

## A Mandate for Allied for Startups' Activities in 2021

The members of Allied for Startups shall adopt the following mandate, which builds on [prior mandates](#) and missions, guiding the organisation for 2021 and beyond:

### Principles

All activities should be guided by **our mission and the following principles**;

- Startups are **global from day one**; we work to create policies that will enable entrepreneurs to thrive and grow globally;
- We want to **democratise entrepreneurship**; enabling the best ideas to become a business and increase the number of success stories;
- **Startups are everywhere**; public policy measures should be weighed against their impact on startups and the startup ecosystem; the burden of proof for regulation should be a principle of avoiding negative externalities (i.e. only if regulator can prove that the positive and desired outcomes outweigh the negative ones);
- **Startups are drivers of growth and competition**; startups grow, scale and create jobs faster than the rest of the economy and should receive specific attention to that end; they challenge the status quo to improve competition;
- Startups are **high-risk ventures**; risk needs to be understood and embraced in order to create progress; equally, the risk/reward ratio for those who undertake entrepreneurial risk must be carefully balanced;
- **Startups are a different breed to the established economy**; they are rarely funded by debt, and a thriving financing framework is paramount for startups to succeed.
- **Failure creates value**; many startups fail and still create value for economies, societies and communities;
- **We believe in user-centricity**; startups deliver value wherever users have a need - policy should be guided by the same mindset; rather than thinking in terms of business models or industries we should continuously place users at the heart of policy development;
- **Startups need legal certainty** from day one; a predictable and stable regime is crucial for startups in order to attract talent and to raise capital; legal exemptions should be limited to positive industry policies and avoided if they represent a competitive disadvantage or a barrier to growth.

- **Startups demonstrate social impact and drive sustainability solutions;** bold ideas can change the world, drive inclusion and promote sustainable development goals, including meeting environmental targets;

## Priorities

Allied for Startups continues to promote elements of successful entrepreneurial ecosystems such as access to talent, finance, education and support organisations.

Legislative action repeats and arises in different locations, which is why we unite our membership around **trends and topic clusters**, rather than individual files. We leverage our network and communities globally to address those.

Allied for Startups is dedicated to **delivering on all priorities** from previous years.

To ensure that we can deliver results while maintaining the broad setup and diverse interests of the network, we divide these into **issue areas and policy priorities**. Issue areas are topic clusters in which Allied for Startups has developed expertise and has a mandate to react to current developments. Policy priorities are topic clusters where active campaigning requires a significant investment of bandwidth and there are concrete policy effects for startups on the line.

For 2020-2021, the following **issue areas** are identified:

- Net Neutrality;
- Distributed Ledger Technology;
- Data Protection, including in electronic communications;
- Capital;
- Competition;

For 2020-2021, the following **policy priorities** are identified:

- Talent, including startup visas, stock options, diversity; as well as the future of work;
- AI & Global Data Flows, the Free Flow of Data, Public Sector Data sharing, eHealth;
- Online platforms, intermediary liability, copyright; including the Digital Services Act;

- In 2020-2021 we recognise that **COVID-19** will impact all these policy areas and impacts everything that we do, and will exceptionally be a policy priority in its own right

This year, a global health pandemic has put significant strain on the global economy and hence, on startup ecosystems. This is why we are making the **digital and green economy recovery** post COVID-19 one of our priorities, leveraging the **13 startup recommendations** we published with our COVID-19 Working Group.

Our strategic growth target for 2021 will continue to be Southeast **Asia and India, as well as consolidate the links with South America**. Regardless of the government of the day, the AFS network strives to provide value for every startup ecosystem in the world.

We strive to ensure that **each elected official will know 3 startups** from his/her home region.

**Global Impact Issues** are topics which arise in different jurisdictions globally and reflect in nature and context our priorities. These issues include questions such as trade & tariffs, data flows and data adequacy agreements, the gig economy or digital taxation; considering our mission statement to work towards a global consensus as well as the similarity of such issues to our priorities we commit to actively engaging on global impact issues.

We continue to monitor **long term trends and questions** related to the digital economy, including e-commerce, ethics & AI, mobile platforms and ecosystems.

## Products and Services

To fulfil its mission, AFS delivers a series of **products and services** for its members; activities include policy workshops, campaigns, policy roundtables, thought leadership, speaking opportunities, policy monitoring, issue sheets, policy-digest, newsletter, as well as strategic and actionable advice.

Allied for Startups **membership commits to invest** into its mission and values as a sustainable and independent organisation. The Annual contribution by each member is set at 950 EUR for 2021. This contribution may be made partly in kind.

Allied for Startups commits to producing and improving its **member services** continuously and to provide strategic and actionable support to members collectively as well as individually; we thrive to be an open platform for entrepreneurs and their communities to understand and hack governments;

Allied for Startups builds and maintains a **knowledge base** that enables its members to understand, intervene and anticipate policy developments and share this value with their ecosystem;

Allied for Startups' value also lies in the connections it can establish and the bridges it can build. **Networking** both among Members and to external actors provides value to Members and the organisation as a whole. It can include connecting Members to capacity builders.

Allied for Startups provides **value through exposure and expertise:**

- Exposure to high level decision makers from policy and government, institutional speaking opportunities; exposure to AFS members, global network, sponsors and partners;
- Expertise to understand and hack government; demonstrate policy value towards own members and ecosystem; expertise for entrepreneurs towards investors through their competitive policy edge;

Allied for Startups is a **community driven organisation** where its independent members exercise a high degree of ownership and benefit from a strong transfer of value;

## Values

Our values define us. They govern the way we work internally as a team as well as externally with our members, policy makers and other ecosystem stakeholders.

- Positivity
- Transparency and Accountability (Honesty and Trust)
- Solution Oriented
- Empathy & Integrity
- We are Innovators

- Commitment
- Always Learning
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Empowerment
- Teamwork

## Approach

To ensure that AFS Secretariat and Continental Council represents its membership as accurately and effectively as possible, AFS activities will be guided with the following structure:

The **Continental Council** provides thought leadership and strategic guidance for Allied for Startups. It further interprets the mandate where necessary and represents the organisation externally. It shall consist of up to 6 members elected by personal mandate from our membership and 3 ex-officio members for a period of 2 years (current 2019-2021).

An **Advisory Board** will guide the activities of Allied for Startups on a strategic level, raise awareness of critical issues, and function as a sounding board for new ideas and policy objectives for the organisation. It will also provide expert analysis to better identify, advocate and influence the issues affecting startups. The Advisory Board will not vote on our mandate and Continental Council.

We continue to emphasise the role and strength of entrepreneurship with a forward-looking, resolutely **positive, optimistic and constructive** view;

Considering that regulation is slow, complex and does not speak the language of entrepreneurs, and political ownership should not distract entrepreneurs, we make an effort to present **one-sentence issues** to members and communities;

One-sentence issues are best communicated through **digital campaigns**, banner-sized ads with a clear CTA; CTAs should not be limited to signing letters, but should create engagement; we aim at communicating our goals in accessible and clear language;

We commit to engaging communities outside the entrepreneurship space that share our goals and principles;

Allied for Startups remains committed to being a trusted source for policy makers regardless of political colour; we want to help them to identify partners and the most effective policy solutions to support entrepreneurship at large, including our guiding principles such as “think user-centric”, “growth mindset” or “think small and digital first”. To this end we’ll support our members in developing evidence-based policy proposals that inform engagement with the new EU institutions’ representatives.