Kraków CallforBusiness
No 3 • Autumn 2026
BULLETIN

Call from the CITY



Łukasz Gibała
Mayor of Kraków

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Krakow has enormous economic potential. It is driven by entrepreneurs, researchers, and people with ideas and the courage to turn them into reality. I want the local government to be their partner – open to dialogue, ready to cooperate and committed to finding solutions that make it easier to run a business and develop new ventures.

I believe that cooperation with the city should be based on clear and transparent principles. Krakow should be a place where good ideas have the space to flourish and entrepreneurs can count on a constructive, solutions-oriented approach from the local authorities.

You will find examples of this kind of cooperation in the latest issue of *Call for Business*. They demonstrate just how much is happening at the intersection of business, science and social initiatives. My goal is to ensure that this potential translates into quality jobs and new opportunities for the people of Krakow.

I invite you to read on!

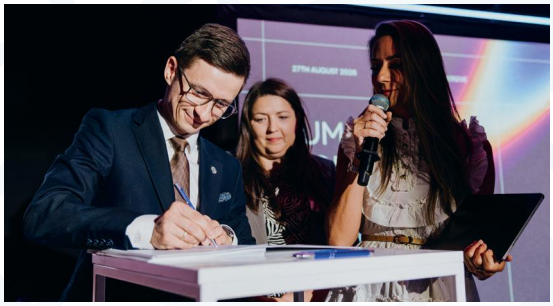
2 | **Call** for the **BUSINESS** | **SUMMER JAM 2026**
4 | **Call** for the **COOPERATION** | **THE EUROPEAN ROVER CHALLENGE 2026**
5 | **Call** for the **COOPERATION** | **FUTUREBIZ**
6 | **Call** for **HELP** | **POLAND BUSINESS RUN 2026**
7 | **Call** for the **NEW INITIATIVE** | **ASPIRE MAN VS MACHINE**
8 | **Call** for the **NEW INITIATIVE** | **BUSINESS IN A CITY FULL OF GREENERY**

Call for the BUSINESS

SUMMER JAM 2026: SIGNAL AND STARTUP KRAKOW

On 27 August, this year's edition of **'Summer Jam 2026: Signal'** took place – it was of particular significance for Krakow and the local start-up community, as it was at this event that the **'Startup Krakow'** project was officially launched.

The event was organised under the slogan 'Where the right people find each other' and was dedicated to building relationships and fostering integration within Krakow's start-up ecosystem. The 'Wesoła Immersive New Media Art Centre' in Krakow was the venue where representatives of start-ups, investors, technology companies, the creative sector, public institutions and organisations supporting the development of entrepreneurship gathered. The project was carried out with financial support from the City of Krakow and the Małopolska Region.



Partners representing the public sector, the technology sector and the start-up sector were involved in the implementation of 'Summer Jam 2026: Signal'. The event brought together over **350 representatives** of the Krakow and regional innovation ecosystem, in particular founders and entrepreneurs, representatives of start-ups and scale-ups, investors, specialists from the technology sector, corporate representatives, **experts and ecosystem leaders,** representatives of the creative sector, and representatives of public institutions and organisations supporting entrepreneurship.

The programme included, amongst other things:

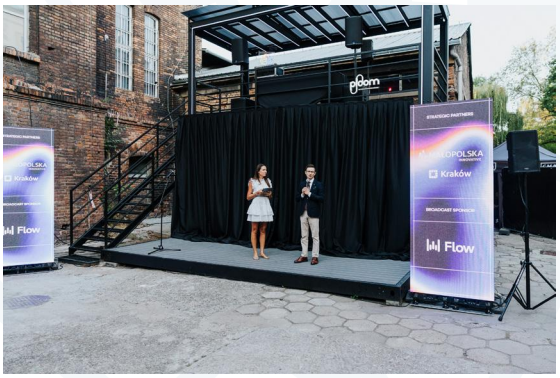
- **From Memes to Institutions: The Stablecoin Story**
- **Startup Krakow Announcement: New Innovation Initiatives from the City of Krakow**
- **From Dashboards to Agents: An AI-Native Founder's Story**
- **Product Talk: Preventing AI Drift**
- **One Year of Wispr Flow Growth & AI Agents: The Next Interface for Work**
- **Summer Jam Signal Index presentation**
- **preview of Investor Salon III**
- **presentation of the plans for the Krakow Startup Report 2026/27**

One of the highlights of the event was the signing of a letter of intent, under which 'Startup Krakow' – a new coordination platform designed to bring together the local innovation ecosystem – was officially established. In addition to Krakow City Council, the letter was signed by organisations that have been helping to shape Krakow's start-up ecosystem for many years: OMGKRK, Krakow – City of Start-ups, Krakow Technology Park, Startup Poland, the Krakow LifeScience Cluster and the Jagiellonian Centre for Innovation. Each of these organisations has its own area of specialisation, its own community and its own strengths, whilst 'Startup Krakow' is a new platform that brings the ecosystem together.



