

# ENRICH MONTHLY

MONTHLY BUSINESS & INNOVATION NEWS COMPILED BY ENRICH IN BRAZIL



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Dear Reader,

as coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread globally, like you, we are following the updates about the disease with concern. Our hearts go to all those who have been affected and their friends and families.

Many countries are taking drastic and unprecedented measures to contain the coronavirus pandemic in an attempt to alleviate massive pressure on the healthcare system which is crucial for all and each citizen of the world. To ensure not only our own safety but also of others, our ENRICH in Brazil staff and employees are working from home, whenever possible.

Amid the race against the COVID-19, several countries have announced calls to find a vaccine or a cure for the coronavirus, allocating hundreds of millions of national currency. European Union with the additional amount from the Horizon 2020 programme is scaling up the emergency call launched in January to fight the COVID-19 outbreak to EUR 47.5 million. We list below some of the recent calls announced by the EU and Brazil :

- [CONFAP & EU](#): Development of therapy and diagnosis to fight coronavirus infections. **Deadline: 31.03.2020.**
- [European Commission](#): Call for startups and SMEs with technologies and innovations that could help in treating, testing, monitoring or other aspects of the Coronavirus outbreak. **Deadline: 20.03.2020 Brussels local time 17:00.**
- [SENAI](#): Mission against COVID-19. **Deadline: 30.04.2020.**

In our ENRICH Monthly Success Story, we present an exclusive interview on innovation in medical technology. Our March guest is Mr Tobias Zobel, a German engineer currently managing the Digital Health Innovation Platform (d.hip) focusing on the development of prediction models for artificial intelligence driven health applications using clinical data of patients.

We thank you and wish you to stay safe and healthy,  
ENRICH in Brazil Team



## European Commission steps up research funding and selects 17 projects in vaccine development, treatment and diagnostics

Following the publication of a €10 million call in January, the Commission has secured an additional €37.5 million for urgently needed research on COVID-19 vaccine development, treatment and diagnostics. This action is part of the coordinated EU response to the public health threat of COVID-19.

Furthermore, up to €45 million in Horizon 2020 funding will support additional research through the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI), a public-private partnership between the Commission and the pharmaceutical industry.

This allowed to select 17 projects involving 136 research teams from across the EU and beyond, which will start

working on developing vaccines, new treatments, diagnostic tests and medical systems aimed at preventing the spread of the Coronavirus.

A commitment of a similar scale is expected from the pharmaceutical industry so that the total investment in the fast-track call launched on 3 March could reach up to €90 million. This means that the total amount in funding for coronavirus research, mobilised from Horizon 2020 and the industry through IMI, could reach almost €140 million.

For application and more information click [here](#).

Read more at: [European Commission](#)

## Urgent Call for Startups with Coronavirus Solutions to Apply for €164 Million European Commission Funding

The European Commission is trusting in the creativity and caliber of European startups in its recent communication to the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The Commission has sent out a call for startups and SMEs with technologies and innovations that could help in treating, testing, monitoring or other aspects of the Coronavirus outbreak to apply urgently to the next round of funding from the European Innovation Council.

The deadline for applications to the EIC Accelerator is 17:00 on Friday 20 March, Brussels local time (New deadline). With a budget of €164 million, there are no predefined themes and applicants with Coronavirus relevant innovations will be evaluated in the same way as other applicants.

With this in mind, the Commission is intending to fast track the awarding of EIC grants and blended finance

(combining grant and equity investment) to Coronavirus relevant innovations, as well as to facilitate access to other funding and investment sources.

The EIC is already supporting a number of startups and SMEs with Coronavirus relevant innovations, awarded funding in previous rounds. This includes the EpiShuttle project for specialised isolation units, the m-TAP project for filtration technology to remove viral material, and the MBENT project to track human mobility during epidemics.

For application and more information click [here](#) and scroll down in order to view the relevant information, as due to the measures related to the COVID-19 outbreak European Commission's IT Helpdesk works in non-standard remote operation, which could introduce some handling delays.

