

*PRESS RELEASE (ENG)***Social Startups VVYVT Innovations and KINDA receive STARTBÜRO BABELSBERG Scholarship 2023**

Potsdam, May 23, 2023 - STARTBÜRO BABELSBERG opens its doors to promising new teams. This year, for the first time, they will move into the rooms of the Collection Building - surrounded by the researchers of the Creative Exchange Studio ([CX Studios](#)) and the actors and startups of the [MediaTech Hubs](#). In this way, media art, media technology and the media industry will come even closer together. For one year, two teams will be supported in their start as media creators and entrepreneurs. They will receive support from the Film University, the Medienboard and the Brandenburg development bank ILB. The program includes not only the space to implement the project ideas, but also a financial budget totaling 20,000 euros. In addition, the teams can rely on the advice of mentors from the participating partners and thus obtain important know-how and valuable industry contacts.

For the STARTBÜRO BABELSBERG, the team of **VVYVT Innovations GmbH**, consisting of Film University alumni [Lilli Berger](#) (Digital Media Culture, 2017), theater director and visual developer [Anton Krause](#) and user interface architect and interactive storyteller [Gregor Teggatz](#), was selected from the numerous applications. Originally trained as funeral director, Lilli Berger's goal was to bring her traditional and more craft-oriented industry into the 21st century with additional offerings for ancient rituals, that were hardly adapted or enhanced over time.

VVYVT develops virtual 3D experiences and remembrance spaces in the context of mourning. The main idea: to provide relatives and friends with a place of comfort, to remember and to come together even if they physically cannot be in the same location at the same time. The startup provides options to listen to the eulogy and to create a space, independent of physical whereabouts, to share stories, voice messages and images of their beloved ones.

In short, the people left behind get the offer to enter their own private metaverse, where they can express themselves and their memories via individual avatars. This is not meant to replace the traditional rituals, but to contribute a valuable addition to the services offered by funeral homes and funeral orators. The company is currently working on transferring the results of the prototype, which will be offered commercially with the public launch planned for September 2023. As a next step of innovation, Lilli Berger and her team would like to develop a text-to-speech engine to simulate AI-supported voice recordings of the deceased and then have texts read aloud in this familiar voice. This is intended to be achieved in cooperation with the Film University's Creative Technologies and Sound Master for Audiovisual Media Programs. VVYVT develops virtual 3D experiences and remembrance spaces in the context of mourning. The main idea: to provide relatives and friends with a place of comfort, to remember and to come together even if they physically cannot be in the same location at the same time. The startup provides options to listen to the eulogy and to create a space, independent of physical whereabouts, to share stories, voice messages and images of their beloved ones. In short, the people left behind get the offer to enter their own private metaverse, where they can express themselves and their memories via individual avatars. This is not meant to replace the traditional rituals, but to contribute a valuable addition to the services offered by funeral homes and funeral orators. The company is currently working on transferring the results of the prototype, which will be offered commercially with the public launch planned for September 2023. As a next step of innovation, Lilli Berger and her team would like to develop a text-to-speech engine to

simulate AI-supported voice recordings of the deceased and then have texts read aloud in this familiar voice. This is intended to be achieved in cooperation with the Film University's Creative Technologies and Sound Master for Audiovisual Media Programs.

Her neighbor in the start office will be KINDA - short for "kindhearted innovation nurturing diverse artists" - an idea and company founded by Filmuni graduate [Lorena Junghans](#). Inspired by her experiences as a film producer and the visionary strategies of music industry avant-gardists like AWAL and Platoon, KINDA aims to combine film production, impact producing and artist management to break new ground for systematic change and more diversity in the European media industry. The mission of KINDA is to accompany and support cultural pioneers and to facilitate extraordinary film concepts or audiovisual formats. The artists, as potential agents for a flourishing cultural and creative sector, will always be at the center of our activities - from advice on contract negotiations to project implementation and evaluation. The special feature: instead of simply charging per project, KINDA links the success of the company with the long-term success of the artists in the sense of a partnership on a common path to success.

We wish the fellows every success in their endeavors and look forward to seeing the results!

**With the STARTBÜRO BABELSBERG, the Filmuniversität Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, with the support of Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg GmbH and Brandenburger Förderbank ILB, promotes young filmmakers in the implementation of project ideas for the development of innovative content or innovative technologies that set new impulses for media production.**

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