



10 years NETS / venture leaders program

Global Footprints of Swiss Start-ups

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A successful private-public partnership

Creating a good ground for innovative Swiss start-ups

Ten years ago there was a growing network of technoparks spreading all over Switzerland. There was also a political commitment to support entrepreneurs, and to some extent there was financial support available. Three pioneering university-linked projects had raised the issue of early stage entrepreneurship: The Venture competition, the ETHtools program at ETH Zürich, and the Branco Weiss chair of Entrepreneurship at EPF Lausanne. In most Swiss universities, however, entrepreneurship was considered something alien since their business had to be pure science. Spending tax payers' money? Of course. Making money and creating tax-paying jobs?

No way. That's when GEBERT RÜF STIFTUNG started the initiative NETS – New Entrepreneurs in Technology and Science. The starting point was a simple ambition: How can we infect young Swiss scientists with the entrepreneurial virus? How to contaminate high potentials with the start-up disease? The foundation gained competent partners for its entrepreneurship development program – the Branco Weiss chair of Entrepreneurship in Lausanne as well as SWISSNEX and the Babson College for Entrepreneurship in Boston. A flexible and dynamic organization could be established which allowed the program to be improved from year to year. The Swiss universities also gave it a chance and made their contribution by annually nominating their candidates. The most ambitious learning partners, however, were the NETS candidates themselves.

In 2004 the Swiss government launched the CTI's venturelab program. This national start-up training initiative shared the NETS vision: training young entrepreneurs, establishing contacts with investors, and promoting successful entrepreneurs as role models. venturelab aimed at strengthening the entrepreneurial spirit in Swiss universities and showing students and postdocs that there is an alternative to a career in academia or large companies.

In 2006 NETS was integrated in venturelab to become its training highlight: Since then, the 20 most promising start-

ups travel as a Swiss national start-up team to Boston every year, selected in a highly competitive process. Looking back over the 10 years of venture leaders and NETS, the success of the program has become visible: 115 of the 187 participants have founded their own company. In total they have created more than 1000 highly qualified jobs and triggered a financing volume of more than CHF 210 million. Most of them act globally and set new standards in their specific fields.

The cooperation between the GEBERT RÜF STIFTUNG and the CTI didn't end with the merger of NETS and venturelab. In 2007 the foundation launched venture kick, the first pre-seed fund in Switzerland, developing ideal synergies with CTI's venturelab program.

authors



Pascale Vonmont is the Deputy Director of GEBERT RÜF STIFTUNG and has a doctorate in biopolymers. In her work with the foundation she supports the strengthening of «science entrepreneurship» at Swiss universities. Within the area of activities of the foundation she is in charge of the pre-seed fund venture kick. She is a member of the jury of the CTI program venture leaders, and she is also a member of the board of the Swiss social entrepreneurship initiative «sei».

www.grstiftung.ch



Martin Bopp is the Head of Section CTI Startup and Entrepreneurship at the Innovation Promotion Agency (CTI) and has a PHD in Physics. He is responsible for the development and execution of CTI's program in sensitizing and educating young entrepreneurs and coaching new technology oriented start-ups.

www.bbt.admin.ch/kti

From 2000, NETS / venture leaders program helps young entrepreneurs to launch their business. With one motto: shaping entrepreneurial spirit

Firing up entrepreneurs - impact study of the NETS / venture leaders program

How can you infect young Swiss scientists with the entrepreneurial virus? This was the challenge set at the 2000 launch of the NETS program. Ten years later, 115 companies have been born, over CHF 210 million Swiss francs in financing volume has been triggered, and over a 1000 highly qualified jobs have been created. Let's have a closer look at the recipe for this success.

«Take motivated Swiss start-ups, add American entrepreneurial spirit and enthusiasm and mix all these ingredients with professional networking tools and you're ready for real world challenges,» explains Max Wiki, founder of Dynetix. Indeed, this is a key philosophy at the heart of the program: to create a successful entrepreneur, you need to start with «high potential» and then help instill the entrepreneurial mindset. The essence of the program therefore has been providing what's needed to shape the entrepreneurs' spirit, their perseverance and their ability to execute, rather than just helping hone business ideas.

Whether or not entrepreneurs can be created is a controversial topic. The NETS / venture leaders program clearly shows,

however, that entrepreneurs' development can be fostered. Whether in biotech or ICT, the core issue remains the same: spirit. When asking participants about the impact of the program, the words «inspiration» and «motivation» come up consistently. The findings of the survey show that over 60% of the participants consider the firing up of their entrepreneurial spirit a major benefit. For almost half of the participants, this had a crucial and indispensable impact on their entrepreneurial career. As Matthias Sala, Founder of Gganba, puts it: «venture leaders helped me to understand the very basics of entrepreneurship that you can only find when you see other entrepreneurs: vision, networking and persistence!» Of course, for many, the NETS / venture leaders program had a direct impact on their companies, some even saying like Michael Friedrich, co-founder of Aïmago, that «[The company] was born in 2008, but its heart started beating at venture leaders 2009.»

«The program got me inspired»

Passion, the ability to think big, and inspiration from the US well-known innovative and entrepreneurial spirit via an in-depth immersion bring the expected results:

«NETS got me inspired, brought me an additional and welcome network, and the Boston experience will stay forever as a once-in-a-lifetime experience,» says Mnemis founder Cyril Pavillard.

Shaping this entrepreneurial spirit is the program's foundation; from here, additional skills such as business understanding, leadership skills and a business network can be built (see figure 2).

Business understanding does not only cover standard business knowledge but also includes how to «think out of the box to find innovative solutions for the daily challenges you have as an entrepreneur,» says Jost Allmelling, Plexim's founder.

Building a network is also a major component of the program, and this includes not only the new US contacts but also the very unique bond created between participants. Many, like Mark Blum, co-founder of Optotune, are «still in regular contact with a handful of entrepreneurs. We meet

venture leaders - ten intense days in Boston

For ten days, entrepreneurs plunge into the US entrepreneurial scene and benefit from personalized development training. The visit is a unique blend of workshops, presentations, business development cases and networking:

- Start-up visits and meetings with successful US entrepreneurs;
- Presentations to experts and investors from the Boston area, per industry sector;
- Several networking events within the high-tech entrepreneurial community;
- Entrepreneurship development training at Babson College;
- Knowledge workshops with experts in US business development, IP, and corporate affairs;
- Executive workshops focusing on «hands-on» company development;
- Group feedback sessions;
- Flexibility for personal business development activities during the visit.

www.venture-leaders.ch



Winners of NETS Prize, at the start of the program

for dinners and exchange best practices. This is valuable information as it comes.»

The program provided the future entrepreneurs with tools to transform a «vision from a wild dream into an actionable plan» (Javier Cardona, Cozybits' Founder). Seventy percent of the participants incorporated and developed the project or the company they had while participating in the program, with an average of CHF 1.8 million of funds raised per company. As usual in the high-tech sector, the top 20% represents 75% of the total amount of funds raised. However, the median of CHF 890,000 indicates that many entrepreneurs were able to achieve substantial financing. These companies created jobs as well as revenues. It's also worth noting the sheer number of prizes collected, in Switzerland and abroad (see p. 20 for a non-exhaustive list).

A long-lasting impact

And the bug is catching: twenty percent of the respondents have already turned into «serial entrepreneurs», incorporating another 28 companies representing a financing volume of more than 100 million Swiss francs. As we write these lines, the companies continue to show impressive growth and progress – thus the impact of the program is far from having reached its peak.

The program itself has been improving over the years. With the support of the key partners CTI, GEBERT RÜF STIFTUNG and Swissnex Boston, the program has been adapted at each edition, matching the evolving needs of the participants and the market situation. It has also had an influence on entrepreneurship support in Switzerland, bringing the educational process back home and raising the participants' preparation level. With improved at-home training and participants' market readiness, the impact on entry into the US market has improved, shown by the fact that more and more NETS / venture leaders alumni return across the Atlantic do to business within their new US-built networks.

