



DTU SKYFACTORY & RISE EUROPE

BUILDING A PAN-EUROPEAN STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

MIKKEL SØRENSEN
CEO, DTU SKYFACTORY

AGENDA

Innovation at DTU – and the birth of DTU SkyFactory

The European Scaleup Challenge

Rise Europe – a united ecosystem





WHERE I SPEAK FROM

CEO, DTU SkyFactory

Prev. Founding Director, DTU Skylab

Founding Member, Rise Europe

EU Startup & Scaleup Forum

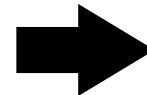
Co-founder, DANTE Fusion, RealBee

Board Member



BUILDING AN ECOSYSTEM

DTU Departments
People, technology



DTU Entrepreneurship
Education and research

AFRI
IPR, license, corporate partnerships

DTU Skylab
Innovation programmes & community

PreSeed Ventures
Early stage VC

DTU SkyFactory
Early scaling

DTU Science Park
Housing, mature companies

DTU SKYLAB

University Innovation Hub, est. 2013

Today: 60+ FTE's, 5,500 m2 of facilities

- Startup Programmes
 - 400 startup projects annually
- Company Collaboration
 - 40+ partners
- Educational Activities
 - 2500+ students



STATUS



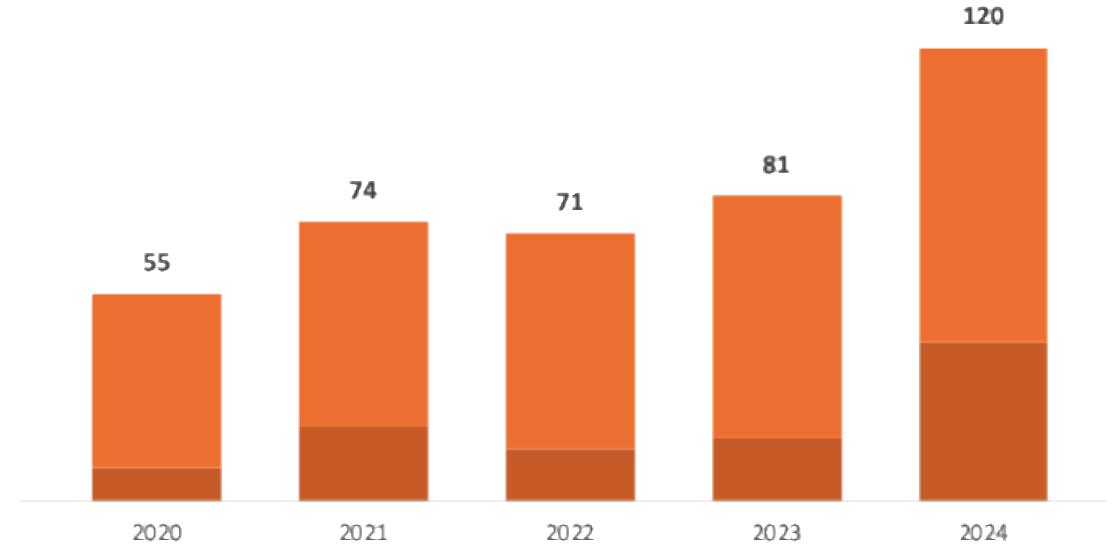
100+ new startups incorporated per year
(2x in 5 years)



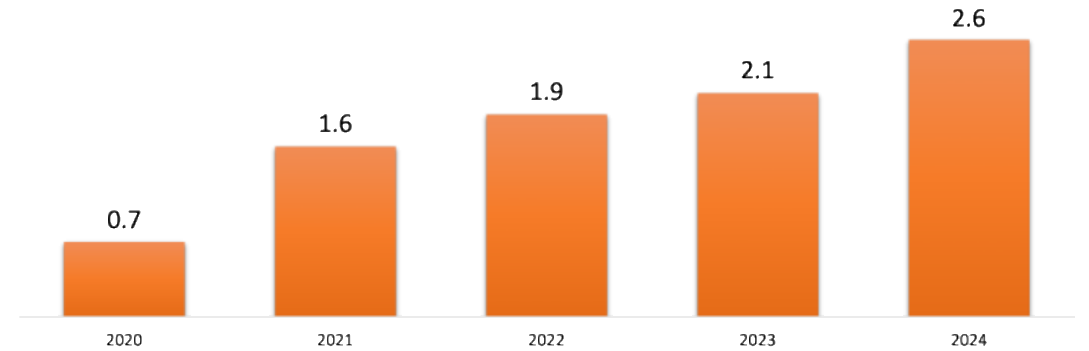
DTU startups attracts ~20% of Danish VC
(3x in 5 years)



Dealroom's European Spinouts Report 2025:
DTU ranked #7 in Europe/#1 in Nordics for Deep
Tech & Life Science spinout value



Newly incorporated DTU Startups per year



VC attracted to DTU Startups per year (billion DKK)

BUT THERE IS A GAP...

External evaluation showed a need for dedicated support to startups with high scaling potential



A EUROPEAN PROBLEM



EU COMPETITIVENESS UNDER PRESSURE

The Draghi Report stresses Europe's failure to turn research into global companies.



GEOPOLITICAL URGENCY

Europe must secure technological and digital sovereignty.



SCALEUP GAP

Too many promising startups leave Europe or fail to scale.

” *The problem is not that Europe lacks ideas or ambition. We have many talented researchers and entrepreneurs filing patents. But innovation is blocked at the next stage: we are failing to translate innovation into commercialisation...* **”**

- Mario Draghi

KEY CHALLENGES

For Scaling deep tech in Europe

Access to financing and investment:

- US invest 3x in deep tech VC compared to Europe, only 3% of European deep tech VC's can lead series B+, 50% of European VC rounds >100 mill from outside Europe
- European Pension funds only invest fraction in European startups, even though EU VC funds has similar performance to US
- Lack of exit market

Regulatory and market integration:

- Fragmentation and complexity across 27 national frameworks slow down market access
- Absence of targeted (public) procurement measures
- State aid + national regulations as barrier for access to (university) infrastructure

Culture and tradition

- Flywheel effect needed locally and internationally (300+ startups out of Tesla)
- Corporate willingness and ability to collaborate with startups
- We need to be ambitious, make big bets, focus on excellence - also in innovation!

DTU SKYFACTORY

A European Pre-Scaleup Engine

Enabling **more** startups to enter a scaleup trajectory

Increasing the **speed** to scaling

Strengthening Denmark's role in the European scaleup **ecosystem**



A PAN-EUROPEAN APPROACH

Stronger together:

DTU SkyFactory connects with Europe's leading labs, investors, startup hubs, and industry

- Access to world-class labs and infrastructure
- Connection to international investors and capital
- Collaboration with leading industry players
- Stronger cross-border partnerships and market entry

RISE EUROPE

20 institutions

14 countries

55.000 reached talents in 2024

€6.1 BN VC funding in 2024

5.800 supported startups in 2024

± 10% of all European tech investments



Mikkel Sørensen, CEO
ms@dtuskyfactory.com