

AAU INNOVATE

IDENTITY AND IMPACT

2026



AAU
INNOVATE



AAU INNOVATE

AAU INNOVATE: Identity and Impact
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Foreword

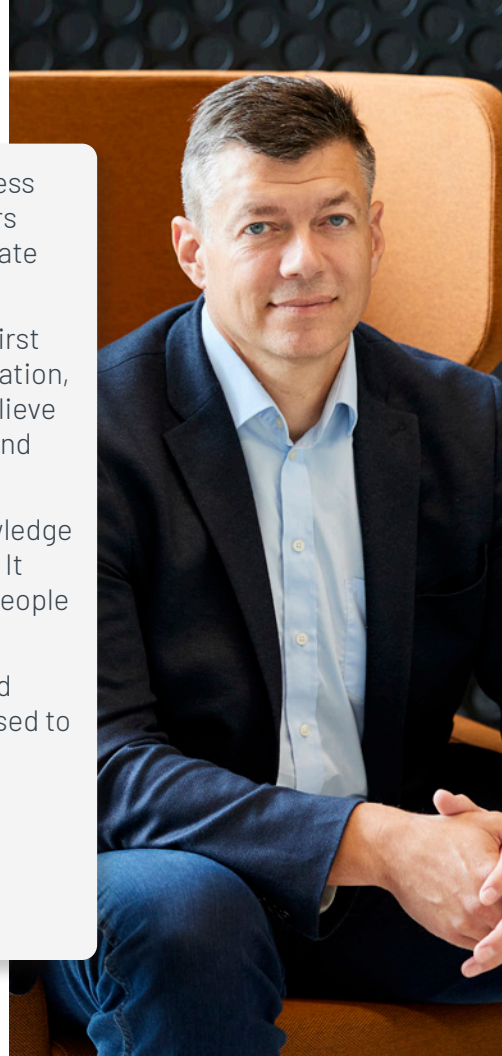
Innovation at Aalborg University is about collaboration, curiosity and the willingness to bring ideas into the world. It happens when researchers, students, and partners work together across disciplines and sectors to explore new possibilities and create solutions that matter.

Whether you are a researcher developing new knowledge, a student taking your first steps towards turning an idea into action, or an external partner seeking collaboration, innovation at Aalborg University is built on openness and shared ambition. We believe that the best ideas emerge through interaction between academia and society, and that innovation thrives when diverse perspectives meet.

This report highlights how innovation unfolds at Aalborg University and how knowledge is translated into value through collaboration, experimentation and engagement. It reflects our commitment to making it easier to move ideas forward, to connect people and competences, and to create space for innovation to grow.

I hope this report inspires you to engage with innovation at Aalborg University and become part of a community where knowledge is not only created, but actively used to shape the future.

Mads Bang
Director of Innovation
AAU INNOVATE



Innovation at Aalborg University

What Is *Innovation*?

Innovation happens when knowledge, curiosity, and creativity are translated into action that creates new societal value by connecting academic insight with real-world application. Rooted in Aalborg University's problem-oriented approach, this process uses research and education to develop solutions that matter beyond the university walls. By turning academic knowledge into tangible outcomes such as new or improved technologies, scalable businesses, and enhanced practices or services, we ensure that our work addresses concrete societal needs while strengthening the relevance, visibility, and impact of our research.

What Is a *University Startup*?

A university startup is a new independent company formed specifically to commercialize knowledge developed at a university. At Aalborg University, this means taking the leap from academic theory to everyday reality. These startups serve as vehicles for bringing innovative, university-backed solutions into society and creating real-world impact.



What is AAU INNOVATE?

A Brief Introduction

AAU INNOVATE is Aalborg University's central innovation hub, acting as a dynamic bridge between academic knowledge and real-world application. We serve as a unified gateway that connects researchers, teachers, students, and external partners in a collaborative environment centered around innovation. By providing tailored guidance and resources, we actively support and facilitate innovation across campus both by fostering an innovative mindset and by supporting the entire journey from early-stage ideas to market-ready technologies and services. Our mission is to translate world-class research and ideas from the university into concrete solutions that create lasting societal impact.

