

## KIT Succeeds in the “EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship” Competition

Federal Ministry of Economics Funds Concept for the Support of Startups with about EUR 3 Million



From left to right: Jens Fahrenberg and Professor Orestis Terzidis from KIT are handed over the EXIST winner certificate by the Federal Minister of Economics Philipp Rösler. (Photo: Thilo Schoch, EXIST)

**Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is one winner in the final round of the “EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship” competition launched by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi). For its concept to enhance the culture of entrepreneurship at the university, KIT will be granted nearly EUR 3 million in the next three years. In total, 27 German universities applied for funding.**

“This win is a big success for KIT. It confirms our strategy to enhance the support of startups and the culture of entrepreneurship at KIT,” says KIT President Professor Eberhard Umbach, who presented KIT’s proposal in Berlin. “KIT is not only responsible for research and education, but also for knowledge transfer to the market. This objective can be reached with sustainably successful startups.”

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The KIT proposal was set up by a team of scientists, students, innovation managers, and regional entrepreneurs and investors. The main element of the proposal is the consistent extension of existing KIT offers and systematic pooling of all activities in a holistic, KIT-wide culture of entrepreneurship. More than 100 ideas were gathered, on the basis of which a national “center of startups” and more innovative companies than ever are to be established at KIT in the next years. “With these activities, we want to further strengthen the enormous potentials of KIT on the market,” emphasizes Professor Orestis Terzidis from the KIT Institute for Entrepreneurship, Technology Management, and Innovation.

From April, new measures for the support of startups will be introduced under the direction of Professor Orestis Terzidis and the head of the KIT Innovation Management Service Unit, Dr. Jens Fahrenberg, with existing facilities being used as a basis. Among others, a KIT funding platform for new business projects is to be established: In leverage crowd funding, many smaller investors will be convinced of a business idea and then fund the startup as silent partners. New teaching formats, such as business plan workshops, entrepreneurship lectures, or patent laboratories are to familiarize the students with topics related to entrepreneurship at a very early point in their education. The Center for Entrepreneurship (CfE) is to be extended to a startup center and detailed counseling by KIT startup coaches is to be enhanced. CfE and the KIT startup coaches will bring scientists, students, doctoral students, professors, and alumni of KIT together in order to support startups in an unconventional and unbureaucratic manner. The services offered will extend from counseling to concept development to the supply of infrastructure and funding. KIT startup coaches will advise young entrepreneurs, identify commercially exploitable ideas and technologies at KIT, and support their further development and transfer to a business model.

**More information on entrepreneurship at KIT:**

[www.gruenden.kit.edu](http://www.gruenden.kit.edu)

**More information on the competition “EXIST -  
Gründungskultur”**

[www.exist.de](http://www.exist.de)

**Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is a public corporation according to the legislation of the state of Baden-Württemberg. It fulfills the mission of a university and the mission of a national research center of the Helmholtz Association. KIT focuses on a knowledge triangle that links the tasks of research, teaching, and innovation.**

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