The companies themselves have not yet finished their stories. As we finalized our survey, 20% claimed that they were profitable, 7% have already sold, and 2% did not survive.

Fig 1: On a scale of 1 (low) to 6 (excellent): how would you rate the impact of the NETS / venture leaders program on your:

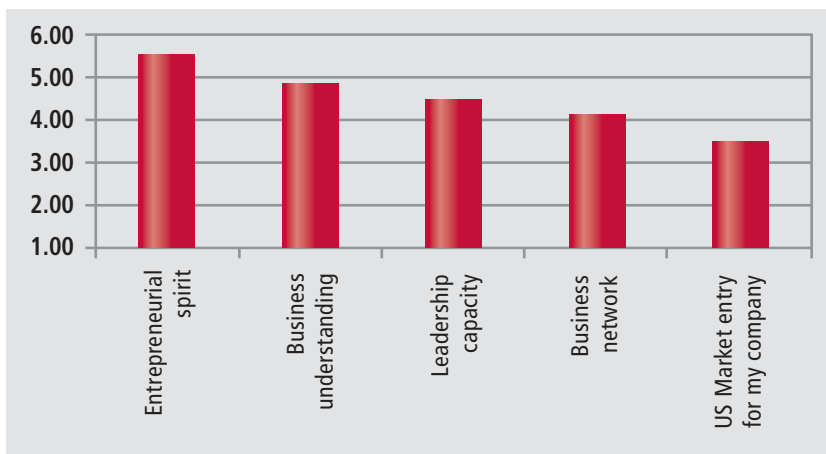
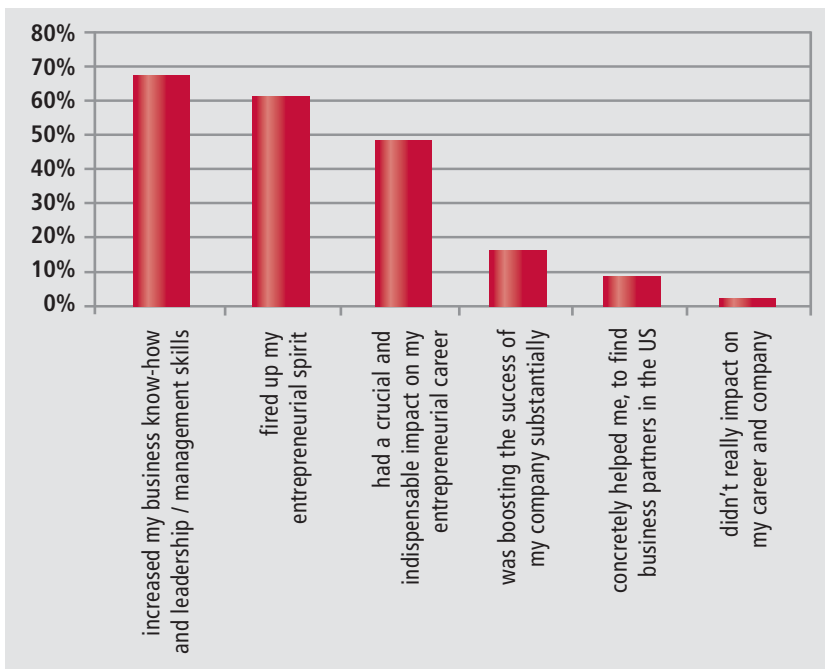


Fig 2: Which statements best describe the impact of the program?



The remaining 71% are striving to grow a successful business. And chances of success are high: the fighting spirit and the passion necessary to build world-class companies is embedded in these entrepreneurs' minds.

About the survey

The survey was conducted by Beat Schillig and Jordi Montserrat in August 2010, polling 187 participants, of which 155 (83%) responded.

A Swiss entrepreneur with footprints in 54 countries



Josef H. von Rickenbach
Chairman of the Board and
Chief Executive Officer
PAREXEL International

You met some venture leaders a few weeks ago in Boston. What did you share with them from your personal experience?

J.v.R.: This year's venture leaders group consisted of a very impressive group of entrepreneurs. I found them to have the right focus, and they were eager to learn. I provided the venture leaders group with a few 'lessons learned' from my experience founding and building Parexel. I emphasized that entrepreneurs should have trust in their vision and that 'the client rules.' Additionally, I conveyed the importance of timing and adapting to changing market dynamics.

Are European and American markets really so different? Isn't the recipe for success the same anywhere?

J.v.R.: If the U.S. can be compared to an open ocean, which also contains sharks and other dangers, the European market could be compared to a grouping of inland seas. In Europe, entrepreneurs can gain traction through referrals and relationships in their home markets more easily than in the U.S. Overall, entrepreneurs should think globally but act locally. They should take advantage of international opportunities, such as offshoring IT or for buying power, but should build and expand from a local geographic radius to be successful and face fewer challenges at the outset.

Would it have been easier for you as a young entrepreneur if you had had support such as «venture leaders»?

J.v.R.: Absolutely, it would have been easier. When I founded Parexel 28 years ago, I had some support, however, it was not as organized in a network such as the venture leaders program.

What is the toughest lesson young entrepreneurs have to learn?

J.v.R.: The toughest lesson for budding entrepreneurs right now is how long it will take to reach their goals, and how expensive it will be. That being said, it is important for them not to lose heart, and maintain their momentum and vision to realize these goals.

Do you believe you could succeed as you did in 1982, if you had to create Parexel now? What changed in 28 years?

J.v.R.: Among the biggest changes since I founded Parexel has been the reversal of the entrepreneurial environments in the U.S. and Europe. The U.S. is now less friendly toward start-ups, as well as business at large. Corporate taxes are among the highest and the costs and efforts to comply with complex regulations and accounting rules have multiplied. There are fewer incentives for entrepreneurs, it is more difficult to take companies public, and there is less VC funding available than in prior times. Generally, European countries, in contrast, have reduced corporate tax rates and many governments are encouraging entrepreneurs to take risks. Switzerland and Germany are good examples of countries that are friendlier to entrepreneurs at this time.

biography

Josef H. von Rickenbach
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
PAREXEL

As Chairman and CEO of PAREXEL International, Josef von Rickenbach has taken his company from its pioneering beginnings as one of the first clinical research organizations (CROs). He has led PAREXEL through its IPO, multiple public offerings, and over 30 acquisitions during the Company's history of 28 years. Parexel now operates in 71 locations throughout 54 countries, and has more than 9,500 employees.

Mr. von Rickenbach holds a B.S. degree in Business Economics from the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences in Switzerland, and a Master of Business Administration degree from Harvard University.

Celereton: more than one million rotations per minute



Martin Bartholet

This summer Solar Impulse, Bertrand Piccard's ambitious project, became the first manned solar-powered aircraft in aviation history to fly through the night with no fuel. Piccard plans to circumnavigate the world with his plane in 2013. The aircraft conceals a wealth of state-of-the-art technology and innovative design. More than 80 partners, including many Swiss companies, are providing Solar Impulse with the components of the plane or are helping to build, test and fly the prototype and the final airplane. One of them is Celereton, working together with ETH Zurich's Power Electronic Systems Laboratory, where the spin-off company originated, and German partner companies.

A new world record

Celereton AG, the start-up company of Martin Bartholet and Christof Zwyssig develops and manufactures ultra-highspeed electrical drive systems that can achieve more than a million rotations per minute. This is a world record. The drive systems are designed for highest efficiency and lowest volume and weight. The innovation lies in the interdisciplinary design in-

cluding mechanics, electromagnetics, electronics and software, combined with superior customer support.

