



AARHUS UNIVERSITY



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AARHUS UNIVERSITY

# BRINGS SOLUTIONS 2021

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COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION: CASES

THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

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# NEW SOLUTIONS BORN OF COLLABORATION

*“We’ve taken the first steps on the road together, and we can see results begin to bear fruit. You can read about some of them in this review of the business initiative’s results in 2021. But this is only the beginning.”*

Aarhus University has a long tradition of contributing to development and growth in society: our researchers and students contribute to the public sector, to private enterprise and to civil society.

We are committed to making our contribution even more valuable and visible – to realise more solutions to the major challenges and critical problems we face. The new sub-strategy for business collaboration and innovation we adopted in April 2021 reflects this commitment.

The sub-strategy is based on a foundation of collaboration between administrative functions, faculties, departments and the universities partners in private and public businesses and organisations – a collaboration we are constantly working to expand to involve even more partners to the benefit of Aarhus University as a whole.

The university’s business committee – which celebrated its first anniversary in December 2021, and which represents all five faculties – plays an instrumental role in this regard.

We’ve taken the first steps on the road together, and we can see results begin to bear fruit. You can read about some of them in this review of the business initiative’s results in 2021.

But this is just the beginning, and we’re looking forward to continuing our fruitful collaboration with AU’s research and teaching programmes, students and partners in 2022.

**Enjoy.**

**Lone Ryg Olsen**

Director of Enterprise and Innovation, Aarhus University

## THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE AT AARHUS UNIVERSITY

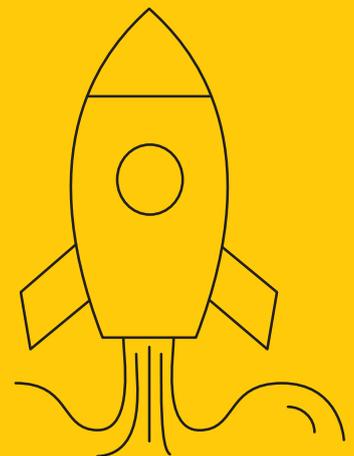


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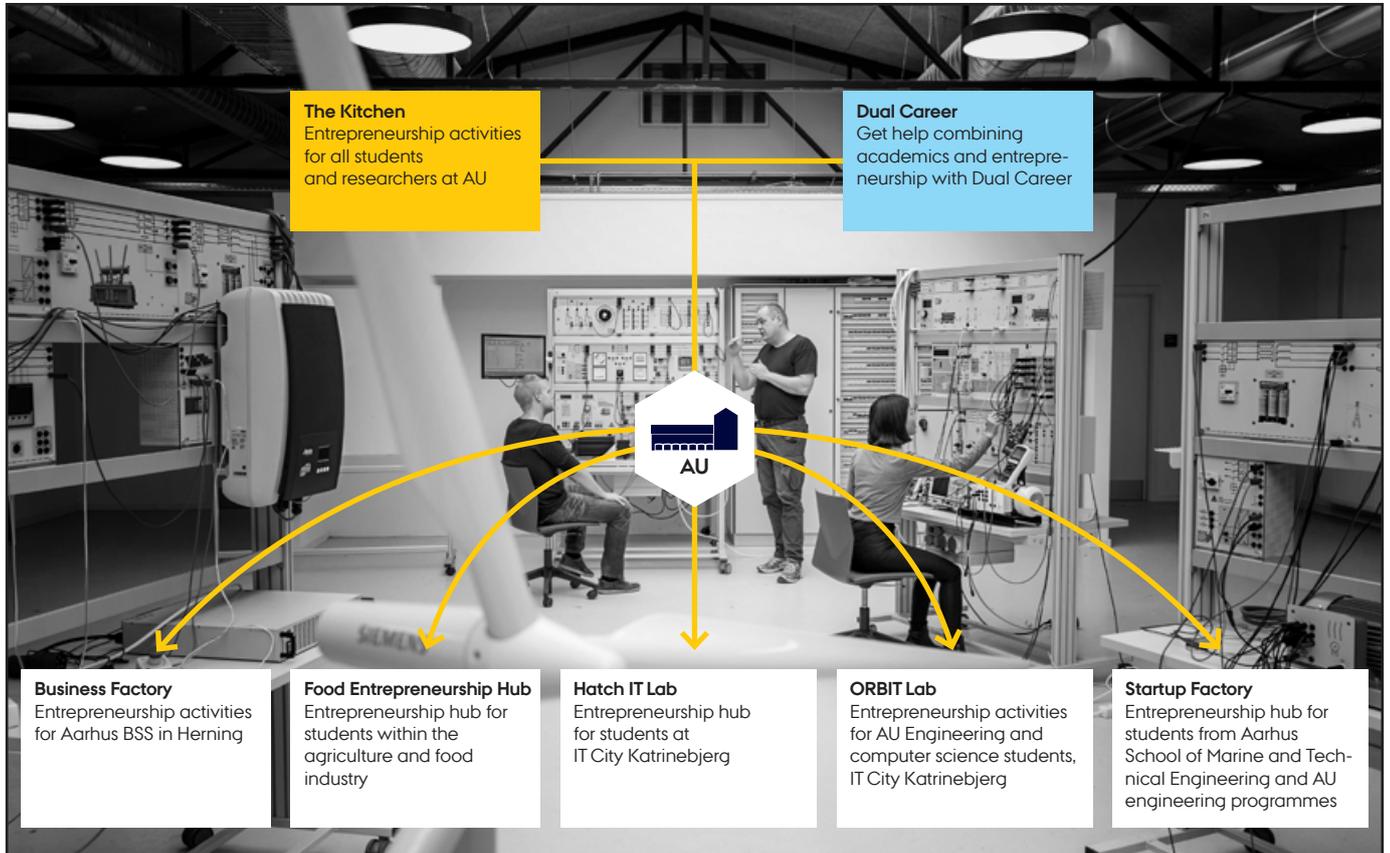
- **Kurt Nielsen**  
Vice-dean  
Faculty of Technical Sciences
- **Thomas G. Jensen**  
Head of Department  
Department of Biomedicine
- **Jørgen Bræchner Jespersen**  
Special Adviser  
Faculty of Natural Sciences
- **Unni From**  
Head of School  
School of Communication and Culture – Media Studies
- **Lone Ryg Olsen**  
Chair of the Business Committee  
Director, Enterprise and Innovation
- **Kirsten Jensen**  
Head of the Office of Business Collaboration  
Enterprise and Innovation
- **Per Baltzer Overgaard**  
Vice-dean  
Aarhus BSS

