EXIST-Business Startup Grant

EXIST – University-based Business Startups

What is the EXIST-Business Startup Grant?
The EXIST-Business Startup Grant is a nationwide funding programme which supports innovative spin-offs from higher education institutions and non-university research establishments in the early phase. The EXIST-Business Startup Grant provides support to the development of a product/service idea and the drafting of a business plan through to the founding of the company.

Who can receive funding?
- Scientists from higher education institutions and non-university research establishments
- Graduates and former academic assistants (up to five years after graduation/leaving the post)
- Students who have completed at least half their course at the time of application, but the majority of the team must not be students
- Startup teams up to a maximum of three people. If they have a state-recognised vocational qualification, one of the team members can also be funded as a technician. Alternatively, one team member’s degree can be more than five years old

What is being funded?
- Projected innovative technology-oriented start-ups
- Innovative services with high client benefits based on scientific findings and likely to have unique selling points

How does the funding work?
- Maximum funding period: one year
- Coverage of personal living expenses via a grant depending of level of qualification:
  - Doctorate: €3,000/month
  - Degree: €2,500/month
  - Recognised vocational qualification: €2,000/month
  - Students: €1,000/month
  - Child supplement: €150/month per child
- Material expenses: up to €10,000 for startup by individual (in case of teams, up to €30,000)
- Startup-related coaching: €5,000

What do we need to do?
- The funding is applied for by the higher education institution or research establishment.

The EU funds the EXIST programme ("Exist – University-based Business Startups" Programme) together with the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action via the European Social Fund Plus (ESF Plus).