

Startup Location Austria.

Where innovation moves mountains.



The Ecosystem

Best place for growing your startup
The environment for your success

Austria offers a vibrant startup ecosystem. Check out this selection:



Business Angels (Platforms)

- > aws i2 Business Angels
- > Gateway Ventures
- > Hans(wo)men Group
- > European Super Angels Club
- > Startup 300



Crowdfunding

- > Conda
- > Danube Angels
- > Invesdor
- > klimja
- > Rockets
- > Tausend mal Tausend



Grants

- > AWS
- > FFG
- > Kommunalkredit Public Consulting
- > Vienna Business Agency
- > Other regional agencies



(Corporate) Venture Capital

- > 3VC
- > APEX Ventures
- > aws Gründerfonds
- > Calm Storm
- > Elevator Ventures
- > Fund F
- > Noctua Science Ventures
- > Red Bull Ventures
- > Speedinvest
- > Verbund X
- > Xista Science Ventures



Incubators

- > accent
- > build
- > INiTS
- > Pioneers (Venture Studio)
- > Science Park Graz
- > Startup Tirol
- > tech2b



Accelerators

- > Bold Founders
- > CultTech Accelerator
- > ELEVATE / The Ventury
- > Frequentis Startup Center
- > TU Vienna i2c
- > Up to Eleven
- > WeXelerate



Coworking & Community

- > Austrian Startups
- > der brutkasten
- > Female Founders
- > Global Incubator Network
- > i2b - ideas to business
- > Ideentriebwerk Graz
- > Impact Hub
- > invest.austria
- > Plug and Play
- > Softwarepark Hagenberg
- > Startup House
- > Trending Topics
- > Werkstätte Wattens



Media & Major Events

- > AustrianStartups Summit
- > 4GAMECHANGERS FESTIVAL
- > Entrepreneurship Avenue
- > Salz21
- > ViennaUP

Do you want to know more? See <https://austria.dealroom.co/intro>

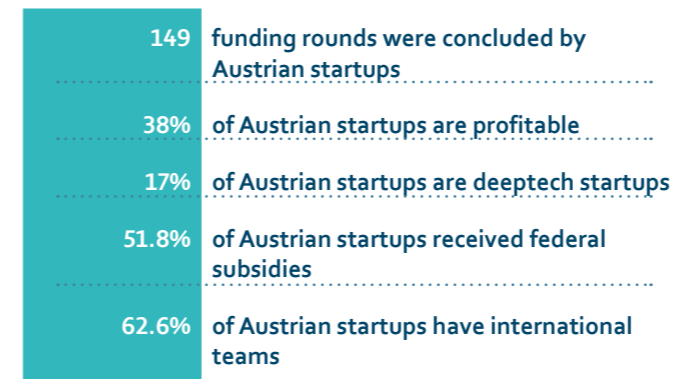
Startup Success Stories



Austria's Startup Power: The Winning Recipe

Corporate innovation, strategic industrial mix, and legal flexibility: These are the ingredients for Austria's continuously growing startup ecosystem.

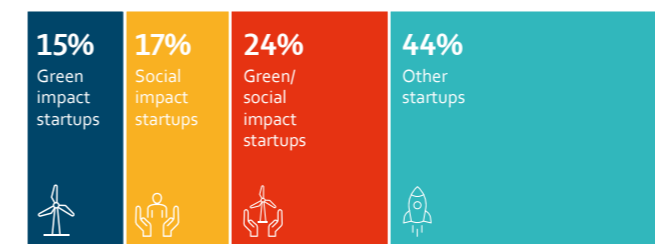
Startups in Austria enjoy prime market access due to the country's Central European location and a booming venture clienting and corporate venturing culture. Corporate giants such as Red Bull are now investing directly in innovative startups, offering both funding and initial clients. In 2024, €600 million were invested across various sectors, with ICT, proptech, and energy leading the way. Forward-looking technologies like high-performance computing and cybersecurity are also gaining momentum. Life sciences, a traditional area of strength of Austria's economy, is generating one of the highest growth rates. Adding to this dynamic ecosystem, the new corporate structure – the FlexCo – introduced on 1 January 2024, streamlines incorporation and boosts employee participation. It has already been chosen by every second startup, and the number is growing.



