

Agricultural and food tech startups wanted: the RootCamp in Hannover offers a new incubation program

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RootCamp GmbH was founded in Hannover in June 2020 as a subsidiary of SpinLab - The HHL Accelerator - in Leipzig. The K+S Group, an internationally oriented raw materials company with focus on fertilizer and mineral products, joined as a founding partner. Technology startups from the agricultural and food sector, as well as other industry-relevant areas can apply for admission to the RootCamp. The program term duration varies from three to twelve months.

Startups participating in the program benefit from an extensive approach - starting with the development of an idea up to creating a launchable product. On the other hand, by cooperating with the RootCamp, industrial partners receive tailor made solutions for existing problems.



Team picture from left: Gaia Amatteis (Program Manager RootCamp), Dr. Philipp Rittershaus (Managing Director RootCamp), Ralf Blessing (Facilitator K+S Group)

Kicking off the program in October, technology startups from the agricultural and food processing industry can apply starting from today. For the initial application period Startups with innovative solutions in the fields of packaging (sustainability, precision and smartness) and logistics are also welcome to join the program. Not only technology-oriented startups are invited to move into the RootCamp, but also teams of the participating companies: so-called *intrapreneurs*, who will develop ideas up to financing, market launch or cooperation.

The head of the RootCamp, Dr. Philipp Rittershaus, states: "The RootCamp was designed in such a way that ideas can develop in the best possible way and grow into

scalable products. With the support of the SpinLab from Leipzig, we have an experienced partner and one of the best-rated startup programs in Europe at hand. Together with K+S as a group with a global presence in the agricultural and food segment, we offer a unique breeding ground for the germination phase of tomorrow's innovations".

All teams benefit from a variety of services. They get coaching for business development as well as they get access to a broad network. In fact, they get in contact with potential customers, they are able to exchange ideas with experts in the field and they are introduced to a wide range of renown investors, who could support the startups financially. In addition to free usage of the rooms, startups can receive a project budget up to 55,0000 Euros as a grant.

Not only the startups benefit from participating in the program, strategic partners from the industry will gain a lot of value as well, SpinLab founder and CEO Dr. Eric Weber explains: "We are very excited that we found an ideal place for RootCamp, as Hannover is internationally renowned in the agricultural industry. It offers a great infrastructure for our second pillar. We keep following our strategy of moving to medium-sized cities with a broad student base and an active creative startup scene. Over the past five years, SpinLab has been able to build up a network of over twenty strategic partners such as Dell Technologies, Porsche, and Helios, and together we have been able to support startups with market access and financing. We will also establish such a network at the RootCamp in Hannover with focus on the agricultural and food processing industry, and we will admit further partners".

Press contacts

Dr. Philipp Rittershaus
RootCamp GmbH
Herrenstrasse 12
30159 Hannover
philipp@root.camp
+49 152 295 760 93

Clara Fischer
SpinLab Accelerator GmbH
Spinnereistraße 7 Halle 14
04179 Leipzig
clara@spinlab.co

www.root.camp

<https://www.f6s.com/rootcamp>

About RootCamp

The RootCamp is an intra- and entrepreneurial incubator for tech-driven projects from agricultural, food & feed. Initiated by the SpinLab Accelerator and the fertilizer and salt company K+S. The incubator is located in the heart of Hannover, the capital of the German federal state Lower Saxony and a center of the agriculture and food industry. National and international Startups from Seed up to Series B are asked to apply to various programs ranging from 3 to 12 months. The teams are fueled by non-dilutive project-grants and supported by a network of experts, corporates, investors, mentors, coaches and the SpinLab-curriculum. Corporate innovation is enabled by catalyzing problem solving and solution finding. Joined innovation break-outs are staffed by corporates, independent experts and international Start-Ups to sketch solutions and form disruptive initiatives. Implementation follows immediately during the incubation program where the teams develop or adapt their solution towards market entry or cooperation projects.

About SpinLab

SpinLab – The HHL Accelerator - supports innovative founding projects with the implementation and growth of their ventures. In addition to intensive coaching, the founding teams will also benefit from a high-caliber mentoring program as well as numerous contacts to investors, established companies and other founders.