Use for many different fields

In Bertrand Piccard's final solar plane, Celereton's drive system is planned to be integrated in the compressor, which provides oxygen to the crew. But this is not the only sector in which Celereton's technology can be used. The dental and medical industry is also a key market for the young company, for example, in dental drills. Martin Bartholet explains: «Until now a standard dental drill rotates with 20,000 revolutions per minute and needs an electromotor with a gear box. With our system, no bigger than a matchbox, we can replace the old and bulky systems to make the drills smaller and lighter and even more ergonomic for the dentist to work with.»

A great opportunity to build a network

Celereton was founded in 2008, while Martin Bartholet and Christof Zwyssig were still completing their PhDs. Initially, they had planned to work for a large company, but their professor Johan Kolar and the visit of the venture challenge semester course, which encourages students to develop their own business ideas, led them to change their minds. In 2008 Martin Bartholet took part in the venture leaders program in Boston. «This offered me a great opportunity to build a network among Swiss entrepreneurs», says Bartholet. This network is now helping Celereton's vision come true. «We want to be the world leader for miniaturized ultra-high-speed electrical drive systems and replace volume and weight with speed across all industries!»

Partners around the world

Since its foundation, Celereton has won several prizes, including the full support of venture kick and third place in the McKinsey-ETH Venture Competition. The company, headquartered in the Technopark Zurich, currently has eight employees and sells its products all over the world – from France to Russia over to Japan, Korea and the United States.

www.celereton.com



The drive system of Celereton

Microprojections and great expectations



Lemoptix projectors use RGB laser light sources instead of LED, providing superior image quality

«The problem with TV on mobile phones? Nobody wants to watch a movie on a display of 6 cm²!» Nicolas Abelé points out the problem encountered by mobile product manufacturers. What is the point of creating smaller and smaller devices if the size of the screens doesn't provide an adequate viewing experience for the user? A key solution to this challenge is to embed a projector into the mobile device. When the device includes projection capability, the user can choose to use a

small display for basic information (such as dialed telephone numbers) and large projection display for information-rich media.

Created in 2008 by Nicolas Abelé, Marco Boella, Faouzi Khechana and Lucio Kilcher, Lemoptix designs, develops and commercializes plug & play laser microprojection systems based on optical MEMS (Micro-Electro-Mechanical Systems) scanning micromirror technology. Lemoptix projectors use RGB laser light sources instead of LED, providing superior image quality and high energy efficiency. In addition to the mobile phone market, this technology can be used for form recognition, barcode scanners and information display, for example on car windscreens.

www.lemoptix.com

Beyond the limits of size and time



Samuel Sonderegger and Jean Berney (from left to right), the two co-founders of Attolight

«Faster, smaller and beyond.» This could be Attolight's motto. This EPFL spinoff chose another one to promote its technological innovation, however. «We have created the camera of the nanoworld,» Samuel Sonderegger explains. In 2004, as the young physicist worked with Jean Berney at the Institute of Quantum Electronics and Photonics, the team reached a significant milestone, overcoming the intrinsic limitations of optical measurement techniques. «The tool we have developed consists of a modified electron microscope and yields combined spatial and temporal resolution of 50 nanometers and 10 picoseconds – a true scientific breakthrough. These limits were unreachable before,» he adds. A wide range of scientific experiments need extremely accurate measurement systems. In fact, any attempt to work on new light sources or semiconductor structures – in short, any new form of material – would be unsuccessful if scientists did not have the appropriate equipment to see what happens in the nanoworld – a

unique environment in which the dimensions of time and space behave differently than they do in our daily life.

The EPFL team provides a new, convincing solution working at the nanometer scale (10⁻⁹ meters) and measuring picosecond (10⁻¹² seconds) events. «Our system couples electron microscopy and ultrafast spectroscopy and can characterize novel nanostructures.»

After publishing the first scientific measurements using this technology in the prestigious journal Nature, in 2005, Berney and Sonderegger decided to launch their own company. They both participated in venture challenge, before Samuel was elected to the venture leaders team in 2007. Attolight was founded immediately afterwards, in 2008. The start-up is currently closing a financing round and plans to start selling to customers in R&D laboratories next year.

www.attolight.com

Poken - bridging online and real-world social networking

Like many other good business ideas, Poken started as a solution of a personal problem. When Stéphane Doutriaux was leaving business school, all his fellows started writing e-mail and social network addresses on bits of paper, and promised to send each other new cell phone numbers. He was sure that there must be a better way to stay in contact, and invented Poken, an electronic business card based on a simple principle: Hold two Poken palms together and the data gets transmitted.

That was back in 2006. In December 2007, Doutriaux founded his company with headquarters in Lausanne. Today Poken is the acknowledged market leader in bridging online

and real-world social networking. Partners in major countries around the globe sell the practical gadgets, with which contact details are easily exchanged and imported directly into programs like Outlook.

On his business adventure, Doutriaux was supported by venturelab. In 2008 he took part in the venture leaders program. «This provided me and my business with a timely boost that will help us overcome some of the key challenges facing an early-stage venture. It was an opportunity to tap into a business network in the United States as well as get direct feedback from potential business partners.»

www.poken.com



Stéphane Doutriaux

Wuala – a leading role in cloud computing

The market for cloud computing is growing steadily. Wuala, an innovative online storage solution that allows users to securely store, back up and access files from anywhere, has built a leading role in the worldwide online storage services market. Since its 2009 acquisition by LaCie, a provider of integrated storage solutions located in the USA, Canada, Japan, Australia, Europe, Singapore and Hongkong the global impact of Wuala has increased even more.

Wuala is based on a revolutionary technology developed at ETH Zurich by Dominik Grolimund and Luzius Meisser. All data stored in Wuala is first encrypted on the user's computer, and then split up into fragments which are stored redundantly on Wuala's own reliable storage infrastructure and in the cloud. The strength of the system is that the user's privacy is very well protected.



Dominik Grolimund

Not surprisingly, many international companies were interested in the young start-up company founded in 2007.

Grolimund recalls: «After our public launch in summer 2008, a number of companies approached us who were interested in our product and technology. We were in a very comfortable situation as we got acquisition offers from three big players at the same time. Finally, we decided for LaCie for a number of reasons.» Grolimund was well prepared for the negotiations – largely thanks to a broad network which he had built up in several venturelab courses. «In the venturelab trainings here in Switzerland and also in Boston, I got in contact with like-minded people, who became good friends. Their tips and support helped us a lot.» At the moment, Wuala employs 15 people and is expanding further.

www.wuala.com

Doodle – the world’s leading online scheduling tool

In the summer of 2008 Spiegel online wrote: «If you have ever tried to commit more than five people to a meeting, you know how tricky this can be. You request an appointment and propose two dates by e-mail. A short time later, verbose negative replies arrive in dribs and drabs with alternative proposals. If you send these out to the group, chaos supreme reigns. It’s far easier with Doodle. Organizing meetings becomes almost as easy as pie with an online appointment planner.»



*The Doodle team
(Paul Sevinç in the first
row, third from left)*

Doodle provides solutions that take the pain out of finding the right date and time

With a few clicks, Doodle allows users to set up a tabular display of proposed time slots and invite participants to vote transparently and democratically for their preferred meeting times and activities. In June 2010, Doodle launched a new calendar interface which allows users to connect their personal calendars with Doodle. This new calendar view enables users to directly start and answer meeting requests with all relevant information up to date at one place. Additional calendars and public ICS calendar feeds can also be

integrated to ensure that all relevant events and activities are displayed.

Pioneer Doodle provides the world’s leading online scheduling service for free and serves a growing number of paying customers

More than six million unique visitors per month use the services of Doodle and the user base is rapidly growing day by day. People from all over the world – from Australia to Alaska, from Spain to Finland – have experienced how easy scheduling with Doodle is. Apart from the free basic service, more and more people use the premium service for individuals. Companies and other organizations such as universities trust in the online scheduling enterprise solution.

