

# NEXT GENERATION DIGITAL ACTION 2025

Enabling youth-led ideas, perspectives and action  
on digital technologies transforming societies  
**Leaving No One Behind**



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# Dear participants, partners, collaborators and new friends

The 2025 edition of Next Generation Digital Action (NGDA) brought together 191 students, young researchers, and early-stage entrepreneurs from across Colombia, Denmark, Egypt, Ghana, India, Kenya, Korea, Mexico, South Africa, Tanzania and the United States. Throughout the initiative, participants strengthened their knowledge, skills, tools, and networks to drive digital action and shape solutions with meaningful societal impact—ensuring that no one is left behind.

The program encompassed a 3-week hybrid innovation journey in June 2025, followed by an 8-day in-person program in Copenhagen during the Digital Tech Summit in November.

We extend our sincere appreciation for your dedication, energy, and invaluable support, which made these achievements possible. You can explore the full outcomes in this booklet and on our official website.

We look forward to continuing this impactful journey together in the years ahead.



**Marie L. Pollmann-Larsen**  
Team Lead  
DTU Skylab



**Viggo Aaberg Kærn**  
Head of Innovation  
DTU Sustain

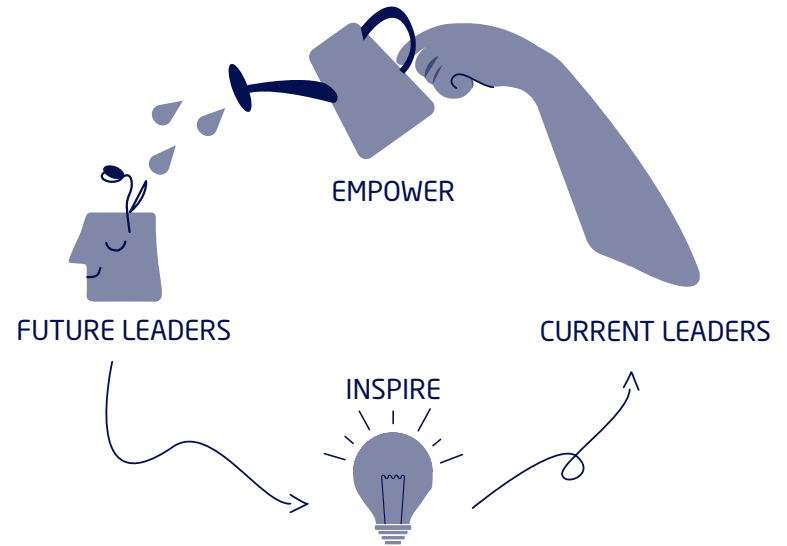


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All photos, except profile portraits, are from the Next Generation Digital Action initiative and taken by Mikael Schlosser, Jessica de Oliveira Benedito, Björgvin Hjartarson, Asger Riis Rasmussen and participants.

# INTRODUCTION



**Next Generation [ ] Action** is a flagship initiative of DTU Skylab, the innovation hub at the Technical University of Denmark, which, at its' core, revolves around youth involvement in the sustainability agenda. Each year, Next Generation formulates a different theme, a field of action, where Denmark takes part as a venue for global decision-makers.

By engaging young academics and entrepreneurs with global decision-makers, through intergenerational dialogues, collaborating and co-creating solutions to sustainability challenges, we provide a platform to inspire current leaders and empower future leaders.



*At DTU, we highly value the 'Next Generation [ ] Action' program for its ability to connect students and startups from around the world with industry, civil society, and our university partners. The program accelerates learning, strengthens community building, and drives innovation aimed at fostering a sustainable and inclusive society."*

Carsten Orth Gaarn-Larsen  
Senior Vice President, DTU



# PRINCIPLES OF NEXT GENERATION

**Youth-led change** | Empowering the Next Generation

**Partnering for impact** | Collaboration for a better future

**Action** | Creating Ideas that work for the real world

**Sustainability** | Innovating for a better tomorrow

**Inclusion** | Developing solutions that leave no one behind

**Beyond congress** | Empowering youth to create lasting impact



“ Collaboration and global networking bring the most diverse and effective solutions to the world’s challenges.”