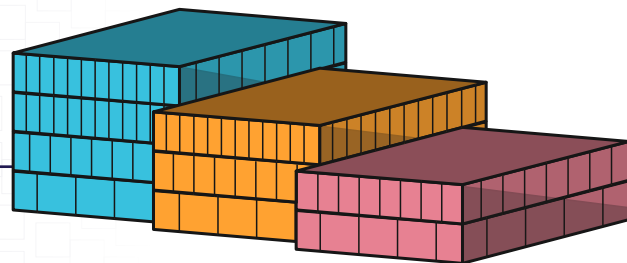


History of AAU INNOVATE

- NOW** AAU INNOVATE operates as the central engine for innovation across campus.
- 2026** The strategy "Knowledge for the World 2026 to 2029" highlights innovation and growth core themes.
- 2026** Political consensus elevates innovation to the same level as teaching and research.
- 2022** The grand opening of AAU INNOVATE.
- 2021** The strategy "Knowledge for the World 2022 to 2026" makes mission-driven global innovation a core theme.
- 2020** The foundation stone for the new science and innovation hub is officially laid.
- 2017** AAU Startup Program launches as a dedicated initiative to build an entrepreneurial mindset for students.
- 2016** The A.P. Møller Foundation donates DKK 100 million to build a new central innovation hub on campus.
- 2016** The strategy "Knowledge for the World 2016 to 2021" focuses on translating research through knowledge collaboration.
- 2013** AAU sharpens its focus on building a unified entrepreneurial culture.
- 2009** Innovation is integrated directly into the academic curriculum.
- 2006** "Kickstart" renamed to SEA (Supporting Entrepreneurship at AAU) and local incubator offices are established.
- 2002** Targeted innovation efforts for students begin through the "Kickstart" initiative.
- 2000** The Technology Transfer Office is established to commercialize academic research.
- 1974** Aalborg University is founded with a core focus on problem-based learning.

The Three Pillars of AAU INNOVATE

The Overarching Areas of Focus



Startup and Impact

Tailored guidance and hands-on support for launching scalable new businesses, as well as commercializing breakthrough research to the established business community.



Knowledge and Skills

Dedicated knowledge and skills development through courses and hands-on education, empowering students and researchers with the essential competencies needed to drive innovation.



Collaboration and Visibility

Visibility through events and networking, and connecting the university environment with industry partners and mentors to create the best framework for collaboration and impact.



What We Offer

Startup and Impact



Business Sparring and Development

Individualized guidance from experienced business developers, tailored specifically for both students and researchers at AAU. We provide hands-on support to help turn ideas into reality.



Internship in Your Own Startup

A formal academic track that allows all students at AAU to replace a traditional internship by spending a full semester working exclusively on their own business.



Funding and Capital

We provide early-stage funding, hands-on guidance to bridge financial gaps, and strategic sparring on investor pitching and capital strategy.





What We Offer

Knowledge and Skills



Garages, Labs, and Prototyping

Grow your startup in one of our 16 garages within a supportive peer community. Access manufacturing labs for hands-on technical assistance in building and testing prototypes.



Courses & Workshops

We help students and researchers develop an innovative mindset through tailored workshops and modules. We also collaborate with faculties to integrate innovation into teaching.



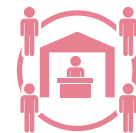
AAU Startup Program

An incubator that guides students from idea to market in a step-by-step process. Students receive a clear growth roadmap, a dedicated business coach, and hands-on support for validation.



What We Offer

Collaboration and Visibility



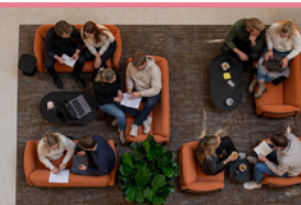
Networking and Events

We host events and networking activities that support and expand the innovation ecosystem. We facilitate meaningful connections that translate academic concepts into real-world ventures.



Collaboration and Results

By bridging the gap between groundbreaking research and the surrounding world, we foster national and international partnerships that help create the startups of tomorrow.



Visibility and Communication

We showcase innovation to build awareness of the support available throughout the journey, highlighting new collaborative opportunities for industry and the surrounding world.



2025 in Numbers

Key Impact Metrics for AAU INNOVATE

Startup and Impact



DKK 170 million

in startup funding



143

Innovation Projects



48

Startups



60

AAU
founders



449

Students in
startup programs



56

Students in
internships in
their own startup

Knowledge and Skills



1260

Upskilled through
educational activity



> 35 km

Filament for 3D
printed prototypes



80

Faculty trained in
teaching innovation



781

Student reached
in curricular activities



479

Student reached
in extra curricular
activities



31

Direct collaborations
with educations

Collaboration and Visibility



> 120.000

Visitors



71.724

Cups of coffee



860+

Participants
at events



+12.000

Followers



About the Data

The data represents the best information available to AAU INNOVATE, though actual numbers are likely significantly higher when accounting for untracked effects. Selected data points are briefly explained below:

48 startups: CVR-registered startups founded by both students and researchers who have been supported by AAU INNOVATE.
60 AAU founders: Researcher or student founders from AAU.
DKK 170 million: Includes soft funding raised by students and researchers.