Read more at: [EU Startups](#)

## CONFAP Offers Proposal for Institutions to Join the European Union Emergency Call for the Diagnosis of Coronavirus

The Brazilian National Council of State Research Support Foundations (Confap), in the set of its Foundations, makes public a proposal for Brazilian institutions to join the Call: "Development of therapy and diagnosis to fight coronavirus infections", launched by the Innovative Medicines Initiative, together with the European Union and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA).

The Call, launched on an emergency basis, has a deadline for submitting proposals until **March 31, 2020**, which will be evaluated by the European side until April 15, 2020, and is open to participation by Brazilian institutions / researchers, with co-financing.

The purpose of the Call is not to develop a vaccine, nor to epidemiological aspects, its main objective is to identify new therapeutic agents and early, effective and reliable diagnostic systems related to the new Coronavirus (SAR-CoV-2).

Budget on the European side: EUR 45 million (≈BRL 244 million). On the Brazilian side, the budget is defined by each State Foundation for Research Support (FAP) that intends to support the Call.

Research projects must be submitted by a European coordinator or from a country associated with Horizon 2020 (following the guidelines of the Call), involving entities based in at least 3 European Union countries, or from associated countries.

The Research Support Foundations (FAPs) interested, and who adhere to the Call, should disclose to their researchers the availability of resources for submission of proposals.

**Contact for clarification and / or more information about the call: [elisa.confap@gmail.com](mailto:elisa.confap@gmail.com)**

Read more at: [CONFAP](#)

## SENAI puts Technology Innovation Structure at the Service of Fighting Coronavirus

The Brazilian National Service for Industrial Learning (SENAI) placed its network of 27 Innovation Institutes and 60 Technology Institutes at the service of combating the new coronavirus. The Innovation Call for Industry launched a call to receive proposals for solutions against the problems caused by the virus that have immediate application and with results within 40 days.

BRL 10 million (≈EUR 1.8 million) will be invested in projects that help prevent, diagnose and treat Covid-19 and its effects, such as the manufacture of more mechanical respirators and the development of rapid detection tests. Entries can be made on the Innovation Publication website.

The BRL 10 million (≈EUR 1.8 million) in resources will be invested in solutions presented by companies with SENAI institutes. Projects can be on themes such as: increasing the number of respirators; development of rapid tests and personal protective equipment (PPE) that can replace

masks, gloves and soaps; replacement of parts and components used in intensive care units (ICUs), among others.

Projects may be up to BRL 2 million (≈ EUR 368575), requiring no financial or economic consideration. The implantation and its effects must occur within a maximum period of 40 days. Deadline for submission of proposals is April 30<sup>th</sup>.

Register your project to diagnose or prevent coronavirus in the Innovation Call for Industry.

**Proposals can be made by Whatsapp at: (61) 99628-7337 or by email [combatecovid19@senaicni.com.br](mailto:combatecovid19@senaicni.com.br).**

Read more at: [CNI News Agency](#) & [Mission against COVID-19](#)

## Thyssenkrupp and Embraer to Build Four Frigates for Brazil Navy

A consortium formed by Germany's Thyssenkrupp AG TKAG.DE and Brazilian plane-maker Embraer SA EMBR3.SA signed a deal to deliver four frigates to Brazil's navy between 2025 and 2028, the companies said in a statement.

The contract signed in Rio de Janeiro is part of Brazil's drive to modernize its navy so it can patrol off-shore resources in the Atlantic, such as Brazil's vast pre-salt oil reserves. The companies did not disclose the price tag. The Brazilian navy website said the four-ship program will cost about USD 2 billion (≈ EUR 1.75 billion; BRL 9.26 billion).

The ships will be entirely built in Brazil, at the naval shipyard of Itajaí in Santa Catarina State, with local content rates above 30 percent for the first vessel and 40 percent for the others. Thyssenkrupp will supply the technology.

