



Cycle 1.0

New startup stars



 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

 SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY PARK
Belgrade

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About the Rising Starts Program

Raising Starts is the first pre-seed program in Serbia that provides startup teams and companies with expert and financial support when they need it the most—in the earliest stages of developing innovative products and services. The program includes intensive business development training, mentorship, and up to 15,000 CHF in grants per team (no equity) to cover costs associated with prototype creation, business model development, market research, initial customer testing, intellectual property protection, and other expenses related to the development of new products or services.

By participating in the program, startups acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to overcome obstacles from an innovative idea to investment readiness and entry into the global market. The goal is to support the establishment and development of new innovative companies that will contribute to increased exports, new employment opportunities, and the reduction of brain drain, enabling young people to develop innovative businesses from their hometowns in Serbia, alongside with the world.

Raising Starts program was created through the project “Technopark Serbia 2 – Boosting exports through Technoparks,” which is supported by the Government of Switzerland. Program aims to support the further development of innovation and technological entrepreneurship in Serbia. It is implemented by the Science Technology Park Belgrade, in partnership with the Science Technology Park Niš and the Science Technology Park Čačak, under the Memorandum of Cooperation signed between the Government of the Republic of Serbia (on behalf of the Government: the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development) and the Government of Switzerland (State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO).

Through multiple open calls (cycles), Raising Starts will support the establishment and development of up to 100 new startup companies in Belgrade, Niš, and Čačak during this Project.

Results of the first cycle

As part of the first Open Call for the Raising Starts program, published on December 18, 2020, and closed on January 25, 2021, out of 183 registered teams, 35 were selected. These teams gained knowledge in market validation and business models for the accelerated development of innovative ideas (Phase 1). Thirteen demonstrated the most significant potential for commercializing their ideas and capturing the global market, receiving additional expert and financial support for further development (Phase 2).

The call was open to startup teams (at least two members), and micro-enterprises established no more than two years before the date of the Public Call announcement for participation in the current Raising Starts program.

The first cycle of the program was implemented at the Science Technology Park Belgrade.

In the first open call:

- ▶ A total of **35 startup teams and companies** were supported.
- ▶ **160.824,47 CHF in grants** was approved to finance **13 companies** that showed the greatest market potential.
- ▶ All supported companies received **expert intellectual property (IP) protection support**, and one startup received additional mentoring and financial support for international patent and trademark protection.
- ▶ **Seven companies raised new investments** during their participation in the program.
- ▶ **More than 50 local and international mentors** worked with the startups, both in groups and through one-on-one sessions, reaching over 250 mentoring sessions.



Supported startups



BrushGalaxy

“Digital brushes” marketplace for creative people

BrushGalaxy is developing an e-commerce platform of the same name, where users can purchase plugins, i.e., digital brushes for drawing software on the iPad—Procreate. The team members already have similar experience in the graphic industry, which has helped them better understand the creative industries market and identify a new business opportunity in the growing demand for digital brushes.

These digital brushes are extremely expensive on other sales platforms. Unlike them, the BrushGalaxy platform is specialized specifically for Procreate users. It offers a subscription model where, for a fixed monthly fee, the customer can download a certain number of brushes, depending on whether they are a monthly or annual subscriber. The main advantages are a wide selection of digital brushes, a commercial license for all products, and savings of up to 90% compared to the competition.

Since launching the product on the market, they have recorded an average monthly growth of +30%. Most Procreate app users are in the USA, Canada, England, Germany, and Australia, so the sales development is focused on these markets, especially the American ones.



brushgalaxy.com



For your global breakthrough

Brush GALAXY

Unlock over 20.000 Procreate Brushes

One subscription. Cancel anytime.
Save over 70% on brushes

Starting from only 19\$/month

The banner features a vibrant, colorful background with abstract shapes. On the left, there are cartoonish characters: a blue creature with a large eye and a red heart, and a pink creature with a large mouth. On the right, there is a blue creature with a large eye and a yellow sun-like character. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold and regular fonts. A blue button with white text is located at the bottom center.

