Switzerland’s 100 most promising startups

Zurich/Lausanne, September 5th, 2018 – From revolutionary medtechs to a platform driving the future of transport, Switzerland’s most inspiring startups were recognized in the eighth edition of the TOP 100 Swiss Startup Award tonight. Among the 700-plus guests were investors from around the world, corporates and experts, eager to meet these promising entrepreneurs and tap into Switzerland’s booming innovation scene.

World leaders in innovation
With Switzerland holding the top spot in the Global Innovation Index 2018 for the eighth consecutive year, we are justly proud of our ecosystem. We are leading in high-tech manufacturing, in patents and IP, in R&D spending and in education. And our startups are making their presence felt across the globe.

TOP 3 Swiss startups: Ava Women, Bestmile and Lunaphore
Look at the evidence. Our #1 for the second year running, femtech Ava Women has raised a total $42.3 million of financing, hired 70 employees, opened an office in San Francisco, and put co-founder Lea von Bidder on the Forbes 30 under 30 list. Ava’s streamlined sensor bracelet looks simple, but it’s super smart: the data it harvests while women sleep is converted into highly precise information about their fertility cycles and health. CEO and co-founder Pascal Koenig said: “Winning the TOP 100 award in 2017 gave us the extra boost that contributed to our fantastic growth over the past 12 months.”

Runner-up Bestmile (last year: #7) offers a platform to integrate fleets of both autonomous and conventional vehicles that has been embraced by transport providers from Switzerland’s own PostBus and SBB to Californian Robotaxis – while earning the company a spot on the World Economic Forum’s list of Technology Pioneers.

And third-placed Lunaphore (up from #9) has signed collaborations with multi-billion-dollar global corporation PerkinsElmer and biomedical research firm Vitro, both of which recognize the potential of the startup’s technology to revolutionize tissue diagnostics. Lunaphore’s automated tissue-staining solution uses microfluidics to vastly increase the speed, and reliability, of lab processes.

Anyone taking a closer look might notice one striking detail – every one of these Top 3 startups has a woman on the founding team. Female founders also appear in three more of the Top 10 (Cutiss, Piavita and Versantis), while 28 of the full 100 startups have women in management. With the shortage of women in tech still a hot topic, it’s clear that where women do appear, they shine. Venture capitalists take note!

Swiss startups scaling new heights
In its eight years, the TOP 100 Swiss Startup Award has in total recognized 371 startups – 143 of which were Venture Leaders, and 124 Venture Kick alumni. Taken together, those startups have created 5,197 jobs and raised more than CHF 2.6 billion of investment. So far, we have seen 38 exits (such as Faceshift’s sale to Apple, Lemoptix to Intel, and Daedalus to Magic Leap), and with Biocartis and Crispr, two IPOs. Who’ll be making financial-page headlines next? Keep your eyes on rapidly growing TOP 100 companies Bcomp, Climeworks, GetYourGuide, Qualysense or Treksoft, for a start. Our TOP 100 nominees have the chance to be presented to our exclusive investor network, giving them an even better chance to grow and thrive.
“The Swiss startup ecosystem is in excellent health,” said Stefan Steiner, co-managing director of the TOP 100 Awards organizer, Venturelab. “These entrepreneurs have more than just good ideas – they have excellent business sense and are taking the investment world by storm.”

Jordi Montserrat, co-founder and managing partner of Venturelab, confirmed: “Growth capital is exploding in Switzerland. 2018 will be a record year for investment, with CHF 270 million raised by just eight top startups in recent months. The arrival of capital on this scale makes it possible for these young firms to compete globally and drive the future of Swiss industry.”

Focus on Deep Tech Nation
For the first time our TOP 100 magazine is also appearing in four languages – German, French, English and now Chinese – showing how much of a global reference the list has become in today’s high-tech ecosystem. We look at the implications of today’s data revolution – the force driving many of our most successful startups, in fields from material science to medicine – and investigate the challenges of managing a rapidly growing company in an interview with Beekeeper founder Cristian Grossmann.

About the TOP 100 Swiss Startup Awards
Each year since 2011, Venturelab has organized the TOP 100 Swiss Startup Award. The 100 most innovative and promising Swiss startups are picked by a panel of 100 leading investors and startup experts. Each one nominates 10 favorite Swiss startups, less than five years old, with the greatest commercial potential. The first-placed company on any list gets 10 points, the second 9 and so on. All these individual rankings are compiled to generate the final TOP 100 Swiss Startup Award ranking, which therefore recognizes the startups that have most impressed all 100 jury members.

The TOP 100 Swiss Startup Award is supported by the presenting partners Credit Suisse, SVC, Swiss Prime Site, SECA and digitalswitzerland.

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Please credit Sandra Blaser.

Links
The TOP 100 2018 special edition magazines, as well as the full 2018 ranking and more information about the TOP 100, can be found on www.top100startup.ch

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