"The Tamandaré Class Programme will strengthen our ties by transferring technology and generating highly qualified jobs for the country," said Rolf Wirtz, CEO of Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems (TKMS).

A majority stake in TKMS, which has an enterprise value of about EUR 525 million (≈ USD 599 million; BRL 2.77 billion) according to Credit Suisse estimates, could be sold in an ongoing restructuring process of the group, Thyssenkrupp has said.

TKMS is Germany's second-largest defence group after Rheinmetall RHMG.DE, which, along with France's Naval Group, has been mentioned as a potential buyer of the unit in the past.

Read more at: [Nasdaq](#)

## Engie and Audi to Construct 200 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations in Brazil

Brazilian utility Engie Brasil Energia SA and German carmaker Audi are partnering up to install 200 electric vehicle charging stations across Brazil by 2022.

The chargers will have 22 kW of power and be fire, shock and weather proof, Engie said. The partnership comes after the announcement of the arrival in Brazil of the Audi e-tron, the company's 100% electric SUV, in the first half of April.

Currently, Brazil has 7.500 hybrid and electric cars in circulation. The country estimates the number will reach 212.000 in 2030, with 24.000 charging stations in public places. For Engie Brasil CEO, Mauricio Bahr, this data shows that the local market is very promising.

Engie intends to reach 1 million charging units worldwide by 2025. The company may enter the Brazilian urban mobility sector in the future, including the rental of electric buses, as cities like Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro have laws that require public transport to cut emissions to zero in the upcoming years.

Read more at: [Renewables Now](#)

## Brazil Approves 145.7 MW of Enel's Solar Plants to Commence Operations

Brazilian power sector regulator Aneel has given the go-ahead to the launch of commercial operations at 145.68 MW of solar plants owned by Italian Enel Green Power SpA.

Built in the city of Sao Goncalo do Gurgueia, Piaui state, the 45.68-MW UFV Sao Goncalo 1 and the UFV Sao Goncalo 2 and UFV Sao Goncalo 21 photovoltaic (PV) plants, each of 50 MW, are part of the 608-MW Sao Goncalo solar asset.

About 475 MW of the Sao Goncalo complex have been put in operation so far, according to a recent announcement by Enel. Once fully online, the park is expected to generate around 1,500 GWh annually.

In addition to the PV plants, Aneel has also approved the start of operations of the 13.86-MW EOL Ventos de Vila Ceara II wind farm located in Serra do Mel municipality, Rio Grande do Norte state.

Read more at: [Renewables Now](#)

## Spanish Airport Management Company Wins Brazil Concession

Through its subsidiary Aena Desarrollo Internacional, Aena has been awarded the concession for the Northeast Brazil airport group of six airports.

The concession is for 30 years, with the possibility of a further five. The airports included are: Juazeiro do Norte – Orlando Bezerra de Menezes; Recife/Guararapes – Gilberto Freyre; Joao Pessoa – Presidente Castro Pinto; Campina Grande – Presidente Joao Suassuna; Aracaju – Santa Maria; and Maceió – Zumbi dos Palmares.

Aena SME, S.A. is a state-owned company that manages general interest airports and heliports in Spain. Through its subsidiary company Aena International it also participates in the management of 17 airports abroad

The group of airports served more than 13.8 million passengers in 2019, accounting for 6.5 percent of total Brazilian traffic.

In the first quarter of 2020, following the administrative procedures required to formalize the concession and the transition period envisaged in the bidding documents, management of the airports will be transferred to the concession company set up for this purpose, which will be entirely owned by Aena Desarrollo Internacional.

Read more at: [Passenger Terminal Today](#)

## Heineken to Pour \$183 Million into Expansion in Brazil

Heineken NV (HEIN.AS) will invest 865 million reais (\$183.14 million) to expand its Ponta Grossa brewing plant in Brazil, the company said on Monday, as competition between the world's two largest beer makers bubbles up.

