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Welcome Statement by the Rector of the University of Freiburg

Founded in 1457, the University of Freiburg is one of Germany’s oldest higher education institutions. As a classical comprehensive university with a modern profile, it covers the entire spectrum of humanities, social and natural sciences, engineering, medicine, law, and theology. This academic breadth forms the basis for outstanding interdisciplinary research at 20 research centers.

The cooperation among researchers is not only being strengthened at the university itself: In March 2015 we established the transdisciplinary Sustainability Center Freiburg in cooperation with Freiburg’s five Fraunhofer institutes. Another important element is the new “Department of Sustainable Systems Engineering” (INA-TECH) at the Faculty of Engineering, whose professorships are split between the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft and the University of Freiburg.

The important role universities play in strengthening innovative capacity is also evident in the tasks entrusted to them by law. In addition to the traditional core tasks of research and teaching, universities are now also responsible for providing continuing education and technology transfer. The University of Freiburg therefore has a vision: We want to be one of Germany’s most attractive universities for entrepreneurial culture and innovation by 2025. Even today, we are already among the top three German universities with regard to patent strength and are one of the 100 most innovative universities according to an international ranking by Thomson Reuters. We aim to consolidate this position further.

In 2013, the University of Freiburg’s strategic concept “Windows for Entrepreneurship” was selected in the competition “EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship” sponsored by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, and is now one of 22 German universities receiving funding within the context of the program. Just recently we received a two-year extension for our strategy. We see this as confirmation of our strategy and of the results we have achieved so far. At the core of our strategic concept is the Freiburg ABCs of Entrepreneurship, the goals and programs of which are presented in the following pages. We are confident that our vision is well on its way to becoming a reality.
Welcome Statement by the Chair of the University Council of the University of Freiburg

Supported by the EXIST funding and the associated financial opportunities, the University of Freiburg has succeeded in initiating something important: enabling the spirit of entrepreneurship to thrive and permeate through all levels of the university.

The idea behind the strategic concept “Windows for Entrepreneurship” is to foster entrepreneurship in students as early on as possible and to teach them corresponding skills. It is not just about opening up additional career prospects for students, but also and most importantly about instilling in them an attitude that can be best described by terms like innovative spirit and passion. The concept also applies to researchers at the University of Freiburg.

Researchers receive advice on how to encourage and coordinate the step from fundamental research to practical applications of their results and to product development even at the early stage of preparing proposals for new research projects.

The result after just three years of EXIST funding is very encouraging and shows clearly that the university’s decision to invest in an entrepreneurial culture is already paying back. For example, the university was listed under the top 100 for the first time ever in the worldwide innovation ranking by Thomson Reuters in 2015. Another indication that good ideas are falling on fertile ground is the success of recent university spin-offs. In 2015 alone, University of Freiburg start-ups and business ventures received around 2.7 million Euros from entrepreneurial funding programs and received awards for their business ideas in various regional and national competitions.

I wish “my” entrepreneurial university continued success on this path and will be happy to support it on this journey. At the same time, I would like to use this occasion to thank all employees for the great dedication they have shown in the past three years to take the university a large step forward in this internationally competitive area.

Prof. Dr. Dr. Andreas Barner
Chair of the University Council of the University of Freiburg
University of Freiburg
Friedrichstraße 39
79098 Freiburg

"The University of Freiburg has succeeded in initiating something important: enabling the spirit of entrepreneurship to thrive at the university."
Toward a Culture of Entrepreneurship

A look back at the support for start-ups at the University of Freiburg – the Founders Office and the founders network Campus Technologies Oberrhein (CTO)

In the mid 1990s, business ideas deriving directly from scientific research and active support for spin-offs were still uncommon at universities. A portfolio of eight patent applications from medicine served in 1994/95 as the basis for the “CellGenix Technologie Transfer AG,” the first company to translate findings from basic research at the University of Freiburg into marketable products. This spin-off was followed by others, giving the Center for Technology Transfer (ZFT) the necessary references to participate successfully in the state competition “Start-up Associations on Campus” in 1998.

As a result, the University of Freiburg cooperated with the Universities of Applied Sciences in Offenburg and Furtwangen to realize the joint project “Campus Technologies Oberrhein – CTO,” which has since been successfully expanded. The “Founders Office” was established at the Center for Technology Transfer to serve as the network’s head office. In 2007, the Freiburg’s Protestant and the Catholic Universities of Applied Sciences also joined.

