



HHL Press Contact

Eva Echterhoff
T +49 341 9851-614
C +49 170 2973 880
media@hhl.de
www.hhl.de

Leipzig, October 18, 2022

Europe's start-up elite will compete for more than 2 million euros at Stage Two

Stage Two is returning for its second round. On October 20 and 21, the best start-ups spinning out of European universities will compete against each other on an international stage in front of high-profile investors and corporates. This year, the initiators from RWTH Aachen University and HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management (HHL) are expecting a much bigger event than last year: more than 40 start-ups from leading universities in over 20 European countries will come together in Berlin in October.

This week, the European research and innovation ecosystem will look to Berlin, where the next generation of disruptive start-ups will meet for the largest pan-European competition for early-stage start-ups from leading universities. For the second time, Stage Two gathers the best founders from European universities. In addition to the start-ups' pitches, the on-site and online audience can look forward to keynotes from Kelly Benchehib (Sungai Watch, Make A Change World), Christoph Sollich (The Pitch Doctor) and Tobias Henz (McKinsey & Company), as well as a live Unicorn Bakery podcast with Ijad Madisch (ResearchGate).

In terms of the number of participating universities and the amount of the prizes, the initiators from RWTH Aachen University and HHL Leipzig report a significant increase as compared to last year. More than 40 universities from all over Europe have selected their best start-ups for the event in Berlin in Stage One, the local round at university level. Over 20 European countries are represented, from Sweden to Cyprus, from Portugal to Estonia. In addition, three teams have the chance to enter the semi-finals of Stage Two via wildcard. The teams will compete in front of a jury of investors for various prizes. With a total of over two million euros, the prize money has doubled since last year. The initiators from RWTH and HHL, Prof. Malte Brettel and Prof. Stephan Stubner, are pleased with the growing community and broad support for university start-ups.

The program, which has been expanded to two days, will provide the participating start-ups and investors with plenty of opportunities for networking. Companies such as Microsoft, McKinsey, Siemens and Biogen, as well as various other partners, invite the participants to engage in industry-specific exchanges. In addition, there will be various panels with start-ups, VCs and executives from



HHL

LEIPZIG
GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF MANAGEMENT

Press release

Microsoft, Meta and Siemens discussing opportunities and ways to collaborate, as well as the connection between sustainability and technology in the face of global crises.

Join the livestream of Stage Two: <http://www.stagetwo.io/livestream>

Stage Two

Stage Two is the largest pan-European competition for early-stage university start-ups, organized by [RWTH Aachen University](#) and [HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management](#), with the mission to unite visionaries from across Europe both on and off stage. The annual competition convenes Europe's top university spin-offs, high-profile investors, and key industry leaders in Berlin for an exclusive pitch contest and networking event, and is livestreamed internationally. Preceding the finals in Berlin is a local university round (Stage One), in which the start-up centers of the participating universities each select their best start-up to compete at the international level. The main event is embedded into a culture of sharing experiences in a growing international community of start-ups, universities, corporates and venture capitalists. Driven by the vision to leverage Europe's full innovation potential "For Our Beyond", the Stage Two family fosters an ongoing exchange of knowledge and best practices among its members in regular roundtables. Stage Two is backed by corporate partners and the [EXIST-Potentials](#) program of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action to support universities and their entrepreneurship centers in creating an active, sustainable start-up culture. More at stagetwo.io

RWTH Innovation

RWTH Innovation is a unique entity in the German university landscape, consisting of a transfer company (RWTH Innovation GmbH) and an Entrepreneurship Center (Chair of Economics for Engineers and Scientists at RWTH). The mission of RWTH Innovation is to support and accompany students and researchers in translating their research into viable business ideas. The RWTH Innovation Entrepreneurship Center specifically mobilizes prospective entrepreneurs, trains and supports them on their way to successful start-ups. The range of offerings provided by RWTH Innovation is geared towards local, national and international start-up teams. In 2021, more than 100 spin-offs from RWTH Aachen University received support. RWTH Innovation aims to build Europe's leading integrated tech incubator. For more information, visit www.rwth-innovation.de.

The Leipzig Graduate School of Management (HHL)

HHL is a university with the right to award doctoral and post-doctoral degrees. According to the Financial Times, it is one of the leading international business schools (19th place worldwide/THE ranking "Master in Management"). The aim of Germany's oldest business school is to train entrepreneurial, responsible and efficient leaders. HHL is distinguished by its excellent teaching, clear research orientation and practical transfer as well as excellent service for its students. In 2021, the Donors' Association for the Promotion of Sciences and Humanities in Germany (Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft) for the fifth time in a row ranked HHL as Germany's leading university for start-ups. Over the past 30 years, HHL has over 430 start-ups in the last 30 years, with more than 50,000 employees. HHL was the first German private business school to be accredited by the internationally renowned AACSB and has since achieved this quality status four times in a row. [More data on HHL](#)