Ambitious goals drive the Doodle’s success

Many people don’t know that Doodle was developed by a Swiss computer-science graduate, Michael Näf, who wanted to meet up with a few friends and was unable to find a time. That was back in 2003. In 2007 Näf and Paul Sevinç founded their company. The start-up currently has 10 employees, is located in the Technopark Zurich and is working hard on its ambitious goals. «Our goal is to turn online scheduling into a sustainable business by helping our users save precious time,» explains co-founder Sevinç, who participated in the venture leaders program in 2008. «We also strive to strengthen our position as the worldwide leading provider of online scheduling solutions.»

Strong start-up support fosters more innovation in Switzerland

About venture leaders and the Swiss start-up support in general Sevinç says: «Programs like venturelab, including the intensive training by venture leaders in Boston, help to create a dynamic environment for start-ups in Switzerland. This leads to the creation of new jobs and gives a welcome boost to the economy.»

www.doodle.com

4-Antibody – development of fully human antibody drugs

4-Antibody is a leader in applying B cell engineering for the development of fully human monoclonal antibodies to any target and for any therapeutic indication. The technologies are patent protected globally and combine the proven strengths of in vitro antibody display technologies, while also benefiting from in vivo antibody affinity maturation of antibodies that ensure highest antibody drug quality. A strong vision stands behind the company. «We want to become a worldwide leader in fully human antibody drug development for bringing most innovative and safe biologic drugs to patients in need» says Ulf Grawunder, founder of 4-Antibody.

In 2003 Grawunder joined the NETS program. «This intensive training uncovered my undiscovered entrepreneurial potential, without which 4-Antibody would not exist today.»

Today 4-Antibody has 40 employees working at its headquarters in Basel and its subsidiary in Jena, Germany. In spring 2010 the company announced a new long-term collaboration with the Boehringer Ingelheim group, one of world's leading pharmaceutical companies.



Ulf Grawunder

www.4-antibody.com

Fewer animal tests, thanks to InSphero

Based on culture systems which allow the formation of three-dimensional microtissues, the start-up InSphero has developed a new test method for screening biochemical compounds that can be integrated into established pharmaceutical development processes. With InSphero's revolutionary and worldwide unique solution, the drug production process can be accelerated. In numbers, this means that the pharmaceutical industries can save tens of millions of dollars.

Founded in 2009, InSphero has already introduced a number of tumor microtissues for efficacy studies to the market. Six global pharmaceutical and cosmetic companies are among the customers of the young start-up company with eleven employees. But this is just the beginning. Jan Lichtenberg, co-founder and CEO of InSphero, sets his sights high: «In 5 years, InSphero's biological microtissues will be a gold standard for testing new pharmaceutical and cosmetic compounds. They will have replaced a substantial part of common test technologies and some of our customers



The founders of InSphero

will completely rely on our methods to identify promising drug candidates at the in-vitro stage of their development process. As a result, drug development becomes safer, more efficient and requires less animal testing.»

This summer Lichtenberg had the opportunity to join the venture leaders program to work on InSphero's international growth strategy.

During these ten days he was able to connect with some potential customers. «I was amazed by the excellent contacts of the venture leader organizers and swissnex. On the first evening in Boston, I was introduced to a manager at Novartis Research and asked him whether he could connect me to a buying center for my products in his organization. Five days later I had the contact, and two days after that I had one of the best sales meetings since we started InSphero! Everybody went the extra mile to make this happen. Thanks!»

www.insphero.com

Pearltec – more comfort for patients during medical scanning



Patrizia Fischer

During medical scanning such as computed tomography (CT) or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), the patient should be positioned and immobilized to obtain high-quality images. Although this sounds easy, it can be very uncomfortable for the patient. This is where Pearltec comes in. The ETH spin-off offers a new, easy-to-use patient positioning device/system with high wear comfort and efficient patient fixation/immobilization.

Patrizia Fischer and her team have developed a unique system which is composed of carefully positioned polystyrene pearls and inflatable air chambers. When the chambers get filled with air, the pearls adapt to the patient's body shape. With this simple construction the examination region can

be stabilized. The results are better images, fewer sequences that have to be repeated, and relaxed patients.

From its origins as a research project at ETH to a working business model, venturelab supported Fischer with several training modules, including the ten-day trip to Boston. «Pearltec wouldn't be where it is today without venturelab! Each course gave me new ideas to move forward,» Fischer says. And she wants to go further. In a few years Pearltec should be known around the globe. «My personal vision is that when I travel to a country far away, have an accident and need to have an MRI, that I recognize my own fixation devices there.»

www.pearltec.ch

VirtaMed – leader in virtual reality trainers for endoscopic surgery



The system of VirtaMed in use

To prepare surgeons for difficult gynecologic and urologic procedures, VirtaMed has developed highly realistic virtual reality trainers. The surgical simulators allow physicians to practice their skills without risk for patients. Dr. Stefan Tuchschnid, founder and CEO of VirtaMed: «Our mission is to develop state-of-the-art training tools for endoscopic surgery of highest possible realism, all with the ultimate goal to improve the quality of patient care.»

VirtaMed has launched two products: The HystSim™ which provides instructional teaching and training of diagnostic and therapeutic hysteroscopy and this spring the TURPSim™ for training of transurethral resection of the prostate. For distribution and marketing of the simulators, VirtaMed joined forces with Sim-

bionix in 2009, the world's leading company for medical simulation systems.

The simulators, developed in close collaboration with the University Hospital of Zurich, are now used all over the world. From Australia to Switzerland to the USA and China, prospective surgeons rely on the new training tool. The VirtaMed simulators are primarily user and not technology-driven. Continuous exposure to the clinical reality shaped the development and tailored the simulators to the specific training needs of future surgeons. As a winner of venture leaders, Tuchschnid was able to profit from the business development program in Boston in 2008. Looking back on this experience he says: «venture leaders has activated my entrepreneurial spirit. In Boston, I was part of an innovative, vivid and strong force, so I returned with lots of energy.»

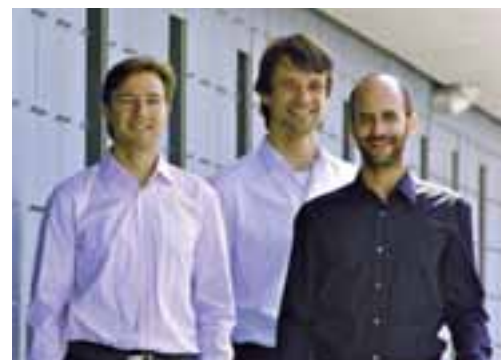
www.virtamed.com

Zurich Instruments – measuring performance, supporting innovation

With a Bosnian father, an American mother, a childhood spent in Germany, Saudi Arabia and the USA, and a thesis in Japan and at the ETHZ, Sadik Hafizovic had the core qualities to be elected to the venture leaders team in 2008: a strong experience of how things work in Switzerland and abroad and a strong desire to build his own company. «While I was studying microsystems technology in Freiburg, Germany, I was earning a living by running a one-man company offering software programming and computer installation services. I had to communicate with a wide variety of people ranging from programmers and marketing to management. With the foundation of Zurich Instruments, I realized a long-standing, long-planned-for project: a high-tech spinoff with a group of highly capable people,» he recalls.

With Flavio Heer and Beat Hofstetter, Hafizovic launched an innovative technology leader developing and selling advanced test and measurement instruments for dynamic signal analysis. These products are used in many fields of

application by high-tech research laboratories and industrial development sites. «Our product philosophy is derived from observing the complexity of many laboratory setups; devices are stacked upon each other and numerous interconnects introduce an unnecessary potential for error. We help users reduce the complexity of their setups by combining the required functions into fewer boxes,» Hafizovic explains. Zurich Instruments' devices can be used in any technological field in which measuring vibration is crucial: semi-conductor manufacturing, quality control for the food industry, and the healthcare industry. Their potential applications convinced many entrepreneurship specialists, including the W.A. de Vigier Foundation, which awarded Zurich Instruments with a prize of 100,000 Swiss francs in 2009.