On 1 January 2022, Niels Mejlgaard will join the business committee as new vice-dean of Aarhus BSS. We would like to thank Per Baltzer Overgaard for his contributions over the past few years.

# ENTREPRENEURS CREATE GROWTH IN SOCIETY



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT AU



**585**  
DKK MILLION



THE LARGEST INVESTMENTS IN AU SPINOUTS IN 2021  
MUNA THERAPEUTICS, RADISURF AND ISD IMMUNOTECH

**255**



STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS INVOLVED IN  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUBS IN 2021

**3,254**



RESEARCHERS AND STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN EVENTS  
AT ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUBS IN 2021

## RISE IN COMMERCIALISATION

↑ Changes over averages  
for 2017-19.

**75** REPORTED  
INVENTIONS

↑ 4%

**12** COMMERCIAL  
AGREEMENTS

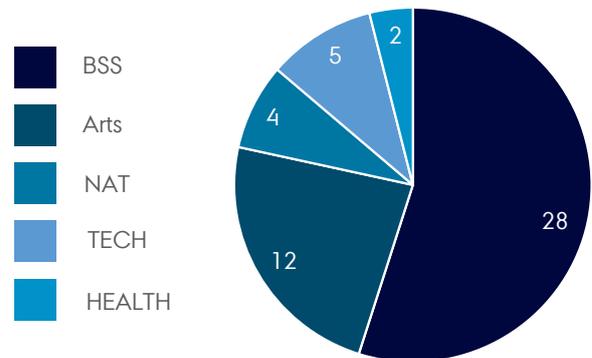
↑ 14%

**28** NEW PATENT  
APPLICATIONS  
(FIRST SUBMISSION)

↑ 33%

Source: Figures from TTO, 2020

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP COURSES 2020/21



Source: Aarhus University course catalogue, autumn 2020 and spring 2021



## AARHUS UNIVERSITY CELEBRATES STUDENTS WHO BALANCE LIFE AS A STUDENT WITH A LIFE AS AN ENTREPRENEUR

Aarhus University is a great place to study if you want to pursue a career as an elite athlete or entrepreneur alongside your studies.

The university honoured high achievers of both kinds in October 2021, and this kind of recognition for your dedication means a lot – in addition to the many opportunities to pursue a dual career at the university:

”It’s meant a lot, having the opportunity to practice and try my hand with all the practicalities involved in starting a business. I’ve mostly drawn on advice and guidance, but you can also postpone an exam or two once in a while. I haven’t done that, but having that option gave me the confidence to throw myself into my entrepreneurship project,” says Anne Ejlerskov, MA and founder of the company Aarhus Blend in.

The Dual Career programme offers a wide variety of services that can help busy student-entrepreneurs succeed. For example, they can take fewer ECTS credits in a semester or postpone an exam. They can also work with an academic assistant who takes notes for them at classes they can’t attend, in addition to supplementary classes in preparation for exams. Dual Career helps about 250 students per year.



## "ENTREPRENEURSHIP HAS HELPED US DEFINE OUR RESEARCH PROJECT"

Postdoc Ella Paldam is working on a new method of social learning with and for autistic children.