Digi Kids Robotics

Platform that teaches children
to program their robot

Digi Kids Robotics is developing a robotics learning platform for children, enabling them to program and control robots at a remote location. Students can see and program the robots in real-time and observe the classroom. Instructors can see everything the students program through the platform as if everyone were present in the same room.

The platform encourages children to take their first steps as creators by programming physical devices, such as a robot or a drone. The goal of the platform is not for every young user to become a programmer, but to learn how to use technology to make their ideas come true, regardless of what they want to pursue in the future. On the other hand, the platform allows schools to incorporate programming physical devices into their curriculum in a simple and cost-effective way.

The authors of the platform already have experience working with children through their robotics and programming school, Digi Klinci, which has about five hundred students. The mentoring support in the Raising Starts program proved to be more useful than they expected, as with the help of experts, they formed their first international group of students using their curriculum. Now, children from the United Kingdom, Spain, and Ecuador successfully program robots through this platform. The team is also forming communities of parents interested in their children developing modern skills, attracting an increasing number of schools to join this project.



HOM3D

Smart 3D tool for construction professionals

The importance of construction for the advancement of the entire economy, its expansion in recent years in Serbia, and the fact that it is also one of the sectors that digitalizes the slowest were decisive for the HOM3D team to turn to the modernization of this industry with their technology development.

The same-named platform they are developing is intended for construction companies and real estate agencies to efficiently establish and manage relationships with customers while the construction of a facility is still in progress. The platform is easy to use and has a unique method of interactive 3D and VR presentation, which allows customers to get a clear picture of what their future home will look like.

Although the team has extensive experience in the construction industry, programming, and business, the Raising Starts program has enabled them to put their multidisciplinary skills to work for faster and more efficient commercialization of their solution.

Immediate priorities in their further development include improving the core functionalities of the HOM3D platform, enhancing the methodology for working with interactive 3D models, and increasing realistic looks. The team is also considering opportunities to apply the experience they'd gained to develop similar methodologies for other industries.

HOM3D.

hom3d.rs



Mad Mage Games

The platform which enables gamers to create their own 3D world

Mad Mage Games is developing a unique platform called Fantasy Engine that allows players to create their own worlds, adventures, and stories in a three-dimensional space without coding or learning a programming language and share all this with their friends. In addition to being able to identify with their avatars in the game, the solution offers users tools for finding games easily, as well as a digital space where players can spend their free time and meet new people with similar interests.

Mad Mage Games is a multidisciplinary team of political scientists, mathematicians, dramatic artists, and musicians, united by a love for epic fantasy and a desire to enhance the genre by combining artistic imagination and technological creativity to inspire creativity in users as well.

Currently, there is no similar project on the market that contains as much detail and modality as they plan to offer to users. They are working intensively to make the content on their platform as accessible as possible and to provide users with complete freedom and all the tools needed to create their own gaming environments. The valuable lessons and hard work with mentors in the Raising Starts program resulted in securing a new investment—a grant from the Innovation Fund.



