

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

- > aws i2 Business Angels
- > G Capital
- > 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
- > Speedinvest
- > Uniqua Ventures
- > Verbund X
- > Xista Science Ventures



Incubators

- > accent
- > build
- > INITS
- > Science Park Graz
- > Startup Tirol
- > tech2b



Accelerators

- > Bold Founders
- > CultTech Accelerator
- > ELEVATE / The Ventury
- > Factory1
- > Frequentis Startup Center
- > Impact Hub
- > Plug and Play
- > TU Vienna i2c
- > Up to Eleven



Coworking Spaces

- > Coworking Salzburg
- > Ideentriebwerk Graz
- > Werkstatt Wattens
- > Softwarepark Hagenberg
- > Startup House



Community & Media

- > Austrian Startups
- > der brutkasten
- > Female Founders
- > Global Incubator Network
- > i2b - ideas to business
- > invest.austria
- > Trending Topics
- > WeXelerate



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

» BITMOVIN

kaleido

PlanRadar

GoStudent

Magic

refurbed®
Rethink New.

GROPYUS

myflexbox

U))) SOUND

hi.
health

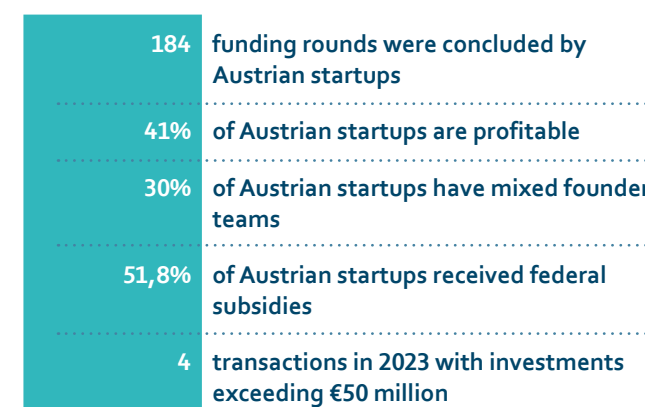
neocom

prewave

Dynamic Development & Flexible Conditions

Austrian startups follow a dynamic yet sustainable growth trajectory,
benefitting from a flexible framework

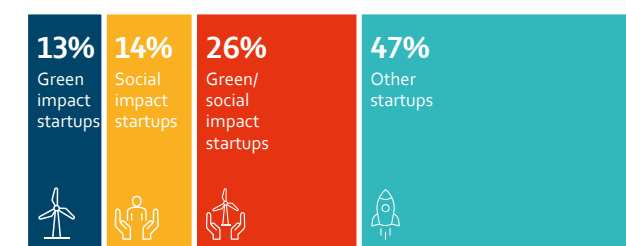
After a record-setting funding year in 2022 with Austrian startups raising over €1 billion in fresh capital, 2023 reaches yet new all-time-highs: 184 investment rounds were championed, representing a 22%-increase over 2022. And, most notably, for the first time, Austrian startups crack the 30,000-employee-threshold proving not only their resilience in the current globally challenging environment but also underlining their crucial role as economic drivers. These impressive developments are met with a flexible legal framework: Since January 1st, the Flexible Company or FlexCo, has been the new legal entity of choice for startups, facilitating the incorporation process in general and employee participation in particular.



Source: Austrian Startup Monitor 2023; EY Startup Barometer, 2023; Trendingtopics, 2023

It's all about the... IMPACT

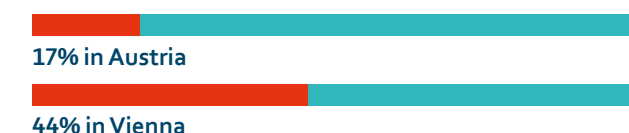
For the first time, more than half of Austrian startups are pursuing a green and/or social impact goal through their service or product offering. This increase is matched by a growing investors' interest: 25% of all investments went to green/social impact startups against only 3% in 2022.