Today university spin-offs are an important factor for regional development. This is true not only with regard to the around 750 new jobs they have created in Freiburg to date, most of which are in the
high-tech sector, but also due to the additional synergies and positive effects they provide for the university themselves.

The resulting networks benefit the research landscape on the Upper Rhine in particular and offer new possibilities for university graduates. New funding programs designed especially to meet the needs of both the university and its spin-offs make it possible to realize additional research and development projects. Spin-offs are serving increasingly as license holders for university intellectual properties. In this way, new companies use the knowledge generated and acquired by the university to create significant innovations.

**EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship – Entrepreneur University**

The Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) has been funding business projects and initiatives to support new businesses since 1998 with the program “EXIST – University-Based Start-Up Programs.” Its purpose is to improve the climate for entrepreneurship at universities and external research institutions. In addition, the program aims to increase the amount and success of technology- and knowledge-based start-ups.

The BMWi then went on to launch the competition “EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship” in 2010. Its aim is to support universities in establishing a clearly defined entrepreneurial profile, which involves developing the potential for technology- and knowledge-based start-ups in the long term and strengthening entrepreneurial thinking among students and academic staff. The universities participating in the competition were called upon to formulate a comprehensive, university-wide strategy for fostering entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurial spirit and to develop suitable measures and instruments for its implementation.

The competition was conducted with two calls for proposals. A total of 124 idea sketches were submitted for the two-stage competition. Twenty-four universities participating in the first call were asked in April 2010 to develop and present a comprehensive strategic concept for an entrepreneurial profile. In July 2011, an expert panel selected
ten of these universities for funding. In the second call of the competition a total of 27 universities were then asked to submit a strategic concept. Twelve of them were approved for funding by the BMWi in January 2013.

The University of Freiburg participated successfully in this second round of the competition with its strategic concept "Windows for Entrepreneurship." Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Hans-Jochen Schiewer accepted the funding certificate from Minister for Economic Affairs Dr. Philipp Rösler on 9 January 2013.

The University of Freiburg’s strategic concept: “Windows for Entrepreneurship”

The goal of the strategic concept “Windows for Entrepreneurship” is to cultivate lasting and comprehensive entrepreneurial excellence at the University of Freiburg.

At the core of this concept are the three institutional “windows” of the Freiburg ABCs of Entrepreneurship: The Academy for Entrepreneurship offers a broad, modular teaching and continuing education program tailored to the needs of specific topics and audiences. The networks organized by the Founders Office help to make start-ups
more professional. The Transfer Coaching explores utilization opportunities and prospects of research findings early on and brings a new level of maturity to the results of research conducted at the university.

The University of Freiburg regards the task of establishing a “culture of entrepreneurship” as the responsibility of its entire executive board. Rector Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Hans-Jochen Schiewer assumes the overall responsibility for the strategy. The concrete spheres of activity “Academy for Entrepreneurship – Founders Office – Transfer Coaching” are the responsibility of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the Vice-President for Innovation and Technology Transfer and the Vice-President for Research, ensuring that the respective topics are guided at the highest level of the university leadership structures.

In the university’s structural and development plan (“StrEP”), which was approved by Baden-Württemberg’s Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts (MWK) in January 2014, the university develops its vision for the year 2025: “As one of the world’s leading research universities, the University of Freiburg is among the most attractive institutions in the country for innovation, technology transfer, and entrepreneurial initiatives.”

To establish a culture of entrepreneurship into the university-wide structures, the three institutional windows of the ABCs of entrepreneurship, “Academy for Entrepreneurship,” “Founders Office,” and “Transfer Coaching,” have been assigned to the three administrative offices working under the three respective vice-presidents:

A as in “Ausbilden” (training) at the Academy for Entrepreneurship: Freiburg Academy of Continuing Education
B as in “Beraten und Begleiten” (consulting) at the Founders Office: Center for Technology Transfer
C as in “Coachen” (coaching) with Transfer Coaching: Freiburg Research Services
Culture of Entrepreneurship – Participating Institutions and Actors

Freiburg Academy of Continuing Education (FRAUW)

The Freiburg Academy of Continuing Education (FRAUW) is made up of two departments: the Department of Continuing Education and the Center for Key Qualifications (ZfS). The FRAUW is responsible for pillar “A” – as in “Ausbilden” (training) at the Academy for Entrepreneurship – of the “Freiburg ABCs of Entrepreneurship.”