BabyFM

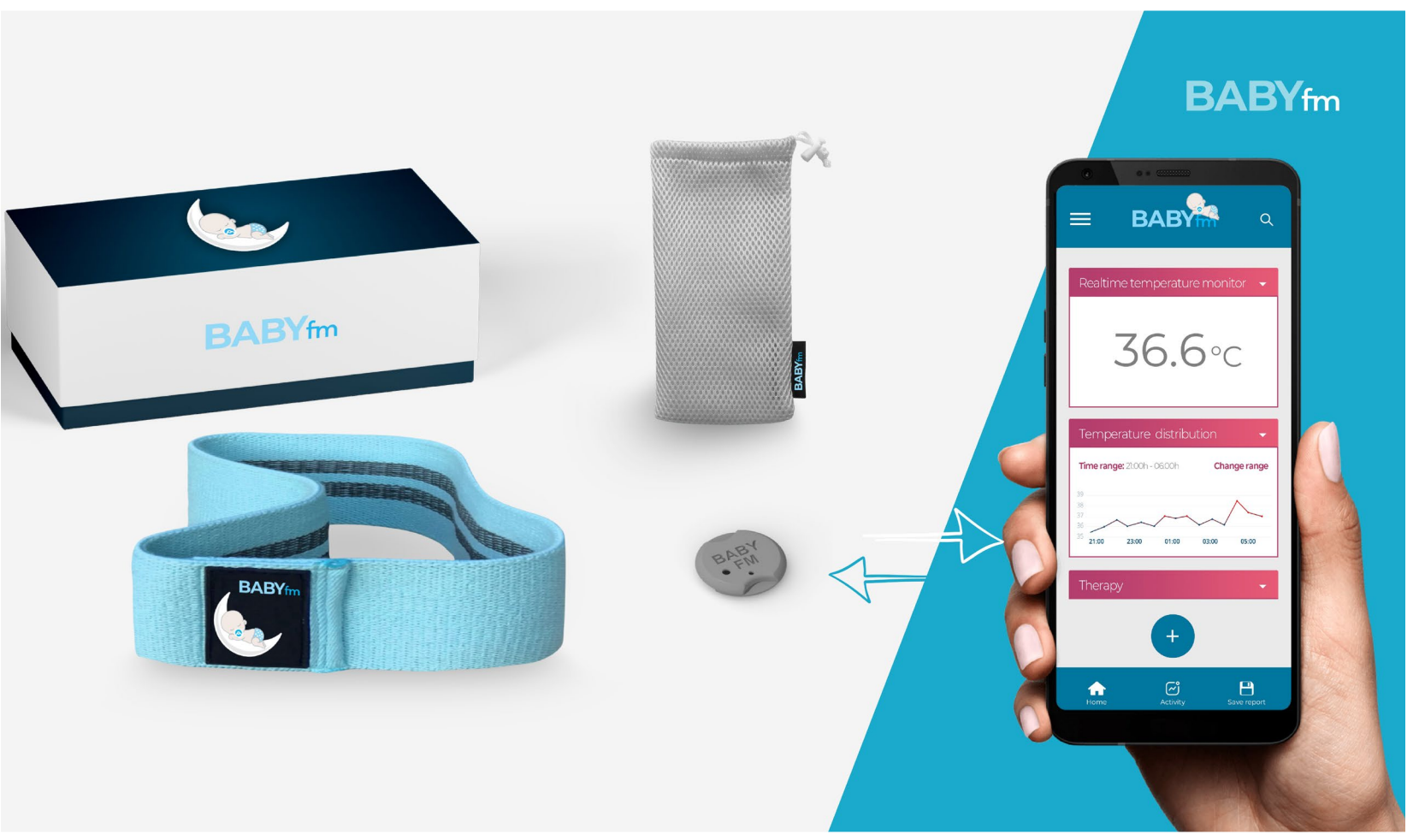
Innovative Device for Continuous Temperature Measurement in Children

Being a doctor doesn't guarantee that you'll be spared from sleepless nights, caring about a sick child and trying to lower a high fever. Such parental experiences can inspire you to use medical and technological knowledge to create something highly beneficial for all parents.

This is how the idea for Baby FM was born—an innovative device for continuous temperature measurement and predicting infections in babies and children, with an alarm and medication reminder. The team of the same name designed the device to accommodate children's anatomy and ensure that the signal is not interrupted when children move. The system is also supported by a mobile app for consultations with pediatricians. The product can be used by parents at home, as well as by hospitals and other healthcare institutions.

The device is being tested by first users, and preparations are underway for its broader market presentation in collaboration with state and private clinics. The team is also working on obtaining the CE mark for entry into the European market and plans to find suitable partners for the U.S. market. During their participation in the Raising Starts program, they secured new investment through the Startech program.

The founders, in the process of further development, will focus on the complete personalization of hardware and software for monitoring users' vital parameters, as well as developing algorithms for predicting and preventing certain conditions and diseases in order to improve the quality of life and health.