Source: Austrian Startup Monitor 2023

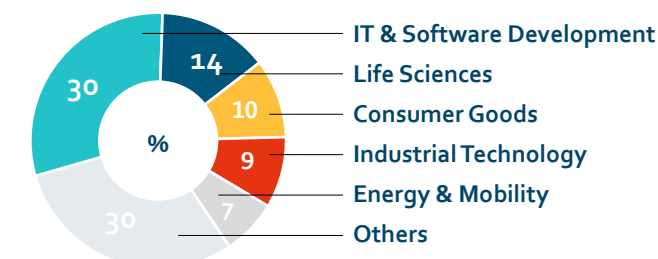
Facts & Figures

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



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

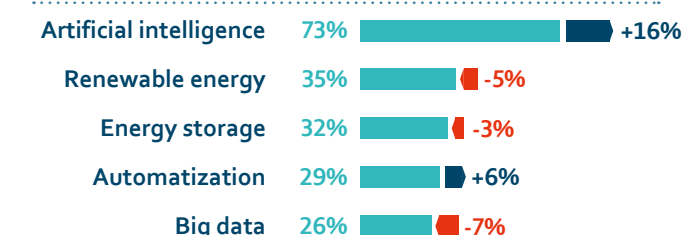
Sectors



Source: Austrian Startup Monitor 2023

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.

Innovation trends over time



Source: Austrian Startup Monitor 2023

Scaling up in Austria

A flexible legal framework, high quality of life, moderate cost, great talent, world-class R&D, and solid funding - Austria offers what founders need to scale-up their business: 14% is the share of scale-ups in Austria.

After the hypergrowth years of 2021 and 2022, 2023 has been characterized by a challenging context for start- and scaleups globally. And yet, Austria's startup ecosystem has proven particularly resilient: a record share of 41% of all startups has reached profitability and an impressive 14% are considered scaleups meaning that they have over 15 employees, are on a 20%-growth-trajectory, and have raised at least €3 million in external capital.

This sustainable growth path is also reflected by the increasing number of scaleups entering later stage.

Top growth sectors for Austrian startups with a high proportion of scaleups include Life Sciences, Industrial Technology, and Energy & Mobility. These sectors, among others, are also strongly supported by federal funding programs designed for Austrian innovation drivers such as the Austrian Life Science program

Want to grow? Got Talent? - Yesss!

86% of Austrian scaleups plan to hire new employees within the next 12 months. On average, they want to grow by 13 people.

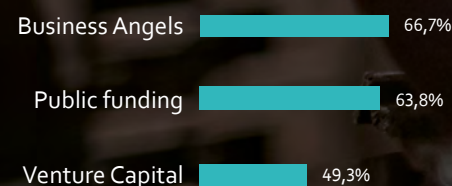
Austria's Red-White-Red – Card ("Rot-Weiß-Rot – Karte") offering a residence permit for third-country nationals who would like to work as skilled employees in Austria and want to stay in Austria on a permanent basis, has been a decisive step towards countering shortage of skilled employees.

Austrian scaleups are not only highly international with respect to their teams but also their revenue. Close to every fifth scaleup generates 90% of its sales on global markets.

Stronger and better together

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 start- and scaleups to cooperate with different partners: 96% of all Austrian startups have collaboration partners, 80% of scaleups partner up with big corporates. The aws Connect program helps forging those strategic partnerships.

Top 3 funding sources for scaleups in Austria



Source: Austrian Startup Monitor 2023

// The maturing tech ecosystem in Austria and Central and Eastern Europe has become Europe's fastest emerging startup ecosystem with amazing talent and founders. [...] Elevator Ventures, with the backing of its LP base, will continue to do their part in promoting innovation in the region. //

Maximilian Schausberger, Managing Director at Elevator Ventures

Perks for International Founders

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



Funding

New record-level funding for start-, scaleups, and spinoffs by 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 is for Austrian scale ups one of the top three financing sources.

Despite the challenging financial context, a series of new funds have been issued in Austria:

aws Gründerfonds II, a €70 million venture capital fund specifically designed by the Federal ministry of Labor and Economy to support startups in their growth phase, together with private investors is set to mobilize €500 million of investments for Austrian start- and scaleups.

Elevator Ventures, RBI's venture capital entity, launched EVII, a €70 million VC fund investing in innovative Series A and B companies in fintech, deep banking and beyond.



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.

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. 750 million customers can be reached by air within a maximum of 3 hours.

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

// Target market USA, roots in Germany, partner in the UK, yet after a detailed analysis, Austria was and still is our first choice as the business location for our tech startup thanks to tangible research benefits (funding, taxes), quick opportunities for networking and short distances, a strong talent pool as well as comprehensive support by public bodies such as ABA, the promotional bank aws, the Austrian Public Employment Service etc. //

Tamara Gerbert, Founder of Brighmind.AI

Did you know this?

1/4 of all 2023 investments went to impact startups?

