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## **EU Commissioner Assumes Patronage for Stage Two Startup Competition**

Mariya Gabriel — European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth — takes over the patronage of the Stage Two academic excellence competition initiated by RWTH Aachen University and HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management. A total of 30 universities and 60 startups from 18 European countries participate in the competition.

As a part of her work at the European level, EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel advocates for the integration of research and business. Her goal is to promote and support disruptive research and breakthrough innovation. She is also committed to excellence programs and partnership networks amongst European universities. Her commitment focuses in particular on the future of the European research landscape. Consequently, the intersection between the commissioner's work and the guiding principle of the Stage Two competition, — expressed through its motto "For Our Beyond" — is quite large.

"Stage Two offers entrepreneurial talents an opportunity to make their business ideas internationally visible, network and shape the future. Thus, this international stage simultaneously strengthens regional startup locations, such as the one here in Saxony. Yet Stage Two also represents an opportunity for Europe to leverage existing innovation potential. We are therefore very pleased to have the EU Commissioner for Innovation and Research join us in this European initiative."

Prof. Dr. Stephan Stubner, Dean of HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management and co-initiator of Stage Two.

It is not only at the political level that Stage Two has recently been able to gain new partners. With Microsoft and McKinsey, two additional top companies strengthen the portfolio of the competition. The technological competence of Microsoft and the industry-specific knowledge of McKinsey consulting increase the attractiveness of the competition for participants and open up new opportunities for the integration of research and business. These are precisely the synergies that Stage Two aims to promote as a platform, thereby advancing the further development of startups.



## **HHL's preliminary competition on July 29**

HHL's preliminary competition will take place on July 29. On the launch day of HHL's tech incubator [HHL DIGITAL SPACE](#) two winning startups from the university will be determined. These will then move on to the round of 60 finalists from across Europe who will compete at the finals to be held in Berlin on October 29.

## **About HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management**

HHL stands out for its excellent teaching, its clear research focus, its effective knowledge transfer into practice as well as its outstanding student services. The 2020 edition of the renowned Global Masters in Management Ranking awarded top places to the education offered at HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management both in Europe and worldwide (2nd place in Germany, 23rd place globally). In 2021, *Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft* (Donors' Association for the Promotion of Humanities and Sciences in Germany) ranked HHL as the best entrepreneurial university in Germany for the fifth time in a row. Over the last few decades, HHL has produced more than 300 startup businesses.

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