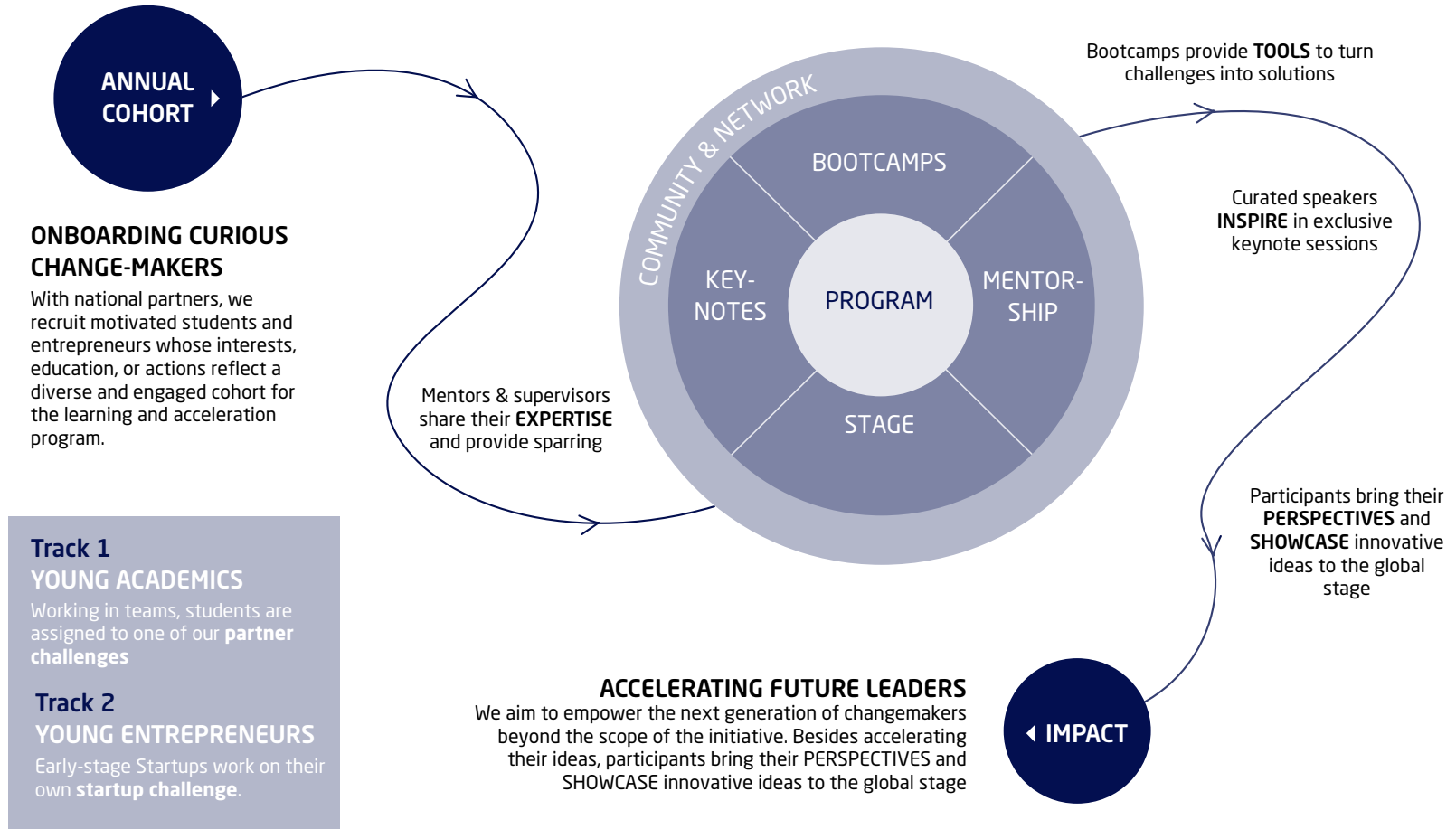
– Young Academic, Ghana

“ Winning isn’t always about trophies. We gained meaningful partnerships, new lessons, and opportunities that shape the future long after the program ended. NGDA showed us that real success lies in building connections that turn ideas into impact.”

– Young Entrepreneur, South Africa

# TWO TRACKS - ONE JOURNEY

Next Generation [ ] Action was developed to provide a journey for students in the YOUNG ACADEMICS track and early-stage startups in the YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS track



# EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

DTU Skylab has led the global youth initiative as part of international events hosted in Copenhagen since 2018. Partnerships, sustainability topics and activities are adapted to bring the best value as an integrated part of the global event.



