Tech Talents for Germany: "42" opens Software Developer School in Berlin

42, an international school for software developers, is coming to Berlin. With the support of partner companies such as Volkswagen, CARIAD, Bayer, SAP, Microsoft, T-Systems, Capgemini and others, it will offer up to 600 students a chance to acquire top-quality programming skills, tuition-free. At a press conference in Berlin today, the charitable association announced it will open the school next year in June.

Berlin, November 11th, 2021. To stay on top of the global economy, Germany needs a steady supply of IT talent. 42 Berlin wants to help aspiring coders get started in the industry and do its part in preparing our society for the digital future.

Self-determined 'peer-to-peer learning' without professors or lectures is the foundation of 42's revolutionary educational concept, developed in 2013 at its first school in Paris. To date it has spread to 36 locations in 22 countries. 42 Berlin will be the third institution of its kind in Germany, after the opening of 42 Wolfsburg and 42 Heilbronn in 2021.

"42 stands for the future of education," says Ralph Linde, the non-profit's president. "With its humanistic aspirations, it offers solutions to the big challenges of our time. We look forward to working together with our partners from business and academia to create a space for learning and thought-leadership, to foster socially responsible innovation, and provide a unique training opportunity for software developers here in the German capital."

Volkswagen has already enabled the founding of 42 Berlin's sister school in Wolfsburg and is again its main strategic and financial supporter. "Digital skills and IT know-how are key drivers of our transformation into a software-oriented provider of mobility," says Gunnar Kilian, Member of the Board of Management HR and Truck & Bus at Volkswagen. "We are constantly investing to further qualify our workforce and are breaking new grounds in order to attract new IT talent. The founding of 42 Berlin is an important milestone on this path. As one of the largest employers in the Berlin IT sector, we are convinced that Volkswagen Group, together with our automotive software company CARIAD, and the partner companies, will help create an educational powerhouse exemplary of the new and innovative IT education landscape in Germany. "

Rainer Zugehör, Chief People Officer at CARIAD, adds: "Technology and software competence are key to addressing our future challenges: CARIAD, the new software house of the Volkswagen Group, is working specifically on the transformation of the car into a mobile digital device. That's why we're supporting 42 Berlin as an important and innovative new pillar for the kind of software and IT training we need here in Berlin. Together, we hope to provide valuable digital skills for the next generation of coding talent."

"The acquisition of digital skills is just as important for employees as it is for companies. It is fundamental for the success of society's digitization process and the continued competitiveness of our country", says Marianne Janik, CEO of Microsoft Germany. "With a variety of initiatives and partnerships like the one with 42 Berlin, we aim to provide opportunities for all kinds of people. Diversity, participation, and inclusion are not merely nice to have, but are at the heart of our long-term commitment to digital education and qualification."

Access for all learners is indeed a unique selling point of the 42 schools. Anyone over 18 can apply, and tuition is free. Rather than academic qualifications or programming experience, the school values applicants with a thirst for knowledge and first-rate team-working skills. Applicants have to complete a four-week selection process,

the so-called "Piscine", to proof their self-motivation, the willingness to learn to code, and their dedication to learn cooperatively.

 "The individual team member and their abilities are the most decisive factors for a successful company - this is especially true in the tech industry", says Sabine Bendiek, CPO & COO as well as Labor Director and Member of the Executive Board of SAP SE. "Our collective future will be shaped by the diversity and courage of our employes, their entrepreneurial mindset, and the willingness for continuous learning."

Applicants who pass the admission process first complete an approximately one-year course of hands-on basic programming training, followed by a first six-month internship. Experts from the IT departments of the partner companies, academia and the tech community at large, share their expertise with the students and stand-by to support them as mentors.

Andreas Greis, Head of Digital Solutions at T-Systems: "We are looking for people who can accompany and inspire our customers in the digitization process. Our recently released 'Corona Warn App' is a good example of what our customer projects will look like in the future: Programmed together with SAP in just 50 days, on behalf of the federal government, it is the largest ever open source project implemented in Germany. To realize digital projects within a framework of modern development methods, T-Systems has consistently been investing in people and education. With 42 Berlin, we are taking a new step to support the training of tech talents in an innovative learning environment. Through this valuable partnership, we aim to support young talent by providing research fellows, mentors, and exciting programming projects. "

After the first internship about two thirds of the students receive job offers. About 30% take the job but have a lifelong invitation to return and continue their studies at any 42 school. Those who continue their studies can specialize their competencies according to their interests in areas such as mobility, cybersecurity or artificial intelligence. A new addition is the field of medical IT. "Berlin is a vibrant center for innovation in biology, medicine and technology. As one of the largest employers in the city, Bayer leverages new science and technologies to drive breakthrough innovation and real solutions for patients, health care providers and societies. Digital technologies and data are an important driving force that enables a completely new form of innovation", says Jeanne Kehren, CIO Pharmaceuticals and Head Digital & Commercial Innovation at Bayer AG. "Education is key for the digital transformation of our economy. We must not just rely on initital education – lifelong learning is the way of the future. Bayer is working with 42 because of its inclusive educational concept that overcomes formal boundaries between disciplines. It promotes what is now crucial: diverse talent."

42 students complete their training with a second six-month internship as 'Full Stack Software Developers' and IT skills comparable to a master's degree in computer science. "The training of IT specialists is one of the most urgent tasks in the face of the digitization of industry and administration," says Rainer Mehl, Executive Vice President Automotive at Capgemini. "The 42 learning method trains not only practical software development skills but key future values such as responsibility, feedback, radical inclusion and peer learning. In keeping with our motto 'Get the future you want', we are very happy to support 42 Berlin."

Since learners at 42 can choose their topics and projects independently, study times vary. On average, students pursue their education for around three years. However, 42 schools allow for lifelong learning: To acquire additional skills, students can return to 42 for the rest of their lives.

The first piscine will take place in June 2022. More information about the new coding school can be found at 42Berlin.de.