

Press release**Technische Universität Graz****Barbara Gigler**

04/24/2019

<http://idw-online.de/en/news714605>Cooperation agreements, Transfer of Science or Research
Economics / business administration, Mechanical engineering
transregional, national**Innovation 4.0: TU Graz opens the biggest academic makerspace in Austria**

The Austria-wide unique Laboratory for Innovation at Graz University of Technology offers a platform for the exchange and networking of the maker community with industry and university research and teaching on more than 800 square metres.

Innovation 4.0: collaboratively developing new product ideas and designs, making prototypes in public digital production facilities – so-called makerspaces – with the help of open-source software, and testing new business models for innovative products. This is the dynamic of the “maker movement” – originally a loosely connected community of technophile hobbyists and inventors. A dynamic which companies and industrial concerns are increasingly discovering for themselves in the struggle for competitive advantage in the development of new solutions and innovative products.

A new initiative of TU Graz's Institute of Innovation and Industrial Management exploits this potential of the maker movement. Institute head Christian Ramsauer explains: “We offer leading partners a completely novel form of cooperation on the path to successful product innovations. With our initiative ‘Enforcing Innovation across Maker, Industry & Research’ – abbreviated to MI&R; – we’re carefully incorporating the maker community in the already established cooperation between industry and university research. Some 15 corporate partners across Austria are already benefiting from this new approach, among whom are Andritz, AVL, Magna, OMV and voestalpine.” The Institute of Innovation and Industrial Management is offering its partners from industry not only scientific know-how, but also the perfect infrastructure in the form of its Laboratory for Innovation.

FabLab and DesignLab are at the core of the Laboratory for Innovation

Equipped with the latest digital manufacturing technologies and appliances for the production of prototypes and innovative product designs, the FabLab offers everything the maker's heart desires. From cutting-edge 3D printers for FDM, STL and CFF methods, to CNC 4 and 3-axis milling machines to appliances for laser cutting and laser engraving, to water-jet cutting, sand-blasting, circuit-board printing and vinyl cutting. Here, students and researchers meet at a multidisciplinary level, as do start-ups, SMEs and established industrial companies for shared innovation work. The public is also welcome to the innovation lab: ambitious makers can implement their ideas and designs at TU Graz each Thursday afternoon.

The DesignLab is another important core of the Laboratory for Innovation. This multifunctional space is fitted out with a state-of-the-art communication and event technology and provides the perfect stage for interdisciplinary exchange in the form of workshops, product presentations and discussion events on about 200 square metres. A multifunctional stage also belongs to this facility as does a 10-metre-wide, 4K-LED wall, professional stage lighting, a video-conference system and a Dolby 7.2 sound system.

Meeting rooms, offices and a generous encounter zone complete the range of offerings from the Laboratory for Innovation at the Institute of Innovation and Industrial Management, which is laid out on a total of 800 square metres at TU Graz's Campus Inffeldgasse.

Head start through innovation

Research into innovation and a practical and interdisciplinary education of future specialist personnel and management and young researchers with their fingers on the pulse of the times has a tradition at TU Graz. At the Institute of Innovation and Industrial Management, the Innovation working group, which also includes the innovation lab, is dedicated to the topics of the maker movement and product design. The Industrial Management working group deals with topics related to agility and digitalisation in production and runs the so-called LEAD Factory at TU Graz as a key facility. The latter is an abstracted, completely functional, industrial production site on 55 square metres with an assembly line for a real product. The abbreviation LEAD stands for the terms Lean, Energy efficient, Agile and Digital. Initiatives of the Institute in research and teaching comprise the annual Innovation Festival, which is taking place this year at Campus Inffeldgasse on 6th June, competitive makerthons and ideation workshops – advanced training for industrial partners.

Cooperation with renowned industry partners

Partner companies of the initiative "Enforcing Innovation across Maker, Industry & Research" (MI&R;) are: Andritz AG, AVL List GmbH, Energie Graz GmbH, Miba AG, Hirtenberger AG (Komptech GmbH), Knapp AG, Knill Group, Logicdata Electronic & Software Entwicklungs GmbH, Magna Steyr Fahrzeugtechnik AG & Co KG, NXP Semiconductors Austria GmbH, OMV Exploration and Production GmbH, Pankl Racing Systems AG, Remus-Sebring Group, Ventrex Automotive GmbH, voestalpine High Performance Metals GmbH. Interested companies are cordially invited to participate in MI&R.;

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URL for press release: <https://www.tugraz.at/en/tu-graz/services/news-stories/tu-graz-news/singleview/article/innovation-4-o-tu-graz-eroeffnet-groessten-akademischen-makerspace-oesterreichso/>



The Laboratory for Innovation at TU Graz offers the perfect infrastructure for innovation research, teaching and interdisciplinary cooperation
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The FabLab at the Laboratory for Innovation at TU Graz is equipped with state-of-the-art digital production technology
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