

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Companies and startups join forces for the data economy: For the second time, Gründerallianz Ruhr invites startups from around the world to participate in the DataHub Challenge in the Ruhr region.**

- **Startups around the globe are encouraged to tackle specific data-based industrial challenges.**
- **Distinguished partners such as Evonik, the city of Herne and Haniel's digital unit Schacht One are announcing real cases and datasets.**
- **Topics include e.g. the development of efficient bulk waste routes, smart street lighting and a CO2 reduction in vehicles or construction machines through the use of specialized lubricants.**

Essen, July 9, 2019 – Gründerallianz Ruhr: After the successful kick-off last year, Gründerallianz Ruhr is starting the second round of its DataHub Ruhr this July. Various companies are making their valuable datasets available for this program to encourage the development of specific use cases. Startups can apply to these and use them as a basis to develop innovative solutions for real data cases that may even include new business models.

Again, distinguished partners such as Evonik, Haniel and the city of Herne are participating in the upcoming round of the DataHub program. The announced challenges range from the development of efficient bulk waste routes or introduction of smart street lighting to a CO2 reduction in cars, trucks or construction machinery by using specialized lubricants.

For each challenge, three startups are selected from all the submissions and invited to pitch their idea to the respective partner company and the data experts from Gründerallianz. The startups participating in the three-month program will each receive funding in the amount of up to EUR 25,000. Gründerallianz Ruhr is also providing its expertise and mentoring to the startups to help them expand their own business model and is making its strong network in the business and science areas available.

The application deadline for the startups is July 31, 2019. At [www.datahub.ruhr](http://www.datahub.ruhr), startups can download the datasets directly and tackle the challenges.

#### **Win-win for both startups and companies – Example: RAG & Spacedatists**

The winners of the previous year are a great example to show how well this kind of cooperation can succeed, even beyond the boundaries of the DataHub: After closing the last mine, the stock corporation RAG continues to take responsibility for the region, constantly monitoring changes and subsidence in the ground to detect the threat of collapses in old mines. The challenge: Evaluating these massive volumes of data and identifying and securing potential areas of danger as quickly as possible. DataHub Ruhr offered numerous applications and suggested solutions for this challenge. The winning solution was provided by Spacedatists, a two-man startup from Dortmund: The two founders Jakob Kopec and Florian Spieß developed an algorithm to analyze 3D images that eliminates the need for elaborate comparisons with images from the prior year, which had been required up to then.

Jakob Kopec, founder of Spacedatists about the launching pad DataHub Ruhr: “For us as a young startup, the innovative format of the DataHub was the best way to prove our skills based on real data and problems and get into contact with global players. The collaboration during the program went extremely well and the discussions about future topics are also very exciting. We realized that our solution could also be applicable in very different areas, such as medicine. DataHub Ruhr really opened doors for us.”

### **The Ruhr region as B2B hotspot for startups**

The concept that knowledge no longer has to be centered directly in the company but that established enterprises and startups can create a shared pool of expertise from which all parties can benefit has also reached businesses and municipalities in the Ruhr area. Driving this idea forward and turning the Ruhr region back into a hotspot for founders is also the goal of Founder Coordinator Christian Lüdtkke. He was born in Duisburg, is a successful founder and managing director of the Berlin-based digital consultancy and startup foundry etventure and knows the strengths of the Ruhr region: “Among the general public, industrial topics have for a long time been overshadowed by the success stories of startups in the business-to-consumer area, for which Berlin is the linchpin. But the industrial area in particular has an extremely high need and previously underutilized potential for both sides. The Ruhr region is the only area where you can find this density of major corporations and colleges that accelerate research and innovation – in other words, the perfect place for industry-related startups in the business-to-business area. The huge potential for the value creation offered by digitization is right here. This is exactly what we want to promote with Gründerallianz Ruhr and initiatives like the DataHub, bringing founders from Germany and the world to the Ruhr region.

### **About the DataHub Ruhr Program:**

The DataHub Ruhr Program was created by Gründerallianz Ruhr ([www.gruenderallianz.ruhr](http://www.gruenderallianz.ruhr)) and is supported by etventure on behalf of Initiativkreis Ruhr ([www.i-r.de](http://www.i-r.de)). The DataHub Program offers startups the opportunity to work with distinguished partners from science and industry to create innovative, data-based solutions from real datasets. The program is open



to companies and startups worldwide and is planned for additional rounds as a long-term innovation driver. More information about DataHub, the partners and data challenges can be found at [www.datahub.ruhr](http://www.datahub.ruhr).

**For more information, interview requests and visual material:**

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