



## **A Corporate Partnership Case Study: Accenture × Sky's the Limit**

### **Partnering for Impact**

Since 2016, Sky's the Limit and Accenture have partnered to expand access to entrepreneurship for underrepresented founders around the world. By combining Accenture's global talent, technology expertise, and employee volunteerism with Sky's the Limit's entrepreneur-first platform and programming, the partnership created a scalable, repeatable model for mentorship, training, and early-stage business support.

Together, the organizations built an ecosystem designed to remove systemic barriers to entrepreneurship and create long-term economic opportunity while also delivering meaningful employee engagement and leadership development for Accenture professionals.

### **Background**

#### **Accenture**

Accenture is a global professional services company serving clients in more than 120 countries, with hundreds of thousands of employees worldwide. Its commitment to innovation, equality, and shared success is embedded across its leadership, culture, and global initiatives.

#### **Sky's the Limit**

Sky's the Limit is a nonprofit technology platform that supports underrepresented entrepreneurs, including women, refugees, veterans, LGBTQ+ founders, and communities of color. Through mentorship, training, community, and early-stage resources, Sky's the Limit helps founders turn ideas into viable, growing businesses.

### **The Challenge**

Underrepresented entrepreneurs face persistent barriers, including limited access to capital, professional mentorship, and trusted networks, especially at the earliest stages of business formation. Many founders experience isolation, repeated rejection, and a lack of guidance precisely when support matters most.

Accenture sought a nonprofit partner with the infrastructure, credibility, and scalability to deliver meaningful, measurable support aligned with its commitment to equality, innovation, and long-term impact.

### **The Approach**

Sky's the Limit and Accenture co-created a comprehensive support model that combined technology, people, and community.

### **Mentorship and Skills-Based Support**

Accenture professionals provided structured, skills-based mentorship through one-on-one sessions, group mentoring, pitch feedback, and ongoing advisory relationships.

### **Employee Engagement at Scale**

Volunteer engagement was designed to be flexible, ranging from a single 30-minute conversation to bi-weekly mentoring over the course of a year. This approach allowed employees across regions and departments to participate meaningfully.

### **Platform-Driven Accessibility**

Accenture invested heavily in building and scaling Sky's the Limit's digital platform, enabling global access, virtual engagement, and measurable outcomes.

### **Community and Accountability**

Entrepreneurs participated in peer groups and structured programs that reinforced accountability, confidence, and shared learning.

This integrated model significantly improved mentor participation, entrepreneur engagement, and program completion.

## **Implementation and Investment**

Accenture's commitment extended beyond volunteer hours to deep, multi-year investment and leadership involvement.

Accenture funded \$650,000 for the initial platform prototype.

An additional \$1.7 million was invested to build the full platform, staffed by more than 15 Accenture developers and designers.

More than \$2 million was invested to develop advanced capabilities, including a blockchain proof of concept with Accenture Blockchain Labs.

Accenture AI Labs supported a matchmaking proof of concept for mentors and entrepreneurs.

Global and regional funding enabled the launch of Skysthelimit.org in the United Kingdom.

Together, the organizations launched the Global Refugee Entrepreneurs Program.

Leadership alignment was reinforced through governance and strategy, including the appointment of John Downie, Senior Managing Director at Accenture, to Sky's the Limit's Board of Directors.

## **Results and Impact**

The partnership has delivered sustained, measurable outcomes.

More than 100,000 entrepreneurs have been supported globally through the Sky's the Limit platform.

More than 60,000 entrepreneurs have engaged through the Sky's the Limit iOS and Android apps.

More than 5,500 Accenture employees have participated through volunteering events worldwide.

More than 3,000 Accenture volunteers are actively mentoring entrepreneurs through the platform.

Thousands of businesses have been launched and grown by participating entrepreneurs. Accenture employees report strong engagement, fulfillment, and leadership development.

Entrepreneurs consistently cite Accenture mentors as instrumental to their confidence, business readiness, and long-term resilience.

## **What Made This Partnership Work**

### **Integrated Investment**

Combining financial investment, technology development, and employee engagement created durable and scalable impact.

### **Early-Stage Focus**

Supporting founders before traditional funding thresholds proved critical to long-term success.

### **Employee-Led Impact**

Accenture's volunteer-driven model strengthened internal culture while delivering meaningful community value.

## **Business and Ecosystem Impact**

Sky's the Limit emerged as a trusted platform for large-scale, purpose-driven corporate partnerships.

Accenture demonstrated how employee expertise can be mobilized globally for sustained social impact.

The volunteer engagement model co-created with Accenture has since been replicated across Fortune 500 companies.

## **Leadership Perspective**

"Accenture's commitment to empowerment and equality has been transformative for our entrepreneurs. Their mentorship, leadership, and investment have opened doors for founders who otherwise may not have had access to opportunity."

Bo Ghirardelli, Founder, Sky's the Limit

Julie Sweet, Chair and CEO of Accenture, has also publicly shared her support of the partnership and its impact.