**Press release**

DEEP Startup Ecosystem Conference

From Brazil to Romania – 12 international ecosystem initiatives set out to raise €2.7mn to democratize entrepreneurship

*“Everybody should have the opportunity to be an entrepreneur”, says Kathy Vredeveldt-Mulders, serial entrepreneur and CEO of the Dutch initiative EntreVistro. She found that one of the main reasons why startups fail is because the founder is unable to maintain a living wage. Her initiative is providing support and financial stability for founders by matching them with consultancy jobs. EntreVistro, top-of-class graduate of the DEEP Startup Ecosystem Accelerator, seeks to raise €1.5mn within two years to support more technology entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds.*

***Munich, Germany – September 2021*.** Faced with obstacles like gender discrimination, financial security, geographical bias, or availability of funding, entrepreneurs are demanding stronger community support. As a response, a new global movement of ecosystem builders is raising €2.7mn within two years to implement innovation projects that will democratize entrepreneurship and empower founders.

Ms. Vredeveldt-Mulders´ EntreVistro received praise from European ecosystem specialists as an inspiring and impactful initiative to support entrepreneurs and strengthen local innovation capacities. She is joined by a total of 12 projects that successfully graduated the *DEEP Startup Ecosystem Accelerator*. Among them are:

* Razvan Valceanu, former General Manager of BitDefender Romania and CEO of MOTII Tara de Piatra, is implementing a sustainable food tech accelerator in the Apuseni region. It will train local farmers and help them to expand organic food production – thus reducing the carbon footprint of Europe´s agriculture.
* Leyla F. Karaha, social entrepreneur and Founder & CEO of YourY Network (Ireland), helps women to overcome systemic disadvantages and build more high-growth, impact-oriented startups.
* Cyril Okoroige, FinTech specialist and CEO of RegTech Africa, is shaping Africa´s future as an inclusive, prosperous, and digital society by supporting tech startups that innovate regulatory processes within the financial industry. His continent-wide action platform – operating from Africa´s biggest startup hub in Lagos, Nigeria – raises awareness, unites RegTech hubs, and awards the most innovative solutions in fields like financial crime prevention, identity management, and data protection.

The global community of DEEP Ecosystems will gather in-person at the **DEEP Startup Ecosystem Conference**on 18 October 2021 in Essen, Germany, to welcome its newest cohort of innovation ecosystem builders into its ranks. Upon graduating from the *DEEP Startup Ecosystem Accelerator*, the latest generation of community leaders – representing 12 projects from 11 countries and 4 continents – will exchange best practices and kickstart new partnerships with 100 attending high-level startup ecosystem representatives from governments, academia, corporates, and investors. The event is attended by innovation managers and ecosystem builders who seek to explore in-depth trending tech topics, get access to leading startup portfolios, and launch new partnerships.

“The DEEP community unites a common mindset, powerful data-driven instruments, and the shared experiences of seasoned startup ecosystem builders”, says Sebastián Díaz Mesa, ex-CEO of Start-Up Chile and new Head of Accelerator at DEEP Ecosystems. “Our conference is a family reunion to showcase the latest milestones and kickstart new collaborations”. The joint mission of the DEEP Ecosystems is to build new innovation projects to democratize entrepreneurship and empower founders. “Entrepreneurs need better community support. As a response, we launched DEEP, a global movement of startup ecosystem builders. Our goal is to raise €30mn within 5 years to invest into 500 new grassroots innovation projects,” highlighted Thomas Koesters, Managing Director of DEEP Ecosystems.

More information can be found at [www.startupheatmap.eu/conference](http://www.startupheatmap.eu/conference).

**Media kit**

<https://t1p.de/hiih>

**About DEEP Ecosystems**

DEEP empowers startup ecosystems to solve the biggest challenges of our times, because the future of the tech ecosystem is transnational, driven by entrepreneurs and their communities. To make that a reality, we grow and connect ecosystems through our [DEEP Startup Ecosystem Accelerator](https://www.startupheatmap.eu/deepsea-startup-ecosystem-accelerator/) (DEEPSEA). This is one of the biggest ecosystem builder communities in the world that gathers twice a year in our [DEEP Startup Ecosystem Conference](https://www.startupheatmap.eu/conference/). Both are backed by our data-driven insights on startup ecosystems through our open [Startup Heatmap Europe](https://www.startupheatmap.eu/) data platform and publications like our annual [Startup Heatmap Europe Report](https://startupsandplaces.com/shm2021-the-power-of-the-ecosystem/).

**About the founding team**

**Thomas Koesters:** +10 years working experience building startup ecosystems across Europe. Invested 1.4mn € in startups. Ran a Microsoft Ventures startup program in Germany.

**Sebastián Díaz Mesa:** +10 years working for the LATAM startup ecosystem. Former Start-Up Chile CEO. Worked with +1,000 startups from all over the world. Public policies consultant for economic development.

**Dr. Erica Santini:** Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Florence Tenure Track Professor in Entrepreneurship at University of Trento. President of the European Startup Initiative.

**Dr. Serghei Glinca:** Founder and CEO of German BioTech startup CrystalsFirst. Ecosystem Builder at heart.

**Harald Eisenhauer:** Sustainable development and governance specialist. Formerly German Agency for International Development (GIZ) and ICT@frica.

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