

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

September 26, 2024 || Page 1 | 3

Bits & Pretzels

From Lab to Launch: How Fraunhofer Promotes Technology Transfer

A unique opportunity for Germany as a business location lies in deep tech and a strong innovation system of science and industry. Fraunhofer will be demonstrating its expertise in entrepreneurial technology transfer at the Bits & Pretzels innovation summit in Munich, which will be held from September 29 to October 1, 2024.

The European deep tech sector is gaining relevance and attractiveness for Germany's and Europe's global competitiveness. That shows recent McKinsey study called *European Deep Tech: Opportunities and Discoveries*. Deep Tech means future technologies with the potential to transform entire business models or industries. Since 2019, the European share in global investments in this segment has almost doubled — from 10 percent in 2019 to 19 percent in 2023. Seizing this opportunity requires teamwork — between research institutions, policy makers, and business. A spirit of optimism and a common will to shape the future could already be felt at the German federal government's Startup Summit in mid-September.

Driving the medium-sized businesses of tomorrow

At Bits & Pretzels in Munich, the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft will be presenting its approaches to *Kickstart Europe*, the motto of the start-up trade show. At the trade show, Fraunhofer will focus on solutions for successful deep-tech transfer of research into real-world applications. One example for this is the AHEAD business incubator program for Fraunhofer start-up teams, which aims to validate business ideas and models. With the support of Fraunhofer Venture, start-up teams learn how to launch their own business and commercialize their technology within 24 months. Workshops, coaching and a large partner ecosystem made up of investors and industrial partners, business angels and business schools, as well as venture interests from other non-university research institutions, help expedite the company incorporation process.

The CoLab technology tandem program brings entrepreneurs and start-ups together with Fraunhofer researchers. A matching platform developed internally helps to find the right technology for founders' product visions. The teams not only gain access to excellent research as well as engineering and development expertise but also to modern infrastructure and a comprehensive network. This supports them in scaling their tech business models and bringing new technologies to market.

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The research organization also offers financial opportunities: “At the request of the founding teams, Fraunhofer can take shares in spin-offs, acting as a co-investor,” says Dr. Sophie Hippmann, Director of Transfer and Innovation Management at Fraunhofer. “Further funding can be provided by High-Tech Gründerfonds, the leading German seed investor, in which Fraunhofer is also involved. Another opportunity is offered by the Fraunhofer Technology Transfer Fund, which we launched in 2019 together with the European Investment Fund. The fund, with 60 million euros in assets, is currently being further developed to enable the teams to raise capital from the equity market following the pre-seed phase.

PRESS RELEASESeptember 26, 2024 || Page 2 | 3

Fraunhofer spin-offs at the Bits & Pretzels trade show

Some Fraunhofer start-up teams will also be present at Bits & Pretzels, together with start-up collaboration projects. They will take turns presenting their innovative technologies for the market at the Fraunhofer booth:

EVERGROW-ELEMENTS has developed an environmentally friendly and cost-effective alternative to conventional building materials: Typha is an all-in-one building material made from bulrush that comes with important properties required for sustainable construction.

Inhale+ improves the lives of premature babies with respiratory complications thanks to an innovative, non-invasive inhalation technology that enables earlier, preventative treatment.

myHORSE monitors horses in the absence of their owners, using a robust condition monitoring system based on neural networks. The 24/7 health monitoring solution allows vital parameters to be tracked and abnormal behavior to be detected early on. It also features an alarm functionality.

ProEvo aims to transform the chemical and pharmaceutical industries by developing next-generation proteins faster and more cost-effectively thanks to an AI-powered, cell-free protein engineering platform.

Tape-Rex recycles carbon fibers, 90% of which currently end up in landfills. By reversing the manufacturing process, they fully recover unidirectional continuous filaments and transform what used to be a disposal problem into a new business opportunity.

QEAlgae-Technologies offers a solution for the rapidly growing demand for microalgae biomass used in sustainable products. Instead of a few thousand tons, LED-controlled, ultra-compact, modular, scalable and cleanable photobioreactors enable rapid production on a large scale.

Digiinsect supports the sustainable food supply of the future. Through digital monitoring of insect farms, their solution detects early-warning signals and allows for greater efficiency and better animal welfare.

PRESS RELEASE

September 26, 2024 || Page 3 | 3

Link

Fraunhofer matching platform: [Fraunhofer Match](#)



Fig. 1 With workshops and coaching, Fraunhofer Venture makes start-up teams fit for the market in 24 months.

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