Outpost Chess

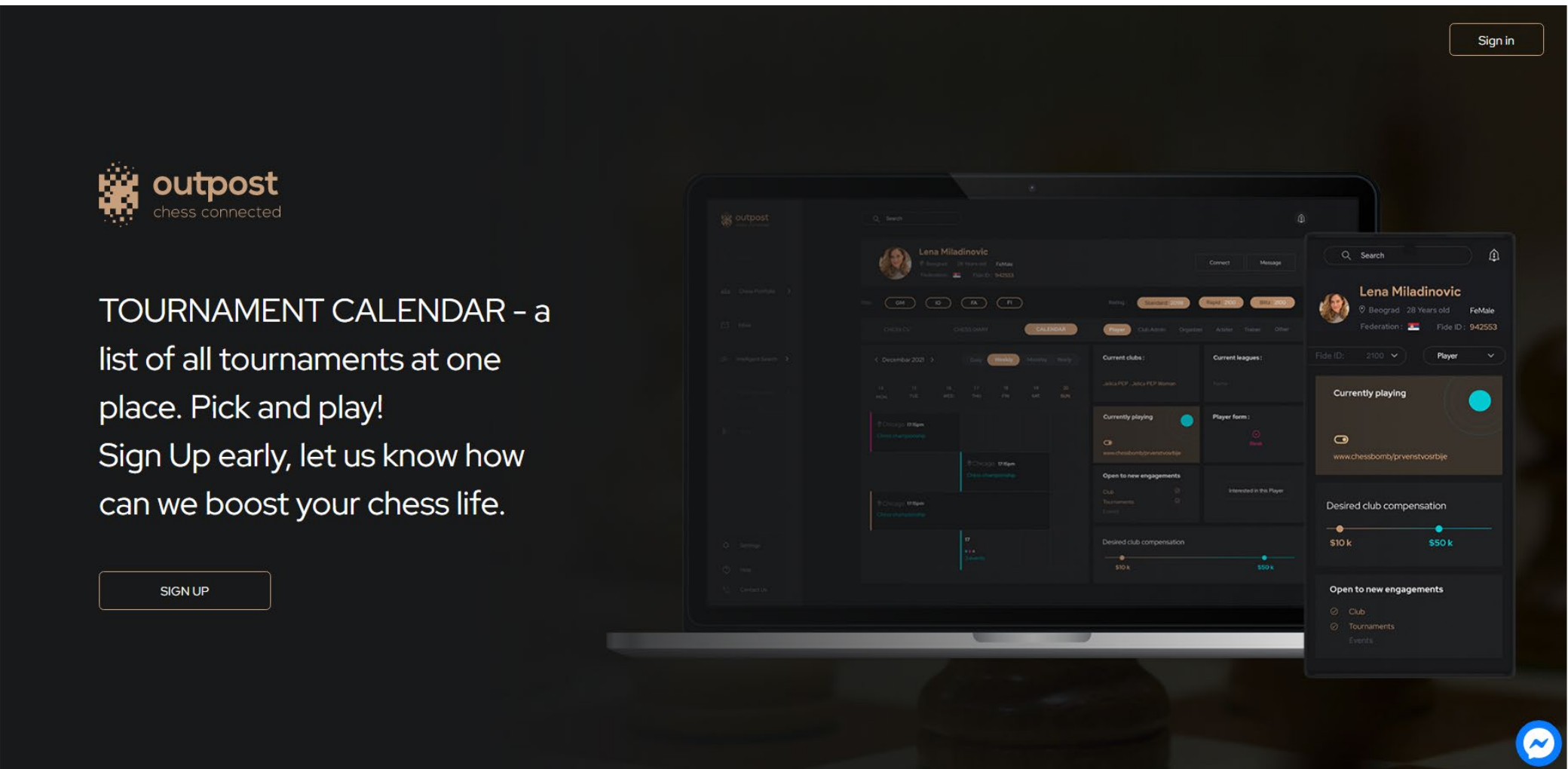
LinkedIn for Chess Players

Outpost Chess brings together experienced professionals in chess, business, internet entrepreneurship, and programming, who, with the help of digital technologies, aim to restore the former popularity of this ancient game. The goal is to enhance the chess experience in the real world through innovations in the online world, provide appropriate earnings for professionals in this sport, and restore the prestige of the chess profession.

