

27 April 2021

From aerospace to bacteria-as-a-service: The startups for the 2021 RESPOND Accelerator have been selected

- On June 7, the second round of the RESPOND accelerator – an initiative of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt operated by UnternehmerTUM – will kick off with ten new impact-oriented startups
- Almost 400 applications from 65 countries were received; 55 percent of the applications came from outside the EU
- The participants can expect individual coaching and mentoring as well as opportunities for global networking

Munich, April 27, 2021 – The participants of this year's [RESPOND accelerator](#) cohort have been selected: From approx. 400 applications from 65 countries, the ten best have been selected to participate in this year's program. The five-month program starts on June 7. Following four hybrid sprint phases including coaching, mentoring, and numerous networking opportunities through the networks of the BMW Foundation and UnternehmerTUM as well as direct access to the global BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Network, the participants will present their projects to investors and media representatives at a concluding event scheduled for October 13.

The participating startups develop innovative solutions in one of the following focus areas, in line with the UN 2030 Agenda:

- the future of work,
- sustainable urbanization,
- and responsible economy.

Heba Aguib, Chief Executive RESPOND, BMW Foundation, summarized the criteria for selecting the cohort as follows: "Through RESPOND, we want to help promote and scale solutions to the most urgent social, ecological, and economic challenges in these critical times. To this end, we are collaborating with entrepreneurs worldwide. Again this year I am particularly happy about the enormous diversity and internationality. We have an exciting mix of innovative technologies from all over the world, from Chile to Hungary, and a disproportionately large number of female founders: This year's cohort includes four female startup founders, against an average of under 15 percent in Germany."

Moritz Förster, Director Operations RESPOND, UnternehmerTUM, added: "RESPOND supports entrepreneurs who work toward a just and sustainable future in line with the UN 2030 Agenda. Every single one of these startups has big potential for success: They all promote innovative, internationally scalable products and services in the field of B2B, and most of

them have already been able to attract investors, which is evidence of the companies' maturity and the potential of their solutions.”

The 10 participating startups at a glance:

- [AquaFarms Africa](#) Conakry, Guinea – offers young Africans the possibility to grow food locally using aquaponics franchise systems.
- [Concular – Circular Construction](#) Berlin – brings the circular economy to material procurement.
- [ConstellR](#) Freiburg – supplies global temperature data in high spatial resolution for a growing planet.
- [FACIL'iti](#) Limoges, France – makes the digital workspace accessible for people with disabilities.
- [Poliloop](#) Budapest, Hungary – uses a bacteria cocktail to biodegrade plastic waste.
- [Resortecs](#) Lievegem, Belgium – melts stitching threads to enable high-quality, large-scale textile recycling.
- [retraced](#) Düsseldorf – offers a solution to make supply chains more transparent, with impact meeting efficiency.
- [The Live Green Co](#) Santiago de Chile, Chile – combines the wisdoms of a plant-based diet with biotech and AI/ML.
- [Traceless](#) Hamburg – develops a sustainable alternative to (bio)plastic.
- [Village Data Analytics \(VIDA\)](#) Munich – is an AI-powered individual software for development investments.

More information on the accelerator program is available at: respond-accelerator.com.

RESPOND

About RESPOND

RESPOND is an accelerator program of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt operated by UnternehmerTUM. It is the world's first accelerator program that supports responsible leadership and thereby helps scale sustainable business models for a better future. The program supports founders who use entrepreneurial approaches to contribute to a peaceful, just, and sustainable future in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda. As part of the program, founder teams have access to workshops and mentoring at the intersection of business, society, and the environment. In addition, the participants benefit from close contact with the global BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Network and the extended network of both organizations. The Responsible Leaders Network currently comprises more than 1,800 leaders worldwide who work toward social change in and between societies.

About the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt

The BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt is an independent corporate foundation whose activities support the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. The BMW Foundation inspires leaders worldwide to assume social responsibility and to work as Responsible Leaders for a peaceful, just, and sustainable future. Serving as an open platform for their personal and professional development, the Foundation connects leaders across countries, cultures, and communities through its global Responsible Leaders Network. The third component of the Foundation's activities consists of using impact investing to invest in initiatives and organizations that work to find solutions to the social, political and environmental challenges of humankind.

About UnternehmerTUM – Europe’s leader center for innovation and business creation

UnternehmerTUM is a unique platform for the development of innovations. UnternehmerTUM actively identifies innovative technologies and initiates new business through the systematic networking of talents, technologies, capital and customers. UnternehmerTUM offers founders and startups a complete service from the initial idea to IPO. A team of 300 experienced entrepreneurs, scientists, and investors supports startups with business creation, market entry, and financing – and also with venture capital. For industry partners, UnternehmerTUM is a central platform for cooperating with startups and expanding their innovative strength and culture. Founded in 2002 by the entrepreneur Susanne Klatten, UnternehmerTUM is the leading center for innovation and business creation in Europe with more than 50 high-growth technology startups every year – including Celonis, Konux, and Liliun.

Press Contact

RESPOND c/o PIABO PR GmbH

Julia Loeser

respond@piabo.net

Phone: +49 30 2576 205 - 19

Mobile: +49 173 2564621

Markgrafenstrasse 36

10117 Berlin | Germany