

# ***IMPACT REPORT***

**2023**

LETTER FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

# 10 Years and counting

Welcome to our yearly Impact Report! This report marks 10 years of Impact Hub Berlin, and 2023 saw so many new projects and beginnings that it felt like a decade itself.

Impact Hub Berlin is a community, incubator, accelerator, coworking and event space with impact at its core. In short, we're the Berlin hub for companies and organisations that make the world a better place.

Our world desperately needs solutions that can scale, fast. Nature



and communities worldwide suffer from the accelerating effects of climate change and rapidly growing inequalities. Simultaneously an increasing number of entrepreneurs are striving to make a positive impact on people and the planet. Our business is to support their journey to success, and make sure their solutions scale at least as fast as our collective challenges.

We are building an impact ecosystem where they can collaborate and grow. Key to achieving that, are the programmes that we run, fostering collaboration among entrepreneurs, corporate players, and the public sector.

At our first Impact Entrepreneurship Forum last September, Robert Habeck, Vice Chancellor and Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, championed impact entrepreneurship in his keynote and introduced Germany's first National Strategy for Social Innovation and Public Benefit Enterprises. This marked a new chapter for the impact scene — a chapter of new seriousness and scale. This report offers just a glimpse into it.

In this report, you will read about our events and the uplifting mutual support of our community, the growing impact of our programmes, and the circular story of our award-winning space. There is a clear red thread running through the chapters of this report and our story of the last 10 years — a thread of continuous growth in size and professionalism.

This growth is not only true for us but for the impact economy. Across our sector, we saw clear signs of rising maturity and professionalism in 2023. From the increasing number of funds created to the emergence of the first unicorns - or shall we say zebracorns - in climate tech, notably members 1KOMMA5°, and the changing reporting requirements that increase pressure and speed in sustainability topics in the corporate world. We are thrilled about the growing impact these initiatives bring and look forward to building upon them with you in the years to come.

**The momentum is here. Let's make the most of it. Together!**

Héloïse Le Masne, Leon Reiner & Alexander Tillack  
*Leadership Team at Impact Hub Berlin*

---

**INDEX**

**4** **MAKING  
IMPACT WORK**

**8** **IMPACT  
ECOSYSTEM**

**11** **STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIPS**

**15** **PROGRAMMES &  
SUCCESS STORIES**

**23** **IMPACT ENTREPRE-  
NEURSHIP FORUM**

**26** **THE HOUSE  
OF IMPACT**

**30** **WHAT'S  
NEXT**

# MAKING IMPACT WORK

with startups, corporations  
and public support.

## In Numbers

Our impact ecosystem is an inspiring centre for the impact economy grounded in the values of courage, trust, and collaboration. Through strategic alliances, innovation thrives.

Every connection we foster and every space for collaboration that we create is a planted seed. And while we care for our seeds, and for maintaining the ecosystem, their growth and the partnerships that sprout from them are the result of collective action. Let's dive into what growth looked like for our community in 2023.