The proof

A trend which is prevailing in 2024: With its AI-based energy trading software, Vienna-based enspired secured a €25.5 million series B round with Zouk Capital as lead investor.

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 1st in the world for employee training.

Austria features 22 public and 17 private universities as well as 21 universities of applied sciences offering around 3,000 study programmes. 390,000 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.

22	public universities
17	private universities
21	universities of applied sciences
390,000	students from all over the world

Source: www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/HS-Uni/Hochschulsystem.html, 05/2023

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 credit for both in-house R&D and for contract research. This amounts to 14% of the total research expenses, such as personnel costs, R&D investments, financing expenses and overheads and is not limited in amount. In 2023, 2,665 companies - 80% of which were SMEs - claimed €8.6 bn investments in R&D, for which €1.2 bn in research premium were distributed. The FFG's substantial funding support contributes significantly to propelling Austria to the world's top 5 when it comes to R&D expenditure. According to the European Innovation Scoreboard, Austria even ranks 1st 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, a special program focus is laid on deeptech, greentech, and life sciences.

The Austria Wirtschaftsservice, aws, is the federal promotion bank which, next to providing loans and VC investments, is operating several programs specifically geared towards startups: the aws Preseed/Seedfinancing programs have supported 74 startup foundations in 2023, especially in the fields of deeptech, life sciences, and greentech. Other programs include the aws First Incubator or aws Connect providing tailored matchmaking for nearly 3,000 startups, investors, and corporates to drive innovation together.

// The tech ecosystem in Austria is now playing at a completely different level. With some of the fastest growing and most valuable unicorn startups in Europe, Vienna and Austria are now clearly on the radar of top global investors. Last, and not least, with Speedinvest headquartered here, we have the most active European seed stage VC contributing to our vibrant ecosystem. //

Oliver Holle, CEO Speedinvest

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?

The European VC firm of the year comes from Austria.

The proof

Vienna-headquartered Speedinvest is one of Europe's most active early-stage VCs with offices in Munich, London, and Paris. After winning "VC of the Year" in 2022, Speedinvest cracked the €1 bn-mark in assets under management in 2023 with over 40 experienced investors on board.

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 2024. The startup is specialising 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.



Infrared.city is a platform for intelligent and resilient architecture and construction design powered by Artificial Intelligence. Their simulation prediction models provide real-time feedback on the performance of design proposals and can guide climate informed decisions at every step of the process. In 2023, the AIT spinoff raised €1 million in pre-seed funding.

SCHÜTTFLIX®

Founded in Germany in 2018, the company digitizes the market for bulk materials such as crushed stone or sand with a marketplace and a logistics platform. In 2022, Schüttflix generated revenue of €90 million, representing an almost 100%-increase over the previous year. Austria represents their first internationalisation step.

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.



Since its foundation in 2018, the smart city company myflexbox established itself as the largest provider-independent smart locker network in German-speaking countries. The parcel stations score highly as an efficient 24-hour alternative to traditional parcel shops and support the megatrend of out-of-home delivery. In 2023, myflexbox secured financing of €75 million.

BRIGHTMIND.AI

Brightmind.AI is a neurotech startup founded in 2022 which is financed by both venture capital and public funding. The mission is to combat major global challenges relating to brain health such as migraines and dementia through neurotechnology. Brightmind.AI directly brings the latest research breakthroughs of non-invasive brain stimulation to patients in their homes as a "closed loop" system.

Our Unicorns

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

Source: Trend, June 2023; Trending Topics, July 2024

How we can support you - completely free of charge

FIRST CONTACT

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



EVALUATION

- > Finding the right location
- > Information about costs
- > Identifying the right networks
- > Establishing contact with service providers



REALISATION

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



EXPANSION

- > "Trouble shooter"
- > 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 found a company here and how long does it take?

Where in Austria is the right location?
What is a "collective agreement"?
How much will I spend on labour costs?
What is a so-called "Gewerbeberechtigung"?

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

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

> Help! I need somebody ...

INVEST in AUSTRIA

We are there to provide help and support when foreign companies want to set up business operations in Austria or expand existing facilities.

WORK in AUSTRIA

Austrian companies offer many attractive jobs for skilled workers from abroad. We are the advisory centre for both sides.

FILM in AUSTRIA

Tom Cruise climbs down a rope from the Vienna State Opera and James Bond flies across Tyrol. We work "behind the scenes" so that the world sees these images.

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Find out more!
www.investinaustria.at

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