

# AXEL SPRINGER **PLUG AND PLAY** ACCELERATOR

## AWIN & AXEL SPRINGER PLUG AND PLAY PARTNERSHIP FAQ

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### ANSWERS

#### What is the Awin & Axel Springer Plug and Play Partnership?

Awin and Axel Springer Plug and Play have partnered to bring together an award-winning accelerator with the expertise and reach of one of Europe's largest performance marketing networks. The objective of this partnership is to accelerate the growth of innovative companies operating in the digital marketing space. It provides a unique opportunity for digital marketing startups to benefit from both a prestigious accelerator, and the ability to launch their solutions to market using the expansive Awin and Axel Springer networks.

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## What is the Axel Springer Plug and Play Accelerator?

It is a Berlin-based accelerator for young startups with digital business models. Beyond initial funding it connects founders to its network of mentors, clients and investors. Its objective is to accelerate startups with the right contacts and resources to strengthen their growth and significantly increase their company value.

The accelerator was founded in 2013 as a joint venture between Axel Springer SE and the Plug and Play Tech Center. Axel Springer SE is one of the largest European digital publishing houses and is active in over 40+ countries. The Plug and Play Tech Center is an established US accelerator located in the Silicon Valley. The accelerator is one of the early investors in success stories such as PayPal, Dropbox and Lending Club.

Three years after its creation, the Axel Springer Plug and Play Accelerator had already invested in more than 90 companies from 32 countries and is receiving hundreds of applications per programme. It received the Best Accelerator award during the 2016 Corporate Startup Summit. More information can be found [here](#).

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## What is the Axel Springer Plug and Play Accelerator Programme?

It is a 100-day programme which takes place three times per year in Berlin. Selected startups benefit from EUR 25,000 in seed financing, access to experts and mentors, tailored support aiming at accelerating their growth and use of offices at a co-working space.

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## Which kinds of companies should apply?

The programme aims to support startups from a broad range of verticals. Companies need to have a digital, innovative and scalable business model to be eligible for the programme. The partnership between Awin and Axel Springer Plug and Play will be specifically relevant for startups whose business model is directly or indirectly related to the digital marketing space. This includes businesses focusing on innovative Ad-tech solutions, scalable marketplaces or publishing content. These can be B2B, B2C and C2C business models.

To ensure that the companies which are selected will fully benefit from the experience, we are particularly looking at the following criteria:

- The company should not be later than seed stage
- The company needs to test its go to market strategies, validate target segments, grow traction and/or flesh out its business case.
- The company's business model is complementary or compatible to the performance marketing industry.

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## What are the benefits of participating in the Axel Springer Plug & Play Accelerator Programme?



- **Amplify traction** – Startups are connected to the right companies through our network to help them grow their traction and improve their go-to-market strategies.
- **Industry expertise** – Coaching and mentoring from industry experts
- **Tailored support** – Custom support tailored to the company's business goals.
- **External expertise** – External Experts are specialists from the Accelerator network. The experts have thematic specific knowledge and, in contrast to the mentors, are not necessarily entrepreneurs. The knowledge areas of the experts are diverse and cover topics such as growth hacking, pricing strategies, data privacy or law.
- **Mentoring** – Mentors are part of the accelerators external network and are usually founders who have successfully and partially sold one or more companies. Due to their entrepreneurial experience, they are important advisors for startup founders. For the mentors, the Accelerator is a platform for networking. The majority of mentors are also active angel investors.
- **€ 25,000 startup financing.** This is generally introduced into the company through a capital increase.
- **Founder friendly investment T&C's:** Standard investment terms and conditions that are provided to founders as soon as their application has been accepted. Before the start of the programme, every founder which has been accepted to the batch will be invited to attend a conference call during to go through the T&Cs collectively.
- **Workshops** on fundamental topics such as "Tax & Legal Advice", "Business Modelling", "Online Marketing", "UX Design" or "PR".
- **Office space;** At least one desk per team depending of its size. At the end of the programme founders who would want to stay in Berlin will be able to apply to the accelerator's co-working space.
- **Direct access to investors:** Continuous exposure to investors through the programmes partners and network. In addition, at the end of the programme, a Demo Day will take place during which founders will present their startup and business pitch in front of investors and journalists.
- **International reach and exposure:** International ad network with a global reach and offices in 10 countries. Moreover, startups for which the US is a relevant target market have the opportunity to spend three more months in the Silicon Valley after the main programme completion.
- **Continuous support beyond the 100-day programme:** Support from both Plug and Play and Awin does not end after the programme. Plug and Play will remain sparring partners for the startups, support them in the search for suitable follow-up investment, continue to provide their network. Awin will continue to support the startup's growth as a close business partner.