# Planting seeds

**90<sup>+</sup>**

in-house events hosted with

**3000<sup>+</sup>**

Attendees and

**36**

Stage speeches at external events

**9** programmes with...



**347**

participants from 88 startups



**69**

industry mentors giving +700 hours of support



**125**

FINTA programme participants

# Planting seeds for a forest

**630+**

impact innovators  
in the community

**1** member reaching  
zebraCorn status\*.  
Congratulations:  
**1KOM  
MA5°**

\*1bn market valuation  
→ LEARN MORE

**>10000**

introductions made  
in our community

**300+**

between startups  
and corporates

**171**

between startups and  
impact investors

**6**

corporate  
partners plus

**101**

organisations  
engaged in various  
activities



LUFTHANSA GROUP



enpact

BANK OF AMERICA



# Planting seeds for a forest to grow

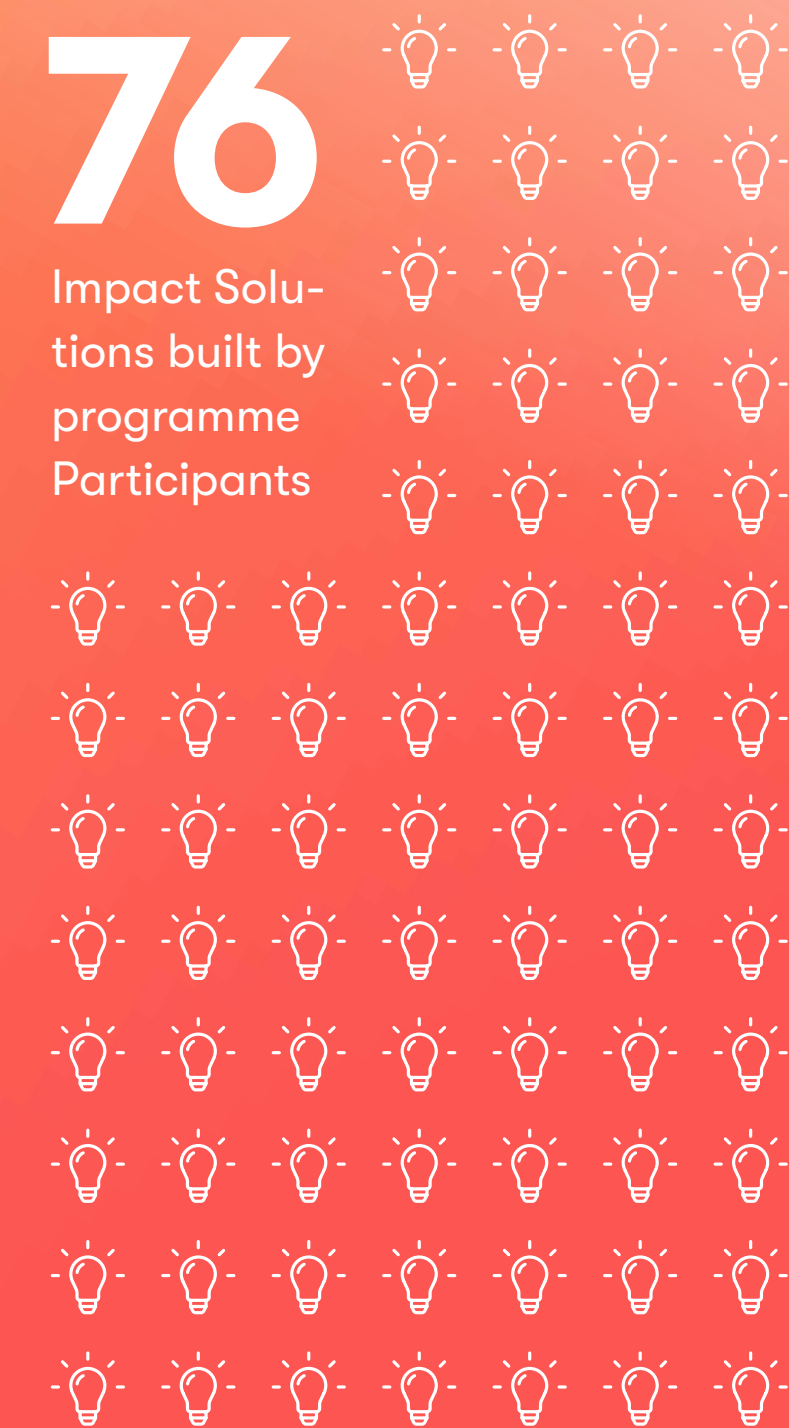
300+

Jobs created by the founders in the community and programmes



76

Impact Solutions built by programme Participants



10 years of building and  
curating an impact community

# IMPACT ECOSYSTEM



— IMPACT ECOSYSTEM

# 10 years

of building and curating a community of impact practitioners, resulting in today's active ecosystem geared at radical collaboration. Two pathways to impact are the basis of our ecosystem approach.

## ENTREPRENEURIAL PATHWAY

Contribute to the success of impact ventures that pioneer and scale solutions to the most pressing issues of our time

## COLLABORATION PATHWAY

Foster large-scale partnerships to mainstream impact solutions and the systems change they promote



How our ecosystem approach works in our video  
→ WATCH THE VIDEO

# Impact Ecosystem

Our impact ecosystem is a network of trusted partners and collaborators who are focused on impact.

We are uniting pioneering startups, established corporations, research institutions, network partners, leading consulting and legal firms, as well as supportive political organi-

sations and influential media. Through Events, Community Building, accelerators and incubators we connect and enable collaboration to make impact work.



COLLABORATION PATHWAY

# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

COLLABORATION PATHWAY

# Impact through collaboration

Through Impact Hub Berlin's unique ecosystem, startups and more established companies benefited from distinct perspectives and active insights into new business, leading to scalable impact. With the support of organisations, especially our Ecosystem Partners Miele and Rentenbank, diverse engaging activities were carried out:



