

News Release

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Next Year's Merck Accelerator Is Open For Applications And Expands To China

- **Merck Accelerator opens its application period for 2019**
- **Startup teams will move into the Innovation Center at the headquarters of Merck in Darmstadt, Germany**
- **Close collaboration between up to 10 startups and Merck experts will create new opportunities for sustainable business partnerships**
- **For the first time, Accelerator teams will also have the chance to join the China Innovation Hub Accelerator in Shanghai**

Merck, a leading science and technology company, has opened the application period for the seventh round of its Accelerator program. The program will take place from mid-January until April 2019 at the Merck Innovation Center in Darmstadt, Germany. Startups from all over the world, including Korea are invited to apply – they have until September 30th, 2018 to complete their application forms.

Alongside the Merck core-business fields of life science, performance materials, and healthcare, Merck is also looking for startups from additional search fields like future technology products leveraging bio-sensing, interfaces and precision farming. The main objective of the Accelerator program in 2019 will be a business partnership with Merck. Selected applicants will also have the opportunity to extend their participation in the program by joining the China Innovation Hub Accelerator in Shanghai.

Previous rounds of the accelerator have seen a steady growth in the pipeline of promising collaborations between Merck and participating startups. As a result, the focus of the 2019

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program will be to strengthen the partnership aspect of the Accelerator. The Innovation Center's location at the heart of Merck's headquarters is the perfect environment for fostering such partnerships, as it allows Merck's in-house experts to work closely with startup teams. The opportunities for collaboration in the Merck Accelerator mean that both Merck and startups benefit from ongoing exchange and mutual support.

From 2019, startup teams will also have the chance to extend their stay in the Merck Accelerator program by joining the China Innovation Hub Accelerator in Shanghai for up to additional three months. The tailored program in China will give startups mentoring sessions on entering the Chinese market and will address topics such as local customer-base, regulatory affairs, and localized business models. Startup teams will be able to adapt their business strategies and gain further insights and contacts through network events in China.

Michael Gamber, Head of the Merck Innovation Center, commented: "For our next Accelerator intake we will concentrate on future collaboration. From the last intake six startups are now focused on working together with Merck to realize their collaboration projects. We want to find potential partners to shape the future with us. Giving Accelerator startups the chance to access the Chinese market is another exciting step. Extending the program in this way allows us to further develop our partnership strategies with startups."

Startups have until September 30th to apply via the Merck Accelerator [Website](#). In January 2019, up to ten selected teams will move into the recently-inaugurated Innovation Center in Darmstadt, Germany in order to develop their projects over the course of three months. They will benefit from open sources and a "Makerspace" with rapid prototyping labs.

About the Accelerator program

The Merck Accelerator program supports startups that are focused on the fields of healthcare, performance materials, life science and additional search fields, such as bio-sensing and interfaces as well as precision farming. The participating startup teams will receive financial support of up to € 50,000 and gain access to the modern workspace at



the new Merck Innovation Center. They will also benefit from mentoring and in-depth coaching from a network comprising over 50,000 experts from 66 countries, as well as mentoring from Merck's Senior Management, tailored coaching sessions and visibility attending inspirational events. Additionally, selected startups will have the opportunity to extend their stay in the program by joining the China Innovation Hub in Shanghai.

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About Merck

Merck is a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science and performance materials. Almost 53,000 employees work to further develop technologies that improve and enhance life – from biopharmaceutical therapies to treat cancer or multiple sclerosis, cutting-edge systems for scientific research and production, to liquid crystals for smartphones and LCD televisions. In 2017, Merck generated sales of € 15.3 billion in 66 countries.

Founded in 1668, Merck is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed corporate group. Merck holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the company operates as EMD Serono, MilliporeSigma and EMD Performance Materials.

