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EPFL spin-offs Flyability and Lunaphore win the Venture Kick final

St.Gallen/Zurich/Lausanne, April 1st, 2015 – The EPFL spin-offs Flyability and Lunaphore secured a total funding amount of CHF 130,000 each by winning the Venture Kick final. The world’s first collision-proof drone “Gimball” and a rapid and accurate method for cancer profiling are ready for commercial success. Both startups were identified and supported at an early stage by Venture Kick, and received important recognition over the past two years.

A spherical flying robot enters a damaged building after an explosion. The lightweight drone is not disturbed by collisions and can fly safely in places out of reach and near injured people, transmitting live video footage to rescuers. This scenario might be soon a reality thanks to Gimball, Flyability’s insect inspired flying robot, the world’s first of its kind. The EPFL and NCCR robotics spin-off opens a world of new applications in search and rescue, industrial inspection or security.

Flyability: A flagship of Switzerland’s flying robotics

The startup’s vision is to bring drones closer to people indoors and in places out of reach for any other flying robot. Their innovation lies in Gimball’s patented rotating protective frame and control algorithms allowing the robot to remain stable even during collisions. It also makes it safe to fly close to humans. CEO Patrick Thévoz and his team were recently awarded with one million dollars at the “Drones for Good Award” in Dubai. He comments on the benefits of the Venture Kick program in the light of recent success: “When launching a startup in Switzerland, Venture Kick is for many entrepreneurs the support needed to “survive” during precious months and prepare for the next steps. Furthermore, the pathway to each stage of Venture Kick is recognized as a serious pledge by Swiss business angels”.

Lunaphore: Detecting cancerous tumors faster

Lunaphore’s “fast fluidic exchange” technology enables the rapid and accurate profiling of biomarkers in cancerous tissues. It brings a significant amelioration to the current tissue coloration assays allowing the analysis and the detection of cancerous tumors. Lunaphore’ solution is faster (it only takes 5 minutes compared to 2 to 8 hours for current tests) and more accurate (up to 90% compared to existing technologies). And the market is huge: 1.9 billion dollars alone for the worldwide hospital market. CEO Ata Tuna Ciftlik explains the benefits of Venture Kick for his young company: “We won the 1st stage of Venture Kick 12 months ago and have witnessed an amazing progress since then. The program helped us increase our credibility and visibility in the Swiss start-up scene. Furthermore, the Kickers Camps helped us tackle all the odds that might have killed our project at every stage of its development”.

Great recognition for both Venture Kick alumni

Over the past two years, Flyability and Lunaphore won prestigious Prizes and Awards, and benefited from a large Swiss and international media coverage. For example, they won the venture leaders USA program in 2014. The same year, Lunaphore entered the TOP 100 ranking as youngest Swiss startup, and one of the best of western Switzerland. Jordi Montserrat, Managing Director of Venture Kick comments on their success: “Seeing how Flyability and Lunaphore founders could evolve using Venture Kick’s network and support makes us very happy. What they have achieved is not only impressive; it also puts them in a leading position to become major global successes, which lies at the heart of our action.”
**Links**
Watch Gimball fly in an EPFL video here or listen to them on BBC
Watch the “one million video” of Gimball at the “Drones for Good” final here
Learn more about Switzerland’s and Venture Kick alumni’s excellence in flying robotics here
Discover Lunaphore 7+ Awards in 2014 here

**About Venture Kick**
Since the launch of Venture Kick in 2007, 350 project teams benefited from the overall support of CHF 13.76 million. The program has contributed to the creation of 3.038 new jobs for highly qualified people and to a financing volume of CHF 602 million. 58 of the actual «TOP 100 Swiss Startups» started with Venture Kick. Eight are even in the top 10: InSphero, L.E.S.S., Abionic, HouseTrip, QualySense, Bcomp, Climeworks and Dacuda. These results show that the Venture Kick approach creates a great benefit for the Swiss economy and its workplace.

**Double the number of spin-offs**
The mission of Venture Kick is the early identification, structuring and promotion of promising business ideas with a clear vision: To double the number of spin-offs at Swiss universities and to raise the attractiveness of these young companies for Swiss and international investors. Thanks to Venture Kick, startups learn how to win customers and convince investors more rapidly. They benefit from hands-on execution boot camps (the kickers camps) and from quick access to extensive business networks. The program is open to young talents with innovative business ideas, who have not yet founded their company and are still enrolled or employed at Swiss institutions of higher learning: students, postgraduates, researchers and professors.

Venture Kick is highly competitive. Each month, eight projects get the chance to present themselves to a jury. The four most promising then receive CHF 10.000 and qualify for the second round held three months later, where the two best teams receive another CHF 20.000 each. In the third and final round, taking place six months later, the winner is granted CHF 100.000.

