

Information about the KickStart Scholarship

THE SCHOLARSHIP OF PROTOTYPING

Between the innovation phase and the start-up project, funding is usually required for robust validation (including demonstrators and market/economic analyses), which is not covered by financial institutions or EXIST scholarships. With the KickStart scholarship, we support individuals or teams at Esslingen University who want to develop a prototype for a particularly innovative research or start-up idea.

What is supported?

An innovative project or start-up idea, for example in the form of a prototype. A prototype can be a functioning and also very simple model of the planned product, component or software. It can be, for example, an advance copy of a series production. The prototype is built and tested to assess the feasibility of a design and identify problems that need to be fixed.

The KickStart scholarship may be used for construction and materials needed for this, procurement of specialized parts, or specialized consulting services (see table of eligible and ineligible services).

Eligible	Not eligible
Material	Living expenses
Rental or purchase of specialized equipment (remain at the university)	Standard lab equipment, e.g., laptops
Fabrication of specialized parts	Personnel costs
Consultations	Personalized software licenses
Software licenses for the university	

Who is eligible for funding?

All students as well as employees and professors of the Esslingen University are eligible to apply.

Only individuals or teams of founders whose project/start-up is in the pre-founding phase are eligible for funding. I.e. the KickStart scholarship is exclusively for individuals or teams that have not yet founded with the idea. For example, ideas from doctoral theses, final theses, student research projects, preliminary work from EXIST funding or other projects are funded.

? How is funding provided?

Up to 7,500 euros in funding can be requested for the further development and testing of an idea (e.g. building a prototype or demonstrator, providing a proof-of-principle, etc.). In addition, preferential access to our MakerSpacES! and GründES! Spaces (coworking space) will be offered.

A Jury, appointed by GründES!, will decide on the selection of the scholarship holder(s) according to the following criteria. In case of a positive decision, the idea will be handed over to the funding body (BMBF). A final funding commitment will then be issued by the ministry.

Selection criteria:

1) *Motivation or reason for application:* What do you / you want to use the KickStart scholarship for? What is your / your personal motivation for the funding?

2) *Personality & Team:* What distinguishes you / your team? What competencies do you have (course of studies, experience) to successfully implement the idea? To what extent can you / the team shape the topic of entrepreneurship and innovation at the Esslingen University?

3) *Innovation level & unique selling proposition:* How innovative is the idea? How does your idea differ from similar ideas that are already on the market?

4) *Feasibility:* Is the project technically and organizationally feasible (within half a year)? Where are there potential barriers?

5) *Benefit for customers and society:* To what extent does your idea benefit society and the environment (socially, ecologically)?

6) *Market potential:* Where would you like to be with your idea in five years?

7) *Amount and duration of financial resources needed:* How much money will be needed over what period of time?

In addition, the following applies to the area of press relations/marketing:

- 1) Mention GründES! in your own press release,
- 2) Provide quote and picture of the scholarship holders / prototype picture / logo of the start-up (if available) for GründES! in social media and on the website for public relations,
- 3) Provide picture and brief description of prototype; and
- 4) Participate in other marketing activities as requested by GründES!

What does the scholarship look like?

The scholarship is not paid out in cash. Once the BMBF has approved the funding, the next steps will be discussed with the scholarship holders and the procurement of material and services (e.g. special consulting services, etc.) will be arranged by the GründES!. In the case of a scholarship approval, participation in the information sessions with important information on the implementation and receipt of the scholarship is obligatory.

Note: Intellectual property rights/copyrights remain with the university upon receipt of the scholarship and can be transferred back via transfer of ownership after the scholarship expires.

Who funds the scholarship?

The KickStart scholarship is part of a funding project of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) within the StartUpLab@FH guideline.

What has to be done?

The following steps must be taken for the KickStart scholarship:

- I Fill out application forms¹
- I Receive confirmation of the KickStart scholarship from the GründES! team
- I Complete and sign acceptance form within one week
- I Meet funding criteria during the funding period
- I Receive KickStart scholarship
- I Complete invoice submission 2 weeks prior to scholarship expiration date
- I KickStart scholarship ends automatically

¹ The application is submitted by a representative of the team, but the eligibility criteria apply to the entire team.