Source: Austrian Startup Monitor 2024, EY Startup Barometer 2024,

It's all about the... IMPACT

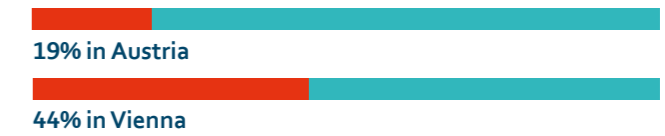
Austria continues to be a hotbed for green and social impact startups: 56% of all founders are pursuing a green and/or social impact goal through their service/product offering. Investors are following this trend, and such startups account for 5 out of the top 15 funding rounds for Austrian startups. International founders choose Austria, and particularly Vienna, as the location for their startup venture.



Source: ASM und und Trending Topics Investment Tracker 2024

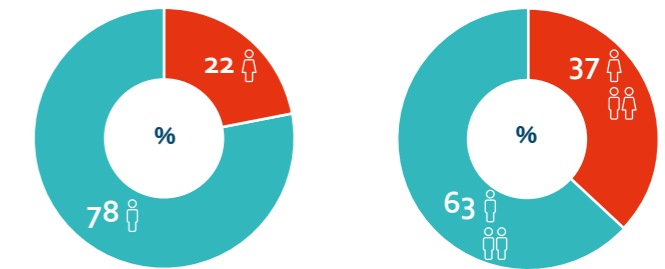
Facts & Figures

International founders choose Austria, and particularly Vienna, as destination for their startup venture.



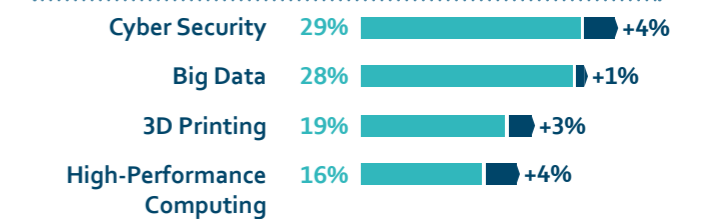
Source: Austrian Startup Monitor 2023; Sifted Tech Report Vienna, 2023

The share of women among all founders is 22% (2024: 17%). The proportion of startups with at least one woman on the founding team has risen to 37%.



ICT and life sciences continue to be the leading sectors for startups. But with its strong industrial base and as green power leader, Austria also offers a thriving ecosystem for startups operating in the fields of industrial technology and energy & mobility.

The four sectors that have gained momentum:



Source: Austrian Startup Monitor 2024

Scaling up in Austria

World-class R&D, solid funding, flexibilization of the legal framework, high quality of life, moderate costs, great talents – Austria offers what deep tech founders in particular require to scale up their business.

DeepTech startups are working on future technologies - from humanoid robots to space technology.

Global VC investments in deep tech have risen from 10% to 20% over the last ten years. The global sector is expected to be worth around €9.3 trillion by 2030. Austria is home to some of the future game changers, thanks to its world class competence centres in various deep tech segments, including quantum technology.

Austrian deep tech startups are on an impressive growth trajectory, representing 17% of all Austrian startups. In 2024, nearly 40% concluded financing rounds exceeding €500,000. This access to private capital is paired with public deep tech funding programs benefiting some 80 startups in the pre-seed but also seed stages every year. Close to half of all Austrian deep tech startups have a valuation in excess of €5 million.

Want to grow? Got Talent? – Yesss!

86% of Austrian deep tech startups (compared to 79% of all Austrian startups) plan to hire additional staff within the next 12 months. On average, they want to expand by 4.4 employees.

Austria's Red-White-Red – Card ("Rot-Weiß-Rot – Karte") has been a decisive step towards countering the shortage of skilled employees. It offers a residence permit to third-country nationals whose goal is to work as skilled employees and stay in Austria on a permanent basis.

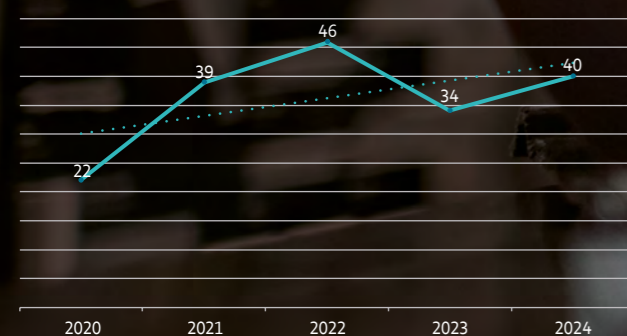
Austrian deep tech startups are not only highly international with respect to their teams but also their revenue. Close to two third (59%) generate revenue on international markets.

