

Local Entrepreneurs featured at me Convention 2019 in Frankfurt

PLUS: Global participants in 'Startup Cities' track now confirmed

July 29, 2019 – The 3rd edition of the me Convention, a collaboration between Mercedes-Benz and SXSW, will be held in Frankfurt between September 11th and 13th during the IAA (International Motor Show).

The complete details of the conference program are currently being finalized, but the event organizers are excited to announce two important aspects of the program which have already been confirmed.

A local revolution with wide-reaching impact

This year, the me Convention has actively dedicated space in the main conference program to highlight the local startup and entrepreneur ecosystems in the region between Frankfurt and Stuttgart. For example, thingsTHINKING, a startup associated with the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, will host a workshop on how artificial intelligence (AI) can support a more direct form of democracy. Startup Mannheim will discuss how the essential leadership skills of tomorrow, like empathy, social skills and creativity, might give women in tech and entrepreneurship an advantage. Experts and startups from Heidelberg University will examine the role of AI in providing better health care in the future.

From Stuttgart, Startup Autobahn will coordinate a number of activations related to the theme of sustainability and innovation, including a panel on corporate sustainability, and will host a demo area dedicated to startups and sustainability.

In addition, the me Convention is literally working on the future with Stuttgart-based company Next Entrepreneurs, who will be organizing a Startup Bootcamp for school children from southern Germany. Five teams of kids will develop a business idea, and then pitch it to a jury, which will include Dorothee Bär, the State Minister for Digitization.



Preparing for the Future: School children solving tomorrow's problems at a NEXT Entrepreneurs Startup Bootcamp.

And finally, representing the host city of Frankfurt, TechQuartier will present a panel on Fintech, and how the world of finance has fundamentally been changed with the emergence of new technology and disruptive startups. Together with PwC, they will also host a unique Cyber Security Escape Room, where me Convention delegates will have the opportunity to try and hack a bank, with the aim of improving their understanding of why cyber security is so important.

Regarding this regional initiative, Mirko Whitfield (SXSW) and Kitty Leering (me Convention conference program co-director) commented:

“During the last four months, we have traveled to a number of cities in the Frankfurt Rhein-Main region, and we were pleasantly surprised to see how many great programs are being rolled out, and the quality of the startups in general. There were at least another 10 cities we could have selected, but those that we are featuring at the me Convention will hopefully get some wider exposure for their projects– not just nationally but also internationally.”

On a national level, in collaboration with Hamburg Startups, the me Convention 2019 will host a special public voting competition to select a winning startup that will then go on to the finals of the Reeperbahn Startup Pitch on November 7th. Between 15 and 30 startups will be pre-selected for the finals, and the general public will be able to vote for the five startups that will pitch at the me Convention 2019. A jury will then select one of these five startups to proceed to the finals on November 7th, and receive free registration to attend SXSW 2020 in Austin, Texas.

Startup Cities: Twelve cities now confirmed

For the third year in a row, the me Convention will be hosting the Startup Cities track, where a variety of cities from around the world are invited to give a 10-minute presentation and explain why their home town is such a great place for entrepreneurs and startups.

The twelve cities that have now been confirmed are:

Atlanta (USA), Bangkok (Thailand), Bristol (UK), Brussels (Belgium), Rotterdam (Netherlands), Fukuoka (Japan), Marseille (France), Nicosia (Cyprus), Brno (Czech Republic), St Petersburg (Russia), Kaohsiung (Taiwan) and Tampere (Finland).



Pahrada "Mameaw" Sapprasert: Director 500 Startups, Bangkok, Thailand



STARTUPAUTOBAHN
powered by **PLUGANDPLAY**

30. July 2019

This is an amazing opportunity for me Convention delegates to understand what is happening in the startup ecosystems of other cities around the world. Each city will talk about what makes their ecosystem so unique, what kinds of subsidies exist to attract businesses and promote cooperation with universities and polytechnics, as well as what problems they have overcome to become a global Startup City. Including this year's participants, a total of 56 startup cities have now presented at the me Convention.

The regional startup activities and global Startup Cities presentations are just a few of the many elements included in this year's me Convention program. In the next three weeks, we will also be announcing details of two evenings of Book Activations (in cooperation with Frankfurter Book Fair), our latest selection of confirmed speakers, and more information about the complete me Convention conference program.

Note to the editor:

Press accreditation for the me Convention

Journalists can request accreditation for this year's me Convention online at www.me-convention.com/pressaccreditation.

Upon approval, media representatives will enjoy free access to all of the activities taking place during the event, such as keynotes, workshops, interactive sessions and concerts. In addition, the Media Lounge will be available as a dedicated workspace. The me Convention PR Team can assist with arranging interviews with me Convention speakers.

About the me Convention

The me Convention is a collaboration between Mercedes-Benz and SXSW. This annual gathering explores major issues and promising ideas for society, business, science and our planet. Under the motto "create the new", the third edition of the me Convention will bring together 3,000 curious, critical and engaged minds from across the globe. This event offers an environment that welcomes multiple perspectives, stimulates critical thinking and encourages experimentation to find concrete ways to bring our desired future closer to reality.

Learn more at www.me-convention.com

About SXSW

SXSW dedicates itself to helping creative people achieve their goals. Founded in 1987 in Austin, TX, SXSW is best known for its conference and festivals that celebrate the convergence of the interactive, film and music industries. The event, an essential destination for global professionals, features conference programming, showcases, screenings, exhibitions, and a variety of networking opportunities. SXSW proves that the most unexpected discoveries happen when diverse topics and people come together.

About Mercedes-Benz

Additional information about Mercedes-Benz is available online: www.media.daimler.com, <https://media.mercedes-benz.com> and www.mercedes-benz.com.



STARTUPAUTOBAHN
powered by **PLUGANDPLAY**

30. July 2019

About Startup Autobahn

Startup Autobahn is an innovation platform powered by Plug and Play. It provides an interface between industry-leading corporations and innovative tech companies. At the heart of the semi-annual program is the corporate partner collaboration with startups on an eye to eye level to evaluate the fit for both parties, pilot their technology and achieve the ultimate goal — a successful production-ready implementation. Designed to go beyond just startup acceleration, Startup Autobahn moderates an ecosystem for collaboration. It drives cultural mindset change as well as sharing corporate best practices in a neutral environment to push digitization across corporate structures and value chains. In May 2016 Daimler, Plug and Play Tech Center, the University of Stuttgart and ARENA2036 founded STARTUP AUTOBAHN as an open innovation platform with global reach. Since then they have teamed up with Anchor Partners Hewlett Packard Enterprise, DXC Technology, ZF Friedrichshafen, BASF, Porsche, Deutsche Post DHL Group, Webasto, Rolls-Royce Power Systems, Samvardhana Motherson, T-Systems, as well as Ecosystem Partners Murata, The Linde Group, AGC Glass Europe, Wieland Ventures, Jardine Matheson Limited, Covéa, Cepsa, Bleistahl, BP, Hyundai, TÜV Rheinland, Yanfeng Automotive Interiors and Schnellecke to bring the idea of open innovation to life.

More information about STARTUP AUTOBAHN powered by Plug and Play can be found online at www.startup-autobahn.com

Press Contact:

Plug & Play Germany GmbH, Program Manager STARTUP AUTOBAHN Hannah Boomgaarden, E-Mail: hannah@pnptc.com, Mobile: +49 157 31986462