



News Release

The Vodafone Institute launches the next round of F-LANE: leveraging the impact of startups with a female empowerment focus

- The new round of F-LANE - the first accelerator in Europe to focus on technology startups by or for women.
- Only around nine percent of technology startups worldwide are founded by women.

Berlin, 23 May 2017. F-LANE, Europe's first accelerator with a focus on social ventures that utilise technology to empower women worldwide, which was initiated by the Vodafone Institute, is getting ready for the next round. The programme mission is to foster the participation of women in technological development and improve the situation of girls and women around the world through technology. F-LANE is collaborating with the Impact Hub Berlin and the Social Entrepreneurship Akademie to source innovative technology startups around the world that focus on women, provide an enterprising solution to a social problem and have the potential to make a wide impact. Online applications can now be submitted for the 6-week accelerator programme starting 9 October 2017 in Berlin to www.f-lane.com. The application is open until 24 July 2017.

Alice Steinbrück, Director of Strategy and Programmes, Vodafone Institute:
"The first round of F-LANE was phenomenal, with inspirational startup ideas, fantastic female entrepreneurs and a big media echo. That made our decision to hold a second round very easy. And we obviously still have a long way to go in eliminating gender-specific disparities, particularly in the technology sector."

In her keynote speech at the "Women in Tech: Breaking the Glass Ceiling" conference in Berlin, which took place parallel to the last F-LANE accelerator, the German Minister of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Manuela Schwesig, called for more support to women in the technology sector. She said, "Digital change will have lasting effects on our society and the world of work. We have to empower women to shape and participate in this new world so that opportunities can be exploited and threats can be averted. We cannot allow our digital economy to fall even further behind. Hardly anywhere is so persistently prejudiced against women, and the number of disadvantaged women is alarming. The most pressing issues to be resolved are: equal pay for equal work, equal opportunities in management and equal access to finance."

The startups in the first round of F-LANE included Wazi Vision, Ask without Shame (both Uganda), Securella (Morocco), DigiSitter (Germany) and Lensational (Hong Kong).

Only around nine percent of technology startups worldwide are founded by women. The "New World With Old Roles?" study, which was recently published by the Vodafone Institute, reveals that many female startup founders feel at a disadvantage over their

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male colleagues. “The popular cliché that there aren’t any women with tech expertise is outdated. To exploit the potential that already exists, the media, policy makers and investors have to change their tack,” said Alice Steinbrück, author of the Vodafone Institute’s study.

„After we sent the call for proposals out via our global network, we ran an intensive programme with the finalists here in Berlin, including coaching, mentoring and training sessions, as well as embedding them into our local ecosystem of change makers. Their energy and their progress, even after a short period of time, was impressive,” says Leon Reiner, founder of Impact Hub Berlin. “Now we are excited for round two of the F-LANE programme“.

About F-LANE

Some 150 startups from 50 countries applied to join the accelerator in the first round of F-LANE. F-LANE sources innovative technological start-ups around the world that focus on women and provide an enterprising solution to a social problem. Their business concept should ideally have the potential to make a wide impact and empower girls and women through technology.

Four or five female startup entrepreneurs will be selected to take part in the intensive six-week accelerator programme. At least two programmes will be implemented every year and they focus on four key support areas:

1. Funding

- Micro investments as startup aid in amounts of up to a maximum of EUR 12,000
- Vodafone as a potential big investor
- Networking with other investors, venture capital providers and business angels

2. Advice & Coaching

- Experienced mentors for every startup
- Individual roadmaps for every startup
- Advice from external experts (technology consultants, Vodafone experts etc.)

3. Training

- Individual training sessions geared to each of the startups’ needs

4. Networks

- Link-up with the global ‘Vodafone family’
- Attendance of diverse conferences
- Access to the global Impact Hub Network (+100 impact hubs around the world) and the Social Entrepreneurship Akademie network

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Workplace: Impact Hub Berlin, Friedrichstraße 246, 10969 Berlin

Accommodation: Kolonnenstraße 61, 10827 Berlin

Duration: Six weeks, commencing on 9 October 2017

All-day child care service available. The application process is now open. The person dealing with applications is: Alice Steinbrück, Director Strategy & Programmes, Vodafone Institute; E-mail: alice.steinbrueck@vodafone.com

Further information: www.f-lane.com
www.facebook.com/flaneaccelerator/

Vodafone Institute partners:
<https://berlin.impacthub.net/>
www.seakademie.de
www.women-in-digital.de

About the Vodafone Institute for Society and Communication

The Vodafone Institute is Vodafone's European think and do tank. We explore the potential and responsible use of digital technologies for innovation, growth and sustainable social impact. Through research and events, we provide thought leadership and offer a platform for dialogue between business academia and politics. We are committed to improving access to technology for all parts of society and thus develop and support on-the-ground projects for female empowerment and digital education. The wide ranging expertise of the Advisory Board members reflects the Institute's intention to act as a cross-sectoral platform.

About the Social Entrepreneurship Akademie

In 2010, the Social Entrepreneurship Akademie was established as a joint initiative by the university-based entrepreneurship centers in Munich. With the slogan „Education for societal change“, this unique network organization educates social entrepreneurs and social changemakers. The Advisory Board of the Social Entrepreneurship Akademie includes Falk F. Strasczeg, Bernd Wendeln, BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, BonVenture, Vodafone Foundation, and Stifterverband.

About Impact Hub Berlin

Impact Hub Berlin is the catalyst for social innovation. We are a community, a consultancy and a creative space. As part of the biggest network for social innovation worldwide, we inspire, connect and enable our local community of change makers to develop their ideas for a more sustainable world. We provide access to training and support, workspaces, lectures, training workshops, community networking events and incubation programs. Moreover, we create professional programmes for local and global companies, organisations and institutions from diverse sectors; working on the intersection of society, economics and politics. Uniting people from every profession, background and culture, Impact Hub Berlin has been run by Nele Kapretz, Anna Lässer, Leon Reiner and Vishal Jodhani since 2014. The first impact Hub opened in London in 2005. Today, more than 100 hubs in over 54 countries with 17000+ members are part of the global network.

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