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Rockstart is closing in on a €15m fund to invest in AgriFood startups

Rockstart is almost ready to close its first fund of €15 million for its AgriFood domain accelerator and fund. Staying true to its commitment to support and empower startups and provide unparalleled access to capital, Rockstart AgriFood now offers (follow-on) investments in participating startups up until Series B.

With the new fund, Rockstart secures its position as Europe's premier startup accelerator with unique expertise in some of the most important vertical domains. In addition to AgriFood, Rockstart runs programs for startups working in Health, Energy, and Emerging Tech, offering startups access to capital, market, community and knowledge.

“During the last seven years investing in more than a 150 startups, we have experienced the need first-hand for support and capital for startups until they reach a sustainable and repeatable business model,” said Rune Theill, Rockstart co-founder and CEO. “Rockstart AgriFood is the first domain where Rockstart will now offer support from the initial phase all the way up to Series B.”

Leveraging the full power of the Nordics and Benelux AgriFood ecosystems, the Rockstart AgriFood program will run from Copenhagen, Denmark, but attract startups globally. The programme has strong ties to the Dutch market, in both locations, several events are already planned to maximize the value of the global ecosystem. The applications for startups will stay open until the end of May, while the program itself will kick off in September 2019.

“We are looking for exceptional entrepreneurial teams with Agritech and Foodtech startups that are using emerging tech and new business models to positively change or transform our food supply system,” said Mark Durno, AgriFood domain director at Rockstart. “The AgriFood industry should be considered holistically, so we are looking at solutions from soil to gut.”

Rockstart AgriFood is looking for startups addressing three core challenges in the industry; optimization of processes and practices, stopping food waste, and driving transparency and sustainability. Selected teams will come to Copenhagen for Rockstart's pressure-cooker program, supported by a network of more than 100 mentors and industry partners. During the program, there will be a heavy emphasis on access to capital and market, with Rockstart AgriFood providing initial capital and promising selected startups an opportunity to raise additional investment from the newly opened fund.

Vækstfonden from Denmark and De Hoge Dennen Capital from the Netherlands are confirmed as cornerstone investors of Rockstart AgriFood fund.

“There is a huge potential for AgriFood technology in Denmark and the Netherlands as these countries have historically had a very strong agricultural and food sector. We are extremely excited about the partnership with Rockstart who now launches their accelerator program in Copenhagen. Adding to the local competencies that we already have, I am convinced that Rockstart will deliver both an international network and mindset that help the startups deliver on their business potential,” says Rolf Kjærgaard, Chief Investment Officer at Vækstfonden.

“We're excited to be part of the next stage in Rockstart's development in a sector that's very close to our heart. With a growing world population, there's a strong need for innovation in the AgriFood sector and Rockstart is perfectly positioned to enable this with a strong presence in Denmark and the Netherlands and an excellent track record in accelerator programs in various sectors” said Jelle Roodbeen, of De Hoge Dennen Capital.

Applications for Agritech and Foodtech startups to participate in Rockstart AgriFood accelerator in Copenhagen are now open. Startups that complete the program will have the opportunity to secure financing from Rockstart AgriFood up to and including Series B. For more information, visit: <https://www.rockstart.com/agrifood/agrifood-program>.

About Rockstart (<https://rockstart.com>)

Launched in 2011, 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. Passionate about driving positive change with teams from all over the world, Rockstart plans to support and invest in more than 200 startups in its core domains over the next five years, providing follow-on capital and unparalleled access to the market along the way. To do that, the accelerator partners with large players in respective industries to connect startups to their first customers and foster collaborative innovation.

About Vækstfonden (<https://vf.dk>)

Vækstfonden, the Danish Growth Fund, is the Danish State's investment fund. Vækstfonden strives to create growth and innovation in Danish companies and to expand the Danish capital ecosystem.

Vækstfonden is deeply rooted in the Danish capital and business ecosystem. Through a large variety of financial products, it finances over 800 Danish companies annually, in all stages of their development and across industries.

About De Hoge Dennen Capital (<https://dehogedennencapital.nl>)

De Hoge Dennen Capital is a respected Dutch family-owned private equity firm that invests in high-potential enterprises and mid-market buyouts. Within AgriFood they have invested in Picnic and De Menken Keuken. De Hoge Dennen Capital's philosophy is a perfect match for Rockstart's focus on societal themes, entrepreneurship, and technology.

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.



Rockstart