The Department of Continuing Education coordinates in-service training and continuing education programs at the University of Freiburg. The program includes courses on a wide variety of topics for qualified professionals and those interested in extending their knowledge in a particular subject area.
They include certificate courses designed to provide further theoretical background for practical work experience and a selection of in-service master's programs that can also be taken as distance learning programs – potentially opening up new professional horizons or even providing the foundation for a change of professional emphasis.

In addition to these continuing education programs for the general public, the FRAUW is also responsible for further special training courses for University of Freiburg employees and for the university's visiting student program.

The Center for Key Qualifications (ZfS), founded in late 2002, develops and organizes “professional skills” (BOK) and “personal skills module” (MPK) courses for students of bachelor's and teacher education degree programs. As a means of ensuring that these courses have a practical bearing, the ZfS engages additional experts from the private sector, research institutions, social organizations, and schools to teach most of these courses.

The BOK courses are a required element of bachelor's programs (B.A. and B.Sc.) and are divided into the five areas management, communication, media, information technology, and languages. The MPK is a required component of the modularized teacher education degree programs introduced in the 2010/11 winter semester.

**Freiburg Research Services (FRS)**

The Freiburg Research Services Office (FRS) supports University of Freiburg researchers – from those interested in pursuing a doctoral degree to established professors – in all matters related to research funding.

The Science Support Centre (SSC) provides advising on national and international funding opportunities, while the EU Office is responsible for all EU programs, including mobility programs. The International Graduate Academy (IGA) serves as the main point of contact for the university's doctoral candidates and organizes a transdisciplinary course program. Thanks to their close contact with the researchers, the FRS team is able to identify research topics with great potential for practical applications. This applies to all of the university's faculties.
researchers at all stages of their careers, and the entire innovation chain.

Transfer Coaching, a service offered by the FRS team, takes up these topics and provides guidance for researchers interested in finding potential practical applications for their research: The transfer coach holds individual sessions with the researchers to determine potential practical applications, helps them to work out a transfer strategy, and supervises them in implementing it in the course of the research project. Ideally, the researchers will eventually go on to form a new company on their own on the basis of their research findings. However, the transfer to practical utilization also works if the researchers cooperate with existing actors, for instance with organizations from the private and social services sectors. The work of the transfer coach forms pillar “C” of the Freiburg ABCs of Entrepreneurship.

Center for Technology Transfer (ZFT)

The Center for Technology Transfer (ZFT) links the University Medical Center and the University of Freiburg with the private sector. It prepares agreements for research contracts, takes care of patents and licenses, and helps researchers to found companies. The ZFT unites services on the following topics under one roof: patents, contracts, transfer, and start-up support.

The Patent Office is responsible for all inventions made at the University of Freiburg and the Freiburg University Medical Center. It takes care of the employer’s legal responsibilities as prescribed by the German Law on Employee Inventions. The Contract Office advises research project heads and is responsible for conducting contract negotiations and preparing research contracts.

The ZFT cooperates closely with Campus Technologies Freiburg GmbH (CTF), a patent exploitation agency accredited by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. The CTF GmbH participates in university and medical center spin-offs with the goal of exploiting inventions from research for commercial purposes.

The Founders Office provides qualified support for all aspiring businesswomen and businessmen on their path to self-employment. The team at the Founders Office coordinates individual advising with coaching and qualification programs on topics of interest for entrepreneurs.
The “Windows for Entrepreneurship” project, whose aim is to cultivate a dynamic culture of entrepreneurship throughout the university, is headed by Professor Margit Zacharias, Vice President for Innovation and Technology Transfer. The operational culture of entrepreneurship team is currently made up of six employees at the three offices responsible for day-to-day work regarding the Freiburg ABCs of Entrepreneurship. The directors of these offices, Jan Ihwe (FRAUW), Prof. Dr. Bernhard J. Arnold, Dr. Bruno Ehmann, Prof. Dr. Margit Zacharias, Dr. Heinrich Stülpnagel, Rodica Schmidinger, Dr. Thomas Maier, Barbara Nüssle, Dr. Markus Strauch, support the operational team on all relevant issues.

