



ENTREPRENEURS

CONNECT Denmark is founded on a unique network of sponsors and members. These sponsors and members contribute through voluntary efforts to connect the entrepreneur with the technical and business competencies they lack, in order to develop the business platform necessary to attract partners and investors.

The value for the entrepreneur is that he /she, through the CONNECT Denmark activities, gets access to a unique nationwide network of the very best competencies available – free of charge.

THE PROCESS

The very first contact between CONNECT Denmark and the entrepreneur begins with a dialogue in order to establish the maturity of the company, strategy, next steps and the need for assistance. CONNECT Denmark's focus is on entrepreneurs that have a unique product, technology and/or concept with the potential of creating a high-growth company.

THE ACTIVITIES

CONNECT Denmark offers a range of different activities that can help the entrepreneur. For the entrepreneur the CONNECT Denmark process and the access to its network and activities are cost free.

Pre-Springboard & Springboard

The core activity is the Springboard process, where the entrepreneurs present their business in front of a panel of experts specially selected from the member base.

“Through the Springboard process we gained valuable feedback on our strategy which then became more focused due to such input. Even today we still use some of the general guide lines and advice we received from the Springboard. Today 3Dfacto is on the right path – we have customers, a mature product portfolio, an experienced board of directors and venture capital to support our growth. We are now 18 people!”

*Thomas Randrup, Ph.D., CEO, 3Dfacto A/S
(Springboard in 2000)*

The size of a Springboard panel varies, depending on whether it is a Pre- or Springboard, but is on average from 8-12 persons. The panellists represent a cross-section of experts within legal, IPR, communication, industry, financing, management, all of them with the common interest of meeting and assisting start-up companies in achieving success.

A Pre-Springboard is aimed at the company who cannot yet present a fully-fledged business plan and therefore needs sparring in order to decide upon focus, strategy, value propositions, market segment, and more. The feedback from the Pre-Springboard enables the company to develop a final business plan more effectively.

The aim with the actual Springboard is to put the entrepreneur's finished business plan through the final test to ensure that it contains what is necessary in order to approach investors and other strategic partners.

Board Member Network

This is an ideal matchmaking tool that helps CONNECT Denmark assist entrepreneurs in putting together a professional and competent board, as well as inviting them to attend seminars on relevant topics helping them understand the responsibilities of a board member, with focus on the needs of venture backed companies.

This is also a database containing information regarding skills and experience of those of our members interested in taking on board duties, enabling us to find the right candidates.

“We are especially grateful to CONNECT Denmark for their ability to raise a professional multi competence Springboard expert panel thus giving start-up companies a realistic view of the challenges to come; If you can still smile after a Springboard session; then don't give up – cause you have something worth struggling for!”

Henrik Falkenthros, founder, Bridicum Security Group (Springboard in 2000).

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On-The-Way-Home-Meetings

These meetings focus on themes such as internationalisation, financing and management. In order to meet the interest of sponsors, members and entrepreneurs, CONNECT Denmark always engages experienced and competent people from the Danish business community to contribute with presentations and case stories on the subject at hand. These meetings are open to everyone and are therefore an obvious forum for networking with CONNECT Denmark's members and others.

International events

In addition to the basic activities, CONNECT Denmark aims to provide its entrepreneurs with the possibility of attending international events. This is often done in partnership with other organizations.

ICT, Medtech and Biotech companies seeking international investors are invited to attend, along with their existing investors, CONNECT Denmark's UK Venture Meeting in London. Here they have the possibility of presenting their company to UK Venture Funds.

During the autumn CONNECT Denmark, in association with Europe Unlimited, arranges the annual Nordic Venture Summit (NVS) in Copenhagen. This conference is attended by some of the best Nordic entrepreneurs from the ICT and Life Sciences sector seeking funding, industrial partnerships and international exposure, as well as an exclusive gathering of influential leaders and decision makers from corporates and industry.

The NVS enables the companies to present their business in front of some of Europe's leading and most active investors and corporate contacts, and to have pre-arranged one-to-one meetings. The programme also includes key speakers and panel discussions concerning contemporary trends, as well as challenges and possibilities in the market. The Summit is the number one event in facilitating a unique networking opportunity for the entire Nordic region and international investment community.

"We got a hard kick in the behind, but in a very professional way and the criticism was 100 percent constructive. Luckily the panel expressed great confidence in the potential of Solvision, but we were told to focus even more on the company's core products and competencies: Tell exactly what it is you can do and exactly what it is you want to do! An advice we have followed ever since.

Subsequently we have participated in several of CONNECT Denmark's Board Member Network Meetings and lectures. For the moment we are considering having a so-called advisory board affiliated, which is the step just before having an actual professional board of directors."

*Leif R. Nørgaard, CEO, Solvision
(Springboard in 2004)*

ReCONNECT Denmark

This is a network established by entrepreneurs who have all been through the Springboard process and are now doing business. The members of ReCONNECT are committed to interact with other founders of companies, who are approximately at the same stage in their development and therefore face similar everyday opportunities and challenges.

The overall purpose is to network and through input from peers, discuss various business topics and entrepreneurial issues, experience personal and

professional development. ReCONNECT arranges regular meetings where the members take turn in presenting the group to a specific challenge or problem.

Only entrepreneurs who have already been through a Springboard process and have been recommended by either CONNECT Denmark or a ReCONNECT member are eligible to join, and may apply to become a member.

“At a very early stage of the company’s history, Amminex A/S had a CONNECT Denmark Pre-Springboard with the participation of an experienced and active panel. Among other things, this gave us valuable feedback in the shape of constructive criticism on our business ideas, patent strategy, development of company management and possible ways to approach investors. It is recommendable to have an early-stage Pre-Springboard, if you do this with an open mind and make use of the good advice.”

Tue Johannessen, PhD., Chief Technical Officer, Amminex A/S (Pre-Springboard in 2005).

“Through our meetings with CONNECT Denmark we have learned a lot about keeping focus on the business potential and identifying weaknesses and strengths in our strategy. From the very beginning the meetings have given us strength to “kill our darlings” in order to formulate a strict business plan.”

Thomas Steenberg, founder & CEO, In-situ Analytics ApS (Springboard in 2004).



CONNECT Denmark is a non-profit organisation founded in April 2000. The organisation offers high-growth entrepreneurs professional advice and access to a unique network of the very best competencies within the Danish business community, universities and organisations.

CONNECT Denmark operates on a regional basis from Copenhagen, Soroe, Odense, Kolding, Aarhus and Aalborg. The CONNECT organisations exist on a world-wide basis, and a particular close collaboration has been established with the Nordic and Baltic countries under the CONNECT Nordic Foundation.

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At www.connectdenmark.com you can read more about the organisation and find out which CONNECT Denmark region is located in your vicinity.

