

# WORLD'S LEADING STARTUP EVENT SLUSH APPOINTS MIIKA HUTTUNEN AS THE NEW CEO AND LAUNCHES NEW YEAR-ROUND INITIATIVES

Miika Huttunen has been appointed as Slush's new CEO and Oona Poropudas as the new President. Both have years of experience from the Slush events and organization. After volunteering at Slush 2014–2017, Miika has been responsible for partnerships and served as Slush's Chief Operating Officer last year. Oona, for her part, has previously been responsible for the Stage Program at Slush events, and will now take the lead on the annual Slush Main Event in Helsinki as well as Slush's international events.

Over ten years ago, Slush was established to change attitudes toward entrepreneurship in Finland. Since then, the student-driven not-for-profit has grown from a single gathering of a few hundred people to a series of events organized all around the world, a digital media outlet Soaked by Slush, and an entrepreneurship education program Slush Academy.

"We believe that entrepreneurship is one of the most efficient ways to change the world fast and at scale – thus we see that entrepreneurs accelerate the progress of the human race. That won't change, shouldn't change, and the fact that these people need help won't change either," says Miika Huttunen, the newly appointed CEO of Slush.

"We trust that if we support the startup founders, everything else will follow. Therefore, the Slush mission remains the same: to create and help the next generation of groundbreaking founders. While doing it in the future, we want to increasingly inspire them to pursue growth with purpose," he continues.

## A NEW PATH TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP – LAUNCHING SLUSH ACADEMY

Slush Academy introduces a new way of learning entrepreneurship to the global educational landscape. Through the intense program, participants will not only learn the ins-and-outs of fast-scaling companies. They will get once-in-a-lifetime kind of experience of working in an international startup and mentoring from some of the most acclaimed founders of our time.

"For a long time, we've recognized the lack of sufficient pragmatic education that actually prepares young talent for creating those record-breaking companies such as Varjo and Klarna. We want to do our part here, as well. Hence, we are excited to start accelerating the 21st-century entrepreneurship through Slush Academy this summer," tells Huttunen.

## A GLOBAL COMMUNITY FOR FOUNDERS AND FOUNDERS-TO-BE

Currently, Slush communities have been started – in addition to Helsinki – in China, Japan, and Singapore. Slush has organized events in Berlin, Stockholm, Paris, New York, Hyderabad, and in more than 40 other cities with different concepts and angles.

"As for the next steps, we are in talks with like-minded people from India to Korea and different countries in Africa. For us, it's meaningful to be a supporting partner in building local startup hubs with an eye for impact all around the world," says Oona Poropudas, Slush's new President.

## **SLUSH'S MAIN EVENT GATHERS A RECORD NUMBER OF INVESTORS AND STARTUPS TO THE NORTH**

Slush's annual main event is organized in Helsinki on November 19–20th this year with the same amount of visitors, 25,000, expected for the Slush-week. Last year, Slush attracted a record number of 2,000 investors and 3,500 startups, and numerous other decision-makers to Helsinki. In 2019 over 6000 meetings were held between entrepreneurs and investors at Messukeskus, amount that more than doubled from 2018.

“The preparations for the next edition of our 25,000-strong crown jewel are in full-effect. This year, we are further expanding the experience from a single event to a week full of meetings – those booked through the Matchmaking Tool, ones in Slush Kickoff Events, and those serendipitous encounters that occur all around Helsinki during the week”, visions Poropudas, who is leading the preparations for the main event, Slush 2020.

“Slush has a unique way of creating an alternative universe inside of our venue – it's the kind of a magical place, where you can have more than a month's worth of meetings in 48 hours”, concludes Huttunen.

## **SLUSH IN A NUTSHELL**

### **SLUSH 2020**

- Organized in Helsinki on November 19–20th. The same amount of visitors, 25,000, is expected for the Slush-week.
- This year, the focus of the Slush-week will remain on meetings and mentoring between entrepreneurs and investors. In addition, more experts from other sectors of society, such as researchers, politicians and business decision-makers, are invited to join Slush.
- [www.slush.org](http://www.slush.org)

### **SLUSH ACADEMY**

- Slush's New School for Growth Entrepreneurship Education Slush Academy will begin operations in summer 2020.
- The Slush Academy application opens on February 10th, 2020.
- Participants are selected based on motivation. The Slush Academy program is a combination of training and real work experience in international teams.
- Through Slush Academy, participants gain access to internships at successful Finnish and foreign growth companies.
- [www.slush.org/academy](http://www.slush.org/academy)

### **SLUSH AROUND THE WORLD**

- Three Slush events will be held this year in China: Slush Shanghai, Slush Nanjing, and Slush Yangzhou. In addition, two new events are planned in China in new cities.
- Last year's Small Talks were held in Stockholm, London, and New York. In addition, Slush organized a smaller scale Slush-event with the local startup community in Trondheim, Norway.
- The Founder's Dinner concept was held in Kyiv, Helsinki, Milan, and San Francisco. The intimate events brought together 10 to 15 entrepreneurs from the same industry around the same table to discuss, mentor and network.
- More of Slush's international events are taking place this year than ever. Dozens of events aimed at entrepreneurs can be expected with different concepts.

## **SOAKED BY SLUSH**

- Soaked by Slush is an online publication under the auspices of Slush that focuses on solving problems and phenomena in the European growth entrepreneurship field.
- Most recently, Soaked by Slush published and analyzed data collected over the past six years on growth companies participating in Slush.
- [www.slush.org/soaked](http://www.slush.org/soaked)

Slush Oy is owned by the Startup Foundation. As with previous years, Slush's annual operating profit will be used directly to develop the events and to support entrepreneurship through new projects and initiatives.

## **MORE INFORMATION:**

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