The Venture Kick initiative has been financed so far by Gebert Rüf Stiftung, Ernst Göhner Stiftung, Avina Stiftung, OPO-Stiftung, Fondation Lombard Odier, Debiopharm Group, André Hoffmann and Hansjörg Wyss. www.venturekick.ch

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The following selected startups have been supported by Venture Kick:

- Abionic SA, EPF Lausanne (Medtech), www.abionic.com
- ActLight SA, EPF Lausanne (Cleantech), www.act-light.com
- Aeon Scientific AG, ETH Zurich (Medtech), www.aeon-scientific.com
- Aiducation International, ETH Zurich (Others), www.aiducation.org
- Aleva Neurotherapeutics SA, EPF Lausanne (Medtech), www.aleva-neuro.com
- Attolight SA, EPF Lausanne (Micro-, Nano Technology), www.attolight.com
- Bcomp AG, HEG-FR - Haute école de Gestion (Cleantech), www.bcomp.ch
  - 2015 Strategis Prize finalist
- BioVersys AG, ETH Zurich (Biotech), www.bioversys.com
- CALCISCO AG, Uni Bern (Biotech), www.calcisco.com
- CashSentinel SA, IMD Lausanne (Internet, Mobile), www.cashsentinel.com
  - CashSentinel signs a partnership with AutoScout
- Climeworks AG, ETH Zurich (Cleantech), www.climeworks.com
- Composyt Light Labs SA, EPF Lausanne (Micro-, Nano Technology), www.composyt.com
  - Composyt Light Labs SA acquired by Intel Corporation
- Compliant Concept AG, ETH Zurich (Medtech), www.compliant-concept.ch
- Dacuda AG, ETH Zurich (Internet, Mobile), www.dacuda.com
- DistalMotion SA, EPF Lausanne (Medtech), www.distalmotion.com
- eSMART Technologies Sàrl, EPF Lausanne (Cleantech), www.myesmart.ch
  - 2015 Strategis Prize finalist
- Fastree 3D SA, EPF Lausanne (Electronics, Mechanics), http://aqua.epfl.ch
- Geosatis SA, EPF Lausanne (Electronics, Mechanics), www.geo-satis.com
- greenTEG AG, ETH Zurich (Cleantech), www.greenteg.com
- Flyability SA, EPF Lausanne (Robotics), www.flyability.com
- G-Therapeutics, EPF Lausanne (Medtech), www.gtherapeutics.com
- HouseTrip SA, EHL - Ecole Hoteliere (Internet, Mobile), www.housetrip.com
- InsPhero AG, Uni Zurich (Biotech), www.insphero.com
  - 2015 Strategis Prize finalist
- Jilion SA, EPF Lausanne (Software), www.jilion.com
- Kandou Bus SA, EPF Lausanne (Cleantech), www.kandou.com
- KeyLemon SA, HES-SO Valais (Software), www.keylemon.com
- Koring GmbH, Uni Basel (Medtech), www.koring.ch
- L.E.S.S. - Light Efficient System SA, EPF Lausanne (Cleantech), www.less-optics.com
- Lemoptix SA, EPF Lausanne (Micro-, Nano Technology), www.lemoptix.com
  - Lemoptix SA acquired by Intel Corporation (17 March 2015)
- Lunaphore Technologies SA, EPF Lausanne (Medtech), www.lunaphore.com
- MindMaze SA, EPF Lausanne (Medtech), www.mindmaze.com
  - MindMaze SA, EPF Lausanne (Medtech), www.mindmaze.com
- Nanolive SA, EPF Lausanne (Biotech), www.nanolive.ch
  - Nanolive wins Pionierpreis (17 March 2015)
- noonee AG, ETH Zurich (Medtech), www.noonee.ch
  - Audi to test noonee’s Chairless Chair prototype (11 March 2015)
- Optotune AG, ETH Zurich (Micro-, Nano Technology), www.optotune.com
- PB&B SA, Uni Genève (Biotech), www.pbbtech.ch
- **Pix4D SA**, EPF Lausanne (Software), [www.pix4d.com](http://www.pix4d.com)
- **ProteoMediX AG**, ETH Zurich (Biotech), [www.proteomedix.com](http://www.proteomedix.com)
- **Poken SA**, IMD Lausanne (Internet, Mobile), [www.doyoupoken.com](http://www.doyoupoken.com)
- **QGel SA**, EPF Lausanne (Biotech), [www.qgelbio.com](http://www.qgelbio.com)
- **QualySense AG**, Uni Zurich (Micro-, Nano Technology), [www.qualysense.com](http://www.qualysense.com)
- **Relish Brothers GmbH**, HSLU - Hochschule Luzern (Others), [www.relishguitars.ch](http://www.relishguitars.ch)
- **RealLook AG (Selfnation)**, ETH Zurich (Internet, Mobile), [www.selfnation.ch](http://www.selfnation.ch)
- **ScanTrust SA**, EPF Lausanne (Software), [www.scantrust.com](http://www.scantrust.com)
- **senseFly SA**, EPF Lausanne (Electronics, Mechanics), [www.sensefly.com](http://www.sensefly.com)
- **SwissLeg Sagl**, Università della Svizzera italiana (Medtech), [www.swissleg.com](http://www.swissleg.com)
- **SwissLitho AG**, ETH Zurich (Micro-, Nano Technology), [www.swisslitho.com](http://www.swisslitho.com)
- **Typesafe**, EPF Lausanne (Software), [www.typesafe.com](http://www.typesafe.com)
- **Uepaa AG**, FHNW - Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz (Internet, Mobile), [www.uepaa.ch](http://www.uepaa.ch)
- **UrbanAlps AG**, ETH Zurich (Electronics, Mechanics), [www.urbanalps.com](http://www.urbanalps.com)
- **Upicto Sàrl**, ETH Zurich (Software), [www.upicto.com](http://www.upicto.com)
  - Logitech buys Upicto (March 2015)
- **UrbanFarmers AG**, ZHAW (Cleantech), [www.urbanfarmers.ch](http://www.urbanfarmers.ch)

See the complete list of VENTURE KICK startups [here](#).

Stay tuned with the successes of Venture Kick alumni on [Facebook](http://Facebook), [Twitter](http://Twitter) and [Linkedin](http://Linkedin).