**DIGITAL TECH SUMMIT 2025**

2018

2019

2021-2022

2023

2024

2025

**2018 Denmark P4G Summit**  
Accelerating Partnerships

**C40 World Mayors Summit**  
The Future We Want

**IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition**  
Shaping the Future of Water

**UIA World Congress of Architects**  
Sustainable Futures  
Leaving No One Behind  
+  
**2023 Colombia P4G Summit**

**Digital Tech Summit**  
Emerging Digital Solutions for Societal Impact  
+  
**2025 Vietnam P4G Summit**

**Digital Tech Summit**  
Emerging Digital Solutions for Societal Impact  
+  
**New York Climate Week**

# AN INITIATIVE RELEVANT FOR EVENTS THAT WISH TO...

**..enable representation of young professionals** from diverse backgrounds and nationalities.

**..develop new ideas and support entrepreneurship** by offering students and startups a hybrid innovation course and acceleration with event partners to work on new ideas and perspectives month before the congress.

**..create branding, media attention and insight** on the role and value of young professionals and sustainable technology-based innovations.

**..involve academia in new ways** by enabling young professionals to bridge between knowledge, ideas and solutions from academia, and the sustainability challenges, opportunities and stakeholders of the event.

**..foster partnerships** between international young talents and the industry - connecting talented students and entrepreneurs to potential future career opportunities and involve partners in new facilitated formats for collaboration.

**..provide unique learning environment for young professionals & partners** to work innovative and entrepreneurial in new settings and offer opportunities beyond what is offered through classical course collaborations, congress activities and industry partnerships.

*“ Next Generation Digital Action exemplifies a truly cross-disciplinary educational and scientific initiative aligned with the mission of the Digital Tech Summit – advancing digital solutions for a more sustainable future by connecting academia with industry. The Next Generation Digital Action delegation played a central role in bringing diverse, international perspectives to the summit and ensured strong visibility for emerging and newly established talent among the event’s 5,000 participants.*

Mark August Riis  
Head of Innovation, DTU Compute



# NEXT GENERATION DIGITAL ACTION 2025

Emerging digital technologies as thematic focus directed students and startups to share new perspectives, ideas and solutions on digital action for societal impact across different domains. The Next Generation Action program opened for a valued international focus on what global and local challenges to address with digital action and the opportunity to involve young innovators from around the world to take part in the transition.

# DIGITAL TECH SUMMIT 2025

**Digital Tech Summit (DTS) is the largest academic-based technology & business event in the Nordic countries**

**“** Presenting our project at New York Climate Week and the Copenhagen Digital Tech Summit helped me improve how I communicate complex technical ideas to different audiences.”

– Young Academics, Denmark

## THE PROGRAM

2025						2026	
JUN 4-26 (3 weeks)	SEPT 18	SEPT 23-26	NOV 1	NOV 5-6	NOV 7	MAY 21-22	
<b>Kick-off Event</b> <b>Student hybrid innovation course</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bootcamps</li> <li>• Keynotes</li> <li>• Double diamond process</li> <li>• Universal design</li> <li>• Groupwork</li> </ul>	<b>Startup acceleration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bootcamps</li> <li>• Keynotes</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Universal design</li> </ul>	<b>Welcome to Copenhagen Webinar</b>	<b>New York Climate Week</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Symposium</li> <li>• Bootcamp</li> <li>• Field visits</li> </ul>	<b>Pre-congress program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congress strategy</li> <li>• Tech Bazaar &amp; reception</li> <li>• Ecosystem tour</li> <li>• Socialising</li> <li>• City tour</li> </ul>	<b>Digital Tech Summit 2025</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibits</li> <li>• Pitch sessions</li> </ul>	<b>Strategy Day</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning &amp; Reflection</li> <li>• Next Steps</li> </ul>	<b>Doers Summit Limassol</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibits</li> <li>• Sessions</li> </ul>

Participants joined the 2025-edition from 11 countries



# 2025 IN NUMBERS

 **11**  
COUNTRIES

**111**  
STUDENTS


 **19**  
STARTUPS

**49**  
MENTORS

**6**  
DIGITAL  
CHALLENGES

**49**  
BOLD IDEAS  
From students  
and startups

**20**  
UNIVERSITIES

 **49%**  
FEMALE  
PARTICIPANTS

**42**  
SUPPORTING PARTNERS  
& INDUSTRIES

**78**  
NET PROMOTER SCORE

The overall NPS was excellent. The high NPS shows that participants are highly likely to recommend the initiative to friends.

