

Make your research matter

# From Lab to Market Challenge

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**Are you a scientist** in chemistry,  
industrial biotech or material science  
working on **research** that could  
**change the world?**

Then this is for you!

Register here!



# From Lab to Market Challenge 2026

The From Lab to Market Challenge is an **idea competition** aimed specifically at **product and business ideas in the chemical space** in Germany.

It is a platform for dreamers, visionaries. Those who believe science is more than just high-ranking publications. Those who want to see their research create impact in the real world.

## Participate for your chance to win...

- a total of **10,000 €** in cash prizes,
- a **full-page feature** in CHEManager,
- a **ticket** to the chemstars Chemistry Ecosystem Night 2026, an exclusive networking event for the German chemistry startup ecosystem,
- and benefit from **continued to support after the challenge**, e.g. in the application to public funding like EXIST Transfer of Research.

## We are seeking ideas at their infancy in four categories:



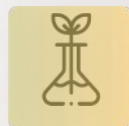
Circular Economy



Net Zero Emissions



Digital



Safe & Sustainable  
Chemicals



## What's in it for you besides prizes?

- Learn how to turn an idea into a business.
- Meet like-minded scientists.
- Present in front of high-ranking people from academia, industry, capital market and politics.
- Connect with top-tier industry experts.

## Who can apply?

Anyone with a science-based business idea who has not yet been granted public funding aimed at starting a company (such as EXIST for example).

## What do you need to participate?

Sign up on the chemstars website, fill in the simple five-page idea template and send it to us.

# How it works

The From Lab to Market Challenge consists of **four in-person events** for the participating teams. The teams are selected based on the submitted idea templates. The Business Modeling Workshop, Pitch Training and Regional Semi-Final are in-person events hosted by our regional partners. After the regional Pre-Pitch, a maximum of three teams per region will be invited to present on stage at the Grand Award Event in North Rhine-Westphalia.



We strongly recommend you **do not disclose IP-related information** to us or our industry experts. It's okay to be secretive about your technology. To discuss the value that you offer to future customers, we don't need to understand how you make your product or your processes work, we need to understand what it enables your customers to do.

# Participants from previous years with tremendous progress

Selected examples.

**20**  
Active startup projects

**7**  
Companies founded

**24 M€**  
Follow-on-funding acquired



**TEXTERIAL**

Hochschule Niederrhein  
University of Applied Sciences

exist FROM SCIENCE TO BUSINESS ~ 1.8 M€



**alteva**  
enabling sustainability

Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt  
German Aerospace Center

HELMHOLTZ HTGF > 1 M€



**SIMPLYFINED**

3. Platz  
EUR 1.000  
SimplyFinet  
Challenge  
22.04.2023

tu technische universität dortmund

exist FROM SCIENCE TO BUSINESS ~ 1.7 M€



**MechSyn**

MAX-PLANCK-INSTITUT FÜR KOLLOIDPHYSIK

exist FROM SCIENCE TO BUSINESS ~ 1.1 M€



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**SECARA**

RWTH AACHEN UNIVERSITY

exist FROM SCIENCE TO BUSINESS ~ 0.8 M€



**POWER2 POLYMERS**

RWTH AACHEN UNIVERSITY

exist FROM SCIENCE TO BUSINESS ~ 1.3 M€



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**Breakomers**  
Innovative Polymer-Technologien

UNIVERSITÄT WIELEFELD

exist FROM SCIENCE TO BUSINESS 1,2 M€



**GROVE Additives**

Fraunhofer ILP

exist FROM SCIENCE TO BUSINESS ~ 1.7 M€



**Minerva Carbon**

MAX-PLANCK-INSTITUT FÜR KOLLOIDPHYSIK

exist FROM SCIENCE TO BUSINESS ~ 1.8 M€

The entrepreneurial journey of teams listed on this page started with the submission of an idea template to the From Lab to Market Challenge. By now, they have won further startup competitions, secured millions of Euros in funding and/or landed first paying customers.

# What past participants say about our challenge



**Max Krause**

"Participating in the From Lab to Market Challenge was extremely valuable in all areas. Not only being mentored and supported by the team and coaches, but also the connections made have been a huge help in our founding process."

**TEXTERIAL**



**Sarah Neumann**

"The From Lab to Market Challenge for us was just perfect at the beginning of our journey as a startup. We really enjoyed the sessions to work hands-on on our business model and exchanging ideas and challenges with the other founders, the chemstars-team and the experts. From the network we benefited greatly – even until today."

**ChemI**



**Philipp Pflüger**

"The From Lab to Market Challenge was a game-changer for us. Before the competition, we were simply a team from university. Afterwards we turned into a startup. Thank you so much for your constant support! I still cannot believe how things changed for us last year – undoubtedly, you have played one of the most important roles to make this happen."

# Register today for FLTMC 2026 on [www.chemstars.de](http://www.chemstars.de)



Register here!



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