



GEC Catalyst Cohorts with a New Focus on Innovative Materials

Greentech innovations take off at the Global Entrepreneurship Centre

Meerbusch, 20 July 2023 – *The Global Entrepreneurship Centre (GEC) presents new pioneers in sustainability. Young companies in the fields of Building and Living, Textiles, Energy, and Food & Agritech respond to the special call for startups (GEC Call for Solutions). The result was a strong cohort of greentech innovations that meet the high standards of the Innovation Hub.*

Numerous startups were put through their paces in an intensive selection process conducted by GEC Venture Developers in collaboration with the GEC sustainability team. The GEC internal screening is, among other things, about the technological maturity and innovation behind the business idea, together with the business viability of the startups.

For the first time, the focus is on innovative and new materials

The result is a cohort of 15 strong greentech startups with high commercial potential. The GEC's call for proposals was answered by companies from Germany, Lithuania, the UK, Israel, France, Denmark and the US that want to drive innovation in environmentally critical and climate-relevant sectors. The GEC Catalyst Programme is designed to support startups and scale-ups in their growth phase and improve their chances with investors. It also selects candidates for market entry in Germany and for settlement in the Rhineland region.

"The GEC has international appeal and is a driving force for unleashing innovative spirit, bundling creativity and competencies and developing successful business models. It stands for the pioneering spirit and the optimism that characterize the Rhine district of Neuss and the Rhenish mining area. At the same time, against the backdrop of structural change, the GEC sends a strong signal for additional, future-proof jobs and value creation in our region," emphasizes Dirk Brügge, District Director of the Rhine County of Neuss.

The following companies will work closely with the GEC Catalyst mentors over the next three months:

Building & Living:

- Mimicrete [<https://www.mimicrete.com/>] from the UK is involved in advanced materials science, developing a new type of self-healing concrete.
- Keey Aerogel [<https://keey-aerogel.com/>] from France specialises in the development of aerogel-based solutions.



- Meshle [<https://meshle.de/>] from Germany offers a smart home technology that is easy to use and integrate for both private users and companies.

Textiles:

- Smobyta [<https://smobyta.com/>] from Lithuania transforms food waste into biotech circular materials for the textile industry.
- RoundRack Limited [<https://www.roundrack.co/>] from the UK helps brands test, design and bring to market next-generation materials and dyes in half the time with its collaborative platform.
- FFBS-Fashion For Biodiversity Solutions GmbH [<https://www.fashionforbiodiversity.com/>] from Germany is the first RegTech for the fashion industry using SpaceTech, IoT, AI and blockchain to ensure all environmental regulations are implemented and complied with.
- PDA Ecolab [<https://www.pdaecolab.com/>] from France is developing bio-based reinforcement materials that can improve product performance in a range of applications.
- ESG Brands [<https://www.theesgbrand.com/>] from the USA converts banana stems into fibres that can be used for textile production and other commercial purposes.
- ZoriTex [<https://www.zoritex.com/>] from the UK is on a mission to prevent landfill and incineration of textile waste through technological innovation.
- Re-Fresh Global [<https://re-fresh.global/>] from Germany transforms shredded textile fibres into raw materials with its patented biotechnology.

Food & Agritech:

- Fenntec [<https://www.fenntec.de/>] from Germany builds intelligent technology for the agriculture of the future. With its robotic system, Fenntec ensures that organic vegetables become cheaper while reducing the use of pesticides.
- B.fab [<https://bfab.bio/>] from Germany, specialises in the efficient conversion of CO₂ and hydrogen (H₂) from renewable energy into biotechnological value chains.
- Vgreens [<https://www.v-greens.com/>] from Germany sets new standards for decentralised, data-driven, vertical farming systems in urban areas.



Energy:

- TEGnology [<https://www.tegtechnology.dk/>] from Denmark converts a temperature difference into electrical energy using thermoelectric generators.
- Svarmi [<https://www.svarmi.com/>] from Iceland supports organisations in their transparency regarding their interactions with nature.

About the GEC Catalyst Programme

Think BeyondTM's GEC Catalyst Programme incorporates best practices from Silicon Valley's Lean Launchpad methodology. It consists of a comprehensive 12-week cohort-based curriculum designed to help startups commercialise. Participants will have access to tailored workshops, individual mentoring and expert guidance to validate their business models, develop a sound investment strategy and prepare for the GEC Factory. In addition, the GEC Catalyst Programme aims to provide entrepreneurs with the necessary tools to build a sustainable and successful business.

"Supporting change towards a sustainable world is at the core of our mission at the Global Entrepreneurship Centre. Our GEC Catalyst Programme is based on the best practices of Silicon Valley's most successful startups. The priority is to help the startups drive their innovations and provide them with the resources, mentoring and networks for their scale-up journey," says Daniella Russo, Chief Innovation Officer at the Global Entrepreneurship Centre and co-owner of Think BeyondTM.

In addition, the collaborative environment of the GEC Catalyst Programme fosters knowledge and idea sharing and partnerships between startups, supporting innovation and breakthrough solutions to address global sustainability challenges.

About the Global Entrepreneurship Centre

The Global Entrepreneurship Centre (GEC) is an innovation hub and impact investor that helps sustainable startups scale their business models to market. Investments are made in national and international deep-tech start-ups with a clear sustainability and climate protection focus. The selection process includes a stringent sustainability assessment conducted internally by the GEC. The GEC Scaling Factory programme invests in up to 20 startups annually in the areas of Building & Living, Textiles, Mobility & Transport, Food & Agritech and Energy. More than 60 startups go through the GEC Catalyst Programme each year to qualify for the Factory. In addition to the goal of establishing themselves in the region, the scale-ups in the GEC ecosystem are prepared for the next round of investment. This is done in the GEC Catalyst and GEC Scaling Factory programmes for business

development, as well as through access to experts, lab capacity or the provision of production space. The Global Entrepreneurship Centre, based in Meerbusch / Düsseldorf, is funded by the Rhein-Kreis Neuss and by the STARK programme to support transformation in the Rhenish mining area.

More information on our homepage at www.gec-scaleup.com

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The new GEC Catalyst Summer Cohort 2023 together with CEO of the GEC Friedrich Barth, CFO of the GEC Sebastian Gronwald and District Director of the Rhine County of Neuss Dirk Brügge.



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Lunch break and time for networking for the startups between the working sessions.