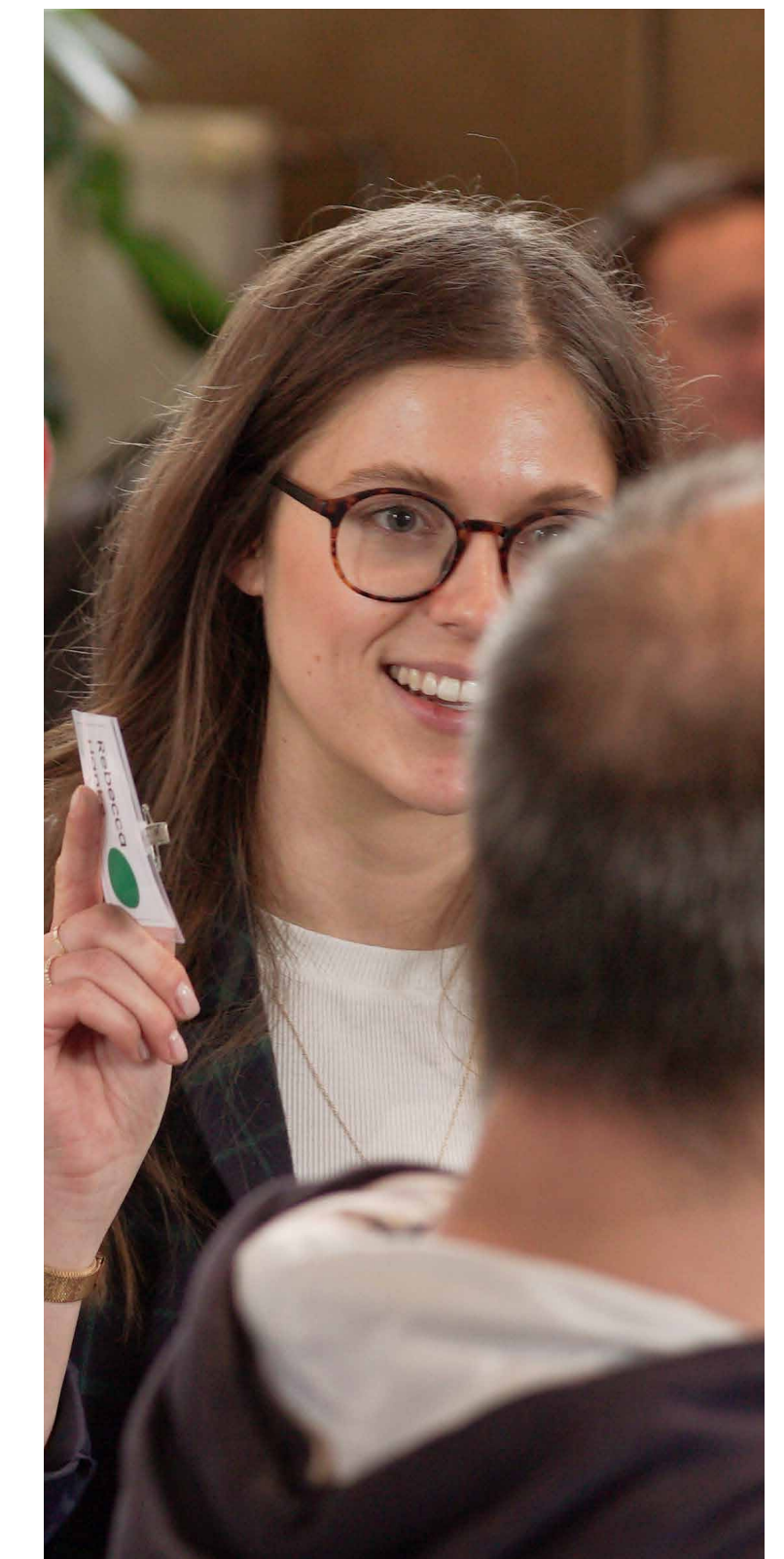
Circular Economy Online Hackathon



Community Cooking event on Food & Belonging  
→ [LEARN MORE](#)



Global Refugee Day, a collaboration with members, Kiron and Jobs4Refugees → [LEARN MORE](#)



Circular Appliance workshop with Miele, April 2023 → [LEARN MORE](#)



Climate KIC Women in Greentech event → [SEE OUR INSTA POST](#)



Sustainable Food Ecosystem tour of Berlin with Bethmann Bank → [READ MORE](#)



Startup matchmaking with a deal flow of 50 high-potential evaluated startups

Trend reports:  
Circular Economy → [READ](#)  
and Sustainable Food → [READ](#)



“

In order to keep improving in terms of sustainability, we also need strong partnerships and exchanges with innovative minds outside the company, and that's exactly what the collaboration with Impact Hub Berlin offers.”

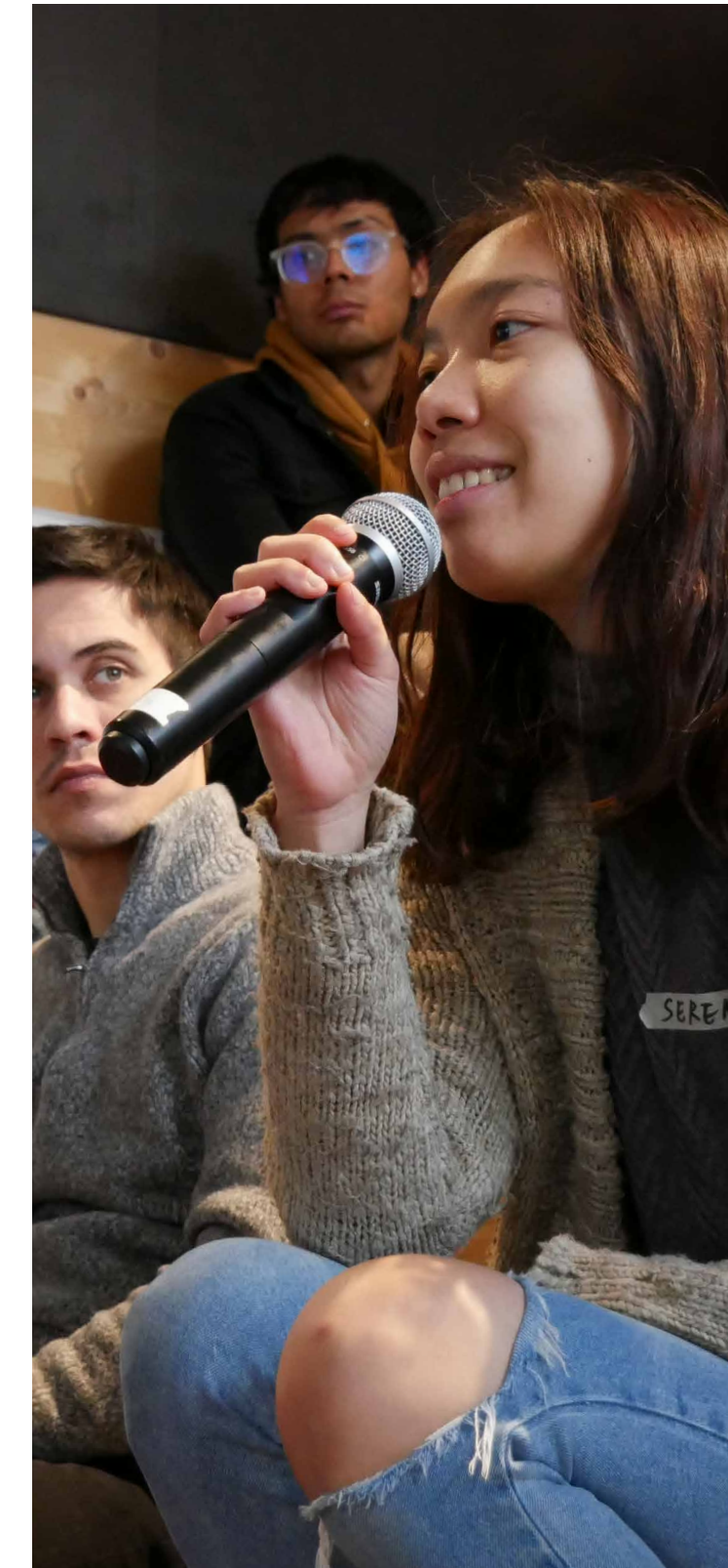
**Christoph Wendker**  
Vice President Corporate Sustainability and Regulatory Affairs at Miele

