

# Press kit

 **START IT @KBC**

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# Start it @KBC Our mission

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## Supporting startups in their entrepreneurial journey

Start it @KBC is a unique startup accelerator, driven by its mission to support people in their passion for entrepreneurship. Curiosity is what drives us. We are always searching for innovations that can make the world a better place. We offer startups a trusted and safe network in which to expand their business. We only realize our dreams when they do.



## Start it @KBC

# A *strategic* partnership

Start it @KBC supports and promotes entrepreneurs that have an innovative idea and a scalable business model. The accelerator is a partnership between Accenture, Cronos Group, Flanders DC, Imec, Joyn, KBC, Mobile Vikings, Universiteit Antwerpen, Telenet and local academic partners.

The startup pioneer Start it @KBC has grown to be the largest startup community in Belgium, operating through hubs in Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent, Hasselt, Courtrai and Leuven. This way Start it @KBC wants to have a positive impact on the Belgian economy and society.

In the first three months, founders are able to enjoy the strong acceleration programme at Start it @KBC. After an initial check-up by a Boardroom consisting of several experts, they can continue to enjoy mentorship, exper-

tise, customized workshops and funding advice. Besides, more than 1 million \$ in benefits with tech partners, lots of fun, an extensive network and co-working space full of new founder friends awaits them for up to a year. After that, the startups have six months to 'leave the nest' and to spread their wings. Startups can therefore stay for a maximum of 18 months. The offer is constantly optimized in co-creation with the founders.

Start it @KBC strongly focuses on cross-pollination: not only between more than 650 startups and scale-ups, but also between investors, experienced mentors, experts in various domains (technology, sales, bootstrapping, business models, funding, rights, marketing, communication...) and other accelerators and incubators worldwide.





**Start it @KBC**

# *No strings attached*

Startups that are accepted into the Start it @KBC acceleration programme become part of a real founder community for a lifetime. Start it @KBC is unique in Belgium because of the no-strings-attached approach:

**Start it @KBC does NOT request shares**

**Start it @KBC does NOT charge money**

**Start it @KBC does NOT request that startups become customers of the strategic partners**

**Start it @KBC DOES, however, expect the startups to grow!:**

## **1** *Network*

Startups are able to significantly expand their network at Start it @KBC. After all, the accelerator is the largest Belgian ecosystem, representing hundreds of startups, scale-ups, mentors and experts.

## **2** *Business*

Startups are able to grow their business at Start it @KBC. Start-ups get guidance for funding, linked to several business partners, but also get connected with the right mentors and experts.

## **3** *Skills*

Startups at Start it @KBC have the opportunity to sharpen their skills and to learn through the Start it Academy, which is a customized program created by and for startups.

## **4** *Market*

Thanks to Start it @KBC startups can get to work in their home country as well as abroad. The accelerator has hubs in Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent, Hasselt, Courtrai and Leuven. But, startups are also welcome in the New York or Budapest hubs, and, thanks to the GAN membership, in accelerators worldwide.

## Start it @KBC

# Pitch waves

Startups are able to apply throughout the year on the website [www.startit.be](http://www.startit.be). Twice a year the selected founders pitch to a professional jury, and a new generation of startups is able to begin the acceleration program within Start it @KBC.