**4.7/5**  
SATISFACTION

In our evaluation\*, the overall satisfaction with the initiative was rated at 4.7 out of 5, indicating a high value creation for participating students and startups.

**OVER 18.000**  
Followers on our DTU Skylab &  
Next Generation Digital Action  
LinkedIn channels



**OVER 9.000**  
Impressions<sup>2</sup> reached with Next  
Generation Digital Action posts on  
our two LinkedIn channels during  
the 2025 initiative



**WATCH  
OUR 2025  
VIDEO**



<sup>1</sup> Net Promoter Score (NPS) indicates customer satisfaction and loyalty on a range from -100 to +100. 30+ considered great and 70+ excellent.

<sup>2</sup> Impressions refer to the number of time NGDA posts appeared on users' LinkedIn screens across our channels.

\* Evaluation survey answered by 89% of participants across 11 countries.

# YOUNG ACADEMICS TRACK

111 university students in 30 teams selected from leading universities in Colombia, Denmark, Ghana, India, Kenya, Korea, Mexico, South Africa, Tanzania and the USA collaborated with international partners to turn one of 6 sustainability challenge briefs into new opportunities during a 3-week hybrid innovation course.



*Working directly with people connected to the challenges gave us a much deeper understanding of the problem than what we usually get in a classroom."*

– Young Academic, Denmark

## 6 SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES

## 30 STUDENT TEAMS



Challenge 1: Reshaping existing infrastructure to nature-positive urban areas



Challenge 2: Tracing Aflatoxin in agricultural produce



Challenge 3: Citizen science supporting water loss management



Challenge 4: Transforming Citizen Engagement in Ghana through Large Language Models



Challenge 5: Data driven water security and safety in rural India



Challenge 6: Financial transparency in Public Works





## 6 Student Teams winning Challenge Acceleration Awards

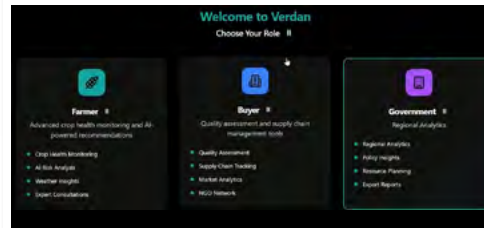
Student teams representing strong university partners turned challenges into inclusive product, service and systemic solution concepts with prototypes, business models, slides and online blog posts that can be accessed through below links. Challenge partners awarded below 6 teams with small grants to support further development.



### Designing Climate-Resilient Cities – With Nature and With People



### VERDAN – Smart Tech, Safe Harvest, Stronger Communities



### Sibonise | Show us the leak!



### Re-imagining Civic Access: Transforming Ghana's Parliamentary Hansard through AI



### AQUAMITRA: Empowering Every Drop, Every Home



### Kwen-Tas: Tracing Every Peso



# Young Academics FACILITATED JOURNEY

The 30 student teams joined a hybrid innovation journey, taking them from challenge to solutions. Teams worked from their own universities with online sparring and facilitation before finally all gathering in Copenhagen to present their solutions.

The first four phases of the program are run like a 3-week sprint, where the teams gain the right competences and dive into the challenge. After the sprint, the teams can continue developing and testing the solutions at their own pace. The program ends with a week in Copenhagen where they presented their ideas at the Digital Tech Summit.

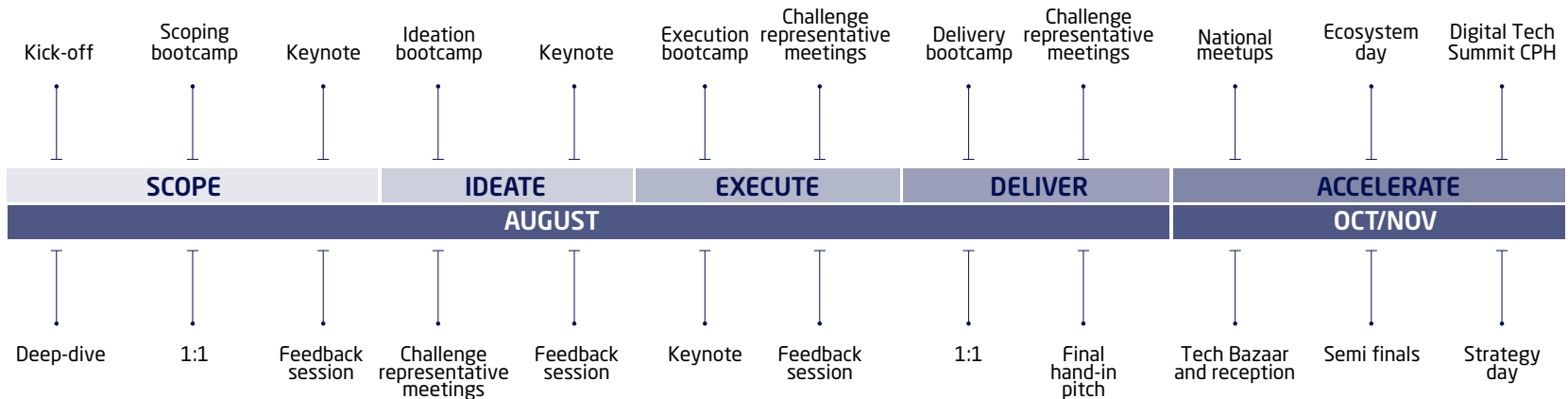
**//** *Through the program, I gained international networks, new friendships, and practical innovation tools that I will use in future projects."*