The University of Freiburg’s culture of entrepreneurship team provides advice to all university members on questions concerning self-employment and the establishment of companies.

The main responsibilities of the team include:

- sensitizing and mobilizing researchers to consider self-employment as a career option
- initiating and organizing teaching and training formats
- advising and coaching entrepreneurs
- helping entrepreneurs to develop business models and business plans
- supervising proposals for start-up funding
- maintaining networks to promote and support start-ups
Support Services

Academy for Entrepreneurship – teaching and training

The Academy for Entrepreneurship was created as a result of close cooperation between the Freiburg Academy of Continuing Education (FRAUW) and the Founders Office at the Center for Technology Transfer.

The courses offered by the Academy for Entrepreneurship include everything from undergraduate courses to continuing education programs. The participants can acquire specific business and entrepreneurship skills and deepen their knowledge at various levels.

Courses for students

The Academy for Entrepreneurship at the Center for Key Qualifications (ZfS) offers even students of bachelor’s programs a wealth of opportunities for exploring the topic of entrepreneurship and self-employment as a career option and coming into contact with entrepreneurs. At the core of the program is the “Entrepreneurship” lecture series, an introductory course open to all interested students that teaches basic business skills and puts the students in contact with university start-ups. A business plan course gives students the chance to extend their methodological skills by creating their own business model. In the course “Ich, Idee, Innovation” (“Me, Idea, Innovation”), they develop their own personal foundations as entrepreneurs. Finally, the “Campus Cup” course consists of a simulation game in which teams work on specific cases and try out individual aspects of entrepreneurship for themselves.
By selecting from a wide-range of such courses, students can assemble their own personal portfolio of entrepreneurial skills and earn the “uniEntrepreneur” certificate. Each individual course offered by the Academy for Entrepreneurship and the program as a whole are designed to provide the participants with concrete competencies they can apply individually to themselves and to their own business.

The Academy for Entrepreneurship maintains a constantly growing network of external lecturers and alumni entrepreneurs. Hence, the students acquire entrepreneurship and business competencies extending far beyond mere professional and methodological skills – they also gain firsthand experience of entrepreneurial thinking and models.

**Continuing education**

Each of the three-hour seminars in the “Entrepreneurship Competencies” series emphasizes practical aspects of a specific topic and may be taken separately. The seminars allow participants to gain additional know-how in particular areas to increase their chances for success in starting their own business. The seminars are taught by business experts from the Freiburg region. In addition to acquiring entrepreneurship competencies, the participants receive the opportunity to extend their own network.

The in-service continuing education courses “Innovation Management – New Approaches for Science and Industry,” “Business Model Innovation – Successful Entry in New Markets,” and “Lean Start-Up – Early Customer Feedback for Successful Products” give researchers from universities, research institutions, and companies or those participating in a start-up or planning their own business venture the chance to deepen or extend their competencies in innovation and entrepreneurship.

The hands-on courses combine theory and practice as a basis for helping the participants to make well-considered business decisions tailored to their own occupational fields. The participants acquire methodological competencies, try out instruments, and apply them directly to their own topics, projects, or problems. The
courses all follow the “lean start-up” approach, which involves initiating a learning process step by step to develop successful products, processes, or models iteratively. The participants work in interdisciplinary teams.

Advising and coaching

The culture of entrepreneurship team supports members of the University of Freiburg – from students to research assistants – on the path to self-employment. The main focus is on advising and coaching, on assistance finding funding and other possibilities for financing start-ups, and on a qualification program with courses on relevant topics for entrepreneurs.

Are you looking for potential applications for your research findings? With support from the transfer coaching service at the Freiburg Research Services Office, researchers can investigate prospects for commercial exploitation of their research early on. The coaching is the right thing for you if you are looking to successfully apply your results and need help formulating research proposals.

Do you have an exciting business idea for a service or a new product? Individual advising sessions at the Founders Office can help you to assess the potential of your idea and refine it into a finished product or a marketable service. The advisors at the Founders Office work with you to develop a viable business model and help you to find suitable markets to transform your idea into a market-ready product or service and realize your business project. The advising services are complemented by support from a network of specialists covering a broad spectrum of expertise and industry knowledge.