143 Innovation Projects: Development and testing of new ideas, solutions and technologies.

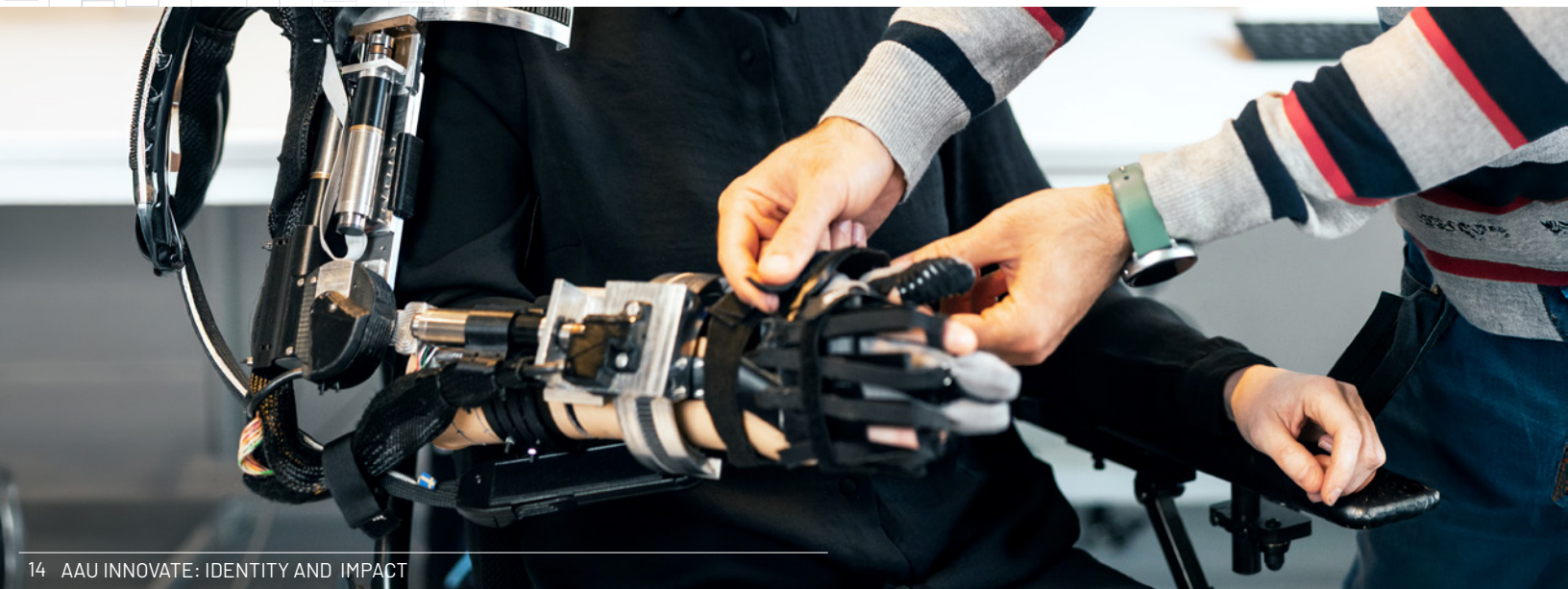
479 students (extra-curricular): Students engaged in university workshops and activities outside their mandatory curriculum.
781 students (curricular): Students engaged in innovation activities integrated into their mandatory curriculum.

31 collaborations: Collaboration with educations on curricular and extra-curricular innovation activities.
80 faculty: Staff trained or involved in teaching innovation and entrepreneurship.

860+ participants: Participants at AAU startup festival, Investor Summit and AAU Open for Business.

Life Science, Health and Welfare Technology

Life science, health and welfare technology at AAU evolve within a collaborative innovation ecosystem where leading research environments, entrepreneurial students, and industry partners jointly advance new solutions for public health, prevention, and clinical capacity. This collective strength accelerates the development of scalable technologies and new ventures that create measurable impact across healthcare and society.



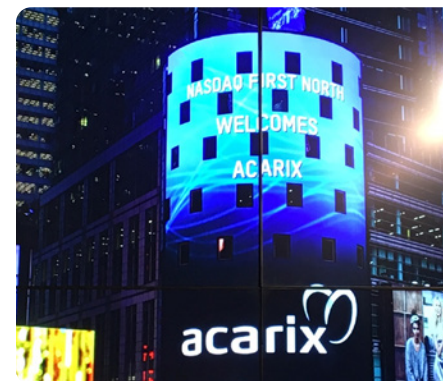
Pull and GO

Ergonomic Mobility for Wheel Chair Users

Pull and GO has developed a patented mechanical add-on that allows wheelchair users to move forward by pulling rather than pushing to reduce shoulder strain. Created by an interdisciplinary AAU student team, the project demonstrates how user-centered innovation can directly improve quality of life.