This led to the idea of developing a platform that connects the entire chess professional community in one place, where they can create personal profiles, improve communication, and organize chess events more efficiently.

Outpost Chess, similar to LinkedIn, allows smart searches for players, clubs, organizers, referees, and coaches, making it easier for everyone to be more engaged in the chess world. A simple search allows users to see which players are interested in participating in an event, as well as their titles and ratings corresponding to the league or tournament being organized.

The team has big ambitions. The platform will first be introduced to users in markets where chess is most popular and best understood—Serbia and Atlanta (USA)—and then to other countries where chess has significant popularity, eventually reaching markets where they will specifically work on popularizing the game.





Beehold

Digital “Apprentice” for Remote Apiary Monitoring

Beehold is developing both hardware and software system for monitoring bees without the need to visit the apiary, at any time and regardless of weather conditions. The advantage of this system is that it provides beekeepers with comprehensive information about the hive’s condition, timely alerts about potential issues, and gives recommendations for resolving them. This saves beekeepers time, increases honey yield, and boosts profitability.

The digitalization of beekeeping has significant potential in the global market. Although agriculture is a very traditional field, Beehold has secured enthusiasts for new technologies among beekeepers who will be the first users of the MVP (early-stage product version) both in Serbia and in countries with different climatic zones (Kenya), as beekeeping is seasonal. During their participation in the Raising Starts program, the team also received financial support from the Innovation Fund and won second place in the competition for Best Technological Innovation.

The system is not only beneficial for beekeepers but also for the bees themselves, as it minimizes hive openings and thus reduces disturbances to the bees. Additionally, by collecting a large number of highly precise data on bee colonies, it creates a vast resource for further scientific research.


beehold.rs


Ball Skiller

AI Mobile Application for Improving Basketball Shooting Technique

Ball Skiller is developing an artificial intelligence (AI)-based application designed to improve basketball skills, particularly for perfecting shooting, a common challenge for about two-thirds of players. Unlike similar solutions that offer statistics or enhancements for those who already have good techniques, this application helps players make significant progress and become much more accurate when shooting at the basket. It works by allowing users to record their shot, upload the video to the app, and receive immediate analysis of their mistakes and how to correct them. There are also plans to develop software that will analyze other key elements of the sport.

The team mainly consists of former basketball players, some of whom have become successful coaches and others who are experts in artificial intelligence (AI). They have combined their love and passion for basketball and technology into an app that enhances the process and speed in learning when it comes to basketball. The application is especially aimed at young athletes training in this sport (ages 13-18) and is also useful for coaches and agents looking to accelerate their players' progress.

The team has already received support from internationally renowned coaches, basketball players, and agents. The product is intended for the global market, particularly in countries where basketball is most developed, such as the USA, China, the Philippines, France, Brazil, Turkey, Spain, and Russia.



Inclusio

Platform for Support to Persons with Disability

Inclusio is developing a platform that facilitates daily tasks for people with disabilities in public places, such as visiting a store, bank, or other establishments. Thanks to this platform, users can inform on-site staff about the type of assistance they need before entering the location to carry out their desired activity. The product also supports companies in providing equal service quality to all their customers.