You also receive help finding suitable funding programs and support preparing the funding proposal, for instance for the two national funding programs “EXIST Business Start-Up Grant” and “EXIST Transfer of Research” or Baden-Württemberg’s “Young Innovators” funding program.
Startinsland

Startinsland – Southwest Germany’s business plan competition – regularly awards prizes to the best business ideas in the region. The competition brings the local start-up scene together and provides opportunities for exchange and feedback. Participants profit from advising services and qualification programs, attractive prize money, and an evaluation of their business plan by a jury of experts. Startinsland has been held twice so far. The next round is planned for 2017.

The competition is open to all aspiring entrepreneurs interested in presenting their new products or services and their business models. Prizes are awarded for the most innovative business ideas and business plans in two main categories: “science and universities” and “companies and society.” In addition, a special “green economy” prize recognizes sustainable business ideas in the areas of renewable energies, energy and resource efficiency, and environmental protection.

Participants have the chance to win prizes in each of the two phases of Startinsland. In the concept phase of the competition they submit a brief sketch of their business idea in three pages or less. A jury reviews the submissions and awards prizes for the best concepts. The second phase is the business plan phase, in which the participants have to flesh out their business idea in a convincing 20-page description. Numerous events and qualification programs are held to give Startinsland an appropriate setting and support the participants in developing their business plans.

The initiators of Startinsland are the University of Freiburg, the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems ISE, the Offenburg University of Applied Sciences, and the Southern Upper Rhine Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK).
Black Forest Venture Day

Make a quick presentation of your own business concept and secure funding for it: Young entrepreneurs meet investors at the Black Forest Venture Day.

In a format resembling speed dating, prospective entrepreneurs try to convince investors of their ideas in brief one-on-one meetings. The Black Forest Venture Day is organized by the Founders Office of the University of Freiburg and the Association for Economic Promotion in the Freiburg Region. It is held once every two years.

In the qualifying round, a jury of business, entrepreneurship advising, and investment experts decides who to invite to the Black Forest Venture Day. Contestants who succeed in making an impression with a short, succinct description of their business model get to present it in detail over an entire afternoon and thus receive a chance to secure start-up funding or direct-investment capital. After the talks, the participants can further intensify the contacts they have made.

Freiburg Start-up Days

The Freiburg Start-up Days is one of Germany’s largest and most successful events for aspiring entrepreneurs.

The Freiburg Start-up Days encompass an entire week of lectures, round-table talks, and workshops for people interested in starting their own business. In addition, the event gives participants ample opportunity for exchange. Selected participants get to present their business idea to the public with an “elevator pitch”. The 2014 Freiburg Start-up Days highlighted topics like “finances”, “company succession”, and “female entrepreneurs”.

The initiators of the event are the Southern Upper Rhine Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the Freiburg Chamber of Skilled Crafts, Lexware, Sparkasse Freiburg–Nördlicher Breisgau, University of Freiburg, Volksbank Freiburg, and the Association for Business Development in the Freiburg Region.
The program of the 2014 Freiburg Start-up Days encompassed more than 36 lectures, round-table talks, and workshops, and gave participants ample opportunity for networking and exchange.

The events at the Freiburg Start-up Days dealt with topics like finances, company succession, innovative start-ups, and female entrepreneurs. They concluded with an idea exchange meeting.
Selected Funding Programs for Start-Ups

The three most important funding programs for innovative business ideas from science are the two Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy programs “EXIST Business Start-Up Grant” and “EXIST Transfer of Research” and Baden-Württemberg’s “Young Innovators” funding program:

• The EXIST Business Start-Up Grant program helps students, graduates, and researchers to prepare innovative technology- and knowledge-based business projects.

• The EXIST Transfer of Research program provides funding for the necessary development work for determining the technical feasibility of research-based business ideas as well as for the preparations involved in establishing a new company.

• The Young Innovators funding program helps young research assistants from universities and external research institutions to start-up their own business producing and marketing innovative products or processes.

A good source of information on funding programs for new and established entrepreneurs is the research database of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. This database lists all relevant programs offered at the state, national, and EU level. The types of funding include grant-, loan-, and guarantee-based programs as well as investment-based programs. A total of around 40 different funding programs are available for start-ups in Baden-Württemberg.
EXIST Business Start-Up Grants
Support realizing business ideas

The EXIST Business Start-Up Grant is a nationwide funding program designed to help get innovative new companies from universities and research institutions off the ground.

