

Best practices- Tartu, Estonia

1. sTARTUp Day

In December 2016, the business festival sTARTUp Day was held in Tartu with nearly 3000 guests. sTARTUp Day aims to bring together several stakeholders from traditional entrepreneurs, IT specialists, business enthusiasts and start uppers to government and media.

Today, we can call it the Estonia's Flagship Event for Estonian Startups. sTARTUp Day is a flagship event for Southern Estonian IT businesses, organized by the key players of the startup ecosystem of Tartu. The idea was initiated by the University of Tartu, which decided to collaborate with the city government of Tartu, sTARTUp Hub, and many other partners to bring the business festival to life.

Collaboration between the startups and public organizations in Tartu is what really made the event possible. sTARTUp Day hosted nearly 3000 guests: startup founders, IT specialists, entrepreneurs, and business enthusiasts.

In 2016, sTARTUp Day focused on a theme that is linked to the startup mentality in Tartu: running lean - or answering one important question, '**How To Earn If There's Nothing To Burn?**'. Startups are often criticized for burning through investors' money and failing to earn enough profit. The speakers will discuss how to increase the success rate of startups and how the lean approach can help startups to avoid making common mistakes.



sTARTUp Day has the potential to become an annual wrap-up event for the Estonian startup scene. The event is a celebration of entrepreneurship and innovation, where awards for the year will be given out. This year, Estonian Startup Leaders Club and EstBAN (Estonian Business Angels Network), will be giving awards to the top 20 early stage startups of the year.

2. Kaleidoskoop/Idealab

Firstly, University of Tartu plays a very important role in the ecosystem as it is keen on supporting and promoting entrepreneurship.

UT encourages its students to work on their business ideas already during their studies. They run a pre-incubation program called Idea Lab. The Idea Lab program consists of a series of events with the goal of providing mentorship to students. Participating teams work on their ideas throughout the program, where they have a chance to get advice from experts of different fields at every event.

At the end of each semester, a pitching competition called Kaleidoskoop is organized. At Kaleidoskoop, teams pitch their business plans they've been developing to a jury. The jury chooses the team with the most promising business idea — this team gets a chance to participate in SLUSH.

The university takes part in organizing many entrepreneurship-related events. The student business and project ideas competition Kaleidoskoop is also held as a part of the aforementioned sTARTUp Day festival.