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CLUSTERS MEET REGIONS

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3 · 4
DECEMBER 2025

STARTUPS AND SCALEUPS AS GATEWAYS TO
EUROPEAN GROWTH AND COLLABORATION

AGENDA

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Bridging Regional Innovation with Global Ecosystem Impact Startups and Scaleups as Gateways to European Growth and Collaboration

3 - 4 DECEMBER 2025
University of Copenhagen Panum and Mærsk Tower
Blegdamsvej 3B, 2200 Nørrebro, Copenhagen, Denmark

Day 1 – Wednesday, December 3rd, 2025

08:30 – 09:00	<p>On-Site Registration of Participants</p>
09:00 – 09:15	<p>Welcoming Address and Opening Remarks Representatives will deliver introductory remarks on the regional government, the European Commission, and the event facilitators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kim Balle, CEO, Global Startup Awards ● Giovanni Emma, Policy Officer, DG GROW, European Commission ● Eva Hoffmann, Prorector for Research and Innovation, University of Copenhagen/Innovation District Copenhagen <p><i>Master of the Ceremony: Teodora Jilkova, Veritas Cluster, ECCP Team Member</i></p>
09:15 – 09:45	<p>Setting the Scene, Presentation of the ECCP Input Paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dr Jan-Philipp Kramer, Partner at Prognos AG, Team Leader Data & Policy at ECCP <p>The EU StartUp & Scaleup Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Giovanni Emma, Policy Officer, DG GROW, European Commission <p>Strategy Implementing Initiatives in Denmark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hanne Bregendahl Pihl, Managing Director, NorthDenmark EU-Office/dacob/EEN Denmark

<p>09:45 – 10:15</p>	<p>EU Policy Panel - Connecting Innovation & Regions</p> <p><i>This session will focus on how EU and national policies can work together to strengthen regional innovation ecosystems and cluster development. Representatives from the European Commission, national authorities, and key innovation agencies will discuss how existing frameworks, funding instruments, and policy priorities can support clusters, SMEs, and start-ups in addressing Europe's green and digital transition. The aim is to provide a policy foundation for the day, ensuring that the discussions that follow are anchored in current European and national strategies.</i></p> <p><i>This conversation will set the stage for the upcoming Strategic Dialogue on Innovation & Cluster Collaboration, where these strategic directions will be translated into concrete opportunities for clusters, start-ups and cross-border partnerships.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tarja Tiainen-Balsby, Programme Manager, DK – EU Policies, DG REGIO, European Commission ● Hanne Bregendahl Pihl, Managing Director, NorthDenmark EU-Office/dacob/EEN Denmark ● Christian Kjær Monsson, Head of Research, Danish Industry – DI ● Anders Pall Skött, Head of External Partnerships, University of Copenhagen <p><i>Moderation: Giovanni Emma, Policy Officer, DG GROW, European Commission</i></p>
<p>10:15 – 10:45</p>	<p>Coffee Break</p>
<p>10:45 - 11:05</p>	<p>Ecosystem Voice: Scaling New Innovation - Frameworks for Efficient Technology Commercialisation and Sustainable Hypergrowth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Laurits Bach Sørensen, Senior Partner (Co-Founder), Nordic Alpha Partners
<p>11:05 – 12:05</p>	<p>Strategic Dialogue on Innovation</p> <p><i>This session will bring together national and EU representatives, alongside voices from across the innovation ecosystem, who will outline Denmark's innovation priorities and how these connect to wider European industrial objectives. The discussion will focus on turning shared strategies into practical opportunities for collaboration across the entire ecosystem, setting the stage for the sector-focused sessions that follow. Acting as a bridge between high-level policy dialogue and concrete ecosystem action, the session ensures a clear strategic thread links the morning's priorities with the afternoon's presentations, partnerships and co-creation opportunities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Giovanni Emma, Policy Officer, DG GROW, European Commission ● Kim Balle, CEO, Global Startup Awards ● Niels Erik Haug-Larsen, CEO, Business Region Funen ● Jesper Skou, CEO & Co-Founder, Skypuzzler ● Laurits Bach Sørensen, Senior Partner (Co-Founder), Nordic Alpha Partners <p><i>Moderation: Dr Jan-Philipp Kramer, Partner at Prognos AG, Team Leader Data & Policy at ECCP</i></p>

