

CISPA Founders Fellowship Programme

CISPA Founders Fellowship provides support to transform cutting-edge research in information security, privacy, and Trustworthy AI/ML into successful startups through structured mentorship, comprehensive resources, and expert guidance over a 12-month period.

Target Participants: • Postdoctoral researchers, Ph.D. students, or exceptional MSc students
• Teams of 1 to 3 people aiming to commercialize CISPA research • Candidates with both technical expertise and entrepreneurial curiosity • No prior company incorporation for the specific idea • Must have explicit support from at least one CISPA faculty member

Key Benefits: • Full-time salary for 12 months • €20,000 per fellow for project-related expenses (up to €60,000 for teams of 3) • Mentorship from CISPA faculty and the Startups & Entrepreneurship team • Access to CISPA's cutting-edge facilities, equipment, and global research network • Structured curriculum through three key development phases • Networking opportunities with potential investors and partners

Programme Structure: • Phase 1 (17 weeks): Customer Discovery & Validation • Phase 2 (17 weeks): Value Proposition Refinement • Phase 3 (18 weeks): MVP Development & Startup Vision
• Regular bi-weekly mentor meetings and quarterly expert panel reviews

Application Process: • Online application >> Application review >> Interview (60 minutes) >> Final decision • Application includes business idea description, team composition, and faculty support letter

Key Dates: • Application Deadline: August 31, 2025 • Interview Period: October 1-30, 2025 • Final Decisions: October 30, 2025 • **Programme Start: January 12, 2026**

Basic Requirements: • Innovation in information security, privacy, or AI/ML • Research-based
• Commercial potential • Entrepreneurial mindset

Post-Programme Support:

• CISPA Founders Fellowship Alumni status • Support with applying for additional funding (e.g., StartupSecure Programme) • Continued access to CISPA network and resources for 6 months

Goal: Develop a market-validated startup with MVP ready for investment

Get Started. *Transform your research into market success with CISPA Founders Fellowship*

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