



Press release

Brussels, 17 October 2014

Start-ups move into Ladeuzeplein

Start it @KBC LEUVEN

Today on 21 October, Start it @kbc, the incubator for start-ups set up by KBC, together with a number of partners including Flanders DC, Accenture, Mobile Vikings, Cronos, iMinds and local educational institutions, will be opened officially in Leuven. The KBC training centre has freed up 355 m² of its office space on Ladeuzeplein to accommodate them.

The Leuven initiative is being launched on the request of Leuven-based start-ups which had set up shop in the KBC Tower in Antwerp.

Antwerp, Hasselt and now Leuven

Like the Antwerp and Hasselt initiatives, start-ups receive free coaching and support from expert partners that include KBC, Flanders DC, iMinds, Cronos, Mobile Vikings and Accenture. Among other things, the Start it site in Leuven provides a dynamic professional environment for 44 start-ups, for 12 to 18 months. Centrally located at the heart of Leuven's vibrant student city, and integrated in KBC's training centre, the site has a unique and distinctive vibe.

Leuven already has a well-established history as an entrepreneurial city and thriving ecosystem thanks to incubators such as Leuven Research and Development (LRD), IMEC.spin-offs, Flanders DC, LEUVEN Inc., De Hoorn and since yesterday, the LCIE Entrepreneurship Academy.

Start it @kbc will integrate within and further strengthen the existing ecosystem for early-stage companies.

Thanks to its unique positioning, it provides useful complementary expertise. Start it @kbc in Leuven will specifically focus on early-stage companies and concentrate on a broad range of domains and sectors (technology, collaborative consumption, mobility, big data, upcycling, marketing, HR, etc.).

The following companies have already moved in:

- Motosmarty (mobility solutions and disruptor innovation)
- Wigoh (a local event discovery app)
- Geniefacts (big data)
- Aidcoin (a cryptocurrency that helps to donate to a good cause)
- Eat&Free (a range of gluten free and tasty food products for sandwich bars & cafés)

- Muuselabs (digital toys without iPad)
- Open Telly (video streaming in HTML5 without plugin)
- Triple Twin (digital ego management)
- Envy (big data)

They will be joined by today's winners of the pitch held at Flanders DC, the Flemish organisation for enterprise creativity.

- SMTH Smooth
- Prezly
- Fermet
- Elegnano
- Time for Vinyl
- BiosenSource

Succes of Start it @kbc

Start it @kbc was launched on 20 November 2013 in Antwerp and currently houses 75 start-ups selected from more than 600 applications.

These 75 start-ups represent 226 people aged between 18 and 47, i.e. more than 80% belong to the Now Generation (20 and 29 year-olds).

In addition to receiving expert support from 23 mentors, they have also benefited from 121 workshops, training courses, key note speeches, expert fora, gatherings, etc., held specifically for them.

Start it @kbc keeps growing

Since its launch, Start it @kbc has grown and expanded to other cities, including Hasselt and Leuven.

Anyone interested can apply on the startit.be website. All applications are examined carefully and short-listed applicants are invited to present their projects, with a chance to join the Start it @kbc community. The next pitch round will be held on 12 December, and ideas can be submitted until 26 November.

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