The AI2Entrepreneur Promptathon: Fostering AI Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education Through Interactive Workshop Formats

Miriam Maibaum[1] and Benedikt Breitkopf[1]

[1] AI2Entrepreneur, Zukunftslabor generative KI, 24149 Kiel, Germany
`miriam.maibaum@zgki.de`

Abstract. This paper presents the AI2Entrepreneur (AI2E) Promptathon project, an ongoing initiative designed to foster AI literacy and Entrepreneurship Education among students through interactive workshop formats. The Promptathon is a structured 4-5 hour workshop where students use generative AI tools to develop entrepreneurial business ideas in teams. We present preliminary findings from 112 student participants, revealing both high enthusiasm for AI applications in education and significant concerns about reliability and skill erosion. This work-in-progress demonstrates a promising approach to proactive AI integration in education.

Keywords: Generative AI, AI in Education, Workshop Format, AI Literacy, Promptathon, Entrepreneurship Education

1 Introduction and Motivation

Over 90% of students in our surveys report using AI tools, yet most educational institutions lack structured approaches to AI integration. This gap between informal usage and formal integration raises concerns about academic integrity, critical thinking development, ethical AI use, and the potential for students to avoid deep learning processes [1].

The AI2Entrepreneur project emerged from this challenge. Rather than prohibiting AI tools or leaving students to navigate them independently, we developed the Promptathon format to bridge the gap between AI potential and responsible use through structured, application-oriented workshops.

2 The Promptathon: Workshop Description

2.1 Workshop Format and Structure

The Promptathon is a 4-5 hour interactive workshop consisting of three progressive phases, see Table 1:

Table 1. Structure Workshop "Promptathon".

Phase	Duration	Content	Learning Objectives
Phase 1: Introduction	45-60 min	AI capabilities overview; Prompt engineering basics; Live tool demonstrations; Ethical considerations	Understanding AI fundamentals; Recognizing tool ecosystem; Developing critical awareness
Phase 2: Team Ideation	150-180 min	Business idea development; Iterative AI usage; Critical output evaluation	Applying prompting skills; Iterative refinement practice; Collaborative problem-solving
Phase 3: Presentation	60-90 min	Team pitches (5-7 min each); Peer feedback; Facilitated reflection	Articulating AI collaboration; Critical self-reflection; Knowledge sharing

Phase 1 (45-60 minutes) introduces participants to generative AI capabilities and limitations, prompt engineering basics, and key tools through live demonstrations (typically ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gamma, Claude, and occasionally V0 and Suno). The facilitators address ethical considerations and demonstrate effective prompting techniques.

Phase 2 (150-180 minutes) forms the workshop's core. Students work in teams of 3-4 to develop an entrepreneurial business idea using AI tools iteratively. They conduct market research, create business model components (through business model canvas), generate marketing materials, and refine their pitch. Participants with existing business ideas can adapt the format to identify AI-supported optimization opportunities for their ventures.

Phase 3 (60-90 minutes) focuses on presentation and reflection. Each team pitches their idea (5-7 minutes), followed by peer feedback and facilitated discussion about the AI collaboration process, challenges, and lessons learned.

2.2   Target Group and Implementation

The workshops target students in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, primarily at upper secondary level, and young adults interested in entrepreneurship. Workshops are offered free of charge to schools, with facilitation by the AI2E team. Table 1 shows the demographic distribution of the 112 surveyed participants across different educational backgrounds.

Table 2. Participant Demographics (N=112).

Educational Background	Number	Percentage
General education secondary schools	90	80.4%
Vocational schools	15	13.4%
University students	4	3.6%
Employees	2	1.8%
Teachers	1	0.9%
Total	112	100.0%

2.3 Pedagogical Approach

The Promptathon deliberately focuses on creation rather than consumption, positioning AI as a collaborative tool for creativity. Key principles include:

- Active engagement: Developing a viable business idea requires genuine problem-solving and critical evaluation, not simple copy-paste of AI outputs
- Visible learning: Teams share their prompting approaches, transforming individual processes into collective learning
- Safe experimentation: A low-stakes environment where participants can explore, make mistakes, and develop understanding
- Entrepreneurial context: The business idea framework requires creativity, problem-solving, and critical evaluation, the very skills students fear losing through AI use

3 Preliminary Findings

3.1 Key Results

Following each workshop, participants (N=112) completed anonymous surveys. The workshop received an average rating of 2.56 (on 1-6 scale, where 1 is excellent), with 51.8% rating it excellent to good. Notably, 92.0% had used AI tools before the workshop, confirming that we address existing practice rather than introducing a new one.

Regarding entrepreneurial interest, 4.5% are already founding, 2.7% have concrete plans, and 35.7% are interested without concrete plans. Among participants with founding experience/plans (n=8), 75% reported high or very high value from the workshop. Significantly, 62.5% strongly agreed that AI tools make solo founding more attractive than team founding.

Participants identified studies and vocational training as the primary AI application area (67.0%), followed by personal tasks (50.9%), general learning (43.8%), work and career (42.0%), and creative purposes (36.0%). Despite this enthusiasm, concerns remain substantial: 48.2% expressed uncertainty about correctness/reliability, 31.3% feared diminished thinking skills, 29.5% were uncertain about data usage, and 27.7% found it difficult to evaluate AI content quality. Only 6.3% reported no concerns.

3.2   Key Observations

Behavioral observations during workshops reveal that students:

- Use colloquial, informal language when prompting
- Treat AI as a conversational partner rather than formal system
- Initially struggle with iterative prompt refinement
- Show surprise at AI limitations and errors
- Display creativity in combining AI outputs with own ideas

The informal approach suggests low barriers to entry but also indicates development potential for more sophisticated prompting strategies.

4   Discussion and Next Steps

Our findings suggest the Promptathon successfully creates engagement with AI tools while maintaining critical awareness. The strong rating (2.56) and high perceived value among founders (75% reporting high value) indicate effective format design. Students emerge as thoughtful users seeking guidance rather than naive adopters—the high interest in educational applications (67%) combined with persistent concerns about reliability (48.2%) and skill erosion (31.3%) demonstrates sophisticated awareness. The perception that AI enables solo founding (62.5% agreement) has potentially significant implications for future entrepreneurial team structures and warrants further investigation.

However, current limitations must be acknowledged. The study lacks pre/post comparison to measure actual learning changes, relies on self-reported data that may be influenced by social desirability, and includes no systematic analysis of prompt quality evolution. The sample is concentrated in one German region without longitudinal follow-up on behavioral change, limiting generalizability of findings.

These limitations point toward critical open research questions: Does the format lead to measurable, persistent improvements in prompting skills? How can we encourage broader tool exploration beyond demonstrated applications? Does AI genuinely reduce the need for co-founders, or is this a misconception about AI capabilities versus human collaboration value? Can the format be effectively implemented by regular teachers without extensive AI expertise, and how does this intensive format compare to semester-long courses or online modules in terms of learning outcomes and retention?

5   Conclusion

The AI2Entrepreneur Promptathon demonstrates a promising approach to addressing AI integration challenges in education through structured, application-oriented experiences. Based on 112 participants, our preliminary findings show strong engagement, entrepreneurial impact, and critical awareness development.

While significant research questions remain regarding long-term effectiveness and scalability, the format shows clear viability. The finding that 62.5% of founders see AI

as enabling solo entrepreneurship raises important questions about future team structures in innovation

Statement on the Use of Generative AI. During revision of this article, AI language models (Claude 3.5 Son-net) were used to restructure content and refine language. The authors retained full responsibility for all conceptual decisions and claims.

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