The Dutch brewer will make the investment this year and next and focus on it Heineken and Amstel brands at the third-largest brewing facility in Parana state in Brazil, its most important market worldwide.

The company did not give details of the expansion plan, stating only that production would rise by 75%.

“We are bringing forward by one year all the investments of our strategic plan. Brazil is a key market for us,” Heineken Brazil Chief Executive Officer Mauricio Giamellaro told Reuters. Basically, we are building a new brewery,” he said in an interview.

Read more at: [Reuters](#)

## Telefónica Invests in Redpoint Eventures with Eye on Brazilian Startups

Eyeing the Brazilian market, the Spanish multinational telecommunications company Telefónica made an investment in venture capital fund Redpoint eventures to put money into in local startups.

The move is part of Telefónica's global open innovation strategy targeting startups in key markets and the same is being done in Spain, the US and Israel. The figures for the deal were not disclosed.

Investments are made through Telefónica Innovation Ventures, the telco's VC arm that also invests directly in startups. This unit's portfolio currently comprises 10 startups in which Telefónica has invested directly and more than 80 through 12 venture capital funds (including two from Brazil).

In a statement, the Spanish carrier stressed that the goal is to invest in startups that can add value to Telefónica's business, either through new products or to improve internal efficiency as a supplier.

Priority areas are principally digital consumer, digital transformation, 5G, cybersecurity, cloud, artificial intelligence, IoT, blockchain and financial services.

“The new strategy is an evolution of our first generation of funds, Américo (2012-2018), whose objective was to foster the innovation ecosystems in Spain and Latin America. Now, the main focus is to support the operator's main business areas”, said Guenia Gawendo, global director of Telefónica Innovation Ventures.

In addition to this investment in Redpoint, Telefónica is doubling the amount of investments made through its own innovation hub Wayra Brasil to as much as BRL 1 million (≈USD 212.000; EUR 186.400) per startup.

Wayra operates in the entrepreneurship ecosystem as a seed capital corporate investment fund.

Read more at: [bnamericas](#)



## Brazil's Booming Marketing Technology Ecosystem

The inefficiencies of Brazil's banking system made the country fertile ground for fintechs, and it is now home to companies such as unicorn Nubank and PagSeguro. Now, a startup accelerator believes a similar process may happen in marketing. Founded in 2019, Circle is specialized in marketing tech startups, or "martechs." The project was born out of parent company and marketing agency Netza, which needs access to new and innovative products to remain relevant at a time when traditional advertising techniques are increasingly questioned.

**Competition.** The Brazilian martech ecosystem is growing, according to a study by Liga Ventures: in 2019, Brazil had 266 martechs, a 37-percent increase from 2018 levels. While the pool of resources for venture capital in Brazil has also been increasing, these companies battle among themselves for funding, but are also competing with more established startup sectors, such as fintechs and edtechs.

According to Circle CEO Fernando Ribeiro dos Santos, martechs have a disadvantage in this point, as they're still valued according to traditional metrics such as revenue. He does not see unicorns rising in this field for the next four to five years, but singles out Dino and Resultados Digitais as players to watch in the sector.

**Perspectives.** Circle has already accelerated five startups

and aims to end 2020 with ten. So far, BRL 1.5 million has been invested in the project and Mr. Dos Santos expects to apply another 2.5 million by 2021. They currently invest in startups across several areas of marketing, such as artificial intelligence, rewards programs, and even corporate messaging for events.

**Opportunity.** According to IAB Brasil's annual Digital AdSpend survey, digital ads consumed only 30 percent of the BRL 16.12 billion invested in Brazilian advertising in 2019. As a comparison, that share reaches 52 and 55 percent in the UK and Canada respectively, showing how much room there is for growth in Brazil. The same survey indicated a future 30-percent increase in digital ads in Brazil, leading the overall market to total BRL 20.95 billion.