“

I highly valued the opportunity to host a closing project event at Impact Hub, which was a wonderful experience. The assistance from the Empower Now team was crucial in making the event successful. Additionally, I enjoyed getting to know the Impact Hub community better, and this experience influenced my decision to subscribe and become more actively involved”

**Federica Cecalupo**  
Founder of Hildashaus

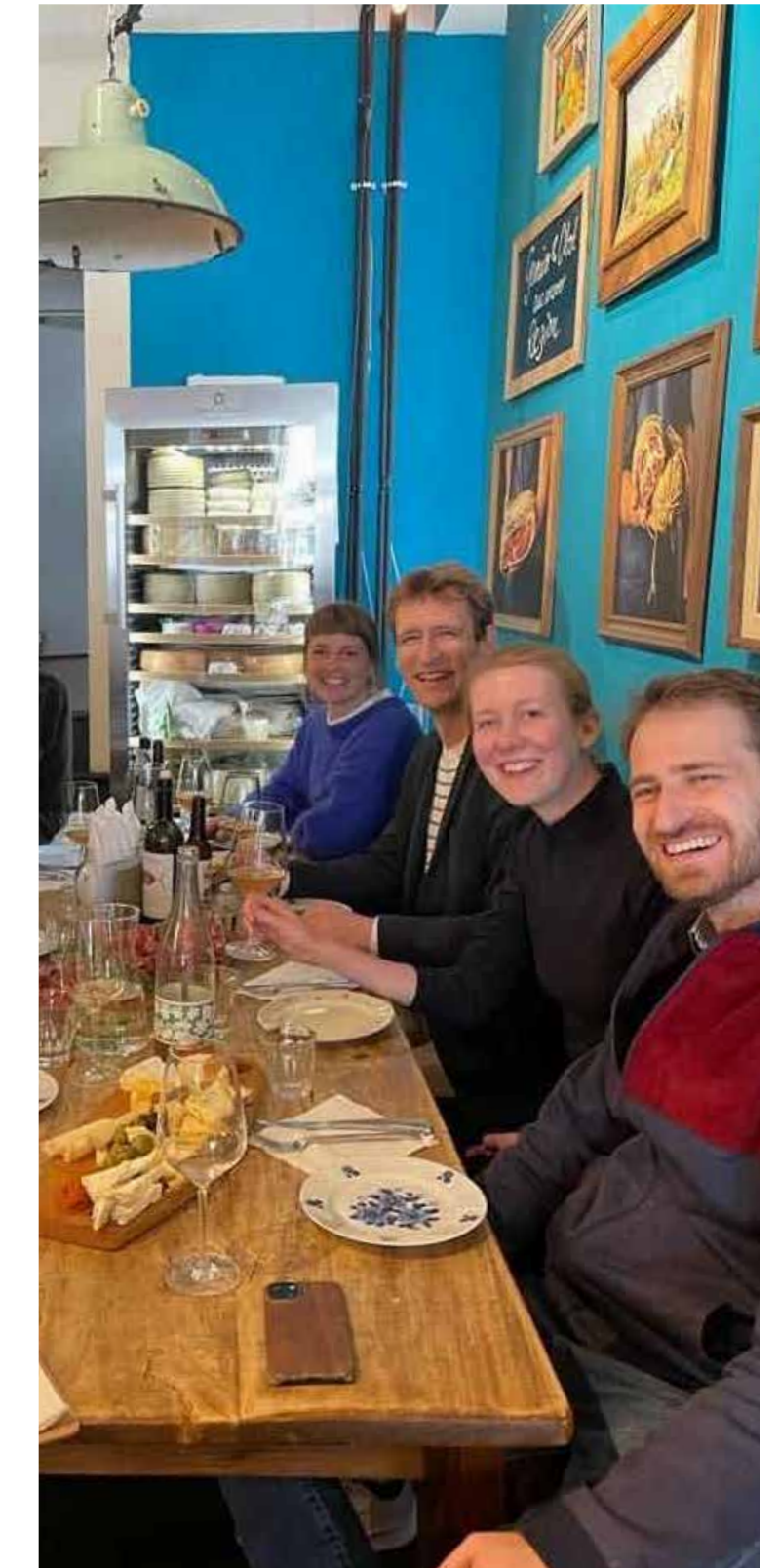
Sustainable Food  
Stakeholder Map → [READ](#)