### Submitting a business (idea to scale up) application to Start it @KBC:

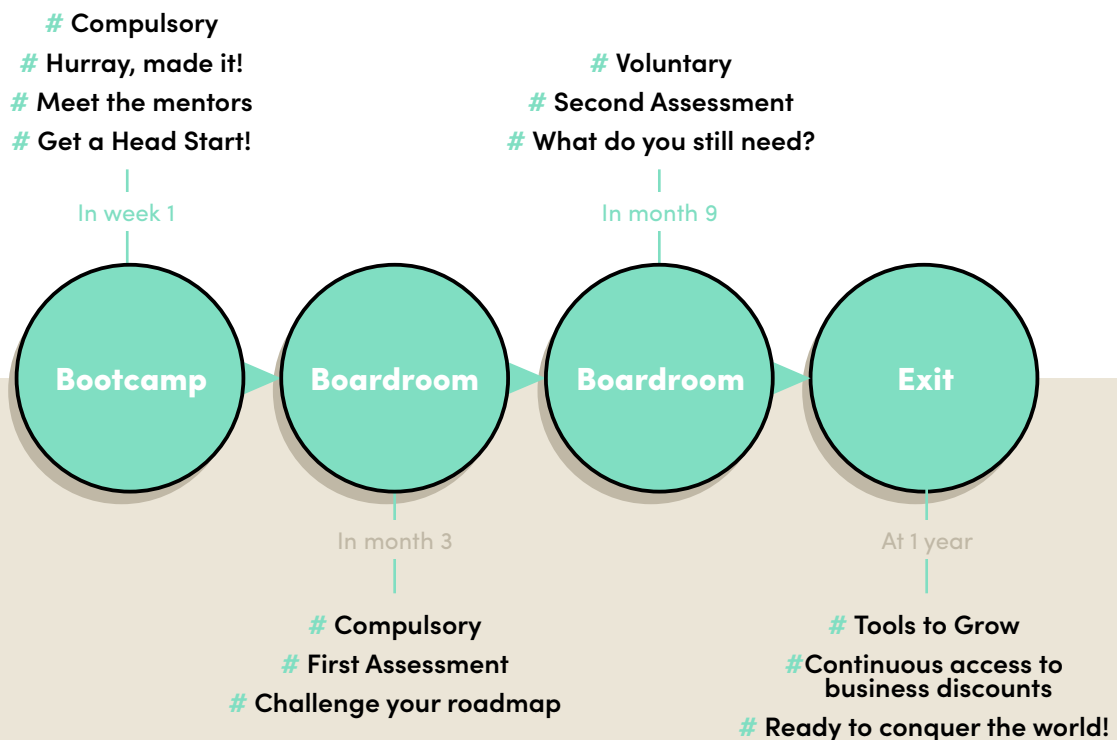
- 1 Visit [www.startit.be](http://www.startit.be) and submit your business application online at 'apply now'.
- 2 A professional jury will evaluate your application based on its level of innovation, the composition of your team, and its ambition and scalability. When you pass this selection you will receive an invitation to verbally present your idea or business.
- 3 During Pitch day, you will introduce the jury to your idea or business and your team in person. Within a few days, they will let you know whether your startup earned a place within the Start it @KBC community.

### What kind of startups is Start it @KBC looking for?

Start it @KBC is looking for enthusiastic and open-minded entrepreneurs: M/F/X of different ages and nationalities. Start it @KBC puts the startup at the centre and offers an acceleration programme of three months, customized to the needs of motivated and inspired founders.

Start it @KBC encourages these entrepreneurs to submit a project only if they develop innovative products or services, and have the ambition, the potential and the drive to scale and to let their business grow. Businesses from any kind of industry are welcome, as long as they want to make a positive contribution to society and the world.

## A year long programme



## Start it @KBC

# An *international* ecosystem

Start it @KBC offers startups the opportunity to think, dream and act in a way that is global and boundless.

The accelerator is part of Global Accelerator Network (GAN), a network representing more than 100 accelerators worldwide. This offers startups in the community extra opportunities abroad, and more than 1 million dollars in benefits with technology partners.

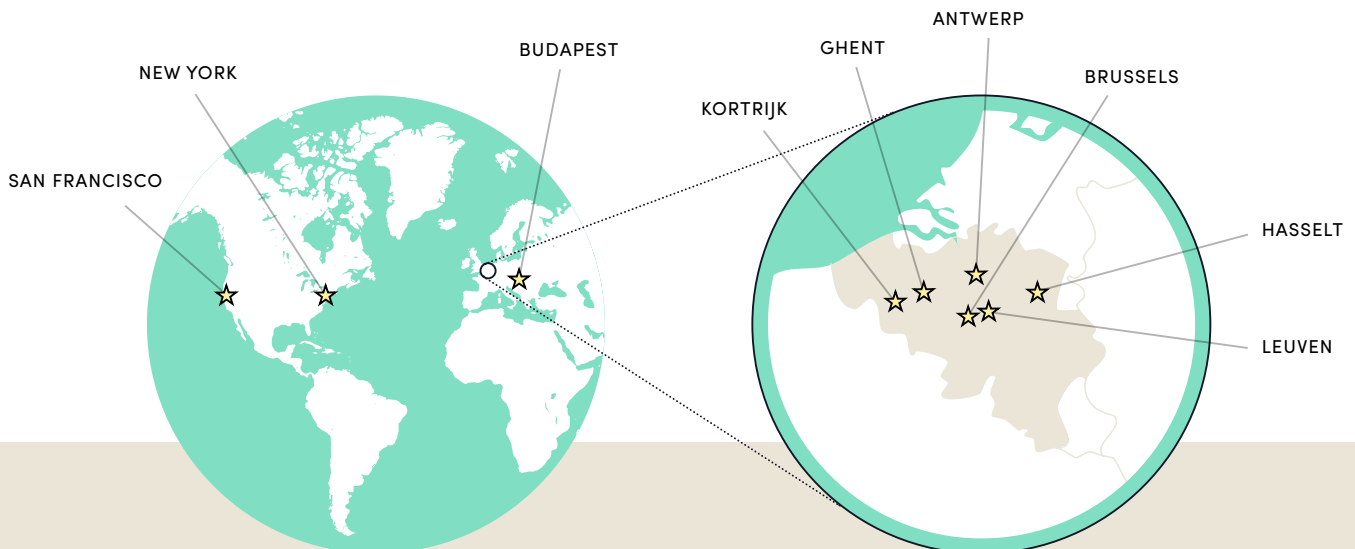
### Growing faster in New York and San Francisco

