

**„Just do it - and don't accept obstacles“**

**70 participants from IT, science, medicine and business worked jointly on medical challenges during the Life Science meets IT Hackathon on 19-21 May 2017. In nine teams they developed concepts and prototypes in a relatively short time. Albrecht Schütte (MdL) praised the event and innovative capacity of the region.**

“This weekend you will be confronted with problems that seem insurmountable”, claimed the moderators *Thomas Prexl* and *Raoul Haschke* to the participants of the *Life Science meets IT Hackathon* at the beginning of the weekend. “Don't hesitate, but attack them!” These words were well accepted by the 70 software engineers, medical representatives, scientists and students, who came together on 19 May 2017 in the Marsilius-Arkaden in Heidelberg. They want to work on IT solutions for health-related problems for two days and two nights.

The *Life Science meets IT Hackathon* started with 16 “challenges” – challenges of industrial companies, hospitals, scientists or patients. “We have asked our network to submit problems or challenges from their everyday life. These could be for example stumbling blocks in hospital processes or ideas for medical products” explains *Uli Harnacke*, Managing Director (ad interim) of *EIT Health Germany*, the methodology. Each of these challenges has been presented in only 60 seconds. Afterwards the participants discussed their collaboration. “It is impressive to see the enthusiasm of participants to find innovative solutions in a very short time. A first big step to a real improvement in healthcare.”

Nine teams finally tackled the challenges in the Marsilius-Arkaden in Heidelberg. “Working together in interdisciplinary teams is one of the core values of the Marsilius-Kolleg”, explained *Thomas Rausch*, Director of the institution and professor at Heidelberg University. “This Hackathon does not only fit to our institution from a logistical or regional point of view, but also from an ideational perspective”. In addition to the open architecture and the mixed teams, the catering also stimulated the active exchange between the teams: food trucks in the courtyard guaranteed variety and room for discussions. Together with best technical infrastructure the participants had the ideal conditions for a productive weekend.

From Friday evening to Sunday noon the teams developed their solutions. These ranged from communication via brain waves to the use of the block chain in order to track drugs from the pharma company to the patient. “The digitalization of medicine and life sciences entails an enormous innovation potential”, explained *André Domin*, Chairman of the Board of Heidelberg Startup Partners and CEO of Heidelberg Technology Park during the final ceremony. “With our offers we contribute enormously to the transformation of research results into products and services. Events like the *Life Science meets IT Hackathon* show, that many scientists want to turn their research into concrete products and are looking for the interdisciplinary collaboration”, according to *Domin*.

“This event sends the right signals by investing in education and research, fostering open controversial discussions and attracting talented people from all over the world”, praised *Albrecht Schütte*, Member (CDU) of Regional Parliament of Baden-Württemberg, who opened the final ceremony on Sunday with a keynote speech. Heidelberg and its surroundings offer the perfect environment, as the most innovative region of Baden-Württemberg and Germany“. Afterwards it was the moment of truth for the participants. In four minutes they presented their results.

A three-man crew jury awarded the performance of the teams in the categories “best technical solution”, “best business model” and “most patient-centric solution”. In addition to that an audience award was granted. The winners received a trophy and a certificate, but also different other prizes and a voucher for the production of a professional pitch video and an invitation to the regional

selection day of the EIT Health business plan competition “European Health Catapult”, that will take place on 11 July in Heidelberg.

The *Life Science meets IT Hackathon* is a joint event of *EIT Health Germany*, *Heidelberg Startup Partners* and *Heidelberg University*. The core sponsors *AbbVie*, *SAP* and *Heidelberg Technology Park* enabled the Life Science meets IT Hackathon. The organisations *Course Resource*, *Microsoft*, *Shutterstock* and *Statista* also provided in-kind support for the event. The platform *Life Sciences* was a media partner.

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The award „**most patient-centric solution**“ was given to the team *Know your Pain*. The participants tackled the problem that emergency rooms of hospitals were approached unnecessarily by patients. The team developed a dialogue-based mobile app that could give an overview of possible causes of diseases symptoms. At the same time users receive a recommendation for a close-by a doctor or medical specialist and the option to arrange an appointment online.

The jury awarded the **best “technical solution”** to the project *OiC*. The team used the Augmented Reality solution via HoloLens of the company Microsoft. The result could allow surgeons in the future to see a 3D display of the body tissue. Endoscopic interventions, for example for brain operations, could thus become faster and safer. The project *OiC* also received the Audience Award.

The jury awarded the **best “business model”** to the team with the name *Lifecrypter*. It concerned the question of how to protect patients from counterfeit drugs. The participants used the block chain technology, well-known from the virtual currency Bitcoin. Smart contracts should ensure that the patient can only buy products that have been produced by legitimate producers.

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More information and press pictures in high resolution:  
<http://www.lifesciencemeetsit.eu/documentation-2017/>

**Press contact:**

Dr. Thomas Prexl

Technologiepark Heidelberg GmbH, Email: [thomas.prexl@heidelberg.de](mailto:thomas.prexl@heidelberg.de), Phone: 06221 71411-162

Christine Neumann

German EIT Health GmbH (EIT Health Germany), Email: [christine.neumann@eit-health.de](mailto:christine.neumann@eit-health.de), Telefon: 0621 76446114

More information about EIT Health:  
<http://eithealth.eu/>

More information about Heidelberg Startup Partners:  
<http://www.heidelberg-startup-partners.de>

More information about Entrepreneurship Management of Heidelberg University: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/forschung/transfer/existenzgruendung/>

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**Press pictures:**



*Moderators Thomas Prexl and Raoul Haschke at the opening of the Life Science meets IT Hackathon 2017 in the Marsilius-Arkaden in Heidelberg.*



*Nine teams start working on their "challenges".*



*Albrecht Schütte (MdL) opening the final ceremony on Sunday with an enthusiastic keynote.*



*Big happiness of the three winning teams.*



The participants were supported in their work by rapid prototyping mentors and could use 3D printers and laser cutter.