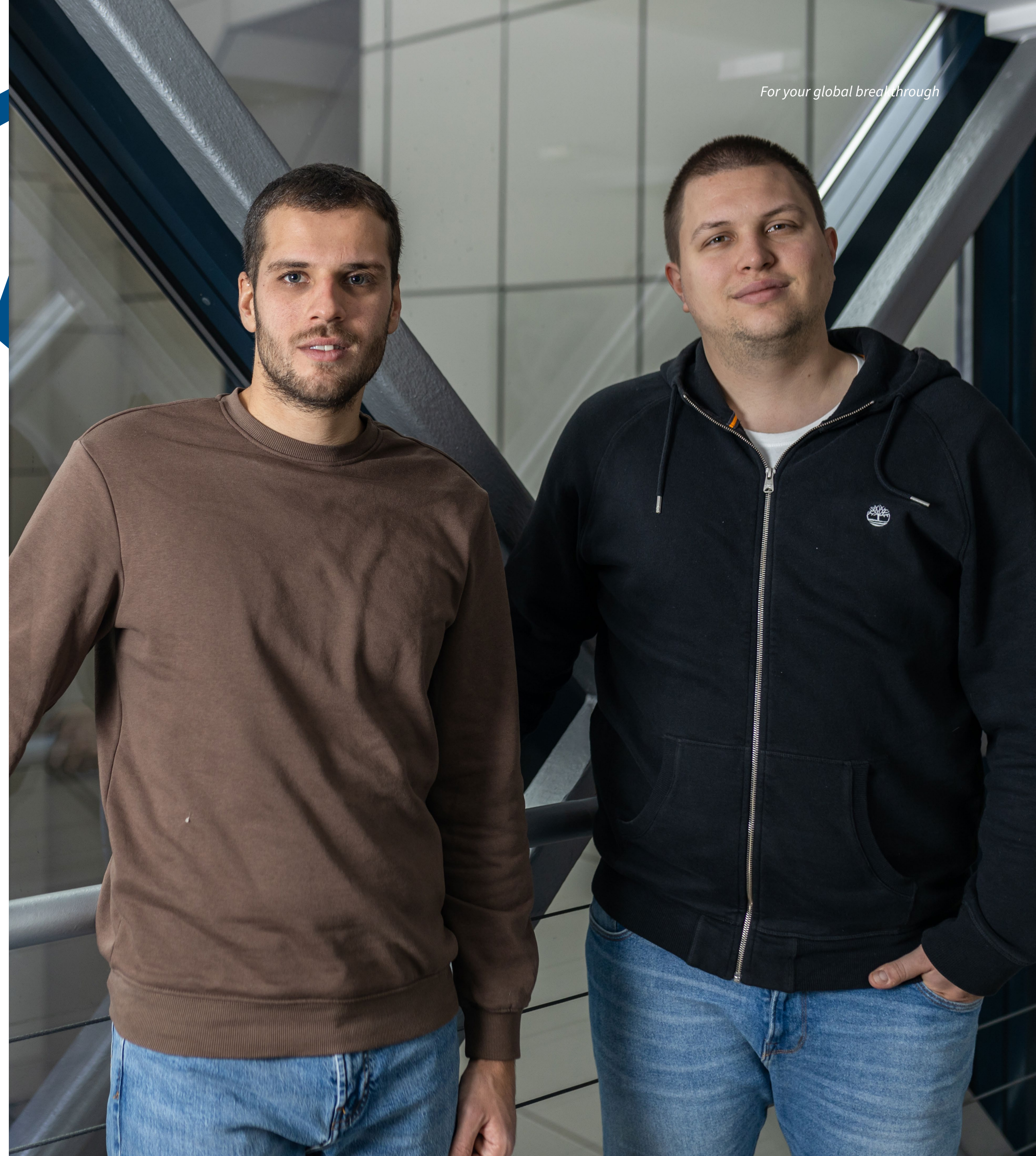
The goal is for the system to always be free for end users. As key partners in the further development and sustainability of the product, they envision companies that lead in corporate social responsibility. For this reason, early testing of the product is conducted among primary users and companies to verify accessibility and ensure access to as many locations as possible.

Understanding the needs of people with disabilities is based not only on research among the target group but also on the personal experience of one of the founders. Raising Starts enabled the development of the first version of the product, and during their participation in the program, they secured two new investments: through the City of Belgrade's competition for supporting innovative activities in 2021 and a grant from the Innovation Fund.

The team plans to introduce additional functionalities during further development to be of more assistance to people with disabilities.



For your global breakthrough



VoiceToys

Smart Therapeutic Toys for Children with Speech Impediments

VoiceToys toys are much more than just toys—they are therapeutic tools primarily designed for working with children with hearing impairments and speech development delays.