Call for the COOPERATION

For years, Krakow has had everything it needs to be one of the strongest start-up hubs in Central Europe: excellent universities, thousands of students studying technical subjects, a growing number of VC funds, experienced mentors and increasingly bold founders. However, it also has something that nobody had planned for: a dozen or so organisations supporting start-ups, which operated alongside one another rather than in collaboration. Start-up accelerators, clusters, foundations, technology parks – each of them operated actively and creatively, but in isolation. The same start-up could have been accepted onto three different programmes and received three different recommendations. A city that wishes to support entrepreneurship has often had to decide who to talk to first – because talking to everyone individually did not result in any coherent strategy.



The City of Krakow, through its Department for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, decided to take on a task that no one else could undertake – to act as a neutral host. Not a competitor for start-ups, not yet another organisation vying for the same grants, but an institution that is committed to ensuring the entire ecosystem grows as a whole, regardless of which specific entity succeeds.

A formal cooperation agreement, modelled on tried-and-tested international models for coordinating start-up ecosystems, was drawn up over the course of many iterations – because reaching an agreement between seven different organisations, each with their own priorities and ways of working, requires patience. Each side had its own comments, its own concerns and its own ideas about what the cooperation should look like.

From the outset, **'Startup Krakow'** is intended to be an open platform, not an exclusive club – the more voices at the table, the more complete the picture of what Krakow's ecosystem really needs. As Jacek Liguziński, Director of the Department for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, says: "We don't want to be yet another institution telling start-ups what to do. We want to be a place where these voices are finally heard."

'Startup Krakow' is a project that is not intended to be a revolution – it is meant to be something far more difficult: simply well-organised collaboration.



Call for the COOPERATION

KRAKOW AS THE HOST OF THE EUROPEAN ROVER CHALLENGE 2026

Krakow has once again hosted an international gathering of young engineers, scientists and representatives of the space sector. **From 4 to 6 September, the 12th edition of the European Rover Challenge (ERC)** – one of Europe's most important Mars rover competitions – took place on the campus of the AGH University of Science and Technology.

This year's competition featured **25 of the best teams, selected from over 120 entries from around the world.** Students and young engineers from countries including Poland, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Egypt, India and Japan came to Krakow. **The EPFL XPLORE team from Switzerland** came first, with AGH SPACE SYSTEMS in second place and **DIANA from Italy** in third.



The competitors tackled tasks inspired by real-life space missions, involving, amongst other things, autonomous navigation, sample collection, maintenance tasks and the analysis of potential signs of life. This year's Marsyard recreated a section of **Hellas Planitia** – the largest impact crater on Mars.

Krakow: a hub for the development of space technology

The organisation of the European Rover Challenge in Krakow highlights the city's growing role as a meeting place for the academic, technological and business communities, and as an environment conducive to the development of innovative technologies. The event attracts participants and experts from all over the world to the city, providing an opportunity to exchange knowledge, network and showcase solutions developed by young engineering teams.

An international conference on the future of space exploration was held in parallel with the competition. The experts discussed, amongst other things, future missions to the Moon and Mars, the commercialisation of the space sector, and the prospects for the development of space technology.

Krakow was the host city for the European Rover Challenge 2026, supporting an event that brings together the worlds of science, new technologies, business and education. The presence of numerous teams from abroad and representatives of the space sector reinforces Krakow's image as a city open to innovation and international cooperation.



Call for the COOPERATION

FUTUREBIZ SUMMIT 2026

Krakow was the host city for the **'FutureBiz Summit 2026', which took place on 23–24 September,** bringing together representatives from the worlds of business, academia, public administration and communities involved in new technologies and innovation.

The two-day meeting provided an excellent opportunity to discuss the direction of the modern economy and how changing technologies, skills and models of cooperation are affecting the way businesses and cities operate.

