

Announcement

Campus Founders is taking the next step in fostering the region's rapidly growing startup ecosystem by partnering with TECH by Handelsblatt for their 2026 Conference.

Heilbronn, 06. March 2026 – As part of the second TECH Conference (May 31 to June 2, 2026) in Heilbronn, Campus Founders will host the House of Startups – a dedicated platform designed to bringing high-potential startups together with corporate decision-makers, investors, and ecosystem leaders from across Germany and Europe. TECH is Europe's leading platform for technology, innovation, and future business models.

Over the past years, Campus Founders has played a central role in Heilbronn's emergence as an internationally recognized innovation hub. Our Heilbronn Slush'D startup festival became a defining catalyst in that journey: it attracted thousands of founders, investors, and industry leaders, created international visibility for Heilbronn, and helped establish a culture of ambitious entrepreneurship and collaboration between startups and established companies. It has proven that Heilbronn attracts the relevant people, sparks real momentum, and turns a strong community into a recognizable destination for innovation.

When SLUSH Helsinki launched the Slush'D event series in 2022, the founding idea was to ignite local ecosystems and connect them into a powerful global network – something Campus Founders and Heilbronn have taken advantage of and put into practice. As part of SLUSH's strategic decision to discontinue the Slush'D event series worldwide, this chapter now closes.

“Campus Founders was given a rare opportunity — and our community turned it into something truly special and awarded. I'm deeply grateful to the SLUSH organization for the trust, and to every founder, partner, and supporter who brought Heilbronn Slush'D to life. Over the past four years, we've witnessed defining encounters, unforgettable moments, and built relationships that didn't just feel

great on the day of the event — they translated into tangible progress, startups, and success stories. Heilbronn Slush'D helped lay the foundation for the energy and momentum our ecosystem is building on today”, says Oliver Hanisch, CEO of Campus Founders.

At Campus Founders, building community has never been about a *one-time event*—it’s what we do every day, all year round. As the Slush'D chapter closes, we’re doubling down on the programs, events, and partnerships that will take our ecosystem to the next level: larger community gatherings, high-impact demo days, and deeper international collaboration – including our new partnership with TECH – so our community keeps growing stronger, more connected, and with more visibility and impact.

“With our newly formed partnership with TECH by Handelsblatt, we’re now taking the next step. By combining Campus Founders’ founder and investor networks and hands-on community building with Handelsblatt’s reach, convening power, and access to industry, technology, politics, and science, we are launching the “House of Startups” at TECH as a platform that turns Europe’s innovation potential into successful startups and scaleups – and into tangible competitive advantages for the German Mittelstand and established enterprises.”

TECH 2026 is expected to welcome around 1,800 attendees and has already announced high-level partners and speakers. The House of Startups will add a focused layer to that platform: curated startup visibility, high-quality networking, and direct access to investors, partners, and customers – with a clear goal of creating startup success stories and accelerating co-innovation.

If you want to know more or want to become part of the House of Startups at TECH and our other initiatives, join the waitlist today and be the first to receive all updates.

Link to the waitlist:

<https://campusfounders.de/house-of-startups-at-tech-by-handelsblatt/>

About Campus Founders

Campus Founders is the startup and co-innovation hub based in Heilbronn. Its programs combine hands-on experience, cutting-edge methods, financial startup support, a strong mentor network, and international connections. Designed to support all phases of the entrepreneurial journey – from initial idea generation and validating problem-solution fit to achieving product-market fit and scaling sustainably – Campus Founders empowers early-stage startups to accelerate their progress and drive international growth.

As a platform, Campus Founders unites students, founders, investors, and companies to promote meaningful collaboration and co-innovation. Its vibrant community of over 1,000 members regularly engages in events and networking formats. Campus Founders also actively supports female founders through dedicated exchange and mentoring initiatives.

Campus Founders is a partner of the NXTGN Startup Factory, which further strengthens the collaboration among Baden-Württemberg's most research- and startup-intensive locations. As part of the RISE Europe network – linking 20 leading startup ecosystems across 14 countries – Campus Founders builds vital bridges to international markets and experts.

<https://campusfounders.de/>

<https://www.heilbronnslushd.com/>

About TECH by Handelsblatt

TECH (Technology Experience Convention Heilbronn) is Europe's leading platform for technology, innovation, and future business models. It brings together the continent's most influential leaders from industry, technology, politics, and science to foster strategic collaboration and meaningful exchange, aiming to strengthen Europe's role in the global tech landscape and shape a sovereign digital future. The platform is founded and organized by the Handelsblatt Media Group and Handelsblatt, Germany's leading financial and business newspaper, in collaboration with Schwarz Digits, the IT and digital division of the Schwarz Group. The second TECH Conference will take place from May 31 to June 2, 2026, in Heilbronn, Germany, at the heart of Europe's largest emerging AI cluster.

<https://www.tech-europe.org/>

Contact for inquiries

Florian Kratz

Director Marketing Communications

Campus Founders gGmbH

+49 (0) 152 0341 8410

florian@campusfounders.de

Bildungscampus 11 - 74076 Heilbronn