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**What are the additional funding options provided by the programme?**

- Incremental investments are possible in the following rounds when the startup scales.

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### What are the chances of receiving follow-on financing

One aim of the program is to get companies investment-ready. More than 50% of the subsidised companies receive a follow-up financing. The average company valuation after the programme is about €2 million.

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### Will cooperation with other companies be possible?

Yes. Both Plug and Play and Awin are part of the Axel Springer network which include more than 200 companies in 40+ countries. Plug and Play has, in addition, partnered as well with ERGO insurance and the Deutsche Bank.

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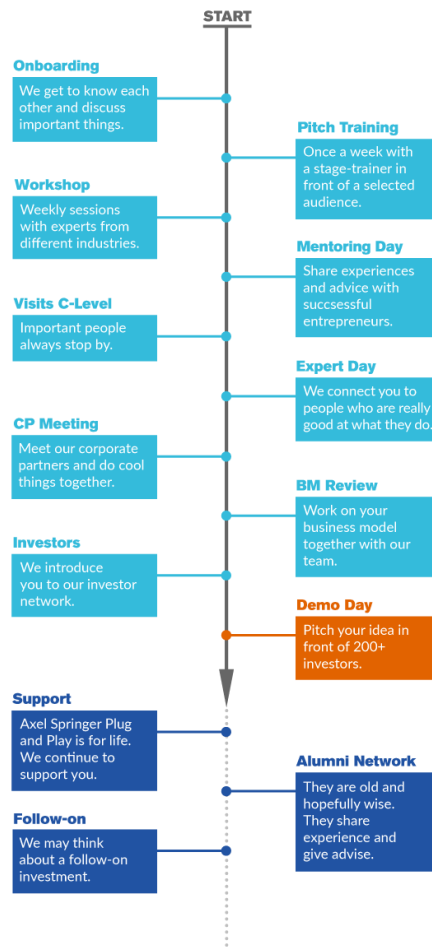
### What is a typical day at the Plug and Play Performance Marketing Accelerator like?

It's intense! However, each planned activity will be tailored to help you grow your business and drive the goals that you have outlined before the start of the programme. A day may contain one-on-one mentor meetings, educational sessions on operational aspects of a company, or meetings with Awin mentors. However, we know that founders need enough time for developing their product and moving things forward. Therefore, we put a lot effort in making the program as relevant as possible and balancing makers' time and programme time.

Additionally, you will receive advanced presentation creation sessions or pitch rehearsals, building up to the Investor Day at the end of the programme.

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### How is the programme structured?



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## How does the selection process work and how many companies are selected?

Interested startups have to fill out the [online form](#). Their applications are reviewed and evaluated by the programme's selection committee. The selection committee is composed of the Awin industry experts, its Board members and the accelerator team. Between 20-40 teams are then invited to the Plug and Play Selection Days to present their pitch. At the end of the process, about 10 startups will be selected.

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## Do I need to move to Berlin?

Yes, for the time of the programme we require founders to be in the accelerator. We feel that it is essential to get the most out of the accelerator and Awin's support. You will also have the opportunity to network with the fellow batch companies.

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## Where is the accelerator located?

Markgrafenstraße 12-14, 10969 Berlin.

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## Will we retain the full intellectual property of what is developed during the programme?

Yes.

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## Is there any limitations regarding the capitalisation table?

The capitalisation table should not include inactive shareholders and, given the stage of the company, the founders should be still in possession of a large portion of the share to be fundable and long-term incentivised in the future success of the company. Also, shares should be adequately distributed among the founders.

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## How can we make our application stand out?

The more detailed your application, the more we can learn about your startup. KPIs, videos and contextual information is the best way for us to get to know your team and product. Videos don't need to have professional production quality – anything that helps us get to know you is perfectly fine.

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## Over which period does the programme take place and what are the application deadline dates?

There are three batches per year starting in May, September and December. Each take place in Berlin over a 100-day period.

For more information on the application and programme start dates, you can consult the schedule on the [Plug and Play website](#).

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## How do I apply?

Apply through the [online form](#).

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## How do I get in touch with Awin?

Contact [global-accelerator@awin.com](mailto:global-accelerator@awin.com).

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