<p>12:05 – 12:50</p>	<p>Digital Transformation & Innovation: Successful Collaborations Sectoral focus: Digitalisation, AI, Industry 4.0, data economy.</p> <p><i>Behind every successful digital transformation is a story of cooperation. This panel brings together speakers from Denmark, Sweden and the Indo-Nordic ecosystem to share practical examples of how digitalisation, AI, data and Industry 4.0 technologies drive innovation across borders. The discussion will highlight success stories, challenges, and opportunities for new partnerships among European clusters, SMEs and innovation actors.</i></p> <p><i>Speakers will provide short inputs followed by a moderated discussion on how cross-border collaboration accelerates digital transformation.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anders Kjøller, Senior Business Developer, Greater Copenhagen European Digital Innovation Hub • Carolina Garcés, Head of Strategy and Project Portfolio – OpenTech Sweden / Clusters of Sweden • Anders Thomsen, CEO, Indo-Nordic Innovation Cluster (Nordic Flex House) • Joost Haugmark Jensen, Project Manager, We Build Denmark (STAR*track) <p>Moderation: <i>Teodora Jilkova</i>, Veritas Cluster, ECCP Team Member</p>
<p>12:50 – 13:35</p>	<p>Security & Space Technologies Sectoral focus: Defence, space, dual-use technologies.</p> <p><i>This session will examine how innovation in security and space can support European strategic autonomy and resilience. CenSec will present its work at the intersection of dual-use and aerospace technologies, with contributions from EU clusters to identify complementarities and cooperation opportunities in sensitive and strategic domains.</i></p> <p>“Quadsat – Managing and Optimising the Radio Frequency Spectrum”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rico Behlke, Head of Innovation Management & Sustainability, Quadsat <p>Hardware supported Qualified Unlinkability – Dual use enabling the most critical strategic capability for all EU sectors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephan Engberg, CEO, Priway <p>NextGen Robotics - Technology and Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kasper Aagaard, Director of Innovation, Business Hub Funen <p>Cluster´s Role in Fostering Collaboration & Innovation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dustin Wilden, CEO, CenSec • Audience Q&A <p>Moderation: <i>Dustin Wilden</i>, CEO, CenSec</p>
<p>13:35 – 14:35</p>	<p>Lunch Break</p>
<p>14:35 – 15:20</p>	<p>Health & MedTech Innovation Sectoral focus: Health, MedTech, biotech, digital health.</p> <p><i>This session will showcase how the Danish life sciences ecosystem connects research, industry, and startups to accelerate innovation in health and MedTech. Afterwards, EU clusters from other Member States will contribute</i></p>

	<p><i>their perspectives, fostering cross-border R&I partnerships and opportunities to scale health innovation at the European level.</i></p> <p>Fireside Chat: Co-Creating Health Innovation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian Hassager, TTUH Academic Leader, Professor, Hjertecentret, Rigshospitalet, the Technical University Hospital • Frederik Hedelund, Director, Business Development, Teton.ai • Stamatiki Kritas, Managing Director, CEBR <p>Moderation: Kirsten Danielsen, Senior Manager, Danish Life Science Cluster (DLSC)</p> <p>Denmark's Health Innovation Ecosystem & Cross-Border Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Lindegaard, International Manager, Danish Life Science Cluster (DLSC) <p>Partnership Model: Success Stories and Collaboration for Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirsten Danielsen, Senior Manager, Danish Life Science Cluster (DLSC) • Frederik Hedelund, Director, Business Development, Teton.ai <p>Moderation of the Session: Karen Lindegaard, International Manager, Danish Life Science Cluster (DLSC)</p>
<p>15:20 – 15:40</p>	<p>Startup-Driven Innovation: Bridging Industry, Finance & Academia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simon Schou, Co-founder and Chief Innovation Officer, Copenhagen Fintech • Q&A
<p>15:40 – 16:25</p>	<p>Green Transition & Energy Leadership Sectoral focus: Renewable energy, offshore wind, Power-to-X, decarbonisation.</p> <p><i>This session will highlight Denmark's leadership in the green transition and the role of clusters in driving energy innovation. With contributions from EU energy clusters, the presentation will focus on opportunities for joint projects and strategic cooperation to accelerate the deployment of renewable technologies and support Europe's net-zero ambitions.</i></p> <p>Presentation of the Energy Cluster Denmark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glenda Napier, CEO, Energy Cluster Denmark <p>Horizon Europe project 2nd Life for Power Plants (2LiPP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jakob Falk, International Project Manager, Energy Cluster Denmark • Q&A
<p>16:25 – 16:40</p>	<p>Wrap up Day 1 and intro to Day 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teodora Jilkova, Veritas Cluster, ECCP Team Member

