

Management summary

During this research, we evaluated the implementation of the On the Job project and in which manner it has been developed starting from the original plan for which an ESF-SITS grant has been awarded. Much has been learned regarding the possibilities and difficulties of employing job seekers in an entrepreneurial way. The most important findings are summarized here.

There is room and demand for reintegration into the labor market through stacked activities in flexible services ("gig economy"). Flexible work and stacked activities fit well with the target group of job seekers and provide a soft landing for job seekers to reintegrate on the labor market. The encouragement of direct additional income achieved in this project through the 'vrijlatingsregeling' (release arrangement) forms an important motivational factor.

Micro-entrepreneurship is often a step too far for the job seekers since they are often looking for (perceived) security and are afraid of an administrative burden. An important balance between income security and flexibility around type of activities and work hours is therefore essential.

Cooperation with the work consultants of the municipality is very valuable, but full dependence is a risk. The group of job seekers from the categories "pre-matching" and "activation" who can start working through an initiative/company like On the Job has been smaller than initially thought. In addition, it takes time for work consultants to understand a new initiative and apply it in the right manner, selecting the right candidates.

It requires a personal approach to get the target group to work and keep them engaged, this requires a specialization which is not easy to integrate for every organization. For job seekers who have often been at home for a long time, a

protected environment, intensive training and personal guidance during employment are crucial. This requires customization for every candidate with regards to flexibility around working hours, training, coaching and finding the right contract form.

The collaboration between start-up and municipality is very valuable, but it is not easy to link an entrepreneurial initiative to municipal structures. A clear separation of roles is desirable. Because On the Job, as a start-up in search for a working business model, requires to be pragmatic and market-oriented. The municipality, on the other hand, already has a range of programs and projects in which job seekers can participate and therefore attaches great value to the framework set for the experiment. Important lessons here are to a) recognize and acknowledge these differences from the outset, b) to limit dependence between start-up and municipality by clearly separating roles.

In addition to these lessons learned, the project has achieved a number of positive results such as:

- On the Job has a validated business model and continues under the name 'Thuishulp Rotterdam' with the mission to guide job seekers to work through stacked activities around home care. The initiative is lauded for being innovative and starts to make a name for itself in Rotterdam.

- Up until April 2019, 22 people on social welfare participated in On the Job / Thuishulp Rotterdam. In total, the project had 27 participants, 5 of whom received UWV benefits, who fell outside the target group of the project.
- From the participants on welfare, 5 people moved on to a permanent job, and 1 person is now working part-time via Thuishulp Rotterdam as an independent entrepreneur.
- An adjustment has been made to the 'vrijlatingsregeling' (release arrangement) that has proved to be important in the step-by-step reintegration of job seekers into the labor market in Rotterdam, not only for On the Job but for all initiatives in this field.

Although the project has not yet led to the desired quantitative results, because there were a significant number of assumptions invalidated leading to adjustments in the concept, there is now a high-quality instrument with potential for growth and replication.

The experiences within the project have taught the parties involved a lot and through these lessons future projects can be set up and implemented more effectively. Our recommendations are the following:

1. For many job seekers, the concept of building up stacked activities through services in the 'gig economy' can offer a good gradual return to the labor market, with the condition that this is tailor-made.
2. Provide a personal approach and strong guidance to get job seekers to reintegrate and keep them engaged for the job.
3. Identify in an early stage potential obstacles in the regulations and ensure that they offer room for stacked activities and additional earnings on top of the regular benefit.
4. Encourage cooperation between municipalities and start-ups who want to take on municipal challenges with a market-driven solution, while guaranteeing independence.
5. Set up a robust project organization from the start with clear responsibilities and communication structure.



There is now a high-quality instrument with growth and replication potential. New projects can be set up and implemented more effectively.