The programme included discussions on topics such as artificial intelligence, new technologies, innovation, economic transformation and cooperation between business, local government and the academic community.
One of the key topics was the role of local government in creating conditions conducive to the development of entrepreneurship, investment and the implementation of new solutions that address the challenges facing modern cities.

Representatives from Krakow took an active part in discussions on cross-sectoral cooperation and economic development, sharing the city's experiences in supporting business, investment and innovation. It was also a good opportunity to present Krakow's perspective in discussions about the changes taking place in the economy and the role of cities in this process.

The 'FutureBiz Summit 2026' also facilitated face-to-face meetings and the exchange of experiences between representatives of companies, public institutions and the academic community, creating a space for establishing new business and professional contacts.

The role of Host City enabled Krakow not only to welcome the event's participants, but above all to play an active part in its programme and in the discussion on the future direction of business, technology and cross-sector cooperation.





Call for HELP

POLAND BUSINESS RUN 2026 ATTRACTS A RECORD TURNOUT.

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE RAN TO HELP

This year's **15th edition of the 'Poland Business Run'** has once again broken its own attendance record. As many as **47,660 participants** signed up for Poland's largest charity business run, united by a common goal: to support people with mobility impairments, amputees and those who have undergone a mastectomy. A total of **3,300 five-person relay teams lined up at the start.**

Krakow has held a special place on the event map for years; it was here that the idea for the 'Poland Business Run' was born, and the race has become a permanent fixture in the city's calendar of social and sporting events. This year's event at Błonia and Jordana Park attracted **17,827 participants.** To mark the 15th edition of the race, Krakow City Council had planned for fifteen teams made up of council staff to take part, and these plans were exceeded slightly, as 16 teams officially took part. One of them is the 'Szalone Dropsy' team, which has represented the Department for Entrepreneurship and Innovation for many years now and ran valiantly for a worthy cause.

The funds raised during the 'Poland Business Run' enable the Foundation to support its beneficiaries by helping to fund prosthetics, rehabilitation equipment, medical treatment and psychological support. **In 2026, more than 130 people have already received support, and since the Foundation began its work, there have been more than 1,400 beneficiaries.** Thanks to the commitment of participants, partners and volunteers, Krakow remains not only the host city for the event, but also a symbol of solidarity and social responsibility, which have been the cornerstone of the 'Poland Business Run' for the past fifteen years.





Call from the INNOVATION

ASPIRE MAN VS MACHINE

Machines can help. People determine the outcomes.

Two days of meetings, five stages and more than 30 sessions created a space for discussions about the future of technology, business and work. **On 22–23 September,** Krakow hosted **the 11th ASPIRE Annual Conference, held under the theme "Man vs Machine".**

The event brought together leaders from Krakow's technology and modern business services sector, which plays a key role in the life of the city and employs one in every four people working in Krakow.

At the heart of the discussions was the question: what role does the human being play in a world of advanced technology? Participants explored how artificial intelligence and automation are transforming the way we work, the challenges they pose for companies, and how to prepare both businesses and cities for the changes ahead.

The ASPIRE Conference provided an opportunity to examine these challenges from different perspectives and exchange experiences among the people shaping Krakow's business ecosystem.

Because while machines are capable of doing more and more, it is still **people** — their ideas, experience and ability to collaborate — who determine how we use their potential.





Call for the NEW INITIATIVE

BUSINESS IN A CITY FULL OF GREENERY

We encourage entrepreneurs and business representatives to get involved in the activities organised by the Krakow Municipal Greenery Authority as part of its corporate social responsibility programme, particularly through sponsorship packages:

https://zzm.krakow.pl/aktualnosci/1411-pakiety-sponsorskie.html

Another area for collaboration is the investment opportunity relating to the possibility of a long-term lease of two properties in Grzegórzecki Park:

https://zzm.krakow.pl/aktualnosci/2215-public-consultation-grzegorzecki-park-in-krakow.htm

- the buildings shown in the concept have planning permits: one for a café, the other to complement the café's function – a hall for exhibitions, dining and events.

Zarząd Zieleni Miejskiej w Krakowie



Editors:
Investors and Innovative Economy Support Centre Team

Contact:
Department for Entrepreneurship and Innovation
pi.umk@um.krakow.pl

Biznes i Nauka w Krakowie
www.linkedin.com