

**StartmeupHK Salon Event in Berlin**  
**(24 August 2022)**

**Welcome Remarks by DBL**

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning and welcome to StartmeupHK Salon 2022 co-organised by Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Berlin, InvestHK and StartmeupHK. I am very glad to see that a StartmeupHK Salon event is held here in Berlin for the very first time in a hybrid format. A big thank you to all of you who are joining us here physically today, and also a very warm welcome to all the speakers and participants from Hong Kong and around the world who are joining us through the virtual sphere.

2. Today, we are gathering to explore together the opportunities that Hong Kong presents to German and international startups. It is very fitting that the event is held here in the heart of Kreuzberg, one of the most popular districts for startups in Berlin. Indeed, Berlin and Hong Kong share many similarities, and very much so in the context of today's event. To say the least, both cities have a very well established and dynamic startup ecosystem, with a diverse and international community of young entrepreneurs.

3. So, what more else can Hong Kong offer to international entrepreneurs and startups? As many of you would agree, “location, location, location” has become a very well-known mantra among the entrepreneurial community. Finding the ideal place for starting a business can be challenging, but it is one of the key factors, if not the most important one, to success. With its unique and strategic location, Hong Kong has the best connectivity in the Asia Pacific region, making it an ideal place for startups to launch their business right in the heart of Asia. You can basically reach all major markets in Asia within just four hours by flight and half of the world population within five. And as part of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area, a city cluster with a population of 87 million and a GDP of EUR 1.9 trillion, Hong Kong also offers direct access to the huge Mainland market with a multitude of business opportunities.

4. Location aside, there is a long list of reasons why Hong Kong attracts entrepreneurs from all over the world. Just to name a few, we have an open and friendly business environment, a simple and low tax regime, a multi-cultural talent pool, and perhaps more importantly, the availability of funding and business opportunities from Mainland China. Together with various support programmes that the Hong Kong Government offers, such as tax incentives, immigration facilitation through our Talent List , as well as the launching of a new Strategic Tech Fund, which is a Government-backed investment fund of HKD 5 billion that aims to fill the gap between Series A and B financing, Hong Kong checks all the boxes on every entrepreneur's wish list. Apart from all these tangible, business-related advantages, let's not forget that Hong Kong is also a great place to live in with a lively cultural scene, a beautiful countryside, an exciting food scene and last but not least, a diverse community of amazing people.

5. Despite the ongoing economic challenges of the global pandemic, Hong Kong's startup ecosystem has proven to be very robust and resilient, thanks to its strong network of incubators, accelerators and venture capitalists. In 2021, we have seen a growth in all major elements in our ecosystem. There are now more than 3 700 startups in Hong Kong, an increase of 68% compared from just five years ago. Among them, 28% of the founders were non-Hong Kong locals from all over the world, including the United States, the European Union and Mainland China. Meanwhile, the number of incubators, accelerators and co-working spaces in Hong Kong has doubled over the past five years. With such promising figures and strong commitment from the Government, I would very much encourage all of you to seize the opportunities in Hong Kong and become part of our community in the heart of Asia.

6. Ladies and gentlemen, I hope I have done a good job in pitching Hong Kong to you. Thank you once again for joining our StartmeupHK Salon event today, which will provide you with a glimpse of the StartmeupHK Festival taking place in Hong Kong from 5 to 10 September. I hope you would all find today's event fruitful and rewarding. Please enjoy!

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