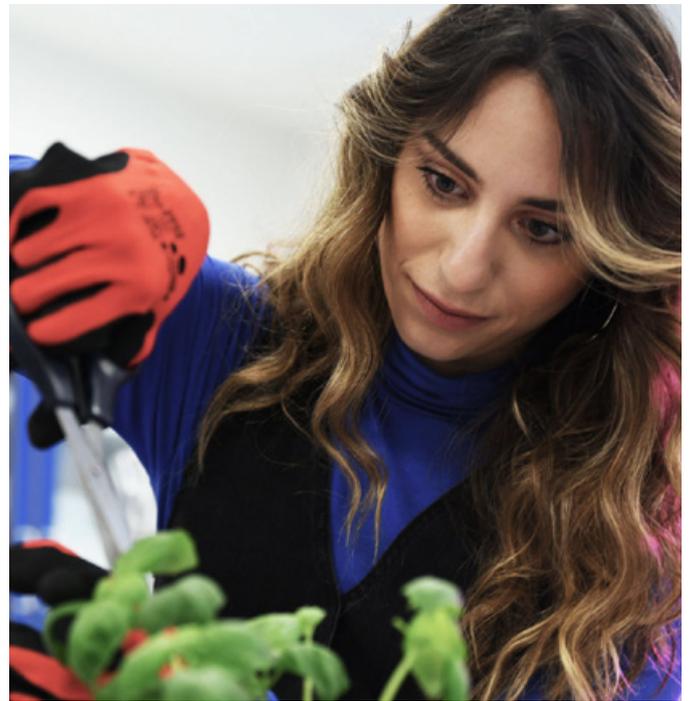
Entrepreneurial tools have helped her team find commercial partners, establish a fruitful dialogue and plan a different kind of funding strategy than what she'd been accustomed to as a researcher.

Ella Paldam participated in The Kitchen's seven-week programme, Validate your Business Model. The project she's working on is called CollaboLearn.

Her objective is to develop a new method of social learning based on play together with autistic children and their carers, teachers and parents in collaboration with schools in Aarhus Municipality.

*"I often say that my goal is to do "humanistic science for society". And entrepreneurship fits in well with that mission. Because entrepreneurship is one of the ways in which research can be applied and be used to benefit society. At the same time, I've found that the entrepreneurial tools I've been given have improved our research project and our collaboration with foundations. So it's win-win."*

Ella Paldam



## ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURAL METHOD CAN BECOME A GOOD BUSINESS

In response to an urgent need to develop forms of agriculture that don't exhaust the soil, contribute to deforestation or contribute to climate change, a new form of cultivation has emerged in recent years: vertical farming.

In vertical farming, plants are grown indoors under artificial light in vertically stacked layers. And PhD student Dafne Avgoustaki, an agricultural engineer at the Department of Business Development and Technology at Aarhus University, is helping to make this sci-fi idea a reality.

In connection with her PhD project, she started a business called VerdeCube, which offers a commercial software solution that makes indoor vertical farming efficient, flexible and smarter by managing the electricity consumption used to power the lighting systems the plants need to grow.

*"The VerdeCube system is an important step towards making vertical farming commercially viable. At the same time, we are supporting sustainable, efficient and local food production"*

Dafne Avgoustaki

## AU STARTUPS IN GOOD COMPANY

### MEDICQUANT

MedicQuant is a spinout started by two nanoscience PhD students. They have developed a solution that allows rapid and local tests for anticoagulants at the point-of-care to benefit patients – in under ten minutes.

*“Our technology had the potential to make a difference for both doctors and patients in the healthcare system, and it would have been a shame not to realise it. That's why we made the leap to entrepreneurship.”*

For the second year in a row, MedicQuant was nominated as the best healthcare startup in 2021 at the Nordic Startup Awards, and received particular praise and appreciation for their pitch at the Nordic Innovation Fair 2021.



MedicQuant is Line Debois and Malthé Hansen-Bruhn.

### EMPLATE

Emplate was established in connection with a project by students on the business development engineering programme at Aarhus BSS in Herning, and the company has been an active part of the university's entrepreneurial hub at both the Business Factory and The Kitchen.

This startup supplies software solutions to shopping centres and is working to become a global player on this market.

In early 2021, the founders were given a decisive boost towards international growth by a large investment from Heartland, Bestseller's investment fund.



Emplate is Simon Staack Jørgensen, Søren Gregersen, Kristian Lyhne, Nikolaj Dahlggaard and Christoffer Hauthorn.

*“I think it's great that Aarhus University can provide a framework that gives students – just like we were – an opportunity to test out their ideas in a commercial context. The university's investment in this area deserves some of the credit for where we are today.”*

Simon Staack Jørgensen, managing director and co-founder of Emplate



Textile Change is Ditte Højland, Emma Hostrup and Simon H. Rossen.

## TEXTILE CHANGE

Textile Change is a startup from AU that has developed a method of recycling mixed textiles, for example by separating cotton and polyester. The founders are engineers from AU who received support from the university's business developers at the Startup Factory at Navitas and The Kitchen.

In 2021, Textile Change joined the national partnership under the Danish Ministry of the Environment on recycling textiles to ensure Danish competitive advantage. The partnership, which also includes the Confederation of Danish Industry, the Danish Chamber of Commerce, municipalities and waste treatment companies, will work together to develop and test green solutions for the textile industry, which is one of the world's most polluting.

*” With our technology, we’ve made it possible to close the value chain, which means that we can help create a circular value chain that ensures that the collected and sorted textile waste doesn’t end up in an incinerator.”*

Textile Change has also received DKK 2.8 mill. from the Ministry of the Environment's MUDP programme to fund the establishment of a test system, and the team behind it received a 'Bright Idea' award from the Otto Mønsted Foundation for "a bright idea with commercial potential which has succeeded in combining a high level of research insight with strong business understanding". The award includes a DKK 250,000 cash prize.

## STARTUPS HIT THE JACKPOT IN 2021



**Aarhus Geosoftware**, a spinout founded by Esben Auken (Dept. of Geoscience) was sold to Seequent, who is the world leader in the field of geoscientific software development.



