

Rockstart leads the way with a new accelerator model with follow-on capital

Rockstart, one of Europe's first accelerators, has upgraded its model to offer longer-term support for startups. Starting later this year, the company will add investments up until Series B to its initial offer of seed-stage funding and acceleration programs. By 2020, the new model will be implemented across all four of Rockstart's core domains: AgriFood, Energy, Health, and Emerging Tech.

Launched in 2012, Rockstart has accelerated over 150 startups across the four core domains that have raised a total of over €87 million and generated more than 700 jobs. With the new model that includes follow-on funding, the company offers further access to capital and support for its alumni going through the growth stage.

“Building a startup is not just difficult in the initial phase, and our learning from the last five years is that the risk for failure is significant all the way up until Series B is raised,” said Rockstart co-founder and CEO Rune Theill.

The accelerator is currently working on transitioning its first program to the new model and plans to announce more exciting details about it before summer. As part of the transition, Rockstart will also drive further partnerships with major players within the four core domains.

“Traditional industries like AgriFood, Energy, Health require a collaborative approach from corporates and startups in order to achieve meaningful innovation,” Theill said. “We have already partnered with Maersk in the AgriFood domain and Shell in Energy and saw a number of startups benefit from improved market access.”

The startups selected for Rockstart programs can still expect top-notch support and tailor-made activities that involve more than 300 mentors, tens of industry partners, and a community of over 400 alumni founders.

“The initial six months — aka the pressure cooker — will still be the most intense period of the program, but we will continue to stay actively involved in the company until series B,” Theill said. “Due to the additional capital commitment, we do expect to see later stage startups applying to the program. This, however, won’t change the fact that more than 60 percent of the assessment of startups applying for the program will be based on the founding team.”

With more and more initiatives for seed-stage startups funded by either local governments, corporates, or the EU, Rockstart is now closing the gap between early-stage funding and Series B. Passionate about driving positive change for teams from all over the world, Rockstart plans to support over 200 startups in its core domains over the next five years, providing follow-on capital and unparalleled access to the market along the way.

ABOUT ROCKSTART

Rockstart launched in 2011 in Amsterdam as one of Europe’s first startup accelerators. Today, Rockstart is an international company that supports and empowers the best startups on their way to success across four domains: Energy, Health, AgriFood, and Emerging technologies. We provide startups with access to the capital, market, community, and expertise by connecting them to partners, investors, mentors and the wider Rockstart network.

Rockstart also creates programs that are customized to boost collaboration between startups and corporates, driving faster access to co-creation, commercial partnerships, and investment. Rockstart has experience in designing and executing programs for Maersk, Shell, Dutch Ministry of Health, and many others.

Since its inception, Rockstart has invested in more than 150 startups and supported them in their journey to raise more than €87 million and hire more than 700 people. Rockstart is an international team of 35+ professionals dedicated to support and empower startups to become scalable and change their world for the better.

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