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### **Digital Top 50 Awards – application phase started**

- **McKinsey, Freshfields, Google, 468 Capital and Hering Schuppener Consulting are seeking Europe's best start-ups**
- **Winners will be announced at Bits & Pretzels Networking Week, which takes place from September 27 – October 2, 2020**
- **Winning founders will be chosen in four categories; 50.000 euros cash prize for the "Tech for Good" winner**

**July 23, 2020 (Munich)** – As of 22 July 2020, start-ups, early and later stage firms across Europe can apply for the Digital Top 50 Awards ([www.dt50.org](http://www.dt50.org)). Since 2016, the Digital Top 50 Awards have been rewarding and celebrating Europe's growing and most promising entrepreneurs and founders and their respective firms. The 2020 Awards are a joint project by McKinsey, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer and Google; this year, Hering Schuppener Consulting and 468 Capital join the awards and support Europe's vibrant start-up community. Bits & Pretzels, the founders festival, is the official partner of the Digital Top 50 Awards.

Firms based in the European Union and EFTA countries having received financing in the amount of up to 100 million euros can apply. This year's categories are:

- Best Technology,
- Best Consumer Business Model Innovation,
- Best Enterprise Business Model Innovation, and
- Tech for Good.

**Winners will receive structured support, professional guidance and coaching**



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All applications are reviewed by DT50's Executive Jury, a panel of experts, veterans in venture capital and growth mentoring. The complete list of jury members will be announced shortly. The application phase will end in late August.

The award winners will be announced at this year's Bits & Pretzels Networking Week ([www.bitsandpretzels.com/festival](http://www.bitsandpretzels.com/festival)), which takes place from September 27 - October 2, 2020. The shortlist of the Top 50 firms will be published in mid-September. Winners will receive valuable support, guidance and mentoring from all 2020 partners of the awards. They will benefit from professional advice, structured consulting and coaching programmes, as well as access to a huge network of leading industry decision-makers. The winner of the "Tech for Good" category will receive an additional cash prize of 50,000 euros.

### Quotes

"The pandemic is hitting start-up teams particularly hard: sales are collapsing, costs are being reduced, and venture capitalists are more cautious about investments. Now more than ever, society and the economy need digital innovation from creative entrepreneurs. Some of the biggest digital players were founded in times of crisis. And that's why we are holding on to our Digital Top 50 Awards, even in times of crisis. But we don't just want to provide financial support, we want to share our knowledge and strengthen the community – for a future-proof and competitive European start-up ecosystem", said Karel Dörner, Senior Partner McKinsey Digital, one of the founding firms behind DT50.

„The DT50 Awards recognise the commitment, ambition and innovative drive of young entrepreneurs across Europe. All partners aim to support the growth of new business ideas, which often contribute to solving some of the most challenging issues for businesses and society. We are very much looking forward to taking a closer look at the next generation of inspiring tech companies“, added Lars Meyer, partner at Freshfields.

“We are happy to support DT50 because we believe in Europe's tech scene, and we believe in the new 'Gruenderzeit'. In today's stakeholder-oriented times, strategic communication is



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key to success for aspiring founders. With our deep knowledge of the start-up sector, VCs and global companies, at Hering Schuppener we play our part to ensure that start-ups succeed”, said Raphael Neuner, Partner at Hering Schuppener.

“From Spotify to Zalando, from Delivery Hero to UiPath, from HelloFresh to TeamViewer - European tech is undoubtedly having its moment. Companies that were early stage hopeful a few years ago are the regional and global technology champions of today, generating tens of thousands of jobs and entering the top echelon of stock market indices. Inspired by these role models, we feel that the latest cohort of European technology entrepreneurs is more ambitious than ever - we cannot wait to meet the tech leaders of tomorrow at the DT50 awards.“, said Alexander Kudlich, General Partner at 468 Capital.

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### **About Digital Top 50**

McKinsey, Freshfields, Google, 468 Capital and Hering Schuppener Consulting have joined forces and initiated the Digital Top 50 Awards to reward and celebrate the bold and trailblazing work of tomorrow's top entrepreneurs. Created under the patronage of Carlos Moedas, former European



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Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, the awards are aimed at bolstering Europe's thriving tech scene and recognizing the continent's most promising start-ups. Accompanied by the knowledge and resources of academic and research partners such as INSEAD, Ashoka and RWTH Aachen University, the DT50 brings together a wealth of expertise to support Europe's digital ecosystem. <https://www.dt50.org>