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INAT SUMMIT Startups, Social Business

Ask About Your Business Idea But Don't Believe Everything: INAT Interview with Norbert Kunz

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Norbert Kunz is one of the highest-profile social entrepreneurs in Germany. In his role as CEO of the non-profit business [Social Impact gGmbH](#) he is focusing on the development of an infrastructure of social innovation and on the support of social startups. He initiated the foundation of the first Social Impact Labs in Berlin in 2011 and the launch of the first business incubation program for social startups in Germany.

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MUNPlanet: You founded various organizations in your career. What would you say is the most important point when starting a new organization or company?

Norbert: I'd say that the most important point is the mission. This business that I developed is very mission-driven. I want to change something for the better for my life, but also for the society. So there is this huge responsibility to the society and it is a good idea for people to start businesses from the problems they face.

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if you don't have the bigger picture?

Norbert: That's not a contradiction at all times. But we realize that if you are mission-driven it comes together with any biographic aspect of your own life. You are better motivated and you can go through crises better than other ones who are only profit chasing. And it really makes a difference. I talked yesterday, for example, about this business Auticon about asperger-autistic people whose founder's motivation was that his son is an asperger-autist. So very often people are really connected to the problem because of their family, friends or they live in certain areas and so on, and that is the reason that they started to think about those opportunities.

MP: With all that you have accomplished, can you pick one that you are the proudest of?

Norbert: I'm very proud that we have decided to build social business incubators. Because in the beginning, a lot of people told me that that doesn't work because there aren't a lot of people that want to start a social business, but then we realized that we have a really big demand on it. We have thousands and thousands of applications and I'm very happy that I can see so many specifically young people are interested in building up businesses with a social impact. That makes me very proud.

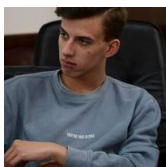
MP: Do you have any advice for young entrepreneurs?

Norbert: It's a bit of a contradiction. On the one side you have to ask as much as possible about potential customers and stakeholders and so on about your business idea, but don't believe everything.

Thank you, Norbert!

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