

Press release

VNG AG / VNG Innovation GmbH / E-world 2020 / Future Room

Energy for Start-ups: Pitch opportunity for ten interested start-ups at E-world 2020

VNG Innovation GmbH invites selected business founders to present their ideas to Accelerator representatives and potential investors at the Essen industry event on 12 February

Leipzig/Essen, 28 January 2020. Start-ups with innovative ideas for the energy sector take note: As part of this year's E-world energy & water in Essen, Europe's leading trade fair for the industry, ten selected young companies will be given the opportunity to present themselves to potential investors. On 12 February 2020, Leipzig-based company VNG AG will host its first 'Future Room' at the Congress Center Süd from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. under the slogan 'Energy for Start-ups'. There, interested founders and young entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to demonstrate compelling solutions during a five-minute pitch. In addition to representatives of VNG Innovation, a wholly owned subsidiary of VNG AG, SpinLab – The HHL Accelerator, one of Germany's leading start-up hubs and the venture capital fund Smart Infrastructure Ventures GmbH will be represented.

Interested start-ups can apply by sending a short description (max. 500 words) with the subject 'VNG Future Room' by e-mail to info@vng-innovation.de by 7 February 2020. Ten start-ups will be selected from the applications.

"The fair is a huge meeting place that offers start-ups great opportunities to talk to potential partners. As a relevant representative of the energy industry that is heavily involved in the start-up sector and is always on the lookout for innovative solutions, we see a great opportunity in the VNG Future Room – both for us and for the young entrepreneurs involved," says Matthias Tischner, Managing Director of VNG Innovation GmbH. "This also applies to the start-ups with which we are already cultivating strategic partnerships at this point in time."

VNG Innovation GmbH focuses on investments in the areas of heat storage, solutions for sustainable heat supply and digitalisation solutions. Strong regional partnerships play a major role, for example with SpinLab – The HHL Accelerator from Leipzig, which has already successfully supported over 50 start-ups in recent years and has been recognised multiple times through rankings. VNG AG also holds a stake in Smart Infrastructure Ventures, a private venture capital fund that was launched last year and focuses on the innovative growth area of smart infrastructure. The fund invests throughout Germany, particularly in start-up teams with scalable business models from the fields of smart cities, energy and e-health. Dirk Frohnert, who previously held the position of fund manager at J.P. Morgan and successfully invested in various start-ups as a business angel, including the London unicorn Revolut, is the Managing Director. The close-knit network of all participants includes the multi-award-winning start-up university HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management.

More information about the event can be found online at: www.vng.de/zukunftsraum

VNG AG

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Media representatives are cordially invited to the 'VNG Future Room' at E-world 2020. You can find out further information in advance from André Hoffmann by e-mail at andre.hoffmann@vng.de or by telephone at +49 341-443 2106.

VNG Innovation GmbH

VNG Innovation GmbH is a wholly owned subsidiary of VNG AG. It was founded in 2015 and focuses on strategic partnerships with start-ups addressing energy industry topics in particular. The main focus of investment lies in heat storage, sustainable heat supply solutions and digitalisation solutions. For more information, visit www.vng-innovation.de.

VNG AG

VNG is a group of over 20 companies active in the European energy industry with a broad, future-oriented portfolio of products and services in gas and infrastructure, and more than 60 years of experience in the energy market. Headquartered in Leipzig, the Group has a workforce of some 1,200 and generated sales of EUR 11.2 billion in the 2018 financial year. VNG concentrates on three links in the gas value chain: Trading & Sales, Transport and Storage. Building on its core expertise in the gas business, the Group's 'VNG 2030+' strategy places a growing focus on new business fields. These include biogas, digital infrastructure and local solutions. More information can be found at: www.vng.de.

SpinLab – The HHL Accelerator

SpinLab – The HHL Accelerator supports innovative start-up projects in implementing and growing their ventures. In addition to intensive coaching, business start-up teams benefit from a high-calibre mentoring programme as well as numerous contacts with investors, established companies and other business founders. They can use modern co-working space in the creative area of the Leipziger Baumwollspinnerei (old Leipzig cotton mill) and have access to various technologies from partners. Even after the end of the programme, selected start-ups are supported in staff recruiting, can plan their expansion via an international exchange programme and are given the opportunity to rent office space right next to SpinLab. Upon acceptance into the 6-month programme, the founders can use the full range free of charge and without investing. More information can be found at: <https://spinlab.co/>

Smart Infrastructure Ventures

Smart Infrastructure Ventures is a venture capital fund that invests in start-ups across Germany in the fields of smart cities, energy and e-health, as well as related sectors. The fund was founded by serial entrepreneurs and successful investors, who all have a stake in the fund. It is the first private venture capital fund in the former East German states. www.smartinfrastructure.ventures

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