Facts:

- Patent granted
- The solution relieves shoulder pain for more than 50% of the wheelchair users affected by it.
- AAU Startup Program participant and receiver of the AAU Startup Grant
- Interdisciplinary student team



Acarix

AI driven Acoustic Diagnosis of heart disease

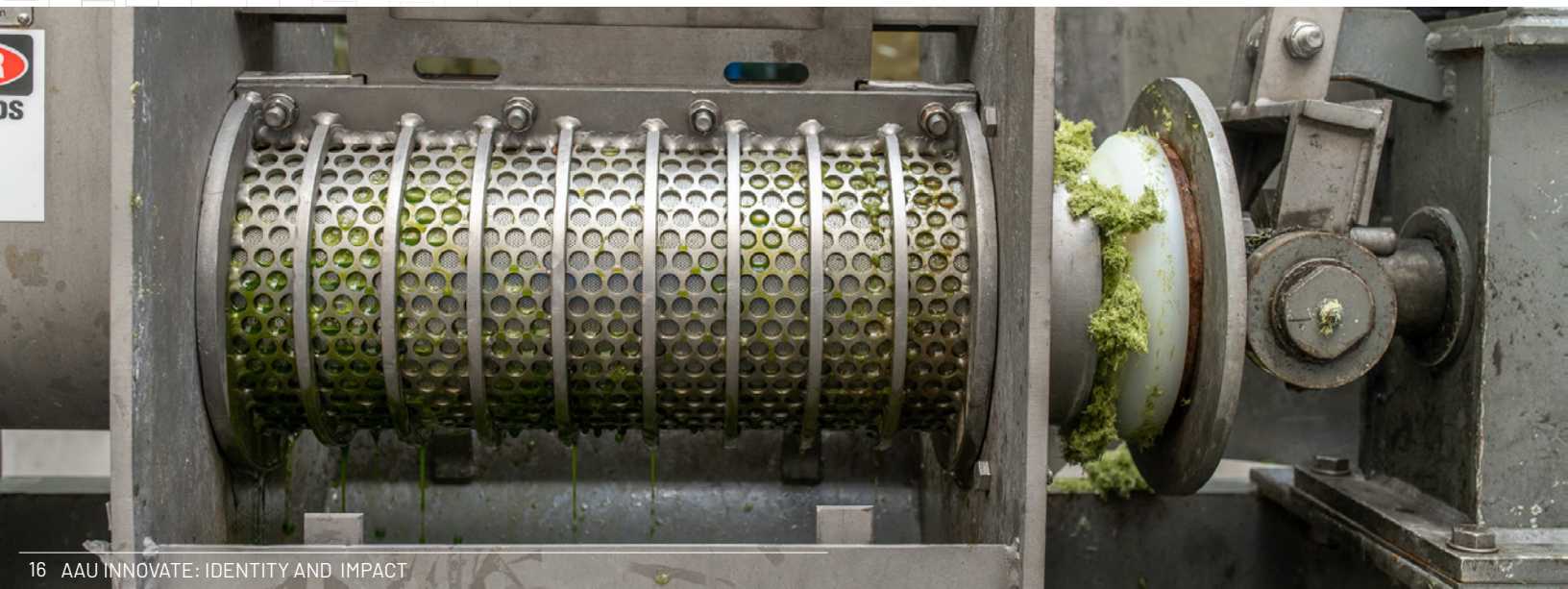
Acarix' CADScor System is a handheld device that uses ultra-low-frequency acoustics and an AI algorithm to calculate a patient-specific risk score for coronary artery disease in under ten minutes. The radiation-free system enables clinicians to rule out disease early and reduces the need for expensive imaging procedures.

Facts:

- DKK 65 million raised
- CE-marked
- FDA cleared
- Publicly listed
- 64% growth in device deliveries in Q4 2025
- Digital Innovation Award 2025 (Global Cardiovascular Awards)

Green Technology and Innovation

Green technology and innovation at AAU grow from a collaborative ecosystem where leading researchers, entrepreneurial students, and industry partners develop new solutions for electrification, renewable energy, and resource efficiency. This collective strength accelerates breakthrough technologies and new ventures that reduce emissions, build resilient green value chains, and drive the transition toward a more sustainable society.



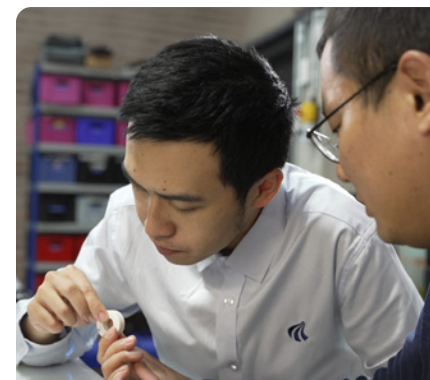
Buildtivity

Data-driven Sustainability in Construction

Buildtivity offers a digital platform that aggregates CO₂ footprints, technical specs, and logistics for building materials. This enables architects and contractors to compare options while complying with regulations. By simplifying data, the solution supports sustainable choices and meets increasing documentation requirements.