**RadiSurf ApS**, which was co-founded by current CEO Mikkel Kongsfelt of the Department of Chemistry and iNano was acquired by a global venture capital firm KCK in a multi-million kroner deal.



**Humio**, founded by Christian Hvitved, Geeta Schmidt, Kresten Krab and Morten Gram of the Department of Computer Science was acquired by American CrowdStrike for DKK 2.4 bill.



**In 2021, ISD Immunotech** received an investment of over DKK 35 mill. from Novo Seeds and the Danish Growth Fund. ISD Immunotech has developed a new treatment for the autoimmune disease SLE, also known as lupus. ISD Immunotech is a spinout from the Faculty of Health.



**Inotify** is a recently established spinout from the Department of Biomedicine, which creates new treatment options for infertility in women. The founder of Inotify, Karin Lykke-Hartmann, has also been accepted to the BioInnovation Institute's programme Creation House, which gives her access to expert advice and a convertible loan of DKK 10 mill.



## LARGEST BIOTECH INVESTMENT IN AN AU SPINOUT IN 2021 WENT TO MUNA THERAPEUTICS

Research from Aarhus University has developed into the company Muna Therapeutics, which received one of Denmark's largest ever biotech investments in 2021. The company has raised almost half a billion Danish kroner from international foundations to develop drugs against dementia.

Muna Therapeutics was established in 2020 by Associate Professor Simon Glerup and his team from Aarhus University with Novo Holdings as an investor. Muna has since merged with the Belgian company K5 Therapeutics, which was founded by the Belgian professor Bart De Strooper.

*„ It's fantastic to see how fast and explosive our growth has been. The new investors rubber stamp the work we've been doing at Aarhus University in recent years. There are people who really believe we can succeed with this task. And that the research we do at Aarhus University can be used in the treatment of dementia. This will give us a big boost,"* says Simon Glerup.

Muna Therapeutics develops small molecules that can repair dysfunction in the brain's nerve cells and in this way curb different types of dementia. The Aarhus laboratory contributes in particular with research into the protein progranulin, as a defect in this protein gives a high risk of developing frontotemporal dementia - the most common form of dementia in people under 64 years of age.

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## THE WINNERS OF THE 2021 GRUNDFOS AWARDS ARE...

Competition was intense at the Grundfos Awards 2021 in The Kitchen on 15 June.

The three finalists, **MinEjerforening**, **Aarhus Urban Legends** and **Textile Change**, pitched cases in front of the audience and a strong panel of judges with representatives from Grundfos and The Kitchen. These student entrepreneurs had all received EarlyCash awards of DKK 15,000, and the challenge was to convince the judges that precisely their startup had gotten the most out of the money.

**1ST PLACE (DKK 30,000):** **MinEjerforening**  
**2ND PLACE (DKK 15,000):** **Textile Change**  
**3RD PLACE:** **Aarhus Urban Legends**



## MEDIBITE FROM ORBIT LAB GETS A START-UP SCHOLARSHIP

In November, Lene and Mikkel from the ORBIT Lab startup MediBite received their first grant after convincing the judges that they deserved EarlyCash with a strong story and a well-prepared pitch.

In Denmark alone, more than 75,000 people suffer from eating disorders, and MediBite will make it easier for patients and practitioners to communicate, create individual meal plans and tailor treatment to the individual patient's needs. And with both personal experience and almost completed software engineering degrees, the founder team is well on the way.

## MASTER CLASS FOR LECTURERS: ENTREPRENEURSHIP THE AMERICAN WAY

Teaching students to be innovative takes well-prepared lecturers. This was the background for the master class in entrepreneurship for teaching staff in higher education, which Aarhus University – in collaboration with Innovation Centre Denmark in Boston and Silicon Valley – held on 9-10 August.

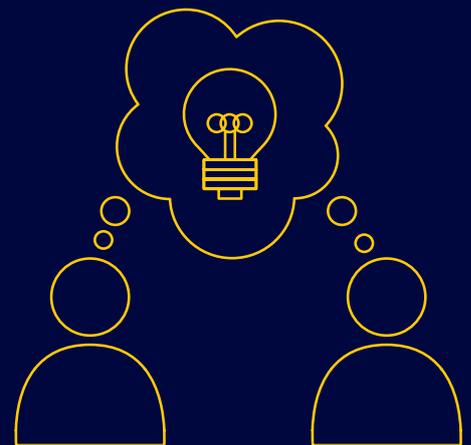
The aim of the master class was to equip the participants with knowledge and inspiration that will benefit the students and, hopefully, contribute to enabling talented young people to realise their entrepreneurial dreams when they join the labour market”



The master class was taught by two big names in entrepreneurship from UC Berkeley:

- **Ken Singer**, Chief Learning Officer & Managing Director
- **David Law**, Director of Global Academic Programming & Startup Programs.

# COLLABORATION WITH AU CREATES VALUE FOR MUNICIPALITIES AND BUSINESSES





## SEAWEED UNITES RESEARCH AND BUSINESS

From the establishment of AlgeCenter Denmark to a research project on methane emissions from cows and a spinout that produces sea lettuce for food, animal feed and skincare. These are some of the results that have been achieved as a result of collaboration between business and Annette Bruhn, a senior scientist at the Department of Ecoscience. According to Bruhn, unifying business and research is decisive if society is to solve the major challenges it faces.

