Ms. Ursula von der Leyen
President-elect of the European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200,
1049 Bruxelles, Belgium

Brussels, 22 July 2019

Dear Commission President-elect von der Leyen,

We warmly congratulate you on your election as Commission President. More than ever, Europe is at a crossroad seeking unity and leadership to overcome challenging times of transformation.

Your recent remark that digitisation needs to be a top priority and center stage is encouraging. We can only concur with your global outlook that Europe needs to catch up in technological development and digital transformation. We believe startups can be the most powerful partners to help achieve these goals and create opportunities for our economies and citizens.

We represent tech entrepreneurs, investors, and startup communities in Europe with a passion for the European Union. We believe that good things happen when entrepreneurs and policymakers talk to each other. Earlier this year, at the Startup Europe Summit in Cluj, which was organised by the European Commission and the Romanian Presidency, we presented a set of recommendations to pave the way forward for this dialogue to happen and for more entrepreneurial success in Europe. These recommendations build on our previous experience with the Digital Single Market, dialogue with policymakers, and the contributions of entrepreneurs and their communities from across Europe.

The European Commission can support startup entrepreneurs through a strong Single Market that is easy to navigate and provides legal clarity. One of our recommendations is to harmonise rules governing employee ownership — the practice of giving staff options to become shareholders of the company they're working for. Another is a strengthened dialogue between the European Commission and startup & scaleup communities, which could be achieved with a single, cross-directorate unit for startups informed by a startup & scaleup advisory board. We would like to share all the recommendations and offer our availability and support to realise them together.
Lastly, our recommendations include an invitation to you to start an ongoing dialogue. We'd like to invite you to Slush, the world's leading startup event, aptly happening in Helsinki, Finland in November this year, to kickstart this conversation in a fitting context.

We hope you will accept our invitation and remain available for any further questions and concerns.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

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