Facts:

- Regulatory alignment: built for 2023 and future 2030 CO₂ rules
- Sector challenge: construction is among Denmark's largest CO₂ emitters
- AAU Startup Program participant and receiver of the AAU Startup Grant
- Industry users: architects, engineers, contractors



InnoMag

High-efficiency planar magnetics for a renewable energy system

InnoMag develops planar magnetic components that increase efficiency in high-power electronics by reducing energy loss and improving thermal performance. These compact, material-efficient components are designed for renewable energy systems, electrified industry, and grid infrastructure.

Facts:

- 50 % size reduction
- 40 % increase in energy efficiency
- 30 % lower material use
- 25 % lower production costs
- More than DKK 50 million in research funding

Defence and Security Technology

Defence and security technology at AAU develops within a research and innovation ecosystem that addresses emerging threats to national resilience. This spans from the protection of critical infrastructure to advanced sensing, autonomy and digital security. As geopolitical pressures increase, researchers, students, and industry partners create technologies that strengthen surveillance, situational awareness, and response capabilities at sea, on land and in the air, turning deep technical expertise into practical solutions that enhance Denmark's security.



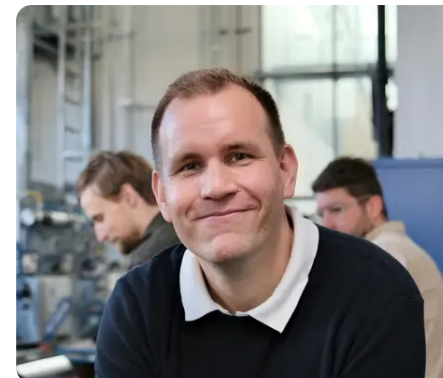
SagaLabs

Realistic cyber training environments

SagaLabs is a startup from AAU that develops a scalable cyber range for cybersecurity training through realistic simulations of complete IT environments. It helps build practical cybersecurity skills by enabling training in real-world attack scenarios.

Facts:

- Develops scenario-based training with realistic cyberattacks
- Founded by AAU students with strong skills in cybersecurity and software development
- AAU Startup Program participant and receiver of the AAU Startup Grant
- Winner of the National Startup Competition 2025, receiving both the Grand Prize and the Digital Category award



ABBA USV and U Shield

Advanced offshore drone protection.

ABBA USV and U Shield develop autonomous vessels and drones to protect offshore infrastructure such as cables and wind farms. The solutions detect unauthorized drone activity to counter rising hybrid threats. This advanced maritime surveillance provides critical security for vital sea-based energy and communication assets.

Facts:

- Focus on energy security and protection of undersea infrastructure
- Develop autonomous maritime surveillance and counter-drone capabilities
- Partner with Vattenfall, Teledyne Reson, Tuco Marine Group, and SubC Partner
- DKK 80 million in soft funding

Critical and Digital technologies

Critical and digital technologies at AAU develop within a fast-growing ecosystem where researchers, students, and industry partners work together to advance artificial intelligence, robotics, cybersecurity, and advanced software systems that underpin modern digital infrastructure. This collective effort drives new solutions that strengthen national digital resilience, enable smarter and more productive industries, and support Denmark's ability to innovate in an increasingly complex technological landscape.