**Business model.** Digital marketing is currently dominated by tech giants such as Google and Facebook, which not only hold every measurable data available for their platforms but also have the power to change algorithms and affect business strategies. While this may be a risk, Mr. Dos Santos believes that the agility of martechs is an advantage. "If you have a traditional agency, it takes too long to adjust a plan. Martechs have the chance to create new paths and customers need their agility."

Read more at: [The Brazilian Report](#)



## Central Bank of Brazil to Launch Payment Application, PIX

The Central Bank of Brazil is shaking up the fintech scene of Latin America's largest country. Last Wednesday, it announced it would be launching its own payment solution that uses QR codes to process transactions.

This system—christened the Instant Payments Platform or PIX—will be available in Brazil from November of this year. One of its most attractive features is that all transactions are settled immediately. And that's regardless of the date and time, or if two users have funds in different banking or financial institutions.

To use PIX, a user needs an account whether it's with a bank, fintech or valid payment institution.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can benefit from this platform as it gives them the opportunity to offer customers electronic payments. That could boost their sales in the process.

But, for the government in Brasilia, it stimulates the rise of new businesses and cuts down the use of cash.

"This initiative, in line with the ongoing technological revolution, enables innovation and the emergence of new business models and promotes the use of electronic payments, reducing operational risk and the difficulties related to the use of cash," stated João Manoel Pinho de Mello, Director of Organisation for the Financial System and Resolution at the Central Bank.

From the looks of PIX, it's very much like Mexico's CoDi (short for Digital Charge or Cobro Digital). This payment system was launched by the Mexican authorities in September of last year.

Both are government-developed solutions designed to encourage electronic payments, increase the number of people with bank accounts, and reduce the use of cash.

In short: promote financial inclusion.

And it's likely PIX faces some of the challenges CoDi is currently dealing with which are primarily two inter-related matters.

The first is developing an effective top-down approach to distribute PIX among its population.

Meaning, besides the government's task of getting traditional banks on board with it (they're probably thrilled), there are other stakeholders in play. Among them are fintechs, retailers and small businesses. But above all else, are individuals that need to be educated on its use and the benefits it can bring. That of course, conveys a big effort.

And second, it also implies the need to break down misconceptions about electronic payments and reassure users on the security of processing transactions through PIX.

Read more at: [Contxtx](#)



## Brazilian Companies Rank as the Most Sustainable Companies in South America

Everywhere you look, sustainability is permeating social, political, and business agendas.

In recent years, an impressive number of companies have stepped up to take a more active role in shaping a more sustainable future—not just in the environmental sense, but also by taking social and governance factors into consideration.

Corporate Knights Global 100, an annual ranking of the 100 most sustainable companies, visualize exactly how many are located in each corner of the world. The companies on the list are clear winners not only because they aim to leave the world a better place, but because their stocks have also outperformed the market on average.

Brazil's Banco do Brasil remains in the top ten list, and is one of the three most sustainable companies in all of South America, followed by CEMIG (electric utilities) and Natura Cosmetics (personal care and cleaning products).

The ranking is based on readily available data for all publicly-listed companies with at least USD 1 billion (≈ EUR 898 million; BRL 5 billion) in gross revenue (in PPP), as of the financial year 2018.

Companies are then screened for several key performance indicators (KPIs), including but not limited to the following categories and examples:

Resource management: e.g. GHGs and other emissions such as NOx and SOx emissions

Financial management: e.g. innovation capacity, or the percentage of R&D spending against total revenue

Employee management: e.g. Women in executive management and/or on boards

Clean revenue: e.g. the percentage of total revenue derived from “clean” products and services

The concentration of the most sustainable companies also varies greatly depending on where you look. A closer look at each region is available [here](#).

Read more at: [Visual Capitalist](#)



## First-time Founders Who Want to Start Business in Brazil

The Brazilian startup scene has gained some serious momentum over the past two years. Unicorns have emerged. Large global investors are putting money into Brazilian companies. Venture funding in the country has skyrocketed.