Due to the collaboration with KBC New York, Belcham New York and Belcham San Francisco, startups that are part of Start it @KBC are able to shift their field and network to two of the largest trading metropolises in the United States.

KBC New York offers the startups of Start it @KBC a free workspace for six weeks, to be divided between different periods as required. Those who need more time and therefore want to stay in the US for a longer time, can visit the co-working spaces of Belcham Atelier (Belgian-American Chamber of Commerce) in New York and San Francisco. Startups are able to rent a permanent office at favourable rates.

### K&H: accelerator in Central-Europe

Even the way to the growing business world in Central Europe is laid out for the startups of the accelerator Start it @KBC. Thanks to Start it @K&H, local startups in Budapest and the surrounding area have access to a dynamic ecosystem offering numerous benefits. Just like in Belgium, the startups in Hungary enjoy a highly customized acceleration program and can also count on mentoring, expertise, an extensive network and co-working space for six months. Founders from Belgium are welcome to visit the programme in Hungary and vice versa, and connections are directly made startup-to-startup by the programme staff.



Start it @KBC

## Diversity and *female* entrepreneurship



### Start it @KBC plays a pioneering role in terms of diversity and female entrepreneurship.

Over the past few years, Start it @KBC has put a lot of effort into encouraging women towards entrepreneurship. As the country's largest accelerator, we believe we have an important social and economic role to play. The new generation of entrepreneurs must be more balanced and more diverse than before.

We reach out to everyone who, together with Start it @KBC, wants to make more women excited about (tech) entrepreneurship, and supports them to pursue their dreams.

Please read our miniguide about female entrepreneurship [here](#).  
Please read the one pagers for female mentors [here](#).



**Start it @KBC**

## Corporate *incubation* program

Through the Corporate Incubation Program of Start it @KBC, large companies can have their own teams guided as (internal) startups by the accelerator and towards becoming fully-fledged businesses. Start it @KBC offers companies a unique platform to challenge their intrapreneurs - employees with entrepreneurial skills and innovative ideas - and to accelerate internal innovation processes. It ensures companies can retain and acquire IP, and keep potential businesses and good employees on board. The Corporate Incubation Program gives companies the opportunity to really get started with innovation, to develop user-cases and therefore have a substantial impact on corporate culture and future business.

At Start it @KBC, Corporate Incubation teams can find an extensive network of experts; they are assigned an experienced coach and can be inspired by the other startups.

Please read our miniguide about corporate incubation [here](#).



# Start it @KBC

# History

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**November 20<sup>th</sup> '13** — Spurred on by founder Lode Uytterschaut, and the joint efforts of Accenture, Cronos, Flanders DC, KBC, Mobile Vikings and Antwerp University, a brand new incubator is launched to offer assistance and support to startups: Start it @KBC. Their goal? To support innovative and scalable businesses whilst increasing the Belgian economy at the same time. In just three weeks, no less than 96 startups were competing for a place at Start it @KBC.

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**January 29<sup>th</sup> '14** — The first 28 startups take up residence on seven floors of the Boerentoren in Antwerp.

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**February 15<sup>th</sup> '14** — The digital research centre iMinds joins Start it @KBC as a strategic partner. Start it @KBC also strikes up a partnership with startups.be and BetaGroup to boost innovative entrepreneurship in Belgium.