*” It makes a lot of sense to me that my research will get out there and create value in society. This is one of the reasons why I became a researcher. And business collaboration is a crucial factor in the creation of value.”*

Annette Bruhn is involved in a number of projects centred on seaweed. And despite the fact that she’s aware of the myth that combining collaboration with industry and research is not ‘as respected’ as doing basic research without commercial partners, she has never had a second thought.

*” Clearly, my primary interest as a researcher is not to create a good business case – I want to do good research. So naturally, I only get involved in projects with partners where that premise is clear. But I’ve almost never found it to be a problem – more often than not, we play to each others’ strengths.”*

**Annette Bruhn**, PhD in marine biology from Aarhus University and senior researcher at the Department of Ecoscience since 2017



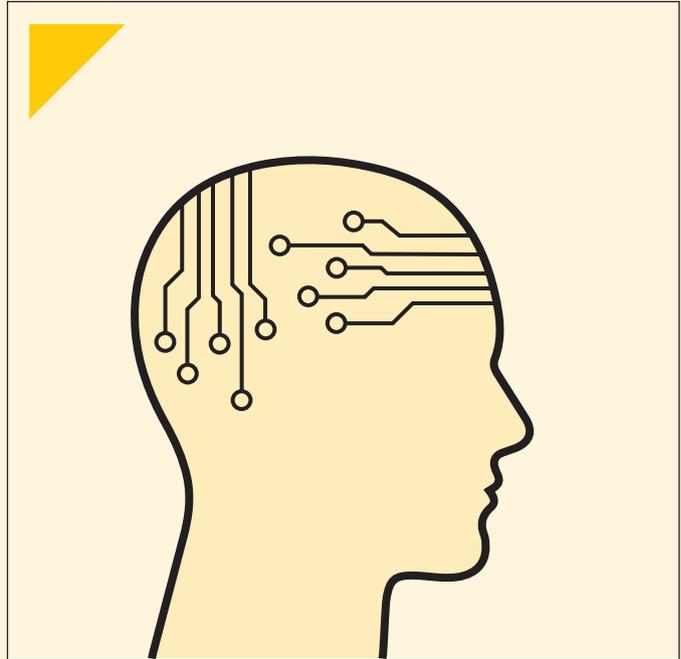
## DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION LAB: WHEN RESEARCH MOVES IN WITH BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

In September, Digital Transformation Lab (DTL) Ringkøbing-Skjern opened its doors at Innovest Ringkøbing Skjern.

The Digital Transformation Lab will bring digital innovation and the latest research from Aarhus University right to the doorstep of business and industry in Ringkøbing-Skjern Municipality, in order to demonstrate what the industry of the future will look like and contribute to the development of product prototypes through increased digitisation, new materials and production technologies.

AU's rector Brian Bech Nielsen explains:

*” Our collaboration with the Ringkøbing-Skjern Municipality is a concrete and very good example of how we make the latest knowledge, innovation and technology created at the university available to companies. I'm convinced that the AU Digital Transformation Lab will contribute to local development and growth to benefit local businesses and citizens alike.”*



## AARHUS UNIVERSITY CONCLUDES STRATEGIC AGREEMENT WITH MAJOR INDIAN IT COMPANY

The Department of Computer Science and the Indian company Infosys have signed a strategic partnership deal that aims to strengthen their cooperation on research and innovation, primarily within artificial intelligence (AI), cryptography and data security.

*” Infosys has shown a particular interest in our research on cybersecurity, blockchains, machine learning, visual analytics and data privacy, but the agreement is open to new focus areas. At the same time, Aarhus University is gaining access to an enormous amount of talent in India by establishing this cooperation.”*

**Kai Grønbech**, head of the Department of Computer Science

The collaboration between Infosys and Aarhus University follows on the heels of the strengthened political, economical and commercial relations between Denmark and India, who entered into a green strategic partnership deal in September 2020. The newly concluded agreement between Aarhus University and Infosys paves the way for a collaborative exploration of sustainable and green technology that may eventually include other research areas at the university

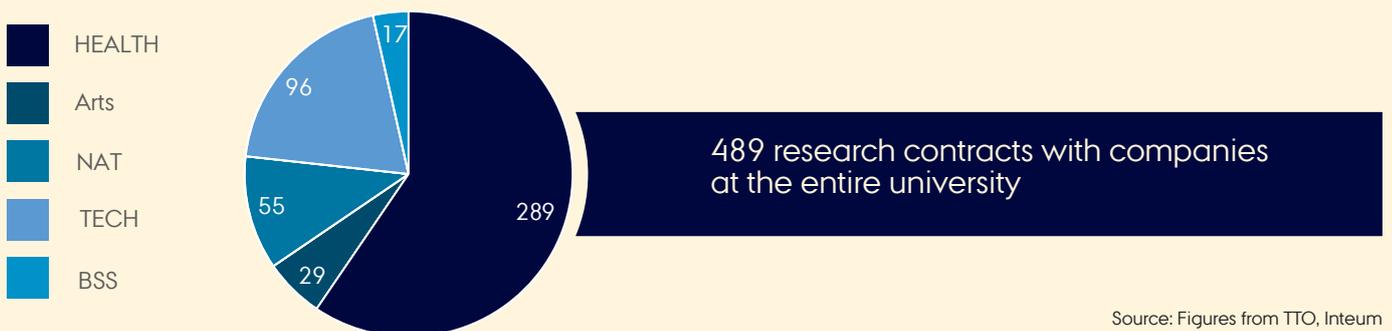


## ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST LIFE SCIENCE COMPANIES HAS CONCLUDED A PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH THE FACULTY OF HEALTH AT AARHUS UNIVERSITY

Thursday 10 June was a good day for life science innovation at Aarhus University: the German pharmaceutical company Merck visited the Department of Health and The Kitchen to sign a partnership agreement involving researcher exchange, collaboration on industrial PhD and postdoc positions and micro-grants for entrepreneurs within life science.

