

Media release
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Revolutionizer of startup-ecosystems Steve Blank visits Finland 5.-9.9.2011
AIM: FINLAND – HUB FOR HIGH-GROWTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

How to build Finland into a European hub for high-growth companies – a centre for the best know-how in Northern Europe that lures foreign investment capital as well as talent from all around the world here to build companies? **Steve Blank**, an experienced serial entrepreneur and a professor at Stanford University, aspires to understand the complicated Finnish innovation ecosystem to share his views on how to reform it.

Blank is a revolutionizer of entrepreneurship education and ecosystems and has successfully founded several high-growth companies. After commercial success, he started spreading and teaching methods on how to facilitate high-growth companies. His book “Four Steps to the Epiphany” is now a management-world bestseller.

The visit is organized by Aalto University and Aalto Entrepreneurship Society (Aaltoes), in co-operation with Sitra, Teknologiateollisuus ry (The Federation of Finnish Technology Industries), The Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK) and many others.

“The current change in entrepreneurial atmosphere could be a huge opportunity for Finland. In the past four years, domestic companies created over 50.000 new jobs - that means most of all new jobs created in that period of time”, says vice president of Aalto University, **Hannu Seristö**.

“Already now there are new Rovios coming up, for example, Finnish companies such as Microtask, Flowdock, Zen Robotics and Sofanatics have been recognized in Silicon Valley and in international financial press”, comments **Kristo Ovaska**, co-founder at Aaltoes.

WEEK OF EVENTS GATHERS FINNISH INDUSTRY LEADERS TO THE SAME TABLE

During his two-week visit to Finland, Estonia and Russia, Blank will visit the key players in the region, as well as a mixture of startup-entrepreneurs, students, investors and major corporation leaders. Participants will arrive from all around the world.

On Thursday September 8th, Blank will co-host a panel discussion “How to develop Finland to become the leading startup hub of Europe?” with **Pekka Lundmark**, CEO of Konecranes and the Chairman of the Board at The Federation of Technology Industries. Other participants in the discussion will be **Peter Vesterbacka** from

Rovio, Minister for European and Foreign Trade Affairs, **Alexander Stubb** as well as **Hannu Seristö**, vice president at Aalto University.

On Tuesday September 6th, Blank will meet the Chairman of the Board at F-Secure. **Risto Siilasmaa**, in his panel discussion “Angel Investors in the Finnish Entrepreneurial Ecosystem”.

On Friday September 9th, Blank will meet the editors-in-chief of the most influential media in Finland, hosted by **Hannu Leinonen**, Editor-in-Chief at Kauppalehti.

MORE INFO:

* The program for the whole week as well as background information on Blank: steveblank.fi. All the events are open to press (exceptions: Thursday morning’s workshop and Tuesday evening’s President’s Circle)

* Requests to interview Steve Blank and other requests, contact Henrietta Kekäläinen/ Aaltoes +358503448110 or Charlotta Liukas / Aaltoes [+358 40 508 35 48](tel:+358405083548)

Steve Blanks press conference: 5.9. klo 10-11 Otaniemi Aalto Venture Garage, Betonimiehenkuja 3, Espoo. More details to follow.