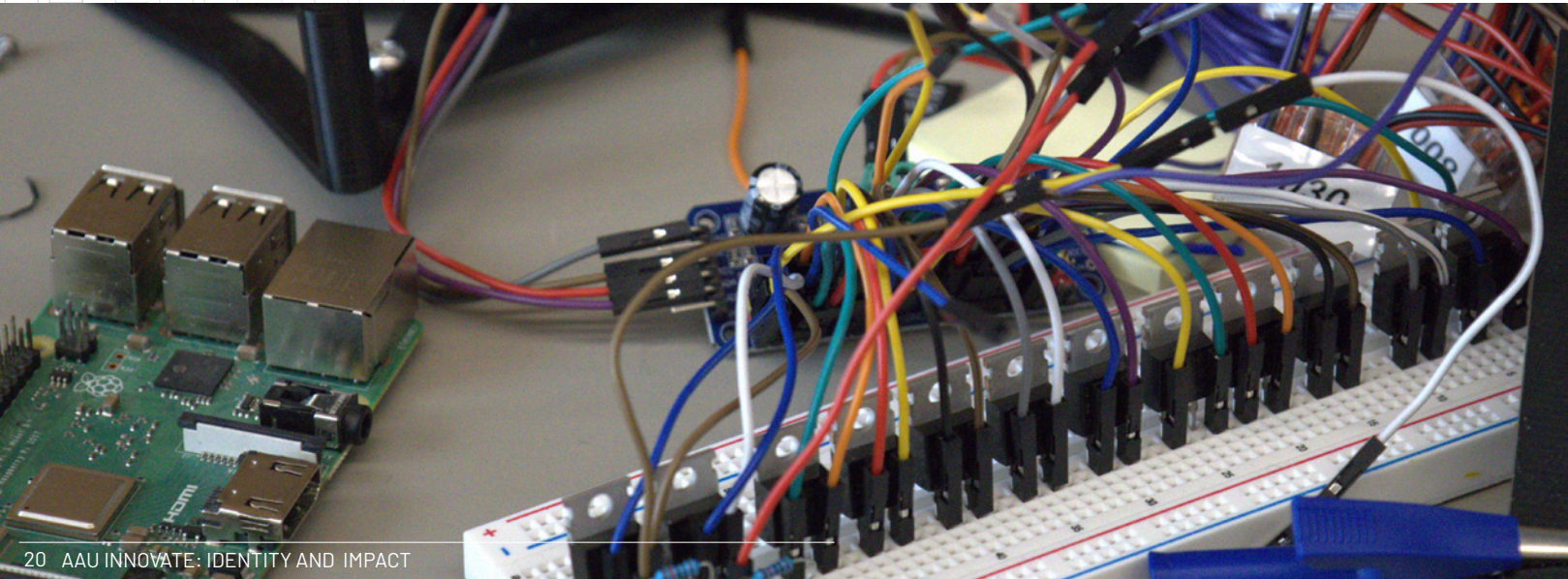
Power Sentinel

Cybersecurity for energy systems

Power Sentinel is a non-invasive security unit that protects power electronics by monitoring communication and control layers in real time. It detects and isolates cyber-physical attacks to maintain stable operations without disrupting performance. This plug-and-play solution integrates directly into existing infrastructure.

Facts:

- World's first non-invasive security unit for power electronics
- Event-driven detection with faster response than conventional cybersecurity
- Supported by Spin-Outs Denmark
- DKK 1.48 million in soft funding



Akson Robotics

AI-driven precision agricultural mapping

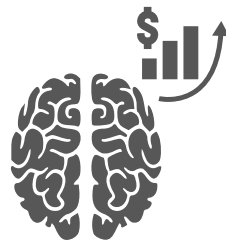
Akson Robotics develops CropUp, a SaaS platform that uses drone imagery and AI to map crops and weeds at high resolution, enabling precise and targeted treatment in agriculture. The solution supports more sustainable and efficient farming by reducing unnecessary chemical use.

Facts:

- SaaS platform enabling precision farming through AI and drone data
- Sub-meter, near-centimeter precision in weed detection
- AAU Startup Program participant and receiver of the AAU Startup Grant
- Detects specific weed types such as Rumex at species level

Knowledge to Economic Growth

Knowledge-driven innovation at AAU turns advanced research and student talent into new companies that deliver scalable technologies with clear commercial potential. Across disciplines, students and researchers transform complex challenges into industrial solutions, digital platforms, and sustainable technologies that form the foundation for the next generation of Danish high-growth businesses.



Lyras

Energy efficient cold pasteurisation

Lyras has developed a cold pasteurization technology using UV light to kill bacteria in liquids without heat. This process reduces energy consumption while preserving product quality better than traditional methods, and improves operational efficiency.

Facts:

- More than DKK 100 million in investments
- Operates in multiple countries
- Serves global food producers
- The process significantly reduces energy consumption compared to heat-based pasteurisation



Space Technology from AAU

From research to international growth

AAU has built strong space and satellite capabilities for more than three decades, from early antenna research to launching Denmark's first nanosatellite. This foundation supports advanced research, prototypes, laboratories, and close collaboration with industry.

Facts:

- More than 40 space companies originate from AAU research and alumni - among others GomSpace, Space Inventor, and Satlab
- Over 1,100 employees across AAU are related to space companies
- GomSpace is founded by graduates from Aalborg University
- AAU invests DKK 530 million in a new Tech Lab for among other space technology and innovation

The Workforce of the Future

Innovation empowers individuals to act effectively in a world of constant change, where employers increasingly demand creative thinkers who can adapt to complex conditions. Through hands-on activities at AAU, students and researchers solve real-world problems via cross-disciplinary collaboration to turn ideas into practice. This process builds a robust professional profile and a solid foundation for future careers. These experiences ultimately equip students and researchers with the essential tools to create lasting value for society.



GoGreenlight

Digital workflow Innovation

GoGreenlight translates humanistic research into digital tools that structure workflows in the creative industries. By focusing on processes like casting, the platform streamlines organizational tasks through user-driven development. This solves industry challenges by applying interdisciplinary innovation to practical workflows.