The fab' three of Zurich Instruments: Flavio Heer, Sadik Hafizovic and Beat Hofstetter

www.zhinst.com

Dectris – welcome to the quantum world

In Switzerland, many innovative companies are spin-offs from ETH Zurich or EPFL. Dectris is hardly different. This young company was founded by Christian Brönnimann, head of a research group at the Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI), one of Switzerland's largest research institutions for natural engineering sciences and the structure of matter and energy. For almost 10 years, he adapted technology from high energy physics to develop a radically new type of x-ray detector. His group succeeded in the fabrication and operation of the world's largest pixel detector, used for structural determination of proteins. Due to the success of the project, he decided to resign as a research scientist at PSI to found Dectris with three other partners in 2006.

The year after, Brönnimann participated in the venture leaders program.

Dectris is the first company worldwide to sell innovative hybrid-pixel X-ray detector systems that operate in single photon-counting mode. This device can be used in various different areas, such as synchrotron light sources, laboratory diffraction systems, and industrial and medical applications. Since its foundation Dectris has built a reputation in the worldwide synchrotron source market and will soon reach a staff count of 35 highly qualified employees. The company just won the Swiss Economic Award 2010 in the category hightech/biotech from among 130 competitors.

www.dectris.com



Dectris' team at work, from left to right: Christian Brönnimann, Markus Naef and Eric F. Eikenberry

Redbiotec – in-depth medicine is on its way



Christian Schaub and Corinne John, the two leaders of Redbiotec

When Corinne John and Christian Schaub decided to create their start-up company, they had a simple but tough mission statement: to treat human illnesses in a more targeted and efficient way than big pharmaceutical firms did. The two scientists, both ETH Zurich alumni, decided to enter a new field in health industry: proteomics. This next step in the study of biological systems is far from the easiest path. Proteins are the essential elements of any living organism and participate in virtually every cellular process and biochemical reaction. Understanding proteins, discovering the forms in which they are found in the human body, and using this knowledge to manufacture protein complexes artificially in the lab are the Redbiotec’s key objectives.

biotec, John and Schaub are able to manufacture not only individual proteins, but also large quantities of protein complexes. Such complexes can have exactly the same effect as proteins in human cells, but also perform completely new functions, with specific curative effects.

This new generation of protein-based pharmaceuticals may one day address some human diseases that have yet to find a cure, such as cancer or Alzheimer’s. In addition to this market field, Redbiotec has partnered with major players in the pharmaceutical and biotech sector to develop their drug discovery process, in particular with its virus-like particle vaccine technology. Two preventive vaccines against the Human Papilloma and Influenza viruses are now in the preclinical stage.

Based on the pioneering discovery of MultiBac, a specific platform that has been made available exclusively to Red-

www.redbiotec.ch

GlycArt – million dollar baby

In 2001, as Joël Jean-Mairet flew to Boston with other NETS prize winners, he probably had no idea about the fate of his young company. The year before, he had founded GlycArt as a spinoff company from ETH Zurich, focused on cancer immunotherapy. The mission of GlycArt Biotechnology was to develop new and improved drug candidates for the treatment of cancer and debilitating

Swiss start-up company, lauded by European Venture Capital Magazine as the «Venture Deal of the Year» in the Healthcare category. During his five years as a CEO, Jean-Mairet and GlycArt co-founder Pablo Umaña raised 15 million euros in three rounds of financing. He has won many awards. He was elected one of the 50 key players in biotechnology in Switzerland in 2003 and earned several innovation awards for GlycArt, including the Wall Street Journal Europe Innovation Award in 2001, and was in the top 10 of the Venture 2000 competition.

Testing pharmacokinetic properties of drug candidates in Roche’s subsidiary in Schlieren



immunological disorders, clearly addressing unmet needs. As of April 2001, GlycArt had 5 employees. The company continued to thrive, since it was sold to Roche in July 2005 for 235 million Swiss Francs – a world record for a

Jean-Mairet is living proof that entrepreneurship isn’t an innate skill, but one that needs to be cultivated. He is currently Partner and co-founder of Ysios Capital Partners, a venture capital firm in Barcelona. In 2008, he became president of the board of Cellerix, a biopharmaceutical company specializing in cell therapy.

www.roche.ch/en/standorte/schlieren.htm

Unique 3D analysis tools for sports broadcasts

Was that player offside? And was that a foul or not? LiberoVision's software clears things up. With the Zurich-based start-up company's 3D replays and virtual tools for sports broadcasts, interesting or controversial soccer, football or basketball scenes can be analyzed from all perspectives. The unique and patented technology creates virtual perspectives from only two TV cameras. The product offers an unrivaled quality with simple technical requirements. Hardly surprising that several leading broadcasters such as ZDF, BBC, ESPN, Sky Italy and many others use LiberoVision to enhance their programming for major sports events such as the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa.

Although their company is already market leader in the generation of realistic three-dimensional replays for sports events analysis, the founders of the start-up, Stephan Würmlin and Christoph Niederberger, want to go a step



Stephan Würmlin

further: «Libero Vision's goal is to deliver the next generation of replays and become the world leader in graphics technologies for broadcast, IP-TV, online and mobile.» Founded in 2006, LiberoVision now has eleven employees and is active in the European and North American markets. In the early stages Würmlin and Niederberger benefited from the whole venturelab program. In 2006 Würmlin was one of the venture leaders.

«In the early booster phase of LiberoVision our entrepreneurial know-how was limited. The venturelab program gave us the opportunity to complement our qualifications exactly where there was room for improvement. Especially the experiences, the profound know-how and the contacts from Boston have supported us during the buildup of our company.» he recalls.

www.liberovision.com

Travelling green with routeRANK

Many online travelling platforms can be accessed on the internet. But only routeRANK considers all factors of the entire travel route. The start-up company, founded by mathematician Jochen Munding, provides a software solution for travel planning that integrates rail, road and air connections. In a single search, routeRANK finds and ranks the best possible and the least polluting travel routes, allowing users to sort them according to their priorities such as price, travel time and CO2 emissions. Thanks to a collaboration with the nonprofit organization My-Climate, the remaining emissions are easily offset. The success of the

EPFL-based spin-off comes not only from its permanent innovations and the expansion of its travelling data across the world, but also from strong partnerships, for example with Nokia or WWF. A customized version of the software is also used by the Swiss Government.

In 2007 Munding took part in the business development program of venture leaders in Boston: «In this short time I learned to sell my business idea. The motto was pitching, pitching, pitching. A great experience!»

www.routerank.com



Jochen Munding

Arktis Radiation Detectors – increasing nuclear safety



Giovanna Davatz

In an era of constant fear of terrorist attacks, border controls are becoming increasingly important. To detect radioactive materials, the start-up Arktis Radiation Detectors has developed a technology platform that is able to detect radiation in a precise and differentiated manner. «With our technology it's possible to screen whole containers,» explains Giovanna Davatz, one of the founders of the ETH Zurich spin-off. «Arktis is dedicated to leveraging discoveries inspired by fundamental research to revolutionize nuclear security.»

Compared with its competition, Arktis' technology, which is based on research carried out at CERN, has obvious advantages. «Other systems give many more false alarms than

our product does, which causes high additional charges in international ports. Furthermore, we are significantly more sensitive to real threats than current systems,» explains Davatz. She joined venture leaders in 2007, and is enthusiastic: «venture leaders was a unique opportunity to experience the US spirit of doing business in a short time frame. As the US is one of our main markets, venture leaders was instrumental for me to better understand their culture and make contacts with our future customers.»