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**March 10<sup>th</sup> '14** — Following its early success and under the impulse of Mobile Vikings, Start it @KBC opens a second hub at the Corda Campus in Hasselt.

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**October 21<sup>st</sup> '14** — Start it @KBC Leuven opens its doors. Startups from across Flemish Brabant now take up residence in KBC's offices near the railway station.

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**March '15** — The number of submissions continues to increase after every pitch wave. Representing almost 180 startups, Start it @KBC is now officially the largest startup community in Belgium.

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**July 13<sup>th</sup> '15** — The Start it @KBC Academy is launched, comprising a unique and comprehensive training program customized to meet the needs of startup entrepreneurs. Experienced mentors coach the startups in business plan design, finance, sales, marketing, communication, etc.

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**September 15<sup>th</sup> '15** — Brussels duly follows suit with a festive opening of the Start it @KBC Brussels hub in the heart of the European District. The community now spans more than 30 different nationalities.

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**December 8<sup>th</sup> '15** — Start it @KBC opens its doors in Ghent with a memorable *fast pitch night*. The startups that were previously located in the same building as Start it @KBC's partner iMinds, move to the Cronos buildings located on the Lousbergskaaai.

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**December 16<sup>th</sup> '15** — Start it @KBC Kortrijk opens its doors, taking the tally of Start it @KBC hubs to 6. Startup specialist Omar Mohout launches his book on the Belgian startup landscape and gets into the ring with mayor Vincent van Quickenborne and Kamagurka.

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**April 11<sup>th</sup> '16** — As part of the Be bold in New York (#BBNY16) concept, Start it @KBC, Telenet Kickstart and Startups.be head to New York with 16 promising startups. On the agenda are, amongst other things, workshops at Google, Spotify and HBO, pitches at Techstars and other accelerators and visits to FIT and Belcham.

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**May 10<sup>th</sup> '16** — The American accelerator Techstars and Start it @KBC now also work together structurally.

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**May 31<sup>st</sup> '16** — Start it @KBC partners up with Telenet Kickstart. As a result, the Start it @KBC Academy expands, offering startups even easier access to digital expertise and a broad international network.

## Start it @KBC *History*

- 
- August 23<sup>rd</sup> '16** – Start it @KBSEA opens its doors to more than 100 startups and coaches who take up temporary residence in Kursaal in Ostend, combining numerous workshops with work, sun, sea and sand.
- 
- October 7<sup>th</sup> '16** – Pitch day! The start it @KBC community continues to grow, taking its numbers beyond 430 startups.
- 
- November 15<sup>th</sup> '16** – Imec, a world leader in nano-electronics and their integration within the Internet of Things becomes a Start it @KBC strategic partner. Startups now have access to high-tech expertise, know-how and infrastructure.
- 
- November 30<sup>th</sup> '16** – Demo day. To mark the 3rd anniversary of Start it @KBC, 15 of the most promising startups pitch their business ideas to an audience of 300 captains of industry, investors and other entrepreneurs.
- 
- February 7<sup>th</sup> '17** – Start it @KBC presents its first wave of startups of 2017, announces the arrival of the Start it Boardroom and also starts its corporate incubation program.
- 
- March 8<sup>th</sup> '17** – Start it @KBC links up with partner 'Straffe Madammen' for a campaign aimed at stimulating female entrepreneurship on the Belgian startup scene.
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- October 4<sup>th</sup> '17** – Start it @KBC opens Hangar K – the city of Courtrai's new incubator – together with seven unique partners.
- 
- October 16<sup>th</sup> '17** – Start it @KBC announces its partnership with Global Accelerator Network (GAN), an exclusive club consisting of some of the very best accelerators in the world. Startups now have even more access to large tech companies and new international markets.
- 
- November 9<sup>th</sup> '17** – The Brussels hub of Start it @KBC doubles its capacity to 800 square metres with a brand new site located in the canal zone of Brussels.
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- May 3<sup>rd</sup> '18** – Start it @KBC teams up with the And& festival to host DemoDay within this event – startups Turbulent and INGA Wellbeing are the big winners of the event.
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- May 24<sup>th</sup> '18** – Start it @KBC presents two international initiatives - the opening of Start it @KBC New York and K&H, the Hungarian hub.
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- June 29<sup>th</sup> '18** – The Antwerp startups take up residence in the Tolhuis (The Beacon), in the innovative heart of Antwerp.
- 
- July 18<sup>th</sup> '18** – Start it @KBC launches an appeal for govtech startups, companies that institute and transform governments into the digital age. "What London is for fintech, Boston for medtech and Israel for hardware, Belgium can become for govtech."
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- August 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> '18** – Pfizer, pioneer in the development of innovative medicines and vaccines, joins Start it @KBC. Their goal: to boost innovations in medtech.
- 
- October 11<sup>th</sup> '18** – Most successful pitch wave ever: Start it @KBC welcomes 65 new startups and now accelerates more than 650 startups.
- 
- January 29<sup>th</sup> '19** – Start it @KBC celebrates its fifth birthday! The party takes place in Ghent: in vibrant Dok Noord A area the brand new Start it @KBC hub opens its doors.
- 
- March 28<sup>th</sup> '19:** At the jubilee edition of Pitch Day, our partners' CEO's reinforce the jury table.

