

# Press Release

Düsseldorf/Münster, October 10, 2024

## 15 million euros for Gründerfonds Ruhr II

### NRW.BANK backs start-ups from the Ruhr area

**With a view to strengthening the start-up ecosystem in North Rhine-Westphalia, NRW.BANK has invested 15 million euros in Gründerfonds Ruhr II in the first closing. The Essen-based seed fund raised a total of 31 million euros from investors. Investments focus on innovative technology start-ups in the Ruhr area and neighbouring regions.**

“We need a faster pace of innovation and more ideas from innovative start-ups to shape the future in North Rhine-Westphalia. This requires funding,” says Johanna Antonie Tjaden-Schulte, member of the Managing Board of NRW.BANK. “By participating in Gründerfonds Ruhr II, we aim to even better harness the potential of the Ruhr area, with its dense research landscape and urban environment.”

Gründerfonds Ruhr II is managed by Ruhrgründer Management GmbH, led by Ann-Christin Kortenbrede and Jan Gräfe. Both bring extensive experience in supporting young growth companies and actively guide the fund’s strategic direction. The goal is to secure additional commitments over the next twelve months to reach a target volume of 50 million euros.

In cooperation with Initiativkreis Ruhr and NRW.BANK, Gründerfonds Ruhr provides not only seed funding but also a strong partner network, direct industry access, and valuable expertise for start-ups. The fund focuses on companies from sectors such as chemicals and new materials, energy and industry, life sciences and healthcare, logistics, and the digital economy.

The first edition of Gründerfonds Ruhr, with a volume of 34.5 million euros, was launched by Initiativkreis Ruhr and NRW.BANK in 2017. To date, the fund has made investments in ten innovative start-ups.

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For more information on NRW.BANK’s start-up promotion programme, visit [www.nrbank.de/founder](http://www.nrbank.de/founder) and [www.nrbank.de/nrwventure](http://www.nrbank.de/nrwventure)

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For more information on Gründerfonds Ruhr, visit [www.gruenderfonds-ruhr.com](http://www.gruenderfonds-ruhr.com)

For more information on Initiativkreis Ruhr, visit [www.initiativkreis-ruhr.de](http://www.initiativkreis-ruhr.de)

**Media contact:**

Caroline Fischer, Press Officer

Phone: +49 211 91741-1847, e-mail: [presse@nrwbank.de](mailto:presse@nrwbank.de)

**NRW.BANK – The Promotional Bank for North Rhine-Westphalia**

NRW.BANK is the promotional bank of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). Working in close partnership with its owner, the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, it provides innovative start-ups with the financial support they need. This is to ensure that no good idea in North Rhine-Westphalia fails for lack of funding. To achieve this goal, NRW.BANK provides a comprehensive range of equity capital. It covers the entire lifecycle of a company: from pre-seed, start-up and early phases to growth and late phases. Special emphasis is placed on the transformation issues of sustainability and digitalisation. NRW.BANK also stimulates the development of the venture capital and private equity market through its activities as an investor in funds managed by third parties. In addition to capital, NRW.BANK supports start-ups with its network and expertise.

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