In 2011 Arktis' first products will be on the market. Arktis is in negotiations with private and governmental partners in Switzerland, Germany and the United States.

www.arktis-detectors.com

HeiQ – extraordinary fabrics for extraordinary conditions

«Swiss start-up company goes to the USA's rescue» read the headline in the Tages-Anzeiger this June. Under extreme time constraints, HeiQ developed, in a joint effort with other companies, a new non-woven fabric called Oilguard for beach protection against oil spills. Rolled out on beaches, Oilguard contributes to beach protection due to its built-in ability to absorb oil while repelling water.

«Based on our previous product development work on super hydrophobic technologies for textiles, we have a unique know-how and understanding which we have now been able to rapidly turn into a product that can play a role in helping to mitigate the problems in the Gulf of Mexico,» explains Murray Height, CTO and co-founder



Murray Height

of HeiQ, who participated at the ten day venture leaders program in 2006.

Founded in 2005 and awarded with many prestigious entrepreneurial prizes, HeiQ has previously launched two extraordinary products. «Pure by HeiQ», is a fabric with an outstanding antimicrobial textile effect making it possible to keep garments naturally odor-free. And «Barrier by HeiQ» is a particle-based water and oil repellency system, providing extraordinary protection against the elements and stains for all types of fabrics. The Alinghi sailing team trusted HeiQ's innovative technology and treated their jackets for the America's Cup last February with the Barrier by HeiQ system.

www.heiqmaterials.com

Making concrete more durable

Although concrete is one of the most widely-used building materials in the world, it has some drawbacks. For example, it can crack after a while, and it takes days to set. This is exactly where Concretum comes in. Founded in 2001 as a spin-off of the ETH Zurich, the company offers concrete additives which harden and desiccate concrete faster and make it more durable and reliable.

Martin Bäuml, CEO of Concretum and participant of venture leaders in 2007, explains: «We unite innovative properties and modern manufacturing processes and differ from other concretes by making constructions faster, more

durable and more efficient. Our technology guarantees simple and reliable production of high-tech concretes.»

In Concretum's early stages, Bäuml and his team specialized in engineering consulting and developed solutions for complex construction projects. In a 2006 pilot project with the Zurich airport, they proved that their high-tech concrete offered the ideal solution to mend a maneuvering area. Within two hours – instead of several days - the concrete had solidified. Today Concretum has 16 employees and is the leading supplier of rapid-hardening and reliable concretes.

www.concretum.com



The founders of Concretum

Revolutionizing the market for optical systems

When hard glass and plastic components reach their limits, soft polymer-based materials offer new solutions. The same is true for optics. The start-up company Optotune has developed and patented a technology based on electro-active polymers that enables a series of adaptive optical lenses that imitate the principle of the human eye. Instead of moving lenses back and forth, Optotune bends them by applying a voltage.

Optotune's lenses can be used in a number of different industries. At the moment the market for cameras, especially in mobile phones, is particularly interesting. The company is currently prototyping a miniaturized camera lens which offers optical zoom, high-speed autofocus and a good macro mode in the form of a sugar cube. This means that future mobile phones will contain cameras with the features of today's digital cameras, without having to compromise on size, weight or power consumption. The market has embraced Optotune's technology, and the company's

engineers now face the challenge of selecting the best markets. Products have been shipped to European countries as well as to the United States, Japan, China and India. Twenty employees work for the young company, founded in 2008 and located in Dübendorf. In a few years this number will likely double. Mark Blum, Optotune's co-founder, is optimistic: «We expect to grow to about 50 people in the next 5 years. Innovation is very important to us. We are continuously patenting new ideas and have several new products in the pipeline.»

venturelab supported the Optotune team on its way to success, as well. In 2008 Blum was one of the winners of venture leaders. «During the ten intensive days in Boston, I got to know and even made friends with a selection of Switzerland's most promising entrepreneurs – people who share the same challenges and whom I can call up at any time to discuss any topic.»

www.optotune.com



Mark Blum

venture leaders is the highlight of the year for us at swissnex Boston. Apart from the excitement of having with us the most brilliant, young entrepreneurs for two weeks, we work throughout the year to warm up our partners for this annual event, and the results have never fallen short.

Pascal Marmier, swissnex Boston

Over the past ten years, each class of NETS / venture leaders has stimulated increasing recognition in the Boston area for Swiss innovation. Recent years have also brought bolder ideas and more mature companies from entrepreneurs more adept at global marketing. Seen as a barometer of Swiss entrepreneurship, the program attests that Switzerland is now confidently in a promising period for successful high-tech activity.

ket demands with a sound trajectory towards realization. The venture leaders are also now learning from some of the finest scholars and experienced entrepreneurs in the Boston area about the necessary steps and adjustments required in pioneering a fast-growing venture in a volatile world economy.

The US remains at an advantage when it comes to recruiting for staff and advisors. With an ample supply of tech personnel, as well as widely available expertise from veteran entrepreneurs, there is a vast collective knowledge about high-tech ventures. What our partners from the local tech community appreciate about Swiss start-ups, however, are their solid foundations. They are impressed by the efforts that have been put into developing prototypes or actual working products. From software and hardware that refine existing technology to user-friendly and economical status, to crossover innovations in medtech/engineering and nanotech/biotech, venture leaders' pitches are embraced as «investor-ready, viable, interesting and potentially successful.» What the venture leaders program offers is a glimpse into the future for any start-up around the world. There is too much competition and too many opportunities to think locally. The next generation of companies will be global from the start. One might have a technology developed at a Swiss university, but the primary markets are thousands of kilometers away: your partners might be in China or India and your consultants spread across the US. The speed with which you need to execute forces you to think in terms of networks and connections. What venture leaders will continue to offer, therefore, is a solid test of your potential, both as a technologist and as an entrepreneur, in a globally competitive environment. It is a rare opportunity to do business development in a key market and to gain a keen understanding on how to organize your business to take advantage of a fast-changing world!

author



Pascal Marmier is the Director and Consul of Switzerland at swissnex Boston, a unique private-public partnership dedicated to facilitating collaboration between New England, Eastern Canada and Switzerland in all fields related to science, technology and innovation.

www.swissnexboston.org

Swiss start-ups have also narrowed the gap with their American peers when it comes to results and potential. The venture leaders impress our partners with their solid market knowledge and clear paths to business development. Consequently, financing deals are much more common today than ever before. It's no longer merely a technology looking for a market, but rather solid companies built on clear mar-

ents

Professors Les Charm and Ed Marram

«A great stimulus to the Swiss economy»

For the past nine years we have been teaching entrepreneurship to the participants in the NETS / venture leaders program. During this time several changes have been evident. The participants have been better prepared in terms of understanding business basics; the ideas for start-up businesses have been more thoroughly developed and vetted; and an increasing number of participants have already received some start-up funding. We noticed that the Swiss government has provided, to a greater degree each year, a thriving entrepreneurial eco-system unmatched in most of the world.

From a market viewpoint, the participants' understanding of the customers' needs has also improved dramatically. The lack of understanding of markets as well as the requirements of starting a business was a major weakness in the early groups. This is not the case anymore.

Babson College: creating value

Since 2001, just a year after the start of the NETS program, professors Les Charm and Ed Marram have been taking part in the training and pitch evaluations of the members of the Swiss start-up teams. Located in Wellesley, just a few miles from Boston city, Babson College is the perfect place for young entrepreneurs. This teaching institution is recognized internationally for its entrepreneurial leadership and its innovative courses that foster creativity, risk-taking and the entrepreneurial spirit. One motto summarises its core mission perfectly: «We encourage people to take the initiative and make a difference.»



Finally and perhaps most importantly, the participants are better at dealing with the risk of failure, a critical trait for successful entrepreneurs. The venture leaders are a positive-minded, success-oriented group focused on creating economic value throughout the world. It has been a rewarding experience for us to participate in the NETS / venture leaders program. This is a great example of institutions encouraging entrepreneurship and economic growth. This program can provide a great stimulus to the Swiss economy.

