

Helsinki

## **Several trump cards for Helsinki in the competition between startup cities - Slush brings growth entrepreneurs together again after a year's break**



Photo: Veeti Hautanen

The world's leading startup event, Slush 2021, will be organised at the Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre on 1-2 December bringing together the world's leading founders, investors, executives, and media for a curated gathering of 8,800 attendees from 90 countries.

Slush and the City of Helsinki have partnered together for a common goal: to support the growth business scene and raise awareness of Helsinki. The success of Helsinki depends on the emergence of new business and in attracting talent to the city. Slush and Helsinki are working together to make Helsinki a leading growth location for companies and entrepreneurs developing solutions for global problems facing the world.

In conjunction with Slush, the City of Helsinki will also present Helsinki Partners, a newly founded company that will promote the City's sustainable growth and build Helsinki's global reputation and brand.

## **Helsinki wants to be the best European platform for experimentation and creative entrepreneurship**

"Helsinki wants to be the best place for growth companies to do business in. The aim is to be Europe's leading platform for experimentation and innovation by 2025. That's why Helsinki is also supporting incubation services outside Slush, especially in areas that have a significant impact on the city's activities. Examples include the Helsinki Education Hub, Health Incubator Helsinki and Urban Tech," says Marja-Leena Rinkineva, the City of Helsinki's Director of Economic Development.

The Maria 01 cluster, established in Helsinki in 2016, is already one of the most important startup campuses in Europe. It has been widely recognised for its work, and most recently in November 2021, it received the President of the Republic of Finland's [internationalisation award](#). Helsinki is also promoting entrepreneurship and growth in many different ways. The city also aims to make it easier for families of skilled workers to settle here. This is supported by measures such as spouse programmes and ensuring the continuity of schooling for the children of international talent.

Long-term work with the growth business ecosystem has already paid off: the value of the ecosystem has tripled since 2015 and the combined value of start-ups already exceeds €25 billion. In the Global Startup Ecosystem 2021 (GSER) report published in September, the Helsinki region was ranked among the top 20 city regions in the world for emerging startup ecosystems.

### **Helsinki's strengths as a business location showcased in a variety of ways**

During Slush, the City of Helsinki is present at Helsinki Partners' showroom at the main Slush event in the Helsinki Expo and Convention Centre, as well as at the Helsinki Partners lounge located at the main venue. The lounge will offer a varied programme for different target groups from investors to startups and is accessible without a ticket to the main event. The showroom shares information about the services available to investors, businesses and startups coming to Helsinki.

The City of Helsinki combined the operations of two of its subsidiaries, Helsinki Business Hub and Helsinki Marketing, into a new company named Helsinki Partners. The newly established city marketing, investment and talent attraction company was founded with a mission to promote the city's sustainable growth and build Helsinki's international brand.

"Helsinki Partners' mission is to strengthen the city's success in an increasingly competitive international environment. The new company will help attract investment, events, talent and visitors, and build Helsinki's global reputation. Helsinki's international profile and ability to differentiate itself will be a key focus for success in the future," says Clarisse Berggårdh, who will take up her position as CEO of Helsinki Partners at the beginning of January.

In addition, the City of Helsinki is also involved in many side events organised during Slush, such as the Finnish Flow event at Ateneum and the Y Science event at the University of Helsinki. The city will also be featured at the official Slush Speakers Dinner at the Savoy Theatre, the Founders Day at Oodi Central Library and during the Media Day at the City Hall Events Tower.

Helsinki is also working with Slush to conduct a visitor survey for event participants, to gauge the attractiveness of the city for growth entrepreneurs and to further develop the city based on the responses.

## **With Slush, Helsinki is and will remain at the forefront of growth business development**

Slush is being held again this year after a year's break. Slush 2020 was cancelled as an on-site event due to the coronavirus pandemic but, despite the cancellation, the Slush community has not rested on its laurels during the pandemic, and has been developing new ways to network, such as the startup community 'Node by Slush' and the online media 'Soaked by Slush'.

*Slush is one of the most important recurring events in Helsinki in terms of economic impact. It brings to Helsinki the most topical people and discussions in the growth business scene, and ensures that Helsinki is and remains at the forefront of development. This year's event is planned for 8,000 people, which is significantly fewer than the number of people at Slush events before the coronavirus pandemic, due to health and safety concerns. The event is sold out.*

More information:

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