They respond to the child’s voice and movements by emitting lights, sounds, and vibrations, motivating the child to use their voice, senses, and motor skills in a three-dimensional space. Thanks to advancements, VoiceToys can also be used with children facing other developmental challenges as well as those with typical developmental progress for their age.

Currently, prototypes are being tested in various healthcare institutions in Serbia and North Macedonia, special schools, and families, with ongoing improvements in functionality. The team is working diligently towards achieving mass production and entering new markets. As part of the Raising Starts program, they have received a special grant for intellectual property (IP), which will help protect their intellectual property at European level.

The team also aims to enhance work with children by developing a system that will be engaging for tech-savvy generations, encouraging the development of cognitive and motor skills without keeping them “glued” to a screen.



voicetoys.rs





ZenHire

AI Selector for Easier Job Candidates Selection

ZenHire is developing a B2B application designed for HR professionals to select job candidates much faster and more effectively, with less stress for both parties. The software will be able to communicate individually with each candidate, send personalized information based on this interaction, and use AI technology to identify those who not only performed best in the interview but also have results that demonstrate long-term job performance. This will be achieved by comparing candidates' long-term performance data with results obtained from their job interview.

This feature gives the software an advantage over solutions that rely solely on information gathered from interviews. The ultimate goal is for the final product to enable the selection of high-quality candidates while saving up to 80% of the time currently spent on these procedures.

A significant amount of time is wasted on candidate selection in startup companies, small and medium-sized enterprises, and even large companies often rely on outdated technology in this process. ZenHire has identified this as an opportunity. The demand for innovative HR technologies and their market value are increasing, and this startup is primarily focused on English-speaking regions (the UK and the USA). The development achieved and the knowledge gained during participation in Raising Starts helped them secure new investment through the Startech program.



Cinteraction

Virtual Classroom of the Future

Cinteraction is developing an AI-based software platform that measures the activity levels of online course participants and helps improve the quality of knowledge transfer during virtual classroom lectures. Practice has shown that student's attention and the amount of knowledge acquired directly depend on the quality of the lectures. Therefore, the platform will assist educators in identifying areas for improvement and provide concrete recommendations for enhancing their teaching.

The idea behind the technology they are developing is to advance computers' ability to understand human behavior and emotional states, thereby improving their usefulness in various applications. They are among the few attempting to solve this problem in the education sector. Unlike similar solutions that mainly measure student attention through passive indicators, this platform relies on a multimodal approach and direct audio-video signals to achieve significantly higher-quality results.

The team has developed a prototype, and following support from the Raising Starts program, they have also received a grant from the Innovation Fund for further development. Although primarily intended for educational institutions, there are plans to expand the platform for use by corporations and healthcare institutions.





Phobos

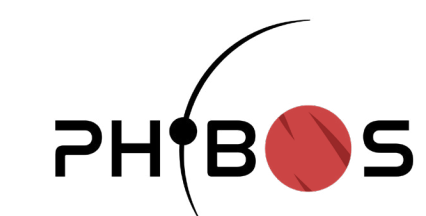
Cloudburst, a Game That Unites Seemingly Incompatible Gamers

Phobos is developing the video game Cloudburst, which gives players the freedom to define their own play style while preventing the game from being used to gain strategic advantages. The game is a mix of battle royale and survival genres, offering players much more gameplay variety by combining the dynamics of one with the slower pace of the other.

What sets this game apart is that it allows seemingly incompatible players to participate—those who prioritize results and those who play primarily for joy, without compromising the sense of achievement and progress in the game. The team members are also gamers who have identified a niche and market for innovation in the growing gaming industry, creating a unique game concept and addressing issues they faced as users.

Participation in the Raising Starts program helped them validate the problem they had identified, as well as their solution. The goal is to launch the final product primarily in the Western markets.

Their involvement in Raising Starts also helped them improve their business plan, marketing strategy, and better prepare for seeking further investments. During the program, they secured a grant from the Innovation Fund for further development.


cloudburstgame.com



#sidebysidewiththeworld

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