Now, one Brazilian venture firm is ready to help keep that momentum growing in a unique way.

Canary Ventures, an early-stage firm with more than USD 120 million (≈ EUR 107.4 million; BRL 600 million) under management, told Crunchbase News exclusively that it has launched a new program to help first-time founders graduating abroad kick off their business ideas in Brazil.

Dubbed JetPack, the program is designed to help people who live outside of Latin America's largest country explore innovative ideas with a little help.

In December, Canary closed on a USD 75 million (≈ EUR 67.1 million; BRL 375.1 million) fund to invest in about 50 early-stage startups operating primarily in Brazil. The São Paulo-based firm generally provides the first institutional capital—seed or Series A financing—to tech companies in the country.

Izabel Gallera, the Canary partner leading JetPack's efforts, told me there are "a lot of inefficiencies in Brazil that are much wider than in the U.S." The real estate, health care and financial services sectors are prime examples. In fact, those industries in Brazil have a reputation for being inefficient and expensive.

"Here we could use a lot of technology to become more efficient," Gallera said. "Even a little bit of technology could help gain a lot of efficiencies. In Brazil, we have much more explicit opportunities of building something that can solve a real problem."

As such, the firm is "very bullish" with regard to those market opportunities.

"We believe more capital flowing to great talent will be able to help solve a lot of problems in the country," Gallera added.

Marcos Toledo, managing partner of Canary, said the program is being founded on the premise that Brazil is seeing a turning point where more and more talented

workers "are moving away from traditional careers."

He also echoes Gallera's sentiment regarding opportunity in the country.

Since it began operating in 2017 through December 2019, Canary has invested in more than 60 companies which, combined, had raised over USD 400 million (≈ EUR 364 million; BRL 2.23 billion) in subsequent rounds. Portfolio companies include Buser, idwall, Loft, SouSmile and Hashdex.

With JetPack, Canary is looking for an ambitious team of first-time founders who live abroad and want to return to or go to Brazil to start a company. A formed team or being Brazilian are not requirements, but living outside of Brazil is.

Canary says its standards are high, and the firm will only choose teams if they see true potential for a long-term relationship. It will evaluate criteria such as ambition, fit with Canary's investment model, founders market fit and execution capability.

Once a founder is chosen, Canary will invest USD 50000 (≈ EUR 45600; BRL 253000) uncapped, which means the financing will be priced only in the next venture round. The firm will cover all LLC costs, but for future rounds a founder will need to open a company in Delaware.

The team will have office space in São Paulo during the extension of the (industry-agnostic) program or until its first funding round. Canary says it will be on hand to help when the team is ready to raise its first round of institutional venture capital. It will also provide full access to its network of tech founders and operators, talent to recruit, possible first clients (for B2B companies in particular), market specialists and enterprise senior executives, among others.

In return, Canary expects the right to lead that first venture round (assuming both parties agree). It also asks a team "to maintain a keen and exclusive focus on validating its business hypothesis."

"We want you to focus on building a business, but don't expect micromanagement from our side," the firm said.

Read more at: [Crunchbase](#)

## Facial Recognition is Used to Reduce and Prevent Accidents in the Industry

The use of facial recognition to prevent and reduce accidents at work is already a reality in the industry of Mato Grosso do Sul. The technology is being developed by the SESI Innovation Center with resources from the Edital de Inovação para a Indústria (Innovation Notice for Industry) and will be implemented at Inflex, which manufactures packaging in Dourados (MS).

The project is an example of what the SESI Innovation Center in Mato Grosso do Sul can do for industries in terms of innovation, transforming labor relations and business management. "Managers, especially in the industrial maintenance area, must be attentive to the activities that the team performs in risky environments, as all procedures performed in these areas must follow a series of work safety standards", explained the Health Technology Manager Occupational Safety at the SESI Innovation Center, Ricardo Egídio.