– Young Academic, India

## FACTS

**111 Students**  
47% Bachelor's  
33% Master's  
20% Phd

**Representing**  
10 Countries  
20 Universities  
27 Nationalities



# TOOLS AND RESOURCES USED IN THE PROGRAM

“ I have not had any other course that provided this level of national and international networking, or the chance to present projects to audiences beyond students and teachers.”

– Young Academic, Denmark

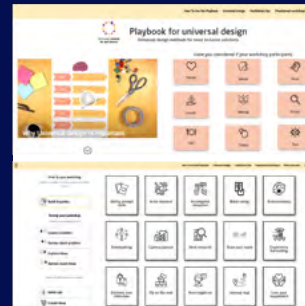
Challenge Brief & Mentors from external challenge partners

Online Handbook & E-learning website (Access-only)

DTU Skylab Design Tool UniversalDesignGuide.com

Miro Canvas for process facilitation, deliverables & peer-feedback

Culture and bias for understanding, respect and diversity to drive innovation



# YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS TRACK

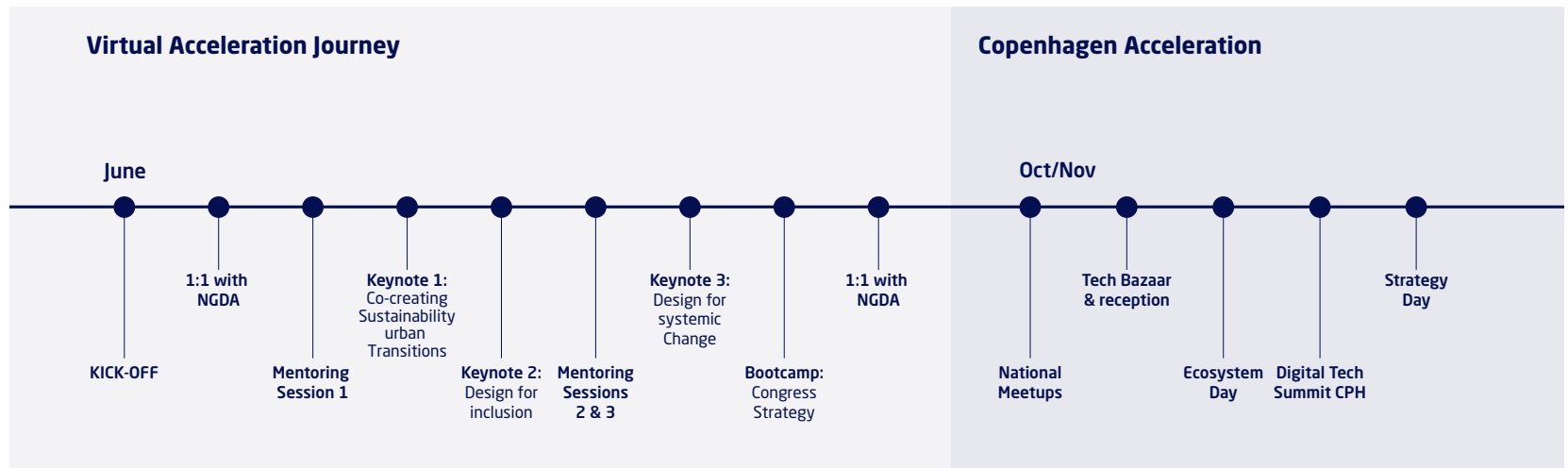
19 startups went through an acceleration journey equipping them with a strategy for the congress and provided mentorship on inclusion, partnership and technology acceleration

