

Not Optional

Europe's ambitious tech entrepreneurs have the drive and ideas to build the next Google, Amazon or Netflix. But inconsistent regulations across the continent have left them without the foundations to achieve their full potential.

That's why we, as representatives of European tech businesses, welcome the European Commission's plans for a new EU Startup Nations Standard. By making it easier to start a business, expand across borders and attract top talent, this new Standard will help to level the playing field with powerful global tech hubs in the US and China.

We applaud the EU's ambition of seeking a pan-European solution to address the needs of startups. We are also encouraged that the Commission has specifically called out the treatment of stock options as one of the key issues. As highlighted by more than 500 leading European entrepreneurs who joined the Not Optional campaign, the inability of startups to use stock options effectively to attract and retain talent is a major bottleneck to the growth of startups in Europe.

The Commission's proposals will be a major step towards unleashing the full entrepreneurial firepower of Europe – but only if they are adopted and implemented by all Member States.

That's why we are today calling on all Member States to sign up to the EU Startup Nations Standard, including a commitment to increase the attractiveness of employee ownership schemes.

As founders and CEOs of businesses that contribute significantly to the regional and global economy, we will support European governments as they take the steps required to become real 'Startup Nations'.

Yours sincerely,

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Pitch

Felix Van de Maele
CEO & Founder
Collibra

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Johannes Schildt
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Klarna

Taavet Hinrikus
Founder & Chairman
Transferwise

Tamaz Georgadze
CEO & Founder
Raisin

The following startup associations have added their voice to that of startup CEOs and founders

Benedikt Blomeyer
Director EU Policy
Allied for Startups

Christian Miele
President
German Startups Association

Jan Bormans
CEO
European Startup Network

Liz McCarthy
Executive Director
Scale Ireland

Nicolas Brien
CEO
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Simon Schaefer
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Startup Portugal