

Online Funding of and Investment in KIT Projects

KITcrowd Supports Innovative Projects by Crowdfunding / Platform now Opens for Crowdfunding Campaigns / More Partner Platforms



On www.kitcrowd.de, crowdfunding and crowdinvesting projects of KIT are presented. (Graphics: KIT)

In the first year of its existence, seven projects managed to acquire funding on KIT's portal for crowdfunding, www.kitcrowd.de. Examples are a 3D ultrasonic tomograph, a smart emergency call system for private homes, and a bakery in Sri Lanka. More than EUR 120,000 were collected. Now, the portal has been extended by a crowdinvesting component for small investors to directly participate in KIT startups. The redesigned KITcrowd portal offers more options and partner platforms.

“Crowdfunding links scientists and founders with all parties interested in technological and societal progress, i.e. citizens, politics, industries, and investors all over Germany and in particular in the Karlsruhe Technology Region,” Professor Thomas Hirth, KIT Vice President for Innovation and International Affairs, says. “KITcrowd is not only a platform for promising project ideas of KIT, but also a showcase for a possibly better future. Via the redesigned portal, sponsors can participate in and support the execution of scientific and philanthropic projects in many more ways.”

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www.kitcrowd.de presents crowdfunding projects of the KIT and its environment. Private persons and companies are invited to support these projects both financially and ideationally. If many sponsors are found, also smaller investments may lead to successful funding of a project.

Today, the redesigned website has been put online. Project Head Thomas Neumann explains: “We found that many projects of students and scientists of KIT have already been executed with the help of various crowdfunding and crowdfunding platforms on their own initiative. In the future, these projects will be published on KITcrowd, a win-win situation for the project starters and sponsors.” Project starters will profit from the additional attention through the KITcrowd network and sponsors will be given a larger selection of current projects of KIT.

KITcrowd is planned to list both technology projects as well as non-commercial projects initiated by e.g. university groups of KIT. The platform is organized together with the Relationship Management Service Unit of KIT. Crowdfunding campaigns are presented directly on KITcrowd or as a partner project on external platforms. In the past, KIT already cooperated with the Startnext portal. Now, many other national and international partner platforms are added, such as Kickstarter, Indiegogo, Betterplace, Vision Bakery, Wemakeit, Oneplanetcrowd, and Sciencestarter.

In the future, KITcrowd will not only present crowdfunding campaigns to be financed by donations and sponsoring, but also crowdfunding campaigns. This type of project funding is highly attractive for many sponsors, as they can invest money in a startup or emerging company and, in return, are granted a participation in the company or profits. On the redesigned KITcrowd platform, these different project types are distinguished.

But not all elements of KITcrowd were changed. The KIT Lever, for instance, will be maintained for leveraged crowdfunding of selected technology projects of KIT, which means that these projects will profit from additional financial support. The funds acquired via the crowd are co-financed by funds from the KIT Innovation Fund. For this purpose, close-to-research projects and spinoff projects with a high need for funding are selected.

Currently, KITcrowd.de presents the crowdfunding campaign “Gramodaya – Wo Gemeinschaft ein Zuhause findet”, a project of the university group “Engineers without Borders” (EWB) to fund a community center in a village in India and another one to support

construction of the KIT Mechatronics Learning and Application Center. In addition, the crowdinvesting campaign of “RESTUBE” can be found on the platform. This startup of KIT produces an inflatable life buoy to rescue lives of drowning people and searches for investors to push the internationalization of the company.

From April 27 to May 11, 2016, a citylight campaign in the city center of Karlsruhe will be organized to make KITcrowd better known outside of KIT.

KIT Founders Forge

KITcrowd is a project of KIT Founders Forge. By this initiative, students and KIT staff members are informed about aspects relating to entrepreneurship using new teaching and advanced education formats and advice and by granting of access to infrastructural facilities and funds. All efforts of the KIT Founders Forge are financed from funds of the EXIST-IV program “Gründungskultur” of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy.

For further information in German, click: www.kit-gruenderschmiede.de.

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) pools its three core tasks of research, higher education, and innovation in a mission. With about 9,300 employees and 25,000 students, KIT is one of the big institutions of research and higher education in natural sciences and engineering in Europe.

KIT – The Research University in the Helmholtz Association

Since 2010, the KIT has been certified as a family-friendly university.

This press release is available on the internet at www.kit.edu.

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