Facts:

- Digital platform that structures and optimizes creative processes
- Developed from concrete challenges identified in practice
- Combines humanistic research with digital solution development
- Developed in collaboration with users and industry partners from the creative industries



Rasgaard Ungepotentiale

Practical Pedagogical Tools

Rasgaard Ungepotentiale is a student-driven startup creating practice-oriented workshops and tools for the pedagogical field. They analyze organizational challenges to translate academic knowledge into concrete solutions for direct application. This approach effectively bridges the gap between theory and educational practice.

Facts:

- Creates solutions to pedagogical institutions
- Founded by Social Work students during an AAU startup internship
- Collaborates with external actors on legal and market frameworks
- Translates academic research into solutions for real-world challenges

Impact Since 2008

Since 2008, innovation at Aalborg University has had a clear and lasting impact on society, as knowledge created through research and education has been translated into new companies, economic activity, employment, and international reach. This demonstrates how academic insight generates value beyond the university and supports long-term economic resilience and societal development.



1622

Full-time Equivalent



DKK 589 million

In Exports

Beyond startups and economic growth, innovation at AAU also creates impact through:

- ✓ **Education:** Innovation-oriented teaching activities
- ✓ **Collaboration:** Private and public sector partnerships
- ✓ **Changes in practice:** Research and education drive new methods, improve practices, and create broad societal and organizational value.



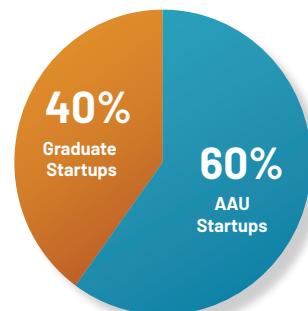
DKK 2.3 billion

Turnover



1320

Startups



The data is based on IRIS Group (2024) and covers the period 2008-2022, meaning that the current numbers are likely much higher today. Graduates include individuals who have started a company within two years after completing their education.

Ambitions

Innovation at Aalborg University: Ambitions for Impact and Growth

Innovation is essential to addressing major societal challenges related to climate welfare security and competitiveness at both national and European levels. These challenges require new knowledge, new technologies, and new forms of collaboration.

Aalborg University has a strong tradition of translating research and education into practical solutions. Through problem-based learning and close collaboration with companies and public organisations, Aalborg University actively contributes to sustainable growth and societal development. Innovation is an integral part of Aalborg University's identity and approach to creating impact. AAU INNOVATE supports these ambitions by strengthening and coordinating innovation activities across campus and by making it easier for students and researchers to develop ideas and create value for society.

Our ambition is that by 2029 Aalborg University is characterised by a strong and value-creating innovation environment where knowledge is translated into practice.

AAU INNOVATEs ambition is reflected in the following measurable results:



30% Increase in innovation projects



30% Growth in the number of startups



50% Increase in innovation funding

Engage in Our Innovation Ecosystem

Being part of the innovation ecosystem at AAU INNOVATE means gaining access to knowledge, networks, and opportunities that turn ideas into impact. **Key events and initiatives include:**

▶ **Aalborg Investor Summit** A central meeting point where investors and industry network and build lasting relationships. The event showcases promising startups and fosters the collaboration necessary to drive future growth.

▶ **AAU Startup Festival** A celebration of the courage to think innovatively. Showcasing student startups, an engaging community, and the facilities at AAU INNOVATE, The festival inspires the next generation to explore their own business ideas.

▶ **Mentor Network** Connects student and research-based startups with experienced entrepreneurs and industry experts to provide strategic sparring and domain knowledge.

▶ **Investor Network** Connects professional investors with the innovation ecosystem to provide early market insights and capital access. This strengthens the link between innovation and investment, driving long-term growth for startups.

▶ **AAU Start Up Program** A structured incubator that guides student entrepreneurs through three phases—Investigation, Development, and Acceleration—to transform early ideas into scalable market-ready ventures.

▶ **AAU Open for Business** Invites local companies and businesses to explore Aalborg University's laboratory facilities and collaboration opportunities with researchers and students to enable the initiation of new innovation projects.

Stay updated
on the latest news from
Aalborg Investor Summit
and learn more at



Celebrate innovation
and connect with the
startup community.
Join the annual festival
to experience pitches,
networking, and
innovation in action



**Connect with emerging
AAU startups.** Sign up for
our investor program to
gain early market insight
and access to capital
opportunities



**Transform your
idea into a scalable
business.**
Sign up for our AAU
Startup Program



**Share your
experience** and
help shape the
next generation of
startups. Sign up to
become a mentor



**Explore collaboration
possibilities** with
researchers and students
and discover AAU INNOVATE's
laboratory facilities and
how to initiate new
innovative projects



How Can We Help?