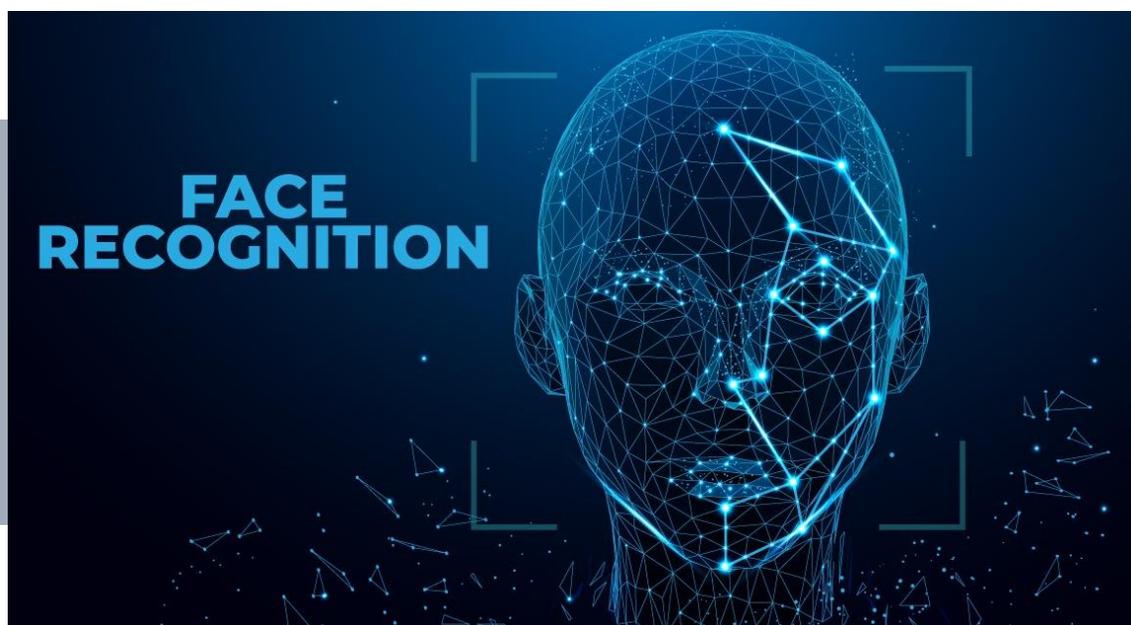
"With the use of this technology, company managers will be able to receive alerts on mobile devices in real time about these risky environments, avoiding unauthorized access by untrained or authorized people, and also generating management indicators, such as permanence of employees in these environments", exemplified the coordinator of

innovation projects at the SESI Innovation Center, Adriano Macedo Silva. "The industry transforms data and information through technology, reducing the chances of accidents and enhancing its management", he added.

Inflex's information technology supervisor, Fernando Eduardo de Lima, already envisions numerous other possibilities for the company with the project designed by the SESI Innovation Center. "We can apply it for other purposes, such as facial recognition of employees who have access to forklifts and other restricted environments," he said.

Inflex made it possible to prepare the project through the Industrial Innovation Notice, an initiative of the Social Service for Industry (SESI) and the National Service for Industrial Learning (SENAI) that finances the development of innovative products, processes or services, with the objective of to increase the productivity and competitiveness of the Brazilian industry, in addition to promoting the optimization of safety and health. Projects from R \$ 200 thousand to R \$ 1 million are financed, destined for the development of the projects, with the participation of the selected companies.

