



## Startup pitch on EXPO Day with NAiSE

Startup NAiSE from the University of Stuttgart develops Google Maps for indoors

**“It follows me wherever I go”, says NAiSE founding member Jens Heinrich, and points to a motorized robot, which follows him through the halls of the ARENA2036 on the University of Stuttgart campus. The “follow me function” is part of the NAiSE system, which Heinrich developed with his colleagues Kai Przybysz-Herz (28) and Robert Libert (29) as part of their startup. They are part of the fifth STARTUP AUTOBAHN program, and will be showcasing their product at this year’s EXPO Day at the Wagenhallen Stuttgart on February 21.**

“The NAiSE system is similar to Google Maps, but it works inside buildings and is much more exact, so it’s particularly useful for industry”, explains the 31-year-old. It locates and operates motorized robots, people and vehicles, for example forklifts, and enables all participants to communicate with one another. “Our vision is to flexibly connect robots and people in an area to ensure the best possible cooperation. We’re making autonomous intralogistics”. The name “NAiSE” was created when their prototypes went into operation for the first time. ‘Nice’ was the first name that the three master’s degree holders from the University of Stuttgart and the FernUniversität Hagen thought of. The dot on the i symbolizes the exact location which the robot can give inside a building.

A particular feature of the system is the safety aspect which the technology provides. “Let’s say that a colleague falls in the production hall and is lying there on the ground. The sensor notices what’s going on, and after the person doesn’t move for ten seconds it sends an emergency message to the screens of nearby colleagues”.

### University Communication

Head of University Communication  
and Press Spokesman  
Dr. Hans-Herwig Geyer

Contact  
T 0711 685-82555

Contact person  
Bettina Künzler

Contact  
T 0711 685-82122  
F 0711 685-82291  
hkom@uni-stuttgart.de  
www.uni-stuttgart.de



### **Carrying on despite setbacks**

The three founders met at a networking event for entrepreneurs in Stuttgart in 2015. "Kai had the idea of developing a parking lot management system using GPS, so that cars could look for a parking space autonomously after the drivers had already gotten out. Me and Robert liked the idea and wanted to get started", explains Heinrich. The first prototypes had already been developed when the German Federal Network Agency stopped them in their tracks. "We only ever got the permit for our localization system for one year at a time. No customer is going to buy something for such a short length of time."

But Heinrich and his colleagues never lost sight of their dreams and reworked their idea. Instead of navigating around a parking lot, they developed a system especially for indoor navigation on factory sites for Industry 4.0. With the help of the EXIST startup scholarship and the Technology Transfer Initiative GmbH at the University of Stuttgart, they founded their own company in 2017 and successfully implemented their idea. "Setting up a business can be an emotional rollercoaster", says the Stuttgart native. He says the support given to them by the Institute of Mechanical Handling and Logistics and the Institute of Industrial Automation and Software Engineering at the University of Stuttgart, as well as the ARENA2036, has been a huge help.

In the meantime, NAiSE has become very much in demand in the industry. Its customers include Daimler, Bosch and Continental among others. "We're very happy with the financial year. We exceeded our expectations. We don't want to sit back and relax though, we want to stay on the ball."

### **About the University of Stuttgart**

The University of Stuttgart is considered to be among the outstanding research universities in Germany and worldwide. The University of Stuttgart, nestled in Europe's most vibrant industrial region, links science, economy and society. This results in various forms of cooperation between disciplines. For years, scientists here have



conducted internationally competitive, cutting-edge research, and they prove their success again and again in the competition for funding and excellence projects.

With its research-driven teaching and its interdisciplinary-oriented profile due to the integration of engineering, science, humanities and social sciences, the University of Stuttgart has positioned itself as a nationally and internationally sought-after study destination.

### **About STARTUP AUTOBAHN**

STARTUP AUTOBAHN is a neutral platform, which moderates in-depth and curated collaborations between key partners from industry, investors and mentors in order to help startups grow. STARTUP AUTOBAHN holds two three-month programs each year, which conclude in an EXPO Day. The programs are stage-agnostic, with a late-stage focus, and were created to promote startups. STARTUP AUTOBAHN offers all the support that startups need to realize their vision quicker: space, funds, people, resources and access to valuable networks of companies, investors, mentors, universities and government representatives.

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### **Contact partner**

Jens Heinrich, Founding member of NAISE, Telephone: +49 179 4269946  
[jens@naise.xyz](mailto:jens@naise.xyz)

### **Further information (in German):**

Website NAISE: <https://naise.xyz/>