Premier Infrastructure

Cooperation is essential for successful scaling. The Austrian market is characterized by a close integration of research, production, and sales, which makes it easy for Austrian startups and scaleups to cooperate with different partners. 95% of all Austrian startups have collaboration partners, whereas 80% of scaleups work together with big corporates.

Initiatives like AI Factory and AITHYRA are positively impacting Austria's artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystem.

Development of Startups Supported by ABA



Since 2020, the ABA has supported 181 international start- & scaleups in setting up or expanding their business in Austria, investing €295 million and creating over 1,160 new jobs.

“Following the successful closing of our second fund, health tech remains a core focus. Yet Calm/Storm is committed now more than ever to supporting Austrian founders and Austria-based startups at the earliest stages, regardless of the sector they operate in. We see immense talent emerging from – and relocating to – Austria, and we’re excited to play an active role in nurturing that potential. As a Vienna-based fund, we’re deeply rooted in the local ecosystem and provide Austrian founders with access to our network of so-called “Supporting Partners”.”

Lucanus Polagnoli,
Founding Partner & CEO at Calm/Storm

Perks for International Founders

Funding, financing and networking - international founders find ample opportunities in Austria



Funding

Record-level funding for startups, scaleups, and spinoffs by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency FFG, one of Austria's two federal promotional banks: in 2023, €103 million of public subsidies were deployed to help jump-start and scale young innovative companies in Austria.



Financing

Venture capital one of the top three financing sources for Austrian scaleups. Despite a challenging financial environment, several new funds have emerged in Austria. Calm/Storm, Europe's leading early-stage health tech VC based in Vienna, launched a second fund with over €20 million targeting health tech startups. aws Gründerfonds II, a €70 million venture capital fund established by the Federal Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism together with private investors, aims to mobilize €500 million for Austrian startups. Elevator Ventures issued EVII, a €70 million VC fund for Series A and B companies in fintech, deep banking, and beyond. Fund F, a Vienna-based fund, successfully raised €28 million for startups with female co-founders across Europe. Red Bull is launching its own startup fund endowed to the amount of at least €200 million, and a new fund, Noctua Science Ventures, combines research and venture capital.



Acceleration and Networking

Austria boasts numerous opportunities for international founders to get deep dives into the ecosystem, peer advice, and valuable connections. BeFounder is an accelerator offering an immersive six-month online program tailored to international entrepreneurs with a special focus on Austria. weXelerate has launched Venturecake, a long-term accelerator supporting ambitious founders on their path to international success. Based on an ecosystem connecting universities, companies, and investors, it is Austria's first co-owned accelerator, helping startups attract investors and customers.

Why Austria?

Austria is a startup hotbed and outstanding fertile ground featuring exciting networks and attractive conditions.

An intact natural environment. Green meadows and mountain pastures, crystal clear waters, good air quality combined with a diverse sports and cultural offering. All this is complemented by a high level of personal security, first-class health care, a well-developed infrastructure, high quality housing and multifaceted learning opportunities. The outstanding quality of life attracts managers, investors and students from all over the world, also because of Austria's gratifyingly affordable living costs. Moreover, startups benefit from a strong, dynamic market.

The market

Gateway to 750 million customers in the heart of Europe – high purchasing power, moderate costs

Austria is seen in the EU as the unrivalled specialist for Eastern Europe and an international business interface. Companies from all over the world which are eager to expand can find optimal conditions here. Coffeehouses, the first co-working spaces of the 19th century, still offer the right atmosphere to discuss the next business steps over a cup of Wiener Melange. As a country boasting a high purchasing power, Austria is a test market for German-speaking Europe. It also serves as a springboard to Central and Eastern Europe thanks to its Eastern European language skills. Conversely, CEE companies often prefer to launch their business expansion to the West from an Austrian base.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 100,000,000 | people live in the German-speaking markets (Germany, Switzerland, South Tyrol, Liechtenstein, Austria) |
| 450,000,000 | inhabitants are in the EU |
| 750,000,000 | people live in geographical Europe extending to the Urals |
| 3 | hours flight time at most to every European capital city |

// Austria offers enormous advantages due to its excellent research landscape, especially in the field of quantum physics. Universities such as the one in Innsbruck are among the world's leading institutions in the field. In addition, the well-developed infrastructure for research and development creates an ideal basis for the collaboration between science and industry. All this makes Austria a highly attractive business location for companies such as planq. //

Alexander Glätzle, CEO of planq

Did you know this?