Read more at: [CNI News Agency](#)





# CONGRESSO INTERNACIONAL DE SERVIÇOS DE SAÚDE

## Success Story

Feira Fórum Hospitalar

CMS CONFERÊNCIA NACIONAL DE SAÚDE

SINDICATO DOS HOSPITAIS DO ESTADO DE SÃO PAULO

ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DE HOSPITAIS



## Innovation in Medical Technology

© Tobias Zobel

by Dr. Anneken Reise, DLR

**Bonn.** Based on an interview with Mr Tobias Zobel for ENRICH in Brazil.

The ENRICH in Brazil interview series continues with Mr Tobias Zobel, a German engineer currently managing the Digital Health Innovation Platform (d.hip) focusing on the development of prediction models for artificial intelligence driven health applications using clinical data of patients. This platform is based on a collaboration between the Siemens Healthineers, the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nürnberg, the University Hospital Erlangen and the Medical Valley EMN in Germany. The purpose of this interview series is to share the stories of people and organizations that have established successful scientific and technological cooperation between Europe and Brazil.

Mr Zobel's very first contact with Brazil was still during his faculty times working as a mechanical engineer for MAN Brasil in Rio de Janeiro. After learning Portuguese and focusing his scientific work on medical technology, he started academic partnerships with various Brazilian universities and established his first business contacts in the country. Thanks to his passion for the Brazilian people, culture and beautiful countryside, this small start lead to long lasting professional partnerships.

"One of the most impressive aspects for me is the

endurance of the Brazilian people and their economy. Both had to go through very tough times but never stop aiming for a better future and getting back up on their feet."

Until 2017, Mr Zobel directed the Central Institute of Medical Engineering focusing on new interdisciplinary research projects between academic institutions, hospitals and industry and on transferring results into innovative products or services on a national and international level, with a special focus on Brazil. Thanks to his roles as ambassador and shareholder of the Medical Valley he reaches out to a huge network of companies and research institutions.

As an expert in biomedical engineering, up to now Mr Zobel founded four companies ranging from software solutions for indoor location aware applications, manual therapy devices, wearables, to pure consulting solutions. The successfully developed products and services are being offered both to industry partners and governmental institutions.

During the last years, Mr Zobel has been evaluating different medical innovation systems in various countries such as Brazil, Mexico, the United States, China, Israel and Germany. As a result and in close collaboration with the Medical Valley, he has built up a partner cluster in Rio Grande do Sul focusing on Medical Technology with over 800 partners including startups, established companies, hospitals, universities and governmental institutions.





“Today Brazil has made its way out of the crisis, and despite complicated bureaucratic processes is already climbing up the stairs of international rankings regarding its innovative capacity, willingness to adopt new technologies and especially regarding its startup culture. Sometimes I miss this kind of passionate driving force in Germany and Europe. “

One of his companies, the CiNNAMED GmbH, focuses on services regarding medical device regulatory processes and market access to Brazil. European companies have the possibility to register their products through ANVISA, the Brazilian national regulatory agency, get in direct contact with key-opinion-leading hospitals and researchers and find distributors on the highest trustworthy level possible. Mr Zobel also organizes various digital medtech conferences with partners like the University of Sao Paulo, Hospital das Clinicas SP, Hospital Sírio-Libanês and many more.

“Bureaucratic processes and the Brazilian tax system are topics that one has to get used to in Brazil. Also, the size of the country is sometimes mistaken for a small European country creating expectations in the fields of distribution and service agreements that are just unrealistic. Those are some of the initial struggles one

might face at the start of working in Brazil but normally finding a quick acceptance very quickly. “

Given these challenges, Mr Zobel strongly advises anybody interested in going abroad to initiate a professional collaboration with Brazil to get informed about the actual situation beforehand, not in forums though, but if possible by visiting one or two conferences or trade shows to get a personal feeling of the country. He states that one should also be prepared to make real investments – both financial and in terms of time - to access a great market that is worth all the obstacles.

“Establishing personal contact with professionals who know the country and have a solid network in the field of your business activities is another clue towards a successful partnership – and don’t forget to define and state both your expectations and offer very clearly and repetitively. Be prepared to meet very friendly and caring people and to make new friends.”

*We thank Mr Zobel very much for his valuable comments and being an “Ambassador” for increasing scientific and technological cooperation between Europe-Brazil.*



*“One of the most impressive aspects for me is the endurance of the Brazilian people and their economy.”*