Media release

Ten new Swiss startups are getting ready for the venture leaders Life Science investors roadshow 2017 in Boston

St. Galli/Zurich/Lausanne, April 4th, 2017 – Ten new Swiss Life Science startups have been selected by the venture leaders Life Science program’s jury to participate in this year’s high powered, one week investors and business roadshow in Boston, co-organized with swissnex Boston. Following the steps of fellow Alumni such as InSphero or Covagen, the 10 Swiss based entrepreneurs of 2017 have developed breakthrough technologies that have the potential to attract international investors and business partners.

Leaving to Boston on June 11 until June 17, this year’s venture leaders Life Science forming the “Swiss National Startup Team Life Science 2017” reflect the impressive quality of Swiss startups, whose innovations come from the best universities and research institutes of Switzerland. This year’s winners develop lifesaving technologies such as a cell imaging platform to accelerate drug discovery, a prosthesis which allows amputees to naturally feel their missing limbs again, an ingeniously simple approach to computed guided needle navigation in the body, or an accurate, safe and cost-effective imaging technology to detect breast cancer at an earlier and more treatable stage.

Boston, the hotspot in the US for Life Science startups

One in two francs invested in pharmaceutical research worldwide finds its way to the US. In particular, the greater Boston area is a veritable hotspot for the global life science industry and research. It also includes the branches of venture capital investors and major corporations who are always looking for novel ideas and partnership with startups, including the young Swiss companies selected by venturelab:

“The venture leaders program has successfully identified and supported many of the most promising Swiss startups in their growth efforts at an international level”, explains Jordi Montserrat, Managing Director of venturelab. Today, venture leaders is considered as a flagship initiative for startups and a pioneer project to help them meet crucial growth objectives beyond the Swiss frontiers.

Meet international investors and build a global business

Since the start of the venture leaders program in 2001, over 300 Swiss startup founders have flown to worldwide innovation hotspots in all industry domains to meet investors and build their awareness of making their startup a global business. Some venture leaders alumni were acquired by major industry players such as Apple or Intel, or count leading firms as their customers. In total they raised hundreds of millions of dollars with Swiss and international investors, some right after the venture leaders trip such as InterAx Biotech, who closed an investment round with Boston-based life science investors in 2016.

In total, 42 venture leaders are listed in the actual TOP100 Swiss Startups ranking.

Event: Meet the venture leaders Life Science 2017 at EPF Lausanne on April 26, 2017

Mark the date of April 26, 2017, for the Startup Champions Seed Night at EPF Lausanne, co-organized with EPFL Alumni and the Innogранnts. Starting at 5PM, the event will showcase 24 Swiss startups to watch, including the 20 winners of venture leaders Life Science and venture leaders China 2017. Our keynote speaker will be Tej Tadi, the CEO of the “Swiss unicorn startup” MindMaze, and a former venture leader. Come and see the 24 world class startups pitch and vote for your favorite one at the evening's Pitch competition (7PM)! Full program and applications (free event for the media).

About venture leaders: The home of the Swiss national startup teams

venture leaders offers one-week roadshows in Boston (Life Science), Silicon Valley (Technology), New York (Fintech) and China (all domains). This includes presentations to local investors, partners and industry experts as well as business workshops and company visits. Further to getting a unique visibility in Switzerland and abroad, as well as building a strong network, the participants are part of a team of entrepreneurs sharing the same objectives and challenges. They are unique Ambassadors of the thriving Swiss startup scene and Switzerland’s innovation power.

Next call for Swiss startups with global potential

- venture leaders Fintech, New York (September 11-16, 2017), applications run until May 14: venturelab.ch/venture-leaders-fintech

Partners

This year’s venture leaders Life Science program is supported by digitalswitzerland, Kellerhals Carrard, EY and the EY Entrepreneur of the Year program, Hansjörg Wyss and the Wyss Charitable Endowment, Canton de Vaud, EPF Lausanne, ETH Zurich, PSI and swissnex Boston.
The venture leaders Life Science 2017 (the Swiss National Startup Team Life Science) at a glance

Comphya, Rodrigo Araujo Fraga da Silva (Medtech, EPFL)
Comphya develops an active implantable medical device to restore the erectile function of patients who are non-responsive to oral drugs (e.g. Viagra or Cialis). To achieve erection, these patients have access to problematic and outdated methods such as intrapenile injections of vasodilators or penile implants. Comphya fills the need for better modalities for these patients, with a main focus on spinal cord injury and prostatectomy patients, both large segments with high potential of use.