Startup Migrants. Startup Pre-school Workshop → [READ MORE](#)



LGBTQIA+ inclusion workshop



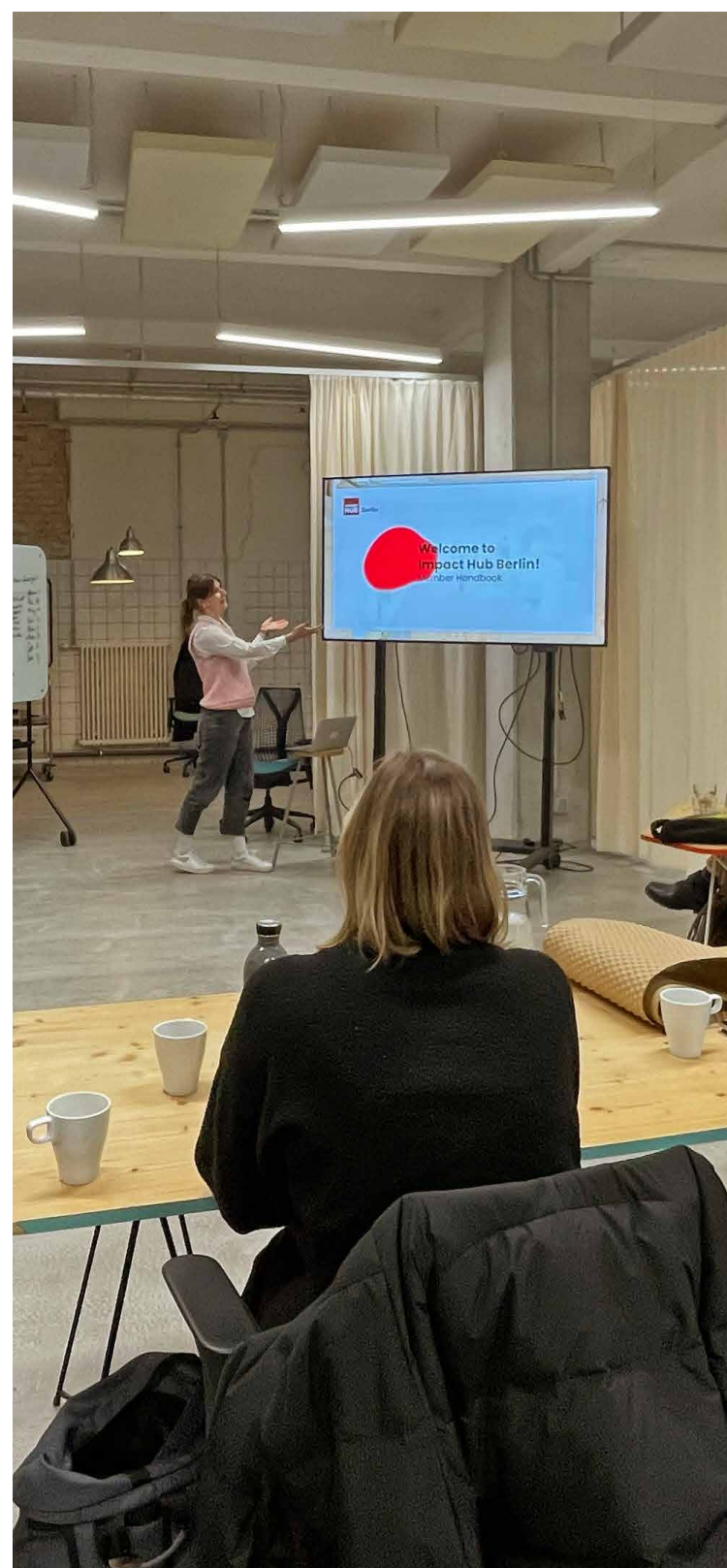
Launch of a “Stammtisch” for food networks in Berlin, with 4 meetups



ENTREPRENEURIAL PATHWAY

# PROGRAMMES & SUCCESS STORIES

In 2023, we ran nine programmes focused on scaling impact, from incubators and accelerators to investor matchmaking formats and internal innovation programmes for corporations. Our programmes empower startups and their partners to design partnerships that work best for their needs and capabilities. Let's dive into what this looked like in practice.



## PROGRAMME

# Impact Accelerator

A thematically focused accelerator aimed to improve impact startups' growth trajectory through a focus on industry partnerships in two tracks.

The Impact Accelerator was made possible thanks to funding provided by the European Union and the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Action as part of the REACT-EU initiative.

### Main activities

- Investor matchmaking
- Community Showcase

### Teams were coached on

- + Business Model Canvas
- + Fundraising
- + B2B Sales
- + Customer Acquisition
- + Scaling
- + Product Management

## IMPACT TOPIC

Track 1 impact topic: Sustainable Packaging

Track 2 impact topic: Food Waste

6 WEEKS

per track

11 STARTUPS

20 FOUNDERS

9 FINTA\* FOUNDERS

## FUNDED BY

Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Action as part of the REACT-EU initiative

Die Europäischen Union fördert in Deutschland zusammen mit dem Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Klimaschutz Programme und Projekte als Teil der Reaktion der Union auf die COVID-19-Pandemie, finanziert aus der Aufbauhilfe für den Zusammenhalt und die Gebiete Europas (REACT-EU) im Rahmen von NextGenerationEU.







