Second L3S Entrepreneurship Talk: Start up and stay

On the 30th of January, the second Entrepreneurship Talk took place at L3S. This time the focus was on setting up a business in Germany as a foreign graduate or scientist.

In her welcome address, Gabriele Herrmann-Krotz, managing director of L3S, pointed out the importance of exploiting the universities' research and development for new products and services to keep the country's economy on a competitive level. Since almost half of the scientific staff at L3S is non-German, this talk addressed mainly this target group to sensitise for starting a business.

Susanne Oetzmann, project leader for L3S entrepreneurship, introduced the new service for L3S members interested in entrepreneurial thinking. The programme startup@l3s offers support by means of consulting and seminars to help scientists develop a business idea and generate a business model. Moreover, she talked about formal conditions for setting up a business and also about the requirements under residence law. In 2012, the federal government eased the requirements for academic founders from abroad.

In addition to theory, L3S invited the Chinese entrepreneur Lei Wang to talk about his motivation and practical experience of starting a business in Germany. Lei Wang holds a master degree in biochemistry from the Technical University of Braunschweig. After graduation he decided to leave the lab and work with people. He became an entrepreneur in 2011 after finding a gap in the market for green tea. Although green tea had become quite popular in Germany one could not buy teabags of excellent quality. Since Lei Wang is originally from a region in China which is famous for its high quality tea he decided to use his knowledge and his contacts to import the tea of his region to Germany. And he has been successful: His teabags were placed in German supermarkets.

Although he dispensed with financial security and spare time Lei Wang enjoys being self-employed and implementing his own idea. But it takes courage, optimism, staying power and communication, he says.

The audience of 30 people, most of them students and postgraduates, were very interested in the talks and asked a lot of questions.

The next L3S Entrepreneurship Talk will take place on the 24th of April 2015 focussing on patents and other intellectual property rights particularly with regard to university spin-off companies.

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