*”It’s important for us to give our researchers and students better insight into how research and development takes place outside the walls of the university. And with this agreement, we can offer our researchers competent sparring from colleagues in the private sector and introduce our students to alternative career opportunities. It’s extremely valuable.”*

Professor Thomas G. Jensen, head of department



Source: Figures from TTO, Inteum

## SME CHALLENGES: STUDENTS PROVIDE COMPANIES WITH A SUSTAINABLE HEAD START

60 students from a variety of degree programmes at Aarhus University took a break from Zoom classes for a day to generate concrete ideas and solutions to address some of the sustainability challenges SMEs are facing today.

The students were all participants in SME Challenges, AU's new case competition, which gives students a chance to compete to find the best solution to a case set by the contributing companies. The winning cases received both a cash award and the opportunity to get a student job developing and implementing the solution at a participating company.

One of the students who participated was Pernille Damgaard-Jacobsen, a BA student in education science:

*” I decided to participate in the SME Challenge because I wanted to explore what I have to contribute to solving real-world problems and get a sense of how I might bring my academic knowledge and competencies into play in the private sector.”*

The participating SMEs, all of which were interested in benefiting from the latest advances within sustainable business development, were:

- Nørhaven, printer and bookbinder, Viborg Municipality
- Rosenholm Slot, a Renaissance castle that hosts events, Syddjurs Municipality
- FOF, continuing education provided, City of Aarhus

One participant was the printing house Nørhaven from Viborg Municipality, a modern printing operation for which the environment and sustainability have been on the agenda for many years. Nørhaven participated in the SME Challenge because they wanted help in making their value chain even more sustainable, while at the same time strengthening their brand as a sustainable business.

*” We took part in the SME Challenge because we need a green business model that is properly integrated into our business, and that's something we need input on. Specifically, we would like to strengthen the reputation of paper books as a sustainable product made of wood residue that can sequester carbon.”*

**Mogens Larsen**, managing director of Nørhaven



### LABOUR MARKET-ORIENTED COURSES

	2018	2019	2020
Number of Master's theses projects in collaboration with business and industry	472	588	882
Number of students in fieldwork/work placement	1627	1,800	1,882

Source: Status report 2020 on Aarhus University's strategic framework contract 2018-2021



## STUDENTS FROM ARTS HELPED SOLVE PROBLEMS FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

For the fifth consecutive year, students from the Faculty of Arts at Aarhus University were invited to present their knowledge and skills to the business community in Silkeborg during the **Stay Relevant** Case Competition.

.....

“This is your chance to apply your academic expertise to strategic business development with a view to helping companies to stay relevant for their customers and partners.”

.....

This was the challenge presented by Stay Relevant to students – a challenge that about 120 students from the Faculty of Arts accepted, when the fifth Stay Relevant case competition, a collaboration between Aarhus University and Silkeborg Municipality, took place on Campus Bindslevs Plads in Silkeborg.

For example, one challenge was contributed by the local football club, Silkeborg IF: “At Jysk Park stadium, we have an average of about 3500 spectators. Our facilities are excellent and our results are good – so how can we get more people in Silkeborg to come to our stadium and watch our matches?”

Anthropology student Thomas Palle enjoyed the competition:

” I got to be creative and had to come up with a solution fast. This is something I guess I don't do that often, because we often have plenty of time to really think things through on my degree programme. Here we were allowed to design something relatable and useful that is relevant for other people.”



” I think we got a lot of good, innovative responses to how we can approach the issues we face. The students had some specific suggestions as to target audiences we hadn't thought of ourselves, and we'll definitely include those when we discuss it ourselves.”

**Pelle Mortensen**, project manager at Outdoor Institute



## AU CHALLENGE: "THE STANDARD WAS EXTREMELY HIGH"

Talented, dedicated AU students who participated in AU Challenge 2021 developed sustainable business solutions to concrete challenges to AART, Aarhus Airport A/S and Aarhus University Hospital.

The participating companies were more than satisfied with the students' innovative solutions to their challenges:

*"The standard was extremely high, and we could actually have gone with each of the three finalists. They understood our business and our challenges, and approached the project very seriously. Participating has been very fruitful and informative,"* says Nicolai Krøyer, CEO of Aarhus Airport A/S.

And what do students get out of spending their spare time finding the right solutions to real problems in companies?

*"The best part of the whole thing was the process and working together across disciplines – each of us contributed our knowledge, and on top of that it's great to have gained a new network that spans university"* says the winning team from AART, Philip Jess Teining, Daniel Peter Brosbøl and Niels Krogsgaard, who are studying civil engineering and cognitive science.