#### SUCCESS STORY

## Skonelabs

Meet Skonelabs, the startup which developed a smart IoT device monitoring the quality of unpacked fresh foods and predicting spoilage, tackling one of the linear economy's most urgent problems - food waste. Skonelabs's smart IoT device monitors the quality of the food & predicts spoilage when installed near unpacked food.

2023 was a thriving year for Skonelabs. **The startup participated in two Impact Hub Berlin programmes** in 2023: an incubator and an accelerator. After graduating in Circular Together in May, the Skonelabs team was accepted to the Impact Accelerator food waste track. Later in the year,

Skonelab founders Nishit Agarwal and Siddardha Koneti became part of the nawi.Berlin, a project funded by the Berlin Senate which offers affordable office space and community membership at Impact Hub Berlin. **Still in 2023, Skonelabs raised a seed round of €150k from Antler.**



# “

“Beyond the financial and strategic support, the program's true value lies in its diverse community. These individuals constantly challenged us to refine our business model and product strategy, while also fostering a vibrant and supportive team culture.”

**Nishit Agarwal**  
CEO, Skonelabs



## PROGRAMME

# Circular Together - Collaborate to Innovate

Our longest-running incubator, with circularity and partnerships at its core.

As part of the programme, each Circular Together startup received the Berlin Startup Stipendium funded by the Berlin Senate allowing the teams to focus full-time on developing their solution.

### Main activities

- Cofounder matchmaking event
- Term sheet negotiation workshop
- Investor matchmaking
- Partnership readiness training on B2B Partnerships
- Showcase event

### Teams were coached on

- + Business Model Canvas
- + Fundraising
- + HR Management
- + Pitching
- + Impact Measurement
- + Financial Planning
- + Go-to-market Strategy
- + Legal & Compliance