The EXIST Business Start-Up Grant helps entrepreneurs to realize their business idea, from the initial process of developing an idea for a product or service and drawing up a business plan to the launch of the company itself. It funds novel technology-based business projects and innovative services based on research findings that have the potential to provide special benefits to customers and introduce unique features to the market.

The program is designed for researchers from universities and research institutions, university graduates, and former research assistants who have earned their last degree or retired from academia within the past five years. Also eligible to apply are students who have already completed at least half of the work toward their degree.

The funding can go to individuals or teams of up to three persons. The grantees receive sufficient funding to cover their personal living expenses and those of any children for a maximum of one year. Moreover, they receive a budget for material expenses and an additional budget for entrepreneurial coaching.

Applications are submitted by the universities. The team at the Founders Office helps applicants to prepare their applications and advises them with support from its network of business start-up specialists. Project outlines may be submitted at any time.
EXIST Transfer of Research
Commercial utilization of new research findings

The EXIST Transfer of Research funding program is addressed at research teams at universities and external research institutions. It provides funding for a maximum of three researchers and technical assistants, one business administrator, and material expenses.

The purpose of the EXIST Transfer of Research program is to help teams of entrepreneurs at universities and research institutions to prepare and launch their company and to conduct particularly risky and time-consuming development work to serve as the economic basis of a growth-oriented new business. In the first funding phase, the entrepreneurs clarify basic questions concerning the transfer of their scientific findings to technical products and processes, develop the underlying business idea into a concrete business plan, and prepare the planned company launch.

The second phase includes further development work as well as measures for initiating business operations at the newly founded technology company and meeting the prerequisites for external business funding.

Applications for the first funding phase are submitted by the universities or external research institutions. The team at the Founders Office helps applicants to prepare their applications and advises them with support from its network of business start-up specialists. Project outlines may be submitted each calendar year from 1 January to 31 January and from 1 July to 31 July.

Applications for the second funding phase are submitted by the newly formed company or by a company in the process of formation. The applicants must officially register the company and provide evidence of having contributed the necessary capital resources before the second funding phase begins.
Young Innovators
Funding for innovative products or processes

The Young Innovators funding program helps young research assistants from universities and external research institutions to launch their own business. To be eligible for funding, the products and processes to be marketed by the start-up must be based on inventions made by the entrepreneurs, software they developed, or their technological know-how.

The program was designed to create an alternative to paid employment and at the same time to promote the transfer of technology and know-how from universities and research institutions to trade and industry. It focuses especially on promising fields like optoelectronics, biotechnology, medical technology, solar technology, automation technology, and mechatronics.

The Young Innovators program provides funding for individuals and teams of up to three persons. The funding does not go to support the launch of the company itself but rather the preparations for it at a university or research institution. Entrepreneurs who have already established their company may also apply, as long as the company has been established within the past 12 to 18 months. The main purpose of the funding is to cover the entrepreneurs’ living expenses while they are conducting the development work necessary to make their innovation ready for the market. The funding period runs for two (or, in exceptional cases, three) years.

Calls for applications for the Young Innovators program are generally issued once a year. The dates for the next application period and the application documents are posted on the website of the project sponsor.

As with the nationwide EXIST funding programs, applications for the Young Innovators program are submitted by the universities. The team at the Founders Office helps applicants to prepare their applications and advises them with support from its network of business start-up specialists.
EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship at the University of Freiburg

Our achievements in numbers

We have provided advice on questions concerning self-employment and company establishment to nearly 1300 persons engaged in around 780 start-up projects in the past 20 years, first at the Center for Technology Transfer and later at the Founders Office. For many years we advised an average of 35 prospective start-up projects per year, but in the past three years since we began receiving funding from the „EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship“ program, this amount has more than doubled to an average of 80 projects per year.

These start-up projects resulted in 218 companies, around 170 of which are still active today. This means that almost every third business idea led to the establishment of a new company and that a full 78% of them have survived. The years 2013 to 2015 saw 43 companies established from initiatives at the university, around 40% of them as incorporated enterprises.