## *The Start it @KBC team*



### **Lode Uytterschaut**

Founder of Start it @KBC

As the founding father of Start it @KBC, Lode Uytterschaut helps hundreds of startups and scale-ups on their way to growth and success, together with the Start it @KBC team. In 2012 Lode presented his idea for an accelerator to Erik Luts, Chief Innovation Officer at KBC, and at the end of 2013 Start it @KBC was born. Under the leadership of Lode, Start it @KBC has since then grown into Belgium's largest startup accelerator, representing more than 650 assisted startups, and dozens of strategic partners, experts and mentors. Lode is involved in overall management, strategic partnerships, business development, the Corporate Incubation Program and the long-term vision.



### **Anna Thomlinson**

Managing Director

The British Anna Thomlinson swapped London for Brussels and brought a wealth of accelerator expertise and international contacts with her. Whilst sharing the responsibility to set and enact the strategy, as Managing Director, Anna focuses on optimizing the offer for startups and operational flows. In addition, she is also responsible for Govtech, corporate calls and internationalization, enabling the startups to explore new markets across borders.

## *The Start it @KBC Team*

# Community Managers

The community managers are the first contact point for the startups within the different hubs of Start it @KBC. They inform, advise, refer to the right expert or mentor, and are the listener for the entrepreneurs. In other words, they are essential links in the huge ecosystem of Start it @KBC.



**Tom Van der Roost**  
Community manager Antwerp  
Officer Academy



**Laura Lumingu**  
Community manager Brussels  
Officer Communication



**Kjell Clarysse**  
Community manager Brussels  
Officer Mentorship



**Bea Cleeren**  
Community manager  
Hasselt and Leuven  
Officer Events



**Dirk Lievens**  
Community manager Leuven  
Officer Corporate Incubation



**Jonas Vandewalle**  
Community manager  
Ghent and Courtrai  
Officer Data



**Johnny G. Mills**  
Community manager  
Antwerp

# Creators of Happiness

A wonderful and beautiful title for this pervasive team that follows up daily the busy schedules of the startup events, pitch waves, Start it Academy, and so on.



**Peggy Goovaerts**  
Officer administration,  
finance & planning



**Liesbeth Van Der Jonckheyd**  
Officer lifecycle, customer journey  
& touchpoints



**Ingrid Zutterman**  
Officer events & partnerships



# Partners

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# Agenda

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**January 29<sup>th</sup> — launch new location Ghent**

**March 7<sup>th</sup> — deadline 1<sup>st</sup> pitch wave**

**March 28<sup>th</sup> — pitch day 1<sup>st</sup> pitch wave**

**April 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> — boot camp new wave of startups**

**August 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> — Start it @KBSEA, 3 day startup festival in Ostend**

**19 September 2019 — Deadline 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch wave 2019**

**10 October 2019 — 2<sup>nd</sup> Pitch Day**

**Interested in attending one of our events?**

Please contact Saar Dietvorst at [startit@contentcats.be](mailto:startit@contentcats.be) or +32 468 19 75 07.

# Media

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**Start it @KBC pressroom**   **Logo's and visual material from Start it @KBC**  
[Miniguide Female entrepreneurship](#)   [One pager mentors](#)



# Press contact

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Would you like to receive more information regarding Start it @KBC?  
Please contact:

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