Prof. Ed Marram (left) and Les Charm (right) with Ralph Rimet, participant in the venture leaders class of 2006.

The potential of the NETS /venture leaders is recognized by important investors and entrepreneurs. This is also evident from the long list of prizes that have been won by NETS /venture leaders. A sampling:

National and international awards – won by NETS / venture leaders

National prizes

Venture

(takes place every second year)

2010: Stemergie Biotechnology (4th Rang)

2008: Optotune (1st Rang)

NeMoDevices (2nd Rang)

Celeroton (3rd Rang)

Aleva Neurotherapeutics (4th Rang)

2006: Arktis Radiation Detectors (1st Rang)

Concretum (3rd Rang)

Epithelix (4th Rang)

venture kick

(a private initiative since 2007) winners

of all three stages (CHF 130'000 per start-up)

2010: Mirasense

2009: InSphero

labseed

Streamforge

Imina Technologies

StereoTools

BioVersys

Minsh

Pearltec

2008: Virtamed

Preclin Biosystems

Optotune

Celeroton

Zurich Instruments

Poken

routeRANK

Prediggo

ZKB Pionierpreis

2009: Optotune (1st Rang)

2008: NeMoDevices

2007: Arktis Radiation Detectors

De Vigier

2010: Nanotun

Pearltec

Aimago

2009: Optotune

Celeroton

Zurich Instruments

2008: Epithelix

2007: Arktis Radiation Detectors

Redbiotec

2006: HeiQ Materials

2002: id Quantique

2001: Glycart

2000: Selexis

Heuberger Winterthur Jungunternehmerpreis

2009: BioVersys

InSphero

2007: LiberoVision

2005: HeiQ Materials

Swiss Economic Award

2010: Dectris

KPMG innovation prize

2009: Imina Technologies

2008: routeRANK

International awards

Red Herring Global

2009: Kooaba

2008: Collanos Software
Secu4

Red Herring Europe

2010: SalsaDev

2009: AxSionics

Epithelix

Wuala

Global Security Challenge

2008: Arktis Radiation Detectors

World Technology Award

2005: Id Quantique

TechCrunch Europe Awards

2009: Doodle (Best bootstrapped start-up)

Amazee (Best social innovation)

Poken (Best gadget)

routeRANK (Best environmental start-up)

Get Funded Show (World Travel Market)

2009: HouseTrip (1st Rang)

GetYourGuide (2nd Rang)

Microsoft ICT Award

2009: routeRANK (finalist)

Wall Street Journal Innovation Awards

2001 Glycart (Gold Medal)

Financial Times Innovation Award

2002 Athelas

Global HP Cloud Security Competition

2010 Axionics (Finalist)

Discover the generations of entrepreneurs and students, who have profited from the NETS /venture leaders program. The 187 winners* are listed alphabetically by sector.



NETS / venture leaders winners

Biotech			
Allmeling	Jost	Plexim GmbH	2004
Antoni	Philipp	Biognosys AG	2009
Bertschinger	Julian	Covagen AG	2006
Betz	Gabriele	Industrial Pharmacy Lab*	2004
Bosman	Alexis	UpCell*	2008
Chaperon	David-Nicolas	InBactoScreen	2003
Clément	Virginie	Stemergie Biotechnology SA	2009
Clot	Bernard	Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA	2001
Constant	Samuel	Epithelix SA	2008
Däscher	Martin	En-hanced Gas and Liquid Transfer*	2000
DeVirgilio	Claudio	SynphaBase*	2001
Deperthes	David	Med Discovery SA	2003
Ernst	Bettina	Preclin Biosystems AG	2008
Fisch	Igor	Selexis SA	2002
Frei	Christian	Straumann SA	2006
Gabriel	Jean-Marc	University of Geneva	2002
Garcia	Pedraza Marcos	Orgart	2003
Geib	Nina	Virometix AG	2010
Girling	PeterJohn	CELLnTEC Advanced Cell Systems AG	2001
Gitzinger	Marc	BioVersys GmbH	2008
Goddard	Jean Philippe	enzyme finger printing*	2003
Grawunder	Ulf	4-Antibody AG	2003
Hassani	Mounir	Atlas Agro GmbH	2003
Hefti-Gautschi	Barbara	Ecogenics GmbH	2002
Heinis	Christian	Synthetic Antibody Mimics	2002
Hottiger	Michael	Dualsystems Biotech AG	2000
Jean-Mairet	Joël	Ysios Capital	2001
John	Corinne	Redbiotech AG	2007
Kessler	Ulrich	Pike Pharma GmbH	2007
Klimkait	Thomas	InPheno AG	2004
Kok	Menno	University of Geneva*	2001
Lahav-LeCoutre	Ronit	Melcure Sàrl	2004
Lichtenberg	Jan	InSphero AG	2010
Lucchesi	Claudio	ABMI SA	2002
Majd	Hicham	labseed Sàrl	2010
Mauch	Frederic	BioApply Sàrl	2010
Meyer	Andreas	protein catalysts*	2001
Miserez	André R.	diagene laboratoires inc.	2001
Naeher	Dieter	Immtrace*	2007
Nazabal	Alexis	CovalX AG	2006
Paccaud	Jean-Pierre	DNDi	2002
Quinn	Thomas	Cytomec GmbH	2006
Rachet	Bastien	Dynscale	2010
Reddy	Sai	Nanolmmune SA	2008
Röckl	Christiane	diagnostic tests for priondesases*	2001
Rothenfluh	Dominique	NANOshuttle*	2006
Schaffner	Christian	Plexim GmbH	2006
Stagljar	Igor	University of Toronto	2000
Tanackovic	Goranka	University of Geneva*	2003
Thomet	Urs	Genionics AG	2004
Weill	David	Primequal SA	2008
Wiki	Max	Dynetix AG	2007
Wipff	Pierre-Jean	ExCellness Biotech SA	2008
Electronics/Mechanics			
Angiolini	Federico	iNoCs Sàrl	2007
Bartholet	Martin	Celeroton AG	2008
Bochet	Christian	Atlas Photonics Sàrl	2006
Brönnimann	Christian	DECTRIS AG	2007
Bureau	Pierre	K-Team SA	2007
Davatz	Giovanna	Arktis Radiation Detectors AG	2007
Hafizovic	Sadik	Zurich Instruments AG	2008
Illic	Alexander	Dacuda AG	2010
Imfeld	Kilian	3Brain	2010
Imhof	Yanick M.	Robotics*	2000
Lemofouet-Gatsi	Sylvain	Enairys Powertech SA	2007
Lischer	Franz	Rescue Helicopters*	2000
Maurer	David	Colorix Sàrl	2004
Milyutin	Evgeny	Piezosens	2009
Neff	Patrik	solve GmbH*	2000
Orzati	Andrea	Sensorion AG	2004
Rothmaier	Markus	Sensorix*	2000
Stemmler	Jochen	Bozzio AG	2006
Vögeli	Mario	Arktis Radiation Detectors AG	2009
ICT			
Alahi	Alexandre	visio safe	2010
Bay	Herbert	Kooaba AG	2007
Belliger	Andréa	Online Education Solutions	2000
Bertrand	Arnaud	HouseTrip SA	2009
Briner	Raphaël	HyperWeek SA	2009
Cardona	Javier	Cozybit Inc.	2004
DalMolin	Franco	Collanos Software AG	2004
Dell'Endice	Francesco	QualySense AG	2010
Doutriaux	Stéphane	Poken SA	2008
Farkas	Karoly	University of West Hungary	2006