Day 2 – Thursday, December 4th, 2025

08:30 – 09:00	Registration & Welcome Coffee
09:00 – 09:15	Morning Welcome & Recap Summary of the 1st day and introduction of the 2nd day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kim Balle, CEO, Global Startup Awards (GSA)
09:15 – 10:00	Turning Insights into Action This session will build directly on the strategic discussions and ecosystem insights from the previous day. Rather than focusing solely on programmes and instruments, the session will explore the <i>needs, challenges and opportunities</i> across Europe’s innovation ecosystems and turn them into practical, actionable steps that countries, companies, clusters, accelerators and investors can take together. The aim is to identify concrete areas where collaboration, shared infrastructure, talent mobility and joint initiatives can strengthen innovation capacity and enable SMEs, start-ups and scaleups to grow across borders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Valentino Izzo, Programme Coordination Manager, EISMEA, European Commission ● Sine Linderstrøm, Director of SMEs and Entrepreneurship, Danish Industry - DI ● Dario Zoric, Founder & Chairman, Danish-Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce (DBCC) ● Q&A
10:00 – 11:00	Opportunity Labs - From Cluster to Collaboration Interactive breakout discussions with start-ups, clusters and innovation actors, moderated by experienced facilitators. Participants will work in small groups around five thematic areas — Green Transition & Energy Innovation; Health & Life Sciences; Digital Transformation & AI; Finance & Investment for Innovation; and Security & Space Technologies — using a relaxed World Café style. <p>Each group will develop 2–3 next-step collaboration ideas or emerging EU project leads. The Labs build on insights from Day 1 and provide space for co-creation of concrete opportunities for future partnerships, joint initiatives and innovation projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Green Transition & Energy Innovation Facilitated by: Joost Haugmark Jensen, Project Manager, We Build Denmark ● Health & Life Science Cooperation Facilitated by: Karen Lindegaard, International Manager, Danish Life Science Cluster (DLSC) and Stamatiki Kritas, Managing Director, CEBR ● Digital Transformation & AI

	<p>Facilitated by: Carolina Garces, Head of Strategy and Project Portfolio – OpenTech Sweden / Clusters of Sweden</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance & Investment for Innovation Facilitated by: Kim Balle, CEO, GSA • Security & Space Technologies Facilitated by: Jeppé Icedor Petersen, Innovation Project Manager, CenSec
11:00 – 11:05	<p>Setting the Stage for The GSA Nordics Spotlight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kim Balle, CEO Global Startup Awards
11:05 – 12:30	<p>GSA Nordics Spotlight</p> <p>As part of the CMR 2025 program, the GSA Nordics Spotlight will feature some of the most prominent Nordic alumni from the GSA network in two on-stage LIVE podcast recordings of the GSA Stars Podcast: Down the Rabbit Hole, hosted by GSA CEO and Co-founder, Kim Balle.</p> <p>The guests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Douglas Stark, Co-founder and Board Member, Voi Technology - GSA Unicorn • Mia Grosen, Founder and Investor
12:30 – 12:40	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <p>The closing will summarise key takeaways from the event, highlight collaboration opportunities identified during the Opportunity Labs, and outline how these will be followed up at the EU level. It will reaffirm the commitment to turning discussions into action, partnerships and impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris Omerinovic, International Relations Manager, Global Startup Awards • Teodora Jilkova, Veritas Cluster, ECCP Team Member
12:40- 14:00	<p>Site Visits:</p> <p>Innovation District Copenhagen – Join us for a tour of the Innovation District Copenhagen. The tour will start at the main venue.</p>