



Press release
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Summer of Startups: Best Summer Job Ever

This summer, as the rest of Finland is taking a holiday, a group of some 30 dedicated student entrepreneurs have been busy building their own companies. Backed up with coffee, wi-fi and a strong community spirit, these aspiring entrepreneurs are stationed at the Aalto Venture Garage, a 700 sq meter former industrial warehouse in the middle of the forest.

Summer of Startups, as the program is called, is all about utilizing the long summer days of Finland to concentrate on developing business ideas into real companies with the help of experienced coaches and visiting mentors.

The two-month summer program is arranged in cooperation with Aalto University, Finland's leading school in the fields of art, technology and business, and the student entrepreneurship societies of several top Helsinki-based universities.

During the summer, the teams have gone through the process of learning, iterating and changing directions. The visiting mentors have provided the teams with help, advice, referrals and connections.

Additionally, the Garage has been the stage for tough business negotiations and honest feedback.

"We are developing a corporate internal tool heavily focused on open source. At Summer of Startups, we've gotten many new insights from talking to film director Timo Vuorensola, of StarWreck, the most watched Finnish movie of all times and a pioneer in crowdsourcing. It's these kind of serendipitous encounters that make the Garage so special" says Olli Gunst from IncSpark.

"Furthermore, we're given the facilities to concentrate on taking our business forward, we've met with investors and overall, learned to act like entrepreneurs."

"I feel proud following how hard the teams are working. They're there till late at night until the security kicks them out" says Will Cardwell, head of Aalto Center for Entrepreneurship. "Our aim is to encourage students to follow their passions, learn from their mistakes and ultimately get them excited about working with startups."

Summer of Startups is supported by Aalto University and the Finnish government, but the student societies as well as the teams taking part in the program are given full freedom to create a curriculum that fits their specific needs.

"Summer of Startups has been the best summer job ever. I get to work on solving an issue

that I feel passionate about” tells Oskari Petas, a student at Aalto School of Technology and the CTO of eXperQ, a recently formed company developing a method to put customer feedback to a better use.

Multidisciplinary and multicultural approach are the keys for success. Between the Summer of Startups participants, there are ten teams and 35 students from ten different universities as well as eight nationalities and four continents represented.

The student startups vary from different web services to low cost renewable energy solutions and innovative home decoration.

More information on the Summer of Startups firms:

<http://www.summerofstartups.net>

<http://www.aaltoes.com>

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Summer of Startups is a summer program organized by the Aalto Venture Garage in cooperation with student entrepreneurship societies from three leading universities, Aalto, Hanken School of Economics and Helsinki University. During the summer the teams work on their early stage companies with the aid of coaches and visiting mentors. Summer of Startups employs 35 students in total.

Aalto Venture Garage is a an open work space for startups and entrepreneurs at Aalto University in Espoo, Finland. The Venture Garage is the home of a dozens promising startups and is the central meeting point for the Helsinki startup community with free meeting rooms and hot desks, resident serial entrepreneurs and investors and weekly events. For more information: <http://www.aaltovg.com>