Press Release

The “flagship program” brings 10 new top Swiss startups to China

St.Gall/Zurich/Lausanne, 9th May 2018 – Meet the selected 10 high growth Swiss startups composing the new Swiss National Startup Team. The team will fly to China for an exclusive 10-day roadshow for business and investor meetings in September, including the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of New Leaders in Tianjin.

“After four consecutive and very successful editions, we may conclude that Venture Leaders China has consolidated its status as a flagship program to support and increase the visibility of Swiss innovation in China.” said Jean-Jacques de Dardel, Swiss Ambassador to the People’s Republic of China, after the Venture Leaders 2017 edition. Venture Leaders China 2018 will take place from September 10th to 21st and will include business workshops, investors meetings and public events in Hong-Kong, Shenzhen, Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin. The high-powered roadshow offers the startups accelerated exposure and entry into the Chinese market, along with learning about business opportunities, how corporate affairