

Institutional setting



- Economic development agency Dortmund
- Project: “start2grow” German wide founders competition
- Funded by the city of Dortmund
- Project: Public Private Partnership
- Most important stakeholders: TechnologyCenterDortmund and its competence centers, sponsors like our local S-Venture GmbH and Hightech Gründer Fonds.
- Main overall goal: create new jobs in IT, mems, logistics industries



Starting point



- Structural transformation until 1990s
- Old industries: coal mining, beer & steel production
 - Loss of 70.000 Jobs
- New industries: MST, IT, Logistics
 - create 70.000 news jobs



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Approach



- Focus on cluster management
- Install founders competition
 - start2grow
 - Special prizes “Technology”
- Install program to support with human resources (humans and their competences)
- Character “project” (originally 2000 – 2010)



Output



- start2grow facts:
 - Established 2001 – within our 33rd round
 - 10.140 participants / 4.510 Teams
 - 3.295 business plans handed in
 - 1.035 companies founded, 5.511 jobs created (1.772 companies and 393 jobs in Dortmund)
 - More than 650 Coaches participating voluntarily
 - Direct contact to banks & VC-partners
 - ISO 9001 certified



Lessons



- “dortmund-project” extended
- Concept of scalability did not apply to companies founded in the TechnologyCenterDortmund (mainly small companies with few employees)
- Cluster focus had to be extended (e. g. creative economy during the “Ruhr2010”)
- Competition helps, grass-roots & individual work wins



Follow up



- What experiences did you make concerning the local image of start-ups, e.g. public perception vs. hard facts (jobs, local business tax)?
- Do ICT firms with a high scalability make an impact on your local economy?
- Do we need incubators strictly for technology? May co-working approaches driven by companies be the better incubators?!
- How do you manage the growth of startups?!

