

Hungry for innovation



Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic on *DLD* stage © Dusan Stojancevic

With its exceptional location, Belgrade is often described as the "Gate of Central Europe": Situated between two rivers, the Sava and the Danube, numerous trade routes from the Balkans to Europe have always crossed here. Belgrade is the hub South East Europe and, with its universities and colleges, is regarded as the educational capital. Reason enough for *DLD* founder Steffi Czerny to host a *DLD Salon* here. An office tour was on the agenda in the morning, and in the afternoon the most exciting entrepreneurs, scientists and artists of the country as well as international speakers discussed Serbia's future at the half-day conference.

Office tour through Belgrade

The special attraction of the Serbian capital was already apparent during the *DLD* Office Tour: At the Institute of Physics from the University of Belgrade, participants were treated to an exciting digression into quantum physics and got insights into a study on spreading of creativity. Next stop was at Startit, a co-working space and startup incubator, where the participants were able to ask questions about the founding culture in Serbia and get to know the tech ecosystem even better.

At the pulse of time

Serbia can look back on a rich history, which is why the National Museum in the centre of Belgrade was the ideal venue for the half-day *DLD* conference. In the midst of historical exhibits, *DLD* founder **Steffi Czerny** and Serbian Prime Minister **Ana Brnabic** welcomed around 200 participants. Why is *DLD* going to Belgrade?

"Serbia reminds me of the pioneering spirit of the early internet days in Silicon Valley or Tel Aviv. The focus, the drive, the determination, and also the positive spirit of entrepreneurs, researchers and government officials, to really take advantage of the opportunities of digitalization in a joint effort convinced me that Serbia will not be a blind spot on the global digital map but a hotbed!"

Steffi Czerny, founder of *DLD*

10 points for a digital future

In a sweeping speech, Serbia's Prime Minister explained how she has taken the country a big step forward in digitalization with 10 points – digital education plays a crucial role in this. For example, IT and programming were introduced as compulsory subjects in primary schools and internet access is guaranteed for all schools.

"The e-commerce market in Serbia has an exciting time ahead of it: the number of consumers who shop online will increase rapidly over the next few years. The mobile share in e-commerce will also rise sharply - this opens up opportunities for existing and new Internet companies in many respects".

Aliz Tepfenhart, Managing Director *Burda Digital*

Miscellaneous programme

On the *DLD* stage, discussions included gaming, digital trust, blockchain, quantum computing, digital education and art. Vesna Crnojevic-Bengin, founder of BioSense, was also a guest, researching how we can produce food for the growing population with minimal ecological footprint. The Startup 3Lateral impressed the audience with a vivid presentation of its innovative 3D animations of the human face. Other speakers at the *DLD Salon Belgrade* included curator **Hans Ulrich Obrist** (Serpentine Gallery), "Serbia's Mark Zuckerberg" **Branko Milutinovic** (Nordeus), **Christian Graggaber** (*Showroom*), **Isabell Welpe** (TU Munich) and **Ruth Koren** (*DLD TLV/Oscar4B*).

At the following *DLD* party of Burda Digital participants already made appointments for next year: The *DLD* flagship conference will take place from 19-21 January 2019 in Munich – and this time at a new location.

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