Only two years after its rating as a unicorn, the TU Vienna spinoff TTTech successfully exited to nxp.

The proof

The Dutch semiconductor company operates its center of excellence for cryptography and security in Styria, offering excellent opportunities for TTTech Auto to strengthen its global presence under the nxp brand.

The talents

High educational level – Multilingualistic people from diverse backgrounds

Highly qualified skilled workers make Austria a sought-after business and research location. Education spending is significantly higher than the OECD average. The high quality of life is attractive to international talents and specialists. Finally, the availability of talents is also due to the commitment of companies. According to the IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook, Austria is ranked 3rd in the world for employee training.

Austria features 23 public and 17 private universities as well as 21 universities of applied sciences and 2 private colleges offering around 3,000 study programmes. Over 400,000 students from all over the world are currently completing their education at these institutions.

Communication is easy: Austria placed 3rd in the English Proficiency Index, and one quarter of all Austrians grow up bilingual.

Yet another strength of Austria are the many schools with practice-oriented technical training and the higher technical schools serving as breeding grounds for engineers. The engineers graduate at the age of 19 and can be immediately deployed to fulfil demanding tasks. These secondary level technical and commercial schools are unique in the world, offering an education equivalent to international bachelor's studies. Particular importance is attached to training in the field of information and communications technology (ICT). Each year some 2,000 students graduate from such study programmes and the number is steadily increasing.

| | |
|----------|----------------------------------|
| 23 | public universities |
| 17 | private universities |
| 21 | universities of applied sciences |
| 2 | private colleges |
| >400,000 | students from all over the world |

Source: www.bmfwf.gv.at/wissenschaft/hochschulsystem.html, 05/2025

The support

14% research premium and direct research funding – strong support for new companies

Austria makes innovation possible

Every company – regardless of its size, industry or company structure – can receive the research premium for both in-house R&D and for contract research. This amounts to 14% of total research expenses, such as personnel costs, R&D investments, financing expenses and overheads and is not limited in amount. In 2024, 2,506 companies, of which more than 80% were SMEs, claimed €8.8 billion in R&D investments, for which the research premium equalling €1.4 billion was distributed. The FFG's substantial funding support contributes significantly to propelling Austria to the world's top 5 when it comes to R&D expenditures. According to the European Innovation Scoreboard, Austria even ranks 4th in terms of direct and indirect public R&D funding.

Strong support for new companies

On January 1st, 2024, the new Austrian Startup Package entered into force introducing a new legal form, the Flexible Company (FlexCo), which provides:

- reduction of share capital to €5,000
- reduction of formal requirements saving time and money
- facilitation of employee participation including tax benefits
- flexible capital measures

When it comes to research and innovation funding, the Austrian Research Promotion Agency FFG is the top address in Austria. As a one-stop shop for business-related research, the FFG supports young companies in the development, implementation and market launch of their ideas, providing over €100 million. Funding, covering up to 80% of the total cost, is available in every field and covers up to 80% of the total cost. A special programme focus is laid on deep tech, green tech, and life sciences.

The Austria Wirtschaftsservice, aws, is the federal promotional bank which, next to providing loans and VC investments, operates several programmes specifically geared towards startups. For example, the aws Preseed/Seedfinancing programmes supported the establishment of close to 80 startups in 2023, especially in the fields of deep tech, life sciences, and green tech. Other programmes include the aws First Incubator or aws Connect providing tailored matchmaking for nearly 3,000 startups, investors, and corporates to drive innovation together.

ABA simply gets it done.

Aim to implement your business idea in Austria?

We will guide you through the startup process – step by step.

Did you know this?

