

PRESS RELEASE

## **Digital innovation through smart data use: third open call from Data Hub Ruhr draws innovative data start-ups to the Ruhr region**

**April 2020: For the third time, Data Hub Ruhr is calling on start-ups from all over the world to present their ideas for seven new, data-based use cases from partnering companies in the Ruhr region. Participating start-ups get the chance to win up to EUR 20,000 and start a three-month cooperation project with the partner. The application period runs from April 1 to May 8, 2020.**

Beginning in April, start-ups all over the world will once again get a chance to become the cooperation partner of exciting companies in the Ruhr region. The organizer: Data Hub of Gründerallianz Ruhr. The principle is as simple as it is effective: established companies define specific challenges they want to solve with the help of existing data sets. This calls for the best start-ups with the best solutions worldwide, which can validate their idea during a three-month cooperation project with the company.

### **Seven new challenges seek data-based solutions**

In this third round organized by Data Hub Ruhr, strong partners like NetConnect Germany, RAG Aktiengesellschaft and Vonovia are again requesting innovative solutions for their use cases. The Bochum-based company Vonovia – Germany’s largest real estate company with 350,000 homes – wants to coordinate its service providers in a more automated and thus time-efficient way. This would apply to winter service, for example: in case of snow and ice, the assigned sweeping and snow removal services have to be activated to ensure the tenants’ safety. With the help of Data Hub, the goal is to design a solution so that the reported operations – based on the day and time of the assignment – are automatically compared with the time-specific meteorological data, such as precipitation amount, ground-level humidity and temperature. This would make it possible to validate the operations even more quickly and precisely.

Another partner that takes care of everyday functionality on the basis of data and occupies a key role in the coordination of the gas supply is NetConnect Germany (NCG): NCG is responsible for the operational handling of the market area cooperation. More than 480 network operators whose networks lie in NCG’s market area are sending projected and measured consumption data to NCG every day. NCG processes these and forwards them to the relevant market partners, who then procure the required gas amounts accordingly. Good data quality is the be-all and end-all in order to avoid surpluses or bottlenecks. Since it isn’t possible to rule out entry or transfer errors entirely, the goal of this use case is automatic data analysis and correction.

You can find all use cases and information about applying at [www.datahub.ruhr](http://www.datahub.ruhr)

### **Data Hub Ruhr – the start of successful long-term cooperation projects**

In many cases, the convincing results of previous cooperation projects were the beginning of a long-lasting, successful collaboration: last year’s winner, the Fraunhofer spin-off project adiutaByte, has already signed further contracts with Entsorgung Herne, for example. During Data Hub’s three-month cooperation period, the start-up digitized bulk waste removal in Herne and thus made the planning faster, easier and more flexible for the employees and residents.

For RAG Aktiengesellschaft and the start-up Spacedatists from Dortmund, the algorithm for the analysis of 3D aerial images developed at Data Hub was also the starting signal for a lasting partnership. Since then, RAG has been monitoring changes and potential danger areas for ground

depressions with the additional algorithm from Spacedatists, instead of just basing them on elaborate comparisons with records from the previous year.

### **An entire region must be digitized**

Christian Lüdtkke, founder coordinator for Gründerallianz Ruhr and founder and CEO of the digital consultancy and start-up foundry etventure, knows that Data Hub is not just about individual challenges, but about digitizing an entire region: “In addition to the specific business problems that we’re solving with these open calls, we also want to use Data Hub to show how attractive the Ruhr area is when it comes to the digitization potential of start-ups. Nowhere else can you find such a variety of corporations, small firms and municipalities with a wide range of needs: from digital solutions for production companies to innovative logistical and supply-chain concepts. This concentration of potential is unique in Germany, which makes it an ideal incubator for start-ups with digital business models.”

Dirk Opalka, CEO of Initiativkreis Ruhr GmbH, also sees Data Hub Ruhr as a driver of digitization: “The previous results from Data Hub show the kinds of opportunities that digitization offers to companies and municipalities. This is exactly why we started Gründerallianz Ruhr with Data Hub as an important part of our founder initiative. We want to pool digital expertise in this region and establish the Ruhr area as a digital innovation site with international standing.” Initiativkreis Ruhr established Gründerallianz Ruhr together with RAG-Stiftung, RAG Aktiengesellschaft and Evonik.

### **About Data Hub Ruhr**

Data Hub Ruhr is a program by Gründerallianz Ruhr. It is operated on behalf of Initiativkreis Ruhr GmbH and overseen by etventure GmbH. Its mission is to utilize and support the data potential in the Ruhr region. To this end, Data Hub connects companies with the best start-ups worldwide to solve specific problems within a three-month, curated program.

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