## IMPACT TOPIC

Circular Economy

6 MONTHS

FULL-TIME STIPEND

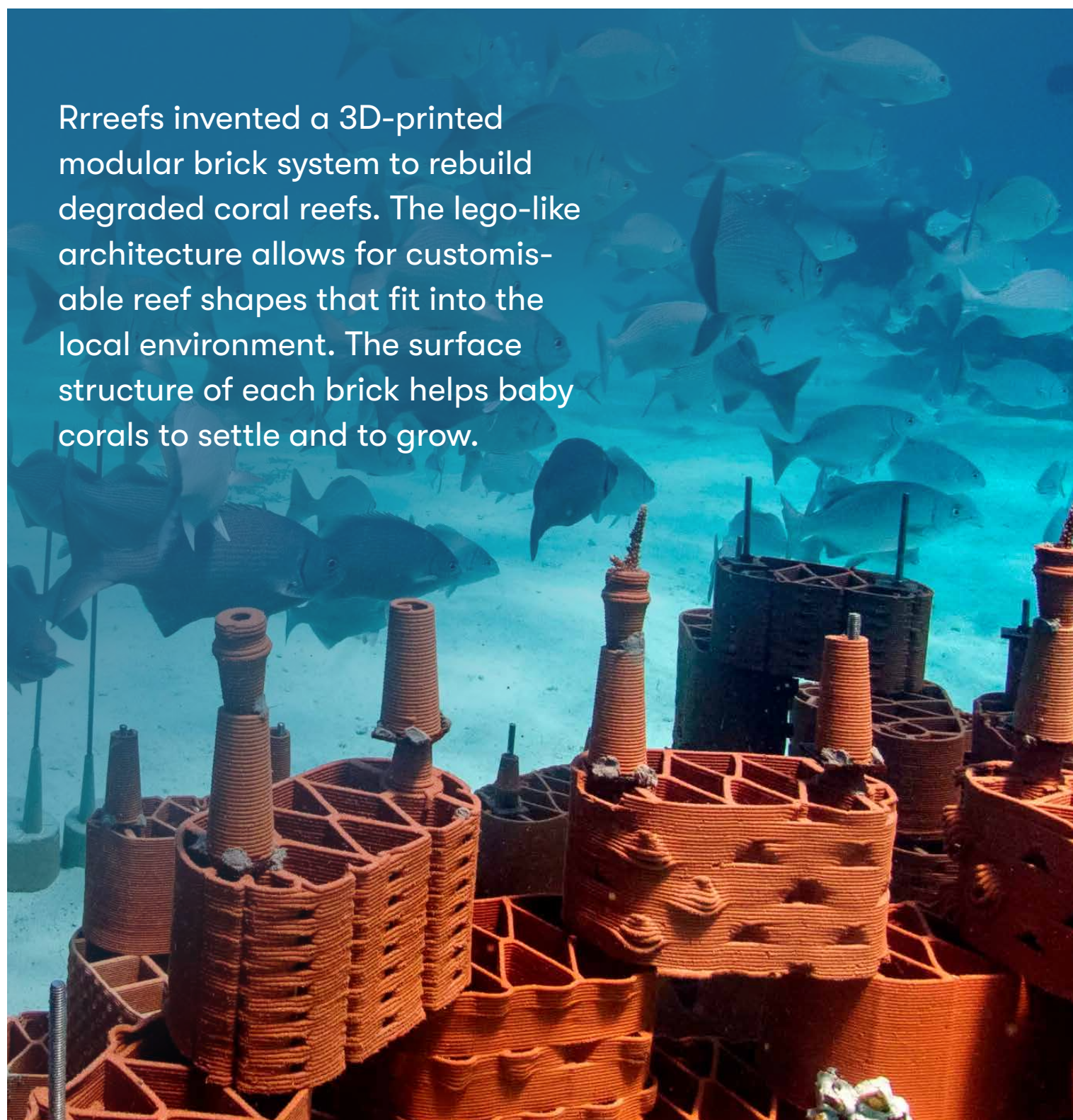
21 STARTUPS

37 FOUNDERS

21 FINTA\* FOUNDERS

## PARTNERS





Rrreefs invented a 3D-printed modular brick system to rebuild degraded coral reefs. The lego-like architecture allows for customisable reef shapes that fit into the local environment. The surface structure of each brick helps baby corals to settle and to grow.

## SUCCESS STORY

# Rrreefs

Climate change, pollution, and overfishing have killed about half the coral worldwide, leading to a loss of the underlying complex reef structure. Female-founded Rrreefs came about in 2020 to tackle this problem by rebuilding degraded coral reefs with sustainable materials using pioneer technologies.

As part of Circular Together's first batch in 2021, **Impact Hub Berlin supported Rrreefs** with market analysis, customer research and a project plan to seek funding and partnership. The startup also took part in our Social Economy Berlin project, receiving coaching in community building in 2021. Their remarkable trajectory speaks

for itself. **Rrreefs has active projects in the San Andres, Pujada Bay and Cooper Islands.** They have spoken in prestigious stages like Bits & Pretzels, ChangeNOW and NOAH Conference, won the PlanetHero award, got featured on National Geographic and raised € 420.000 in their first investment round from investors.

“

For the future, it is important to us that we can rebuild kilometres of reefs. So of course we have to grow, and we need to grow sustainably. We are not in it for the profit - we just want to maximise our impact”-

**Dr. Ulrike Pfreundt**  
Co-Founder, rrreefs



PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHT

# Empower Now

The first incubator for FINTA\* (female, inter-sex, non-binary, trans and agender) founders developed by FINTA\* founders with a focus on building a social business in the field of Empowerment & Participation.

### Main activities

- Mentorship from the DEI advisory board
- Experience exchange on crowdfunding with Impact Hub Berlin alumni
- Art night: participatory event and exhibition
- Empower Now showcase event

### Teams were coached on

- + Business Model Canvas
- + Fundraising
- + Pitching
- + Impact Measurement
- + Accessibility & Inclusion

**IMPACT TOPIC**  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

**6 MONTHS**  
with 6 months full-time stipend

**8 STARTUPS**

**9 FOUNDERS**

**9 FINTA\* FOUNDERS**

### PARTNERS



BEHIND EMPOWER NOW

## Our intersectional DEI advisory board

Building and hosting the Empower Now incubator is a group of FINTA\* with multiple discrimination backgrounds who have experienced the ups and downs of founding and running businesses. Our six-person advisory board brings personal, academic, and professional experiences as PoC women, (trans) non-binary persons, mothers, people with physical and mental disabilities as well as neurodivergent people. Their mission is to create an inclusive, space for collective learning and growth.



WADZANAI MOTSI-KHATAI  
(SHE/HER)



HENRIETTE SCHWARZER  
(SHE/HER)



DR. FOX MEGA  
(THEY/THEM)



KAVE BULAMBO  
(SHE/HER)



AMREI FEUERSTACK  
(SHE/HER)



HEDDA OFOOLE-KNOLL  
(SHE / NO PRONOUNS)



SUCCESS STORY

## Inklusive Achtsamkeit

Founder Mechthild Kreuzer's goal is to make mindfulness more accessible for people with disability and connect people with and without disability through mindfulness practices such as MBSR courses, workshops and training for organisations on creating more mindful spaces and events.



“

“During the programme, I was able to professionalize my project. I created a clear storyline and could create my first pitch deck. Also, I know what the next steps for the project are going to be. My mentor, the masterclasses and the team at Impact Hub Berlin supported me a lot with achieving those steps.”

**Mechthild, Kreuzer**  
Founder of Inklusive Achtsamkeit

IMPACT  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
FORUM

# IMPACT ENTREPRENEURSHIP FORUM

—— FLAGSHIP CONFERENCE

# An event that stood out

On September 29th 2023, we hosted the first Impact Entrepreneurship Forum, our flagship conference dedicated to the strategic partnerships that make impact entrepreneurship grow.

The full-day event counted with 4 stages and lots of networking between the 120 selected partners, allies, and impact entrepreneurs.





HIGHLIGHTS

# Outstanding speakers

Keynote by Minister Robert Habeck, who spoke about the first national strategy for social innovation and the common good economy, championing impact entrepreneurs and Impact Hub Berlin for their courage and important contribution to the German economy and society.

Recap of the Impact Entrepreneurship Forum  
→ WATCH HERE



KEYNOTE BY MINISTER ROBERT HABECK



BREAKFAST CHAT WITH ZARAH BRUHN

One of the driving forces behind the strategy - a milestone for the standing and funding of the impact economy in Germany. Bruhn shared her vision for the future of Impact Entrepreneurship both as the commissioner for Social Innovation at the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and as the founder of a social enterprise.