**“** *The program gave me an international view of entrepreneurship and showed me the power of collaboration, connections, and exchanging ideas across cultures.”*

*Young Entrepreneur, Colombia*

**“** *The experience in Copenhagen was truly invaluable, not only personally, but also for us as a business. The insights, connections, and inspiration we gained will have a lasting impact, and I'm deeply grateful to the NextGen team for making it such a meaningful journey.”*

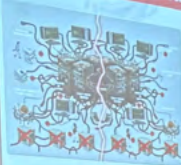
*Young Entrepreneur, Egypt*





### Problems

Broken Pharma Supply Chain & Legacy Systems



**Consequences:**

- Financial Strain:** \$100M+ Annually and 10M+ Hours in manual workdays.
- Operational Failures:** Limited processing power leads to bottlenecks and near 100% of orders being delayed, incomplete, or lost.
- No Quality Visibility:** Operational stakeholders, retailers, and consumers lack data.
- Critical Human Cost:** 500K Annual Deaths in Europe due to counterfeit drugs.

**DIGITAL TECH SUMMIT 2023**

Additional partners

**MARITIME FOND**

Spin-outs

ocean

**DIGITAL TECH SUMMIT**

16

# 19 PARTICIPATING STARTUPS

Delivering innovative solutions within health, climate, water, community, education, finance, transportation, sustainability and agriculture, leveraging new and emerging digital technologies.



Developing affordable medical technologies to improve maternal healthcare and provide micro-health insurance solutions for underserved communities.



Tanzania



Creates and operates innovative edtech services for leading organizations in Korea. They also run Geek Haus, an edtech brand specialized in STEM education.



Korea



Deeptech startup focusing on easy analysis of water quality at the last mile of water pipes.



India



Cluster is an AI-powered platform re-engineering pharma supply chains with multimodal ordering, ERP integration, and an intelligence hub to ensure access to medicines.



Egypt



A digital platform connecting pregnant women with midwives in rural areas.



Ghana



M-taka is a tech-enabled circular economy platform based in Kenya that digitizes informal waste systems to create traceable, inclusive, and financially viable recycling ecosystems.



Kenya



Through a mobile app, Parksby connects those with underutilized parking spaces to those looking for parking.



Kenya



Micro investment platform for farmers, to create community, local engagement, and financial prosperity.



South Africa



Providing gig workers with affordable electric bikes and financial support to enable cost-efficient, eco-friendly last-mile delivery and improve earnings and work-life balance



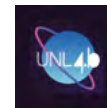
Egypt



Developing ultra-realistic AI avatars that can interact via voice and gesture recognition, with applications spanning customer service, digital signage, and metaverse platforms.



Korea



UNLab4.0 is a social innovation laboratory aimed at breaking gaps of social inequality. UNLab4.0 is a social innovation (EDtech) laboratory aimed at breaking gaps of social inequality.



Colombia

READ MORE  
ABOUT ALL  
THE STARTUPS



Digital pharmaceutical platform that streamlines access to quality medicines by connecting patients, pharmacies, and healthcare providers through an integrated online system.



Tanzania



Health tech startup that uses AI-powered speech analysis to help healthcare professionals detect dementia early and accurately.



Denmark



Educating kids and young people on finance, via software and board games.



South Africa



Helps companies improve the environmental impact of their products using tools for life cycle assessments, climate impact calculations and digital product passports.



Denmark



Order From Above Revolutionizing Delivery with Smart Drones. Fast, Reliable, and Sustainable.



Ghana



Agri-tech company that empowers small-scale farmers in Latin America through technology, traceability, and direct market access.



Colombia



Using AI-power, users can create manuals within 30 sec. users can maximize efficiency of handover, job training or on-boarding.



Korea



Developing water management solution for urban areas with water scarcity issues.



India

# TECH BAZAAR & RECEPTION

200 invited guests joined the Tech Bazar & Reception hosted at DTU Skylab where all teams had a first opportunity to present their ideas and solutions. 7 Embassies and 6 Ambassadors joined to welcome and connect with their national youth delegations. The evening of inspirational talks, live music, drinks and tapas concluded a day with bootcamps, pitch coaching and social activities to support teams in developing a congress strategy, pitch, and be ready for their attendance at DTS 2025.