Find the Right Support for Your Innovation Journey

Startup and Impact

Do you want to turn research into real-world solutions?

Are you looking for pathways from lab to market?

Do you need support to launch a startup?



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Knowledge and Skills

Do you want to master the tools of innovation?

Do you want to integrate innovation into your teaching?

Do you want to become an entrepreneur?



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Collaboration and Visibility

Do you want to explore collaboration possibilities?

Are you looking for partners to amplify your impact?

Do you want to plan an innovation event?



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mda@adm.aau.dk

Get in Touch

Let's Innovate: Reach Out Today!

If any of our facilities, offers, events, or programs have sparked your interest, we invite you to reach out to us and explore how you can get involved in the innovation ecosystem. Whether you are a student or researcher with a business idea, looking to develop your innovation skills, or an external partner interested in collaborating or planning an event at AAU INNOVATE, we are ready to facilitate the right connections.

General inquiries

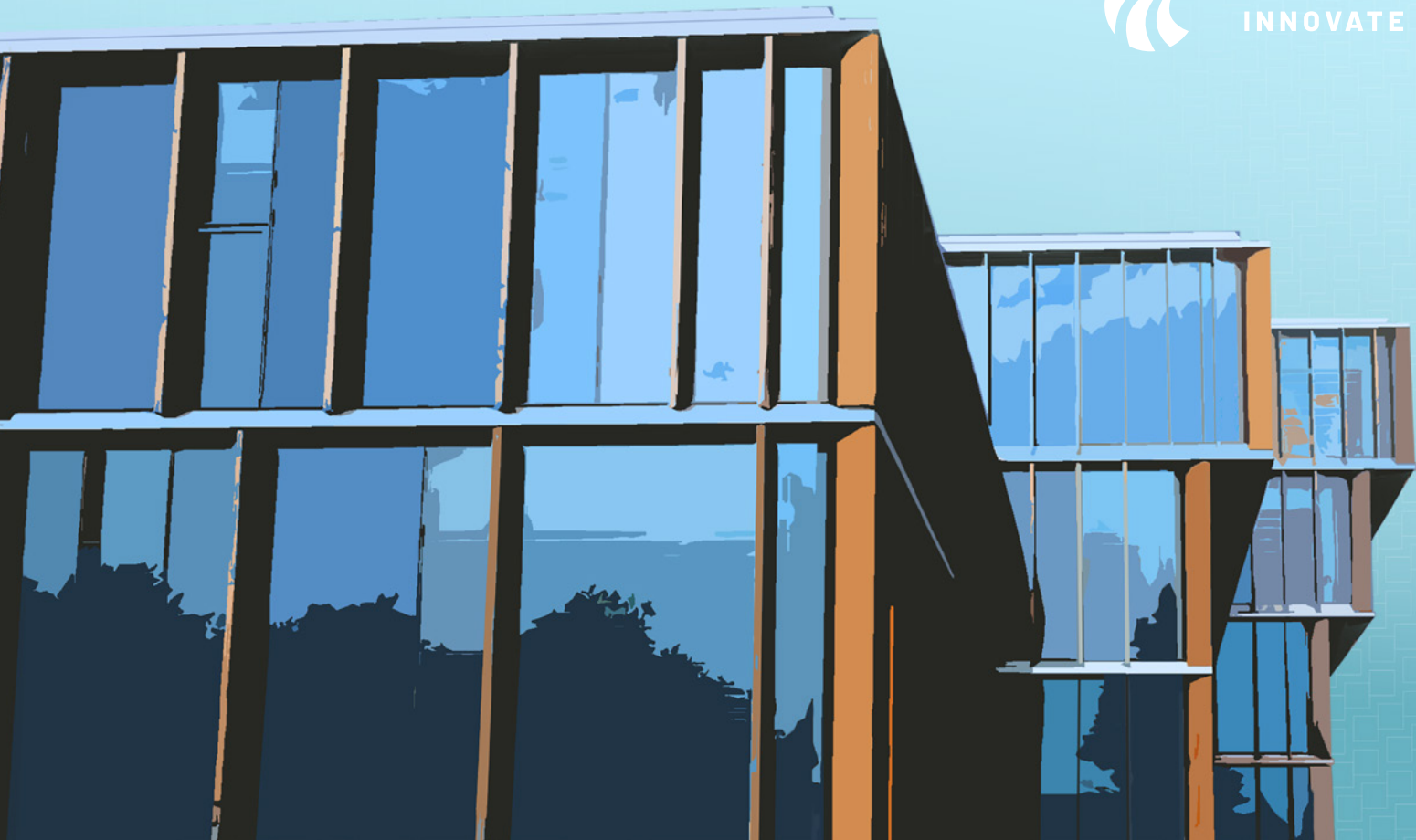
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