To date, we have helped a total of 32 start-ups to secure funding from the Young Innovators, EXIST Business Start-Up Grant, EXIST Transfer of Research, and Go-Bio programs. These programs have contributed around 12 million Euros in spin-off funding to the University of Freiburg, including around 4.8 million since the launch of the EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship project in 2013 alone. In addition to this funding, which benefits the spin-offs directly, another 4.4 million Euros went to cover measures for promoting start-ups offered by the University of Freiburg, 1.6 million of which came from the EXIST Culture of Entrepreneurship program. We have already received approval for an additional 0.5 million Euros in funding over the next two years to continue the project.

In the newly created area of transfer coaching, we have already supervised more than 40 research projects on a wide range of topics and in various phases of implementation. This service has increased awareness for fields of application and motivated many researchers to tackle the issue. The transfer coaching service has also led to higher approval rates for external funding proposals.
We have organized 156 events with more than 3900 participants in the past three years, ranging from one-off lectures and specific courses like our lecture series to informal get-togethers and award ceremonies, such as that for the Startinsland business competition. The main aims of the various event formats are to provide information on topics related to self-employment and start-up businesses, to increase awareness for them, and to provide relevant qualifications for interested researchers.

**Award-winning start-ups**

Eighteen university spin-offs have received a total of 37 awards in start-up competitions and contests in the past three years. The nomination of Averbis GmbH as a finalist for the German Start-Up Prize in the category “start-up of the year” is certainly one of the standout results, since only three companies are nominated for this national award.

In the following, we would like to list just a few of the start-ups that have won awards in the past three years.

**Averbis GmbH**
- One of three finalists in the “start-up of the year” (“Aufsteiger”) category of the German Start-Up Prize (Deutscher Gründerpreis), 2013

**BioFluidix GmbH**
- First prize in the STEP Awards, 2015

**Cytena GmbH**
- Third place in the business plan phase of the Science4Life Venture Cup, 2014
- FAIM 2015 grant
- First place in the “start-up” category at the CyberOne Hightech Awards, 2015

Pascal Benoit, Hendrik Klosterkemper, and Simon Fey; Enit Energy IT Systems GmbH, Freiburg; Increasing energy efficiency in industrial plants using the OpenMUC technology

Jürgen Burger, Normann Kilb and Tobias Herz; immune2day, University of Freiburg/ZBSA; Identifying and producing vaccine candidates using a biomolecule copier
Enit Energy IT Systems GmbH
- First prize in the second round of the “IKT Innovativ” competition, 2014
- First place in the business plan phase of Startinsland in the “innovations from science” category, 2014
- First place in the Digital Innovations start-up competition, 2014
- Freiburg Innovation Prize, 2015

FIFTY2 Technology GmbH
- Second place in the business plan phase of Startinsland in the “innovations from science” category, 2014

IONERA Technologies GmbH
- Finalist in the concept phase of the Science4Life Venture Cup, 2013
- Finalist at the CyberOne Hightech Awards, 2013
- Finalist in the business plan phase of the Science4Life Venture Cup, 2013
- Winner of the Achema Innovation Award in the “measurement technology” category, 2015

SmartExergy WMS GmbH
- Baden-Württemberg Environmental Technology Award in the “process measurement and control technology” category, 2013
- Second place in the start-up category at the CyberOne Hightech Awards, 2013
- Finalist in the concept phase of the Science4Life Venture Cup, 2013

Telocate GmbH
- Winner of the grand prize in the first round of the “IKT Innovativ” competition, 2014
- Finalist in the first phase of the Start2Grow business plan competition, 2014
- Finalist in the second phase of the Start2Grow business plan competition, 2014
How can I stay in contact after I’ve left Freiburg?

After completing your studies, you can keep in touch with the University of Freiburg with Alumni Freiburg. Through contact with Alumni-Clubs worldwide, Alumni Freiburg organises regional meetings with former students. The club’s programme includes scholarly presentations as well jointly held visits to cultural events and opportunities to network. In addition, Alumni Freiburg regularly invites former students to international Alumni Meetings in Freiburg. Further information is available at:

Alumni Freiburg
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg
Haus „Zur lieben Hand“
Löwenstr. 16
79098 Freiburg
www.alumni.uni-freiburg.de
Tel.: +49 (0)761/203-4229
e-mail: alumni@uni-freiburg.de

Alumni Club North America
Jeffrey Himmel
President
e-mail: jeffrey@artcosteel.com

London Alumni Chapter
Daniel Celentano
Alumni Ambassador UK
e-mail: daniel.celentano@Evercore.com