The winners of the three business cases were selected from among nine teams that made it to the semifinals, out of more than 100 students who participated in the annual interdisciplinary case competition.



## ENGINEERING STUDENTS CREATED INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR COMPANIES IN CENTRAL AND WESTERN JUTLAND

On the course in Technological Business Model Innovation (TBMI), students from the MScEng (Technology-based Business Development) programme at the Department of Business Development and Technology were tasked with designing or improving the participating companies' business models with a focus on technology.

In 2021, a total of 26 companies from central and western Jutland participated by presenting specific challenges for which the students had to find solutions.

TBMI is a good example of collaboration between the university and local business and industry: it gives students an opportunity to apply their knowledge in practice, while giving companies access to the latest knowledge and solutions to concrete technological challenges.

## CAREER DAY IN RANDERS

**ACADEMICS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN SMEs.** This was the message of Career Day in Randers Municipality on 22 September, where more than 25 companies and 220+ students and recent graduates met to explore new job opportunities.

Career Day Randers is part of the collaboration agreement between Aarhus University and Randers Municipality.



**PARTNERS IN SEARCH OF THE TALENTS OF THE FUTURE AT AU**

Why do companies like Netcompany partner with Aarhus University? According to Trine Tirsgaard, head of commercial concepts and communication, it's about a close alliance to ensure the labour force of the future:

*” Getting close to an educational institution, collaborating, and creating a balance in the supply and demand of the talents of the future is critically important to ensure Denmark’s competitiveness going forward.”*

**Trine Tirsgaard**, head of commercial concepts and communication at Netcompany, on the adoption of the sub-strategy for business collaboration and innovation.

Netcompany and Aarhus University’s collaboration includes working to attract IT talents.

**PHD STUDENTS AND EARLY-CAREER RESEARCHERS CREATE VALUE OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSITY’S WALLS**

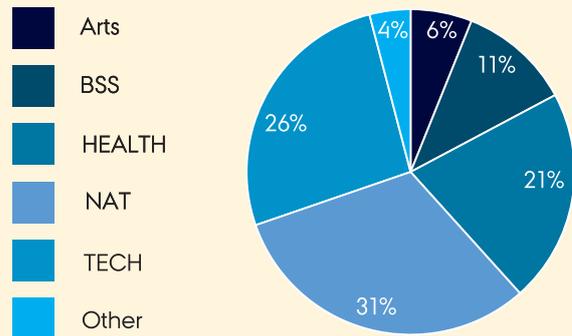
47% of PhD students and postdocs from Aarhus University apply their expertise in knowledge-intensive companies and public-sector organisations.

For this reason, Aarhus University offers a variety of services to help PhD students and postdocs clarify their career path.

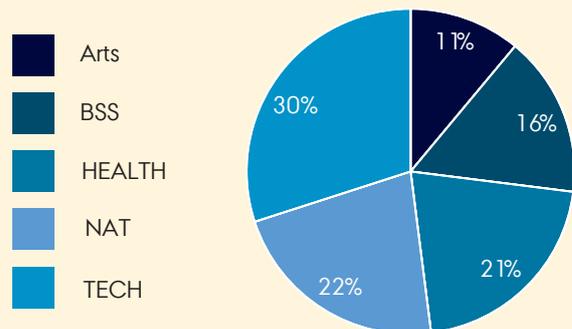
For example, in the fall semester of 2021, AU Career PhD & JR held 30 presentations at 32 different PhD programmes aimed at PhD students and postdocs with a focus on career development and career paths.

These presentations gave the participating junior researchers insight into their value on the labour market and provided them with tools to make thoughtful, intelligent career choices.

Career events for PhDs and junior researchers



Individual career guidance for PhD students and junior researchers



- **47% of all PhD grads** get jobs outside academia
- **75% of them** in large companies or institutions with more than 250 employees
- **59% find employment** in central Jutland

Source: AU Career PhD & JR

# GOOD FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS FOR BUSINESS COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION





## THE OLD LAUNDRY WILL BECOME A BASE FOR ENTREPRENEURS AND WILL HAVE EXTERNAL PARTNERS RIGHT NEXT DOOR

Public and private partners will have the opportunity to move into the University City to facilitate closer collaboration with researchers and students. Here they will be able to rent office facilities for employees who work with innovation and development in order to give them easy access to interaction with the university's innovation offerings.

These offices will be located above the old laundry, which will become a base for entrepreneurs in 2025, when they are relocated from The Kitchen. The new facilities will provide plenty of opportunities to build bridges linking external partners, researchers, students and entrepreneurs, as a framework for joint event and collaboration platforms.



## CRM SYSTEM PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT AT AARHUS UNIVERSITY

The Aarhus University alumni network has about 40,000 members. Creating and maintaining alumni engagement in such a large network is challenging. AU's CRM system helps by enabling the alumni coordinators to organise and administer the many contacts in the network.

Once central function that is crucial to alumni engagement is being able to send emails directly to network members informing them about offers, exciting articles about prominent AU alums, events and so on. The CRM system has a newsletter module that makes this easy; members give their consent when signing up for the network, so the module is GDPR-compliant.

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Ultimately, AU CRM will be the authoritative system for business data for AU as the system for collecting, maintaining and displaying data internally at the university.