Dicronis, Patrizia Marschalkova (Medtech, ETHZ) [www.dicronis.ch](http://www.dicronis.ch)
Lymphedema is a frequently occurring and serious complication of cancer therapies. It is a chronic and progressive disease, mostly outlined by the swelling of a limb due to improper function of the lymphatic system. Dicronis helps to drastically improve its prognosis by providing the earliest lymphedema diagnostic based on a micro-needles technology used to assess the lymphatic function in a simple, safe, minimally-invasive and cost-effective manner.

Dispencell, Georges Muller (Biotech, EPFL)
Biotech companies spend USD 220 million per year in isolating the best candidate living cell for making new drugs. With the technology of Dispencell, they will be able to isolate single cell lines three times faster and ten times cheaper than with existing solutions.

Lumigbo, Andreas Schmocker (Medtech, EPFL)
Every day, more than 1 million implants are placed using open surgery. Lumigbo developed a technology to build up implants inside the body using an access channel of less than half a millimeter in diameter. The procedure can be used for almost any type of polymer-based implant.

MaxWell BioSystems, Urs Frey (Micro technologies, Biotech, ETHZ) [www.mxwbio.com](http://www.mxwbio.com)
MaxWell Biosystems develops and distributes the most advanced electrophysiology cell-imaging platform for high-throughput assays to accelerate drug development. The toolset, consisting of an integrated sensor chip, acquisition hardware and software, delivers unprecedentedly accurate results. This solution can advance and accelerate drug discovery and basic neurosciences.

Medical Templates, Rafael Hostettler (Medtech, ETHZ) [www.medicaltemplates.ch](http://www.medicaltemplates.ch)
Medical Templates developed the “Puncture Cube”, an ingeniously simple approach to computed tomography guided needle navigation in the body for biopsies and pain therapy. Targeted at interventional radiologists, the technology reduces radiation, intervention time and variance, while increasing patient comfort and safety. The solution has seen extremely positive user feedback. MedicalTemplates is now aiming towards FDA approval by the End of 2017 to enter the US market.

RetinAI Medical, Carlos Ciller (Medtech, UNIL) [www.retinai.com](http://www.retinai.com)
RetinAI Medical is a startup based in Bern, Switzerland, focused on empowering eye care professionals and doctors using artificial intelligence. RetinAI uses the latest machine learning techniques (deep learning) and medical image processing to reach human-level performance for the assisted automatic evaluation of Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT), Fundus Image Photography and retinal Angiography. These techniques can be applied to the early detection and screening of the following pathologies: Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), Diabetic Retinopathy (DR), Glaucoma, and a multitude of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, multiple sclerosis (MS), and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

SensArs, Francesco Petrini (Medtech, EPFL) [www.sensars.com](http://www.sensars.com)
Lower limb amputees suffer from a lack of sensory feedback from prostheses. Because of this, they experience falls due to unexpected perturbations, and walk asymmetrically facing high fatigue. Also, they feel the prosthetics as a foreign body and contract phantom limb pain. Due to such inconveniences, 60% of the amputees abandon their prosthesis. SensArs’ solution is SENSY, a unique worldwide product which allows amputees to naturally feel their missing limbs.

SonoView, Ivana Balic (Medtech, EPFL) [www.sono-view.com](http://www.sono-view.com)
SonoView develops an accurate, safe and cost-effective imaging technology to help health professionals detect breast cancer at an earlier and more treatable stage. The technology aims at obtaining the same image quality as Magnetic Resonance Scanning at one tenth of its cost.

SUINCoL, Mattias Larsson (Biotech, EPFL)
SUINCoL develops tissue regeneration therapies, with the primary focus on non-invasive treatment of stress urinary incontinence. SUINCoL’s main goal is to motivate investors to fund further development of its products and their respective clinical introduction.

Useful links
More about the venture leaders programs
Check out the 300+ venture leaders alumni list and their online profiles
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