

SLUSH PARTNERS UP WITH VICTOR TO FLY 100 ENTREPRENEURS & VCS FROM SILICON VALLEY TO HELSINKI

The flight project kicks off with the world's first Skydive Pitching Competition in San Francisco, organized in collaboration with Idean & Kairos Society.

The world's leading startup event, Slush, is partnering with Fly Victor to bring investors, founders and speakers from San Francisco to Helsinki and back between November 28 and December 2, to experience the flourishing Nordic startup scene. Slush is organizing not only the direct flight, but also the world's first Skydive Pitching Competition in San Francisco.

The Nordic Tech scene is blooming. According to Creandum's Nordic Exit Analysis 2016, the Nordics represent over 7% of global billion-dollar tech exits since 2005, even though the region makes up only about 2% of world GDP. Moreover, for all the billion-dollar tech exits in Europe, the Nordic stands for 50% of them.

Despite the remarkable growth in the area, the Nordics, and especially Helsinki, still remain located about 5,000 miles away from San Francisco, where many of the most prominent tech influencers are, and the current flight connections are not favorable for Nordic founders. Studies show that direct flights can play a vital role for startup success: a study by MIT, Stanford University, and Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business found that 90% of VCs stated that direct flights increase their interaction with their portfolio companies, helping them better understand their activities.

"We wanted to make the travel to experience the Nordic startup scene for these entrepreneurs and investors as easy as possible. So instead of making them travel 20 hours with multiple stopovers, Slush is organizing a direct flight from San Francisco to Helsinki," says Marianne Vikkula, CEO at Sush.

As Slush celebrates its 10th anniversary, we're partnering up with Victor, Idean and Salesforce to fly Slush attendees from San Francisco to Helsinki and back between November 28 and December 2. Passengers include Mark Pincus, Founder of Zynga, Caterina Fake, Co-founder of Flickr & Hunch, Will Marshall, Co-founder and CEO of Planet Labs, and Hemant Taneja, Managing Director at General Catalyst, to name a few.

The World's First Skydive Pitching Competition by Slush in SF

This year there are 100 seats on the flight, from which Slush wanted to secure seats for some of the boldest founders from the Bay Area. "The Skydive Pitching Competition is something that has never been done before. 16 different skydiving professionals told us this would be simply impossible, which is why we absolutely needed to give it a go," tells Alexander Pihlainen, CMO at Slush.

The concept of the world's first Skydive Pitching Competition is simple: 1) Founders jump off an airplane, 2) Founders pitch during free fall at approx 120 mph and answer questions from investors, and 3) Founders deploy their parachute before hitting the ground.

The winner is chosen by the jury at the Slush Flight Opening Mixer Party in San Francisco on September 15. The jury consists of the passengers of the Slush Flight and they will decide who delivered the most memorable pitch of the century. The winner gets a ticket to the Slush Flight and conference in November.

About Slush

Described by many as “Burning Man meets TED”, Slush brings together the leading actors of the global tech scene to Helsinki for something very special. Slush is held each fall in Helsinki to bring together the leading actors in the global tech ecosystem to accelerate the growth of startups. In 2016, Slush had 17,500 attendees, including 2,300 startups, 1,100 investors and 610 journalists, together representing over 120 countries. Slush is a non-profit event, organized by a community of 2,500 students and future founders committed to serving the next generation of groundbreaking entrepreneurs.