Florey	Gilles	KeyLemon SA	2009
Gamard	Stéphane	salsaDev SA	2009
Gerhardt	Dania	Amazee AG	2009
Grolimund	Dominik	Wuala by LaCIE	2006
Guillemot	Maël	Klewel Sàrl	2008
Gysling	Lukas	Streamix AG	2006
Hieronymi	Andreas	PETTS*	2006
Hirsig	Christian	Atizo AG - Open Innovation	2009
Jongen	Nathalie	EPF Lausanne	2002
Kirchschräger	PeterG.	PHZ Luzern	2002
Maillard	Patrick	IMMOMIG SA	2007
Marconi	Stéphane	UBS AG	2004
Methqal	Mohamed	Minister of Economy & Finances (Tunisia)	2003
Meyer	Thomas	lift.tv	2004
Moscheni	Fabrice	Fastcom Technology SA	2000
Müller	Samuel	Mirasense AG	2010
Mundinger	Jochen	routeRANK SA	2007
Navarro	Alfonso	Handcrafted Industrial Projects (Peru)	2004
Pavillard	Cyril	Mnemis SA	2004
Pellegrini	Renato	sonic emotion AG	2007
Reck	Johannes	GetYourGuide AG	2010
Riem-Vis	Ruud	IPO1 SA	2001
Rimet	Ralph	Secu4 SA	2006
Rizk	Karim	Wavercall SA	2000
Rizzotti	Sven	useKit AG	2009
Rochat	Philippe	EPF Lausanne*	2003
Rollier	Alain	AXSionics AG	2006
Sala	Matthias	Millform AG	2009
Santini	Silvia	MircoEnv*	2007
Schickel	Vincent	Prediggo AG	2008
Schmid	Marc	Swiss Internet Services GmbH SISNET	2002
Sevinç	Paul	Doodle AG	2008
Starlander	Marianne	University of Geneva	2007
Startchik	Sergei	Anteleon Imaging Systems	2003
Tadi	Tej	MindMaze	2010
Tuchschruid	Stefan	VirtaMed AG	2008
Uherek	Remo	trigami AG	2008
Vitalini	Roberto	BASHIBA SA	2008
Vögeli	Christian	Dybuster AG	2008
VonRickenbach	Pascal	StreamForge GmbH	2009
Wallach	Dieter	Ergosign GmbH	2000
Warth	Rainer	Fondation Biobank Suisse	2006
Wayenberg	Alexandre	Capsule SA	2009
Weder	Jürgen	NeuroPie Solutions AG	2009
WürmlinStadler	Stephan	LiberoVision AG	2006
Yersin	Barbara	Minsh Sàrl	2008
Materials/Chemicals			
Bäumli	Martin	Concretum AG	2007
Dockendorf	Cédric	OCAS Ventures / Arcelor Mittal R&D Industry Gent (OCAS)	2006
Grass	Robert	TurboBeads GmbH	2007
Height	Murray	HeiQ Materials AG	2006
Properzi	Milena	BFH	2004
Medtech			
Antonov	Janine	PDM Support*	2006
Bonny	Christophe	Xigen SA	2001

Charrier	Rémi	StereoTools Sàrl	2010
Filser	Frank	Frank dental	2002
Friedrich	Michael	AIMAGO SA	2009
Hahn	Friedrich	MedDrop Technology AG	2009
Keller	Emanuela	NeMoDevices AG	2010
Mathieu	Laurence	Anteis	2006
Mercanzini	Andre	Aleva Neurotherapeutics SA	2007
Peterhans	Matthias	CAScination GmbH	2010
Rocklinger	Marc	Power Insoles	2010
Serov	Alexandre	FluxExplorer	2006
Thurner	Marc	Delta Robotics GmbH	2007
Zucker	Arik	Qvanteq GmbH	2010
Micro-/Nanotech			
Abelé	Nicolas	Lemoptix SA	2006
Blum	Mark	Optotune AG	2008
Dagon	Benoît	Imina Technologies AG	2010
Durand	Nicolas	Abionic	2010
Halim	Samuel	Nanograde GmbH	2009
Hubler	Urs	Concetrisc GmbH	2002
Latkoczy	Christopher	Naotion AG	2010
Laue	Carsten	Medipol SA	2006
Nagy	Zoltan	FemtoTools GmbH	2009
Ribordy	Grégoire	Id Quantique SA	2001
Rychen	Jörg	Nanonis / SPECS Zürich GmbH	2003
Sonderegger	Samuel	Attolight Sàrl	2007
Stark	Wendelin Jan	ETH Zurich / Functional Materials Laboratory	2003
Other			
Aegerter	Veronika	Cultivino Weingalerie	2001
Barbara	Antoine	PrimeLodge*	2004
Beermann	Marc-Oliver	Ventizz Private Equity	2002
Bensouda	Karim	Global Strategy & Governance SA	2002
Bison	Georg	Magnetometer*	2004
Bonzon	Yvan	Vibro-Meter SA	2001
Brun-Luong	Vivien	Asian Specialities*	2002
Ciani	Dario	BikeToTheFuture	2000
Condrea Gaber	Irina	SciencePassion	2004
daMotaSilva	Suzana	health monitoring system*	2002
Dong	Ji-Cui	Chinese herbal medicine*	2003
Estier	Thomas	A3 Angels	2001
Grassioulet	Yves	Independent	2003
Grätzer	Stefan	cable railways*	2001
Gschwind	Stephan	maropack AG	2000
Guarneri	Nicola	DEERIVE	2001
Jovignot	Charles	Philip Morris International	2003
Kralik	Roman	Architecture and Informatics*	2003
Krieger	DavidJohn	University of Lucerne*	2000
Molteni	Simone	LIFEGATE spa	2002
Schachtler	Moritz	Mobile Beach Cleaning System*	2000
Scherer	Jiri	Denkmotor GmbH	2001
Shantinath	Shachi	Woman-to-Woman*	2004
Simon	Michel	STARTglobal*	2002
Stapf	Fabian	R&D*	2000
Staubli	Thomas	Bible + Orient Museum	2000
Urban	Claus	LS Instruments*	2001
the winners are listed with their current start-up project or company they work at. If only the old project name/company is known this is marked with a star.			

Without the support of the following organizations, the NETS /venture leaders program wouldn't exist. More information about our supporters:



The winners team of 2008

GEBERT RÜF STIFTUNG

The charter of GEBERT RÜF STIFTUNG founded in 1997 states its mission as «promoting Switzerland as a place to live and do business». The Foundation is committed to providing project-related start-up financing and funding projects with seminal or keystone potential; i.e. initiatives which can be a critical factor triggering broader impact. The foundation aims to use its limited resources as a form of risk financing, subject to on-going evaluation, to provide a platform for pioneering approaches and to help get novel pilot projects off the ground.

GEBERT RÜF STIFTUNG financed the NETS program until 2004. With its participation in the private initiative venture kick, GEBERT RÜF STIFTUNG now supports another key project to encourage Swiss start-ups.

www.grstiftung.ch

Innovation Promotion Agency CTI

CTI is the Swiss Government's Innovation Promotion Agency. For the past sixty years, it has fostered knowledge and technology transfer between companies and universities by bringing them together as partners on applied research and development projects. CTI also provides assistance to start-up companies

www.bbt.admin.ch/kti

venturelab

Since 2004, venturelab, the national CTI-financed start-up training, offers specific training modules to help increase students' awareness of entrepreneurship, as well as individual coaching for high-tech start-ups, jointly with numerous partners, primarily universities and engineering schools and their respective technology transfer offices. Since 2006 venture leaders is part of the venturelab programs.

www.venturelab.ch

swissnex Boston

The Consulate of Switzerland/ swissnex Boston connects the best of many worlds by bridging the knowledge, energy and expertise in science, higher education and innovation between Switzerland, New England and Eastern Canada. Since 2000 swissnex Boston has been an important partner in the on-the-spot support of venture leaders.

www.swissnexboston.org

Ernst & Young

Ernst & Young is one of the world's leading professional services organizations, helping companies across the globe to identify and capitalize on business opportunities. Ernst & Young has sponsored the venture leaders program since 2006.

www.ey.com



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