves be inspired by this melting pot where ideas flourish.

**Actions:**

- Engage visitors and digital nomads through actively communicating and increase visibility of local entrepreneurship and innovation events and meetups
- Host regular startup and entrepreneurship workshops and meetups
- Engage local community and get them involved in hackathons and solving local problems with help from entrepreneurs
- Expand ATECH College Tour to high-schools and primary schools to reach the younger generations
Let’s create the right environment!

- A visible environment where one can almost touch opportunities to create new businesses
- A risk-taking society
- Where the community believe in their own abilities and competencies
- Where there is opportunity to fail
- Where entrepreneurship is celebrated

A culture that rewards determination and experimentation

» Talent Factor

At the heart of any ecosystem is its talent pool. The unprecedented wave of technological advancements is forcing us to rethink education and future of work. Rather than focusing on future jobs, we should be looking at future work skills, proficiencies and abilities required across different jobs and works settings.

Actions:

- Attract and retain talent needs
- Build out STEM academic capacity and R&D capacity of University of Aruba
- Offer free AI and coding programs to students and young entrepreneurs
- Build a Youth Science Park for learning and experimentation
- Consider future skills needed to build resilience in the future economy (e.g., social intelligence, adaptive thinking, design mindset, data-based reasoning, problem-solving, sense-making, process development)

Rethink education and the future of work

» Diversity and Equality

Diversity is a key component of a thriving startup economy; a diverse tech sector could translate into stronger financial performance.

Actions:

- Offer equal funding opportunities to women entrepreneurs and minorities
- Introduce skill development program for pensionados geared toward contributing to the tech / innovation economy (win - win)
- Introduce a mentorship and services network for entrepreneurs composed of retirees
To encourage the right mindset, we must equip our institutions and educators, business leaders and youth with the right stories and words to change the narrative into one of ambition, open-mindedness and tech savviness. This in turn will not only create ambassadors but help trigger an organic mindset shift.

Community
Creativity
Culture
Curiosity
Experimentation
Innovation
Openness
Resilience
Sustainability
» The Architects of Our Future

We see genius in the young generation. Developing the potential of our young generation is crucial to an innovation economy, yet unfortunately the existing education platforms are not future-proof. Building a generation of doers requires a revolutionary shift in the risk-taking capacity of our citizens and younger generation. This requires both a reform of our education system and enabling of our educators to cultivate a culture of risk and experimentation.

But how do you educate a new generation for a world we can’t even imagine?

Research and studies suggest that the most valuable skills in the future will be those that machines can’t yet easily replicate, like creativity, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, adaptability and collaboration. In short, students need to learn how to learn, because the only hedge against a fast-changing world is the ability to think, adapt and collaborate.

Actions:

Future-proofing our education system

- Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Education
- Digital Media & Arts School
- Liberal Arts program
- Maker-spaces in schools
- Robotics
- A secure student database tracking students’ skills and development from early childhood using machine learning to improve education, planning, and monitoring

After and outside-of school programs

- After-school, weekend and summer camp coding and AI programs
- Troubled youth and probation innovation program to teach tech skills focused on getting paid work
- Downtown Tech Fridays initiative to bring youth downtown after school to work on maker (IoT) projects at co-working spaces and maker labs
Engage our Diaspora

We’ve witnessed a growing need for unity, engagement and community from our diaspora. Members of the Aruban diaspora can play unique roles in re-inventing Aruba’s future and catalyzing the development of its startup ecosystem. An engaged diaspora can mitigate brain drain and create employment or remote projects for local talent. Sourcing of offshore projects typically happens through word of mouth. Communication with diaspora is key to identifying potential opportunities within this global network. We should harness the capacity of Arubans and friends of Aruba for the greater good of the island.

If we bring our Aruba born leaders, students, professionals and experts together, it can lead to lasting commitment to changing the narrative of Aruba, to re-imagine the economy and co-create innovative solutions through the place we all love.