PANEL ABOUT IMPACT PARTNERSHIPS

Panel about Impact Partnerships with Zarah Bruhn, Dominik Campanella - founder and CEO of Concular - and Christoph Wendker - Vice President of Corporate Sustainability and Regulatory Affairs at Miele - moderated by Impact Hub Berlin's managing director Leon Reiner. A candid conversation on the common goals and different needs of impact startups and innovative corporates and how to work together successfully.



THEMATIC IMPACT TRACKS

The afternoon was dedicated to thematic impact tracks with focused round table discussions, panels and workshops with practitioners and founders from the fields of Sustainable Food, Circular Economy and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

# THE HOUSE OF IMPACT



THE HOUSE OF IMPACT

3500m<sup>2</sup>

Our coworking space is the physical representation of Impact Hub Berlin's values, with community at its heart.

We need to add that this heart beats in an extraordinary body: a 3500m<sup>2</sup> space in the historic Kindle brewery area in trendy and innovative Berlin-Neukölln.

**An award-winning, international lighthouse project of circular architecture**, the Impact Hub Berlin building is unique to Europe in its design and history.

3 Workshop rooms  
12-80 pax

6 Meeting rooms  
5-12 pax

92 Flex desk  
coworking seats

194 Seats in private offices,  
labs & maker spaces

140 Café & event  
spaces capacity

# Circularly built and run

Our space is the manifestation of circular construction principles such as reuse and flexibility of components, recycling materials and facilitating future usage and maintenance. **Approximately 70% of the materials and products used in construction and interior design are repurposed, recycled or natural.** From repurposed windows, ventilation pipes or parts from museum exhibitions to lots of wood and hemp, the design principle of “form follows availability” led to unique aesthetics and a reduced environmental impact.



## Electricity

Externally supplied electricity via Original Energie Ökostrom a combined heat and power plant operated by Berliner Stadtwerke, which can be operated with climate gas in the future, and, if necessary, battery storage.



## Energy Neighbourhood

The building is embedded in an energy concept coupled with the neighbouring building. Heat pumps with long-term and short-term storage units ensure a sustainable heat supply based on as much renewable energy as possible.



## Smart Energy

The areas of the Impact Hub Berlin are heated/cooled in a combination of conventional radiators and a ventilation system with heat recovery. The upper floors work with ceiling heating panels. The radiators are controlled by a Smart Heating System from Vilisto.



## Heated Water

Water is heated with a modern and efficient Solar Thermal System.

THE HOUSE OF IMPACT

# Drawing Circles

There is a German metaphor to describe something that has a significant impact on its surroundings. Taken from the effect of a stone dropped in a body of water, we say that things draw circles - Kreise ziehen.

In 2023 our circular coworking space has been drawing impressive circles, small and large, in the media and public sphere. From **awards and nominations to over 20 media mentions** and our participation in the 18th International

Architecture Exhibition of La **Biennale di Venezia**, with a total of 285,000 tickets sold, the second most highly attended Biennale Architettura in its history — our space gaining recognition and **making us proud.**

FRAME MAGAZINE

## “Co-working Space of the Year”

Our space received the highest number of votes among the jurors from the design and architecture community, labeling Impact Hub Berlin as the Coworking space of the year 2023.

BIENNALE ARCHITETTURA DI VENEZIA 2023

## “Trivial Circuit”

By contributing to the educational board game “TRIVIAL CIRCUIT” developed in collaboration with our architects LXSy, Impact Hub Berlin was honoured to represent circular architecture at the German Pavilion, entitled “Open for Maintenance”.

KATRINA YIN

## “An Impressive dedication”

Katrina Yin, Juror and design manager at JDS Development saw “An impressive dedication to, and a keen understanding of, the temporary nature of office fit-outs and their sustainable impact.”

POLIS AWARD

## Ecological Reality

Impact Hub Berlin at CRCLR House won the 23 Polis Award 3rd place prize in the section Ecological Reality, which honours projects that contribute to the public well-being of a city beyond its own scope.

GERMAN ARCHITECTURE MUSEUM

## Nominated!

Nomination for the DAM Preis 2024 by the German Architecture Museum

BLOOMBERG

## An Optimist’s Guide to the Planet

Game of Thrones star, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau visited Impact Hub Berlin to film an episode for his show “An Optimist’s Guide to the Planet,” showcasing the circular space and the revolutionary concept of circular construction by community members Concular. The show is a celebration of the many optimists saving our planet through business every day and around the world.

# WHAT'S NEXT

# SHARE THE IMPACT

Get in touch to learn how we can work together to make a better future for people and the planet.

Partner with us

Invest in Impact

Become a Member

## WHAT'S NEXT

# Challenge accepted

As we wrap up this year's report, we reflect on the new chapter of maturity and professionalism that arose in the impact economy, and how we can bring it one step further.

As **Robert Habeck** put it at our first Impact Entrepreneurship Forum, using economical means to solve the biggest problems of our time and the most pressing societal issues is **“an awesome combination.”**

In the previous pages, we have seen a promising glimpse of what that combination looks like, thanks to the brilliant startups in our community and our partners

Lufthansa Group, Miele, Bethmann Bank, the Berlin Senate and several ministries.

With **new and harder challenges** to address in the face of a steep climate crisis and stricter regulations, organisations look for a partner to co-build solutions and provide the access they need to social innovation. **We are looking forward to making impact work with you.**