

**Submission
No 26**

SUPPORT FOR START-UPS IN REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: AgThentic
Name: Ms Sarah Nolet
Position: Founder and CEO
Date Received: 31 July 2017

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sarah Nolet and I work in the AgTech innovation space, via my company AgThentic. I work with urban and regional entrepreneurs, as well as industry and government, to support innovation in the food and agriculture system in Australia.

There has been a surge of accelerators and similar innovation models recently (SproutX, Rocket Seeder, GrowLab, etc.), including increasing interest in regional and rural models. I think these models have huge potential and the momentum is fantastic.

However, I am concerned about the lack of coordination between these models. Especially for rural and regional co-working spaces and other resources for entrepreneurs, collaboration and connectivity with national (and international) experts is crucial to success.

I therefore see a critical role for the NSW government in driving collaboration and coordination between the various entities emerging. This might be as simple as a website that showcases what is out there (and what is/isn't working); or, a more involved effort such as convening events or a platform for shared content and resources across different rural and regional support models and entrepreneurs.

Successful innovation ecosystems, like Silicon Valley where I'm from, or Cambridge, Mass where I studied, are fueled by cross-sector collaboration. Yes, competition is key; but the government especially can focus on building the whole ecosystem, rather than promoting any one entity.

Finally, when funding programs are made available from the government, they need to be friendly for SMEs (including startups) to apply for. The idea that a whole industry has emerged to do grant writing, is ridiculous and counter productive.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to seeing the output of this inquiry and associated efforts.

-Sarah Nolet

CEO/Founder, AgThentic (www.agthentic.com)

ENTREPRENEURS

Talk is cheap and ideas are commodities we help build businesses that solve real problems



Who we work with



INVESTORS

Avoid the hype and find winning opportunities to revolutionize our food system

CORPORATES

Get a seat at the innovation table and be part of the solution



GOVERNMENT

Catalyze and support innovation in agriculture and food

Our food system is at a tipping point. Technology alone will not be enough to solve the challenges of the next 100 years. The tools of the future must be grounded in the limits of a finite planet. They must work with the complexity of the natural systems that produce our food. They must be developed with real users, in relentless pursuit of usability. At AgThentic, we bring a global network of leading consultants with expertise in agricultural economics, venture capital, technology and entrepreneurship, and data driven research to help innovators build the food system of the future.

SERVICES

- Investment readiness
- Tech scouting
- Speaking
- Executive coaching
- Workshops and board meeting facilitation
- Landscape assessments & reports
- Navigating Australia <-> US expansion
- Interim CXO
- Distribution strategy development
- Turning innovation aspirations into action

ABOUT SARAH



Sarah Nolet is a globally recognized food systems innovation expert. A systems thinker with an understanding of the complexities of the food system, Sarah brings a visionary yet pragmatic approach. She is committed to results. Sarah works across the global food system supply chain, helping farmers, agribusinesses, universities, investors and entrepreneurs to achieve their goals. Sarah is also a startup advisor and investor, speaker and writer, most recently at 440M AgTech Investment Forum (Australia), Ag/Sum (Japan), and in GreenBiz, AgFunderNews, and Forbes.

Sarah holds a Masters in System Design and Management from MIT, and a B.S. in Computer Science and Human Factors Engineering from Tufts University.

"Sarah is an expert in the agtech industry, constantly on the cutting edge of innovation in the food system. Her contributions to AgFunder News have been invaluable, including a top 10 most read article in 2016. Our work with AgThentic highlights Sarah's commitment to raise the bar in agtech- she's someone to watch."

Rob Leclerc, CEO, AgFunder



AGTHENTIC

RECENT PROJECTS

AGRIDIGITAL

Project Description: Served as Interim Chief Strategy Officer, responsible for corporate engagement, global expansion, and investment readiness strategies.



BLUE RIVER GROUP

Project Description: Developed business model for an innovation hub to support commercialization of research and technology for the benefit of farmers and the agriculture sector.



AUSTRADE

Project Description: Conducted landscape assessment of FoodTech and AgTech activities in Australia, and developed strategic communications plan to attract foreign investment.



FRESH SOURCE CAPITAL

Project Description: Developed PPM and Pitch Deck to articulate food system investment thesis and support Fund II Capital Raise.

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE AT MIT SLOAN

Project Description: Researched, wrote, and developed marketing strategy for an eBook, "Unlocking Capital for Sustainability Oriented Ventures: 7 Key Lessons for Entrepreneurs".



AUSTRALIAN FARM INSTITUTE

Project Description: Developed case studies on leading agtech companies in the US, informed by qualitative interviews and desktop research.



RABOBANK

Project Description: Led workshop for 35 farmers in the Executive Development Program on opportunities and challenges in agtech.



400M AGTECH INVESTMENT FORUM 2017 (QLD)

Project Description: Conference Speaker.



GOTERRA

Project Description: Facilitated workshop on investment readiness and go to market strategy; Advisory board member.



AG/SUM CONFERENCE 2017 (JAPAN)

Project Description: Conference Speaker.



"We hired AgThentic to write three case studies on how agtech companies in the US are using Big Data in the agricultural supply chain as part of the Precision to Decision project. The case studies, and associated presentation by CEO Sarah Nolet, have helped us to understand real-world examples of how data can inform decision making. Sarah's knowledge of the agtech landscape is extensive and she was a great addition to the project."

Richard Heath, General Manager Research, Australian Farm Institute

"Sarah was a great addition to the 2017 400M agtech event. Sarah is on top of the latest topics in agtech globally, and her talk was engaging and informative. Many of the pitching startups also appreciated that Sarah was able to provide insights and practical pitch feedback after the event."

Ben Lyons, 400M Conference Chair; former CEO, Food Leaders Australia

How do you want the future to look?

AGTHENTIC.COM