



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

8,115: Startup Engagements by Corporates

ECTS credits: 3

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Presentation, Digital, Group work group grade (100%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,115,1.00 Startup Engagements by Corporates](#) -- English -- [Cotting René](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

There are no special prerequisites for this course.

Learning objectives

- Understand the importance, motivation and roles of Corporate Ventures in engaging with Startups
- Learn the winning factors and "do's and don'ts" in engaging with Startups
- Learn how to pitch your pre-selected startups to the Corporate Investment Committee
- Get technical knowledge in screening, evaluating, selecting, pitching, financing and coaching Startups
- Get introduction in organizational, management and legal setups
- Get introduction in key legal terms for a term sheet/contract with startups

Course content

In this seminar you will learn the exciting world of innovation with Startups from the perspectives of Corporates. We will look for answers on questions such as

- what are Innovation challenges of established companies and why are Startups getting more important
- what interests and motivations do Corporates have in engaging with Startups
- what organizational set-up of Corporate Venture exist and what are 'do's and don'ts'
- how shall we select the winning Startups: We will screen and build-up a dealflow, evaluate pitches, value business models of startups, do due diligence and learn the decision process to invest
- what are key contractual terms and financial valuation methods to use
- how shall we engage, coach, collaborate and innovate with Startups. Hereby, we will review some accelerator approaches from Corporate Ventures
 - what are exit strategies as well as what are compensation aspects
 - what can Startups learn from Corporate Ventures to realize a win-win

In the seminar we will discuss challenges, practical set-ups and implementation steps and deepen them with real examples. Hereby, we are focusing on "do's and don'ts" based on best practices, studies and own experiences.



Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course is structured as a three day seminar plus an exam session (group work) after 6-8 weeks, and is held in English.

Major Agenda structure:

1. Venture Capital and Corporate Venturing engagements
2. The case for Corporate Venturing
3. Success factors - House of Corporate Venturing
4. Summary of DO's and DONT's
5. Q&A

We will focus in answering the questions highlighted above, with deep-dives into practical methods, processes and tools. We will reflect on the experiences and pitfalls of a Corporate Venture CEO and Startup CEO, latter when dealing with Corporate ventures vs. other investors.

We are rounding-up the seminar with the discussed 'Do's and Don'ts' when engaging with Startups.

During the seminar you will receive your group work topics which will count for the examination. Hereby, your group will need to select an existing startup, you will define the corporate venture team of a company, and then pitch the selected startup to the Investment Committee (represented by the lecturer). NDAs will be signed.

Course literature

Handouts, case study and further material as published on Canvas

Additional readings:

Kupor, S.: Secrets of Sand Hill Road - Venture Capital and How to Get it, New York 2019

Mason, H., Arrington, E., Mawson, J.: Corporate Venturing - a survival guide, Global Corporate Venturing, London 2019

Grichnik, D., Hess, M.: Startup Navigator - Guiding your entrepreneurial Journey, 2020

Selected articles published lately

Additional course information

The lecturer Dr. René Cotting acted over the last two decades as CFO, Chairman of ABB Technology Ventures and Head of Startup Engagements at a global Corporate. He was Member of an Investment Committee at a Venture Capital Company, Investor in several global Venture Capital funds and has been acting as Senior Advisor of a Private equity firm. Further, he lived in the Silicon Valley and is engaged privately since then in Startups.

As a Board member of the insurance company Helvetia Group he also oversees the corporate venture activities of Helvetia.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/1)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination



Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	100%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Remark

Proposal in writing and presentation via teams

Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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Examination content

Creation and presentation of a **decision proposal** for funding a Startup to the Investment Committee of a Corporate Venture CVC.

Group work (5-6 students per group) on practical topics that will be educated during the course.

6-8 weeks preparation time after the block seminar, presentation of the pitch of an existing startup, acting in pre-defined market and sector areas, to the Chairman of the Investment committee of a Corporate (i.e., lecturer).

The grade will be determined based on the following parts:

- Investment Committee IC documentation & presentation (to be sent as pre-read to the IC meeting).
- Set-up of the selected Corporate Venture Organization (Vision/Strategy, organisational aspects, scouting and acceleration process aspects, investment and funding aspects, portfolio aspects, etc.).
- Startup investment selection and engagement.
- Due diligence / Risk analysis.
- Investor role.
- Funding amount proposed and financials explained.
- Contractual terms (Term sheet).
- Engagement after investment.
- Active participation during course.
- Group grade.

Examination relevant literature

The literature to be used depends on the respective case and is to be researched by the students.



Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).