

### The “Berlin Buzz” and Asia

What with heavyweights like Soundcloud, Zalando and Delivery Hero already under its belt, the German capital is looking to conquer Europe with a buzzing startup community full of young, hungry techies and relatively affordable housing.

In the German capital, over 18 per cent of the population is foreign-born, representing approximately an astonishing 190 countries (especially considering that there are a total of 195 countries in the world today). Many founders and employees of startups don't speak German and are thus creating an English speaking ecosystem. This intense ecosystem is famed to be a hub for innovative types to create, network and experiment.

The one-day Connecting Startup Cities conference on May 14, 2019, boasts an international scope that addresses precisely these startups, bringing together established companies, innovation labs, VCs, accelerators, science partners, political decision-makers, and institutional actors from Germany and Asia. By offering a platform for dialogue, knowledge exchanges, networking and matchmaking, the conference is fast becoming the interface for the initiation and development of international relations – Asia meets Europe. It will take place within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Week in Berlin from May 13-19, 2019. With more than 90 speakers, 50 different talk formats and a total of more than 2.000 visitors the Asia-Pacific Week in 2018 was a raging success.

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## FOCUS TOPICS

### **Asia meets Europe – Company Culture and Business Mentality**

There is constant chit-chat about Berlin companies looking to enter the Asian market or to get investments from Asia and vice versa, but is it that unusual to expand or found a business in Asia? Why do we always look West rather than East? Is it just about the culture? With big VC shots like Softbank Vision Fond, Horizon Ventures, Tencent, Ping An, and many more in Asia, the time has come to get over any lasting apprehensions. What's more: Last year, Asian VCs invested 40 per cent of the \$154 billion in global venture financing, compared to a 44 per cent stake for U.S. investors, according to a recent Wall Street Journal analysis. So what does it take to get funded by Asian investors? How to get a save access to Asian markets as a startup? And why are most German VCs still hesitant to invest in Asia?

### **Female Entrepreneurship**

The ratio of startup founders in each market is also a topic of contention: While Berlin has (only) about 16 per cent of female founders, various studies cite that the average of women founders in Asia is even lower: only about 6%. How different is the situation for women both in Germany and in Asia, and what are the steps each ecosystem needs to implement in order to change the current status quo? How can we exchange best practices and cooperate in order to achieve higher percentages of women entrepreneurs, a better gender equality, and a better pool of talents?

### **Smart Cities | Green Tech | Energy, Mobility**

We want to focus on holistic development concepts in Asia and Europe that make cities more efficient, technologically advanced, greener, and more socially inclusive. As we enter an age of increasing awareness around our planet's health and what our habits are costing it, so is a growing insistence on using renewable resources to fuel them. How will we produce, store, transport, and efficiently use renewable energies in our cities? What are the green products, processes, and services that are helping the transformation to a green economy? And how are green markets establishing themselves as an important branch of industry? How will we move from A to B in 20 years from now? What are the challenges faced by startups disrupting a sector whose potential appears limitless? There are few industries facing such a tremendous change in dynamics as the mobility sector does. We dare the deep-dive in one of the biggest challenges of our time.challenges of our time.

### **Social Innovation**

What can we do with tech and innovation that goes beyond founding the next gaming, e-commerce or SAAS startup? With the help of the internet and social media, social entrepreneurs can reach a large audience all across the planet to work together in order to make the world a better place. Social innovation is the process of developing and deploying effective solutions to challenging and often systemic social and environmental issues in support of social progress. Solutions often require the active collaboration of constituents across government, business, and the nonprofit world. But how does one set up a business that isn't in it for the money? And how does grow a company that doesn't produce a countable profit?

### **Marketplaces**

The internet has definitely changed the way we run a business. These days, online marketplaces offer a whole new world of opportunities and standards to wholesalers, retailers, and innovative enthusiasts. E-commerce platforms let smaller vendors contend in the competitive retail field, as well as offer an easy way for larger sellers to use numerous advantages of marketplace platforms.

eMarketer estimates that global retail sales will reach \$27.7 trillion in 2020, even if annual rates of growth will slow down over the next several years. During this period Asia-Pacific is expected to double its sales and reach \$2.725 trillion by 2020, remaining the largest retail e-commerce market (products and services market sectors) while China is leading the list of the largest regional e-commerce markets.