Actions:

- Create a platform to engage the diaspora community: **District297**
- Raise visibility of Aruban entrepreneurs internationally in collaboration with Aruban diaspora through a periodic newsletter and blog
- Develop a database of Arubans and friends of Aruba (e.g., former expats or foreign investors) to map out networks, track competencies, facilitate building of regional communities, and connect homegrown investors and talent
- Organize a 2-day forum every 3 to 4 years in Aruba to bring this community together and create real life connections
- Launch **District297 - For Aruba Fund**, a collective investment vehicle co-funded by diaspora members to support local entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs within the network
- Revision of voting law to allow citizens living and/or studying overseas to vote and submit their vote online during parliamentary elections and referendums (consider blockchain)

The beauty of an innovation economy is that there are no boundaries when it comes to technology and where one works from or how one contributes. Returning home can take an entirely new meaning in an innovation economy for those that see the world as their playground.
CHAPTER 6 – THE ATECH CODE

THE ATECH CODE

Our Values  Our Model  Our Promise

This code guides our actions and our decisions. It is the glue that holds our community together.

This code is for anyone who has a great idea or a startup. This is for people who want to make or do something that matters. This is to be shared, discussed and adopted. We hope you take away from it what resonated to you and your startup, your non-profit organization, your project or your business and make it your own. Use it as inspiration to create your own code. We dare you…. to Disrupt, Innovate and Create. Have a go. Make a difference.

With this code, we affirm our commitment for the years and generations to come. There is no IF in our vocabulary, but HOW. These words guide our how.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Al the new electricity

BE A CHANGEMAKER
Experiment
Think Big

PEOPLE MATTER

DO IT ANYWAY

GROWTH MINDSET
FORTUNE FAVORS THE BOLD

BY DESIGN
live curious

CO-EVERYTHING
TRY.DO.FAIL

START SOMETHING

TRANSPARENCY ALWAYS WINS
Permanent Beta
IMAGINE

INTEGRITY
RE-IMAGINE

CULTURE MATTERS

EMBRACE UNCERTAINTY

CREATE DON’T IMITATE
APPENDIX 1
A CURATION OF SOURCES AND STUDIES ANALYZED

Studies and whitepapers

Articles

Ruta N landing information

https://ind.nl/EN/business/investor-self-employment-start-up/Start-up

https://techcrunch.com/2015/06/29/france-launches-french-tech-ticket-a-startup-visa-for-foreign-entrepreneurs/

https://e-estonia.com/e-residents/about/


http://fundersandfounders.com/coming-to-america-for-entrepreneurs-infographic/


http://thenextweb.com/entrepreneur/2014/06/11/7-us-startup-visa-options-international-founders/#gref

http://italiastartupvisa.mise.gov.it/


http://english.rvo.nl/subsidies-programmes/residence-permit-foreign-start-ups/do-i-qualify/facilitator
http://www.wired.co.uk/article/the-tel-aviv-connection

Programs
http://rutanmedellin.org/en/
http://www.startupchile.org/
http://www.startupdelta.org/
https://investin holland.com/dutch-government-to-provide-extra-funding-for-startups-and-scale-ups/
https://techcrunch.com/2015/07/05/the-netherlands-a-look-at-the-worlds-high-tech-startup-capital/
The Caribbean Startup Ecosystem: A Leapfrogging Opportunity

ATECH joins Citi Bank’s Tech for Integrity accelerator as an Ally Partner

ATECH receives unique invitation to GES in Silicon Valley

The 15 Best Global Tech and Innovation Conferences in 2016

SXSW invites ATECH Founders to Austin, Texas

United Nations invites ATECH to speak during special session in NYC

One Happy Island Innovates

APPENDIX 2
LET’S BUILD THIS TOGETHER!

Our community of supporters, partners, and believers, some of who have been there since day zero, others joined or contributed in small and big ways along the way.