# ECOSYSTEM VISITS AND FIELD EXPLORATION

Our delegation of students, entrepreneurs and partners had 1.5 days of presentations, exploration and partner tours to Niras Green Tech Hub, Novo Nordisk Foundation and Ramboll, that provided examples on how Copenhagen, Denmark and partners

are making efforts towards a more sustainable future with great questions and conversations among our delegates on how learnings and approaches can give inspiration to communities in very different contexts.

**“** It gave me the opportunity to experience new things, such as exploring a beautiful city like Copenhagen and immersing myself in the local culture and way of life”.

– Young Academic, Colombia

Eco-system visits



Field exploration - Ramboll Track



# DIGITAL TECH SUMMIT (DTS) COPENHAGEN 2025

The Next Generation Digital Action reached its peak as our delegation of 111 young academics, 19 startups and many university representatives participated in the DTS Copenhagen 2025. Beyond having full access to the DTS equal to other delegates, the following Next Generation Digital Action activities took part within the summit:

**“** *The environment was more personal and intentional than other conferences, which made it easier to build meaningful connections rather than just exchange contacts.”*

– Young Entrepreneur, Colombia



## EXHIBITION

The summit provided two designated areas where all student and startups teams alternated to showcase their solutions during two full days - inviting for inspiration, network, feedback and collaboration.



## PITCH AND AWARD SESSION

Following 2 semi-finals at DTU Skylab, the summit was venue for 4 pitch-sessions where 12 finalist student teams and 19 startups presented their solutions, invited for partnership and was given feedback from international jury panels. Partners concluded the sessions by awarding mentoring time, grants and acceleration scholarships.



# STRATEGY DAY

Last year we increased our focus on what happens after the program. We end our Copenhagen program with a strategy, hosted at the BLOX hub. A day to reflect on learnings and experiences and to think about the next steps.

## Individual learning and experience

By using the LEGO Serious Play method, the participants could make their abstract experiences tangible through the process of building and storytelling, and we could end our program on a fun and playful note.

## From reflection to action

A final workshop guiding the participants to turn their reflections into future actions. Here we focused on three dimensions, actions as individual change-makers, as a team/startup and as a national delegation.



# INTERNATIONAL TAILORED TRACKS

## South Africa water innovation

Feb 25-28 & August in Pretoria & November in Johannesburg

DTU Skylab with INSCAPE, Water Research Commission and Embassy of Denmark in Pretoria gathered partners within the water sector in South Africa and 7 NextGen teams from India and South Africa to foster joint learnings, inspiration and connections for action through 4 days of seminar, bootcamps, pitch-session and talks. Supported by the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science.

South African partner Ilambu Global led a NextGen-inspired youth track at the AU-AIP Water Investment Summit - August in Pretoria, and with WRC at AWSISA Africa & Global South Water & Sanitation Dialogue with WRC, November in Johannesburg



2025 included 4 international sub-tracks with partners to grow learnings, impact and outreach on platforms in South Africa, Vietnam and USA. Partner with us to develop and connect a tailored track to our global youth program in 2026.

## P4G Summit Hanoi, Vietnam

Apr 13-18, Hanoi

DTU Skylab with 6 students and 4 entrepreneurs from Colombia, Kenya and South Africa. Program included Youth bootcamp day with Vietnamese ecosystem with BK Holdings and GYCC, panel session at P4G Welcome Reception, P4G pre-seed to seed pitch session, showcasing at the Green Growth Exhibition visited by H.E. Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh of Vietnam, contributing as speaker into The Ministerial Session on 'Game-changing Technology for Green Transition and Sustainable Development in the Intelligent Age'. Enabled by support and partnership with State of Green and P4G.



WATCH THE  
RECAP VIDEO



## New York Climate Week

23-28 Sep, New York

DTU Skylab and DTU Sustain with 5 teams of students and young researchers from Kenya, South Africa, Denmark, Colombia and USA working on the NextGen-challenge with Ramboll. Program tailored to bring the context and stakeholders closer to their ideas and learning, including platforms to showcase the partnership and project ideas for network and feedback, field visits and tech-sessions for further data collection, and explore New York Climate Week. Enabled by Ramboll, The City University of New York, Ramboll Foundation and DANVA.



# JOIN AS A PARTNER

## CONGRESS PARTNER

The initiative is co-created in partnership with a world congress to bring innovation and youth-led action to their sustainability theme.

## MAIN SPONSOR

The initiative is funded and enabled by strong partnerships with industry-leading foundations and public partners

## CHALLENGE PARTNER

The initiative is anchored in industry challenges that are proposed by our challenge partners.