Europe's most active early stage investor, Speedinvest, comes from Austria.

// Our employees now come from 41 nations. The ranking, in which Vienna is recognised as one of the most liveable cities in the world, really helps us. Vienna is up-and-coming in the technology sector. On the labour market, you don't have to compete with tech companies like Google or Zalando.//

Lisa Smith, Co-Founder & Managing Director Prewave

The proof

With over €1 billion in assets under management, Vienna-headquartered Speedinvest has now partnered with TU Wien to issue a new fund: Noctua Sciences Ventures.

Austria as a springboard

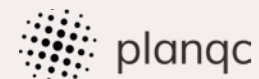
International startups use Austria as an EU hub



Established in France in 2021, fast charging station operator Electra expanded to Austria in 2023. The startup specialises in expanding Europe's charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. Its business operations encompass the development, construction and operation of charging stations, especially in urban and peri-urban areas. Electra plans to set up over 600 fast charging points by 2027 and to expand from Austria to CEE markets.



Global cryptocurrency exchange KuCoin, has established its regional headquarters for Europe in Vienna, Austria. This move is part of KuCoin's broader strategy to expand its presence in the European Economic Area (EEA) and operate as a regulated crypto-asset service provider. KuCoin EU Exchange GmbH is applying for a MiCAR (Markets in Crypto-Assets Regulation) license in Austria to ensure compliant operations in the EEA.



The German quantum computing startup planqc, which developed scalable quantum computers, opened two locations in Tyrol in 2024. The spinoff of the Max Planck Institute for Quantum Optics landed major contracts, such as the one from the German Aerospace Centre, and raised €50 million in a Series A funding round.

From Austria to the world

Austrian startup successes



Blackshark's AI-driven technology enabled Microsoft's Flight Simulator to display the surface of the entire planet in 3D – with over 1.5 billion photorealistic buildings – giving users an unprecedented immersive 3D flight experience and the largest open world in the history of video games. Microsoft's investment of USD 20 million enables Blackshark to build up and expand its development location in Graz as well as to strengthen the sales team in the USA.



Founded in 2017, Prewave leverages AI to transform millions of risk events across languages and networks into targeted, actionable alerts for businesses. In its mission to revolutionize supply chain risk management, Prewave secured €63 million in Series B funding to expand its AI-driven superintelligence platform.



Bitpanda, Austria's first unicorn, continues to soar and has secured the top spot in the ranking of Austria's 100 best startups by the business magazine "trend". The Austrian crypto broker has now received its MiCAR licence from the Austrian Financial Market Authority (FMA). This makes it the first company in Austria to be fully authorised under the new EU crypto regulation.

Our Unicorns

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Bitpanda | investment platform |
| COPA-DATA | software for automation |
| Loxone | control and automation systems |
| refurbed | online market place for refurbished electronic devices |
| Tricentis | enterprise continuous testing |

Source: Trend, June 2023; Trending Topics, July 2024 / January 2025



ABA simply gets it done.

Are you trying to get an overview of investment promotion in Austria?

We will filter out what is right for you.

Did you know this?

The Tyrolean spinoff ParityQC, the world's only company for quantum architecture, has been profitable since 2023 – only 3 years after its foundation.

The proof

Last spring ParityQC's valuation put it on a par with US-listed quantum companies.

How we can support you – at no cost to yourself!

FIRST CONTACT

- > General information
- > Benchmarking with other countries
- > Sector-specific data
- > Legal & financial information



EVALUATION

- > Finding the right location
- > Cost details
- > Identifying suitable networks
- > Contacting service providers



REALISATION

- > Organisation of fact-finding missions
- > Identifying the right grants/funding programmes
- > Finding specific properties/locations
- > Explaining cultural differences



EXPANSION

- > "Troubleshooter"
- > Establishing useful contacts
- > Support of local management in winning expansion project



Typical questions

Why should I choose Austria?
What R&D centers can I find in my sector?
What do I need to set up a company here - and how long does it take?

What's the optimal location for me in Austria?
What is a "collective agreement"?
How much will I spend on labour costs?
What is meant by a "Gewerbeberechtigung"?

Who can organize all the necessary appointments for me?
How do I find employees here?
Which funding programme is relevant for my project?

Our HQ is evaluating different locations – how can I pitch Austria?