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# INNOVATION ON THE AGENDA

## DENMARK'S POLITICAL FESTIVAL '21 ONLINE

As Denmark's Political Festival 2021 could not be held live, Aarhus University broadcasted an online programme from The Kitchen that included:



### BETTER CONDITIONS FOR INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT THE UNIVERSITIES

#### Participants

- Mona Juul, MP, Conservative People's Party
- Jens Joel, MP, the Social Democrats
- Mikkel Kongsfelt, CEO, RadiSurf, representing researcher-entrepreneurs at AU
- Simon Staack, CEO, Emplate, representing student entrepreneurs at AU
- Rector Brian Bech Nielsen, rector of AU
- Jacob Bundsgaard, mayor of Aarhus
- Lars Holm Nielsen, head of entrepreneurship and SME policy, Confederation of Danish Industry

### WHY ARE THERE SIGNIFICANTLY FEWER FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS IN DENMARK?

#### Participants

- Helle Neergaard, professor of entrepreneurship, Aarhus University
- Maria Lya Leerbeck, Forlaget Fortæl, head of secretariat for Bestyrelseskvinder and founder of the Ladies First network
- Otto Hausgaard, Senior Relationship Manager, The Danish Growth Fund

## EDITORIALS IN THE PRESS

20.04.2021 KL. 18:00

### Fremtiden for life science bor i Midtjylland

Region Midtjylland kan blive en magnet for talent, viden og kapital på life science-området. Spilles kortene rigtigt, har Aarhus og Region Midtjylland mulighed for at placere sig på niveau med Silicon Valley, Tel Aviv og Singapore som et af de mest innovative hubs i verden.



Tegning: Rasmus Sand Høyer

Director of Enterprise and Innovation Lone Ryg Olsen, AU  
Mai Louise Agerskov, INCUBA  
Mette Hoberg Tønnesen, The Link  
Struck a blow for the thriving life sciences environment in central Jutland. **JP Aarhus 21 April 2021**

### “THREE TIPS FOR A STRONG DIGITAL DENMARK”

” Collaboration, quantum leaps in knowledge and interdisciplinary talent will contribute to developing a strong digital Denmark.”

Lone Ryg Olsen, director of Enterprise and Innovation at AU  
Kristian Pedersen, dean at NAT  
Johnny Laursen, dean at Arts  
Served up three tips for the digitalisation partnership  
**Børsen, 11 June 2021**

### “DENMARK HAS POTENTIAL TO DEVELOP YET ANOTHER STRONG LIFE SCIENCE REGION”

” Companies that focus on biotech, pharmaceuticals and medical devices are becoming increasingly important to Denmark's prosperity and export. “Let us exploit the entire potential of the life sciences in Denmark to enable this sector to continue to drive growth in intense international competition.”

Lone Ryg Olsen, director of enterprise and innovation at AU  
Lars Bo Nielsen, former dean at Health  
Anders Kühnau, chair of the regional council  
Editorial published in **Altinget on 2 March 2021**

# WITH PARTNERS, WE CAN ACHIEVE MORE

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE ECOSYSTEM

The Link is based at Aarhus University's entrepreneurship hub, The Kitchen and brings together expertise in the ecosystem in a regional powerhouse under the leadership of Mette Hoberg Tønnesen.

The initiative is working to promote growth and innovation within the regional strengths of food, cleantech and the health sector in close collaboration with the new clusters, the strong research programmes and companies within these areas.



### BEHIND THE INITIATIVE ARE

- Aarhus University
- The City of Aarhus
- Central Denmark Region
- Unsilo
- Grundfos
- Færch & Co.
- INCUBA



Mette Hoberg Tønnesen

## CLUSTERS CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Fourteen new national clusters will promote innovation and knowledge collaboration between researchers and companies and pave the way for entrepreneurship and cooperation on joint projects. All clusters have AU representatives, and AU has an internal cluster network.

*” The business clusters facilitate wide-ranging interdisciplinary collaboration between knowledge institutions and create ideas for new research, education and innovation. Collaboration between diverse players in society creates new opportunities for digital solutions, climate adaptation, the green transition and a clean aquatic environment. The goal is to continue developing Aarhus University's research and education within water and energy technology.”*

Uffe S. Thomsen, TECH

*” I think that the most important benefit of participating in Copenhagen Fintech is that we – students and researchers within the field – can connect with and keep up with what is happening in the strong Fintech environment in the capital.”*

Thomas Pallesen, Aarhus BSS



## UNIVERSITIES WITH A COMMON MISSION

Universities Denmark has a new motor for innovation and business collaboration: the committee on innovation policy.

The committee brings all Danish universities together in a common mission to create a stronger framework for innovation policy, and in 2021 the committee has worked for more sustainable framework conditions and for more accurate measurement of the universities' value creation.

Among the next steps will be collaboration with the research policy committee on broader recognition of co-operation and innovation.

The committee consists of:

- Deputy Director Kim Brinckmann, UCPH
- Innovation Director Dorte Stigaard, AAU
- Director of Enterprise and Innovation Lone Ryg Olsen, AU
- Head of Research & Innovation Organisation Søren E. Frandsen, SDU
- Deputy Director Elisabeth Hvas, RUC
- Senior Vice President Marianne Thellersen, DTU
- Head of Research Support Jane Finnerup Johnson, CBS
- Pro-rector Jens Christian Godskesen, ITU