## COLLABORATOR

The initiative is powered by various collaborators who support as mentors, supervisors, speakers, judges or program contributors.

**“** *One of the most eye-opening & rapid learning experiences I’ve had. I was amazed at how many of my corporate learnings could be directly applied to the startup world to help grow my mentees’ businesses. What was equally fascinating was working together to solve challenges that, in larger corporations, would typically be handled by senior executives. It was an incredibly enriching experience, and I will definitely continue as a mentor.*

– Challenge mentor

**“** *Young people are a powerful vanguard, capable of solving many of the challenges we face globally.”*

– Challenge partner representative



# 6 REASONS TO GET INVOLVED

Next Generation is a strong partner on your side, ready to deliver value that goes beyond youth involvement.

## 1. ACCESS TO TALENTS

Through the initiative, you gain direct access to talented international students & researchers from leading technical universities as well as young professionals who are skilled and eager to make an impact.

## 2. ACCESS TO GLOBAL INNOVATION SYSTEM

DTU Skylab not only operates at the core of the Danish innovation system - but through Next Generation grants you access to promising early-stage startups around the globe hungry to disrupt the industry.

## 3. STAY AT THE BEAT OF THE INDUSTRY

Ideas and solutions proposed by our participants provide you with inspiration and the latest insights - and help you stay at the beat of the industry!

## 4. PART OF A STRONG INDUSTRY NETWORK

We connect public and private partners in the industry across borders, enabling opportunities for new partnerships on a corporate level.



## 5. A GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR YOUR ENGAGEMENT

We provide the branding and communication platform to make your engagement visible at a global scale.

## 6. A JOINT PLATFORM AT A GLOBAL CONGRESS

We create strong platforms to showcase ideas by the next generation at global summits or congresses. Five editions have been brought to life since 2018.

# THE PROJECT TEAM



**Marie L.  
Pollmann-Larsen**

*Team Lead,  
DTU Skylab*



**Björgvin  
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*Innovation Consultant,  
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**Federico Medda**

*Program Assistant,  
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**Rikke Elbæk  
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*Event Manager,  
DTU Skylab*



**Margarita Mærsk**

*Administrative Coordinator,  
DTU Skylab*

# MENTORS

The program is powered by the dedication of our partners, collaborators, and academic supervisors. Thank you to all our program mentors for generously sharing your expertise, guidance, and support. Your contributions have been essential in helping participants advance their ideas and shape impactful solutions.

- Adam Foss
- Anders Dalgaard
- Anders Damgaard
- Anders Hansen
- Bjarne Schøn
- Camilla Enge
- Clara Dyhrberg
- Dorthe Lybye
- Henrik Nyholm Voss
- Hanne Breddam
- Jakob Faarvang
- Jakob Maltha
- Jakob Steffensen
- Jeppe Parving
- Jesper Karle
- Jørgen Bek Weiss Hansen
- Kanishka Sina
- Kathya Singh
- Katinka Wodschow
- Klaus Hougesen
- Martin Broch Pedersen
- Mathias Jørgen Larsen
- Marta Fuster
- Michael Sørud
- Peter Flemming Teunisse
- Rene Nygaard Jensen
- Steen Skjold
- Susanne Zwergius Teilmann
- Sussie Ruff
- Tina Vester Solgaard
- Trine Dalsgaard
- José Celso Rivas

# VOLUNTEERS

We thank all the volunteer students from DTU that supported the program



- Md Noor Ullah Shumon
- Garima Gopalani
- Lucia Balceríková
- Anna De Bona
- David Brin
- Alisa Lassen
- Hannah Wang
- Elin Lee
- Leo Saied-Ahmad
- Lizbeth Adriana Lara Anaya

# ENABLED THROUGH STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

## Main partners



## Challenge partners



## University partners



## GET IN TOUCH

Would you like to hear more about collaboration opportunities?

**Marie L. Pollmann-Larsen**

Team Lead DTU Skylab

[mlml@dtu.dk](mailto:mlml@dtu.dk)

*“ The Next Generation program inspired me to keep developing innovative ideas that solve real problems, and it gave me strong tools to actually make those ideas happen. Personally and professionally, it showed me what I’m capable of when I combine creativity, data, and collaboration. ”*

*– Young Academic, Mexico*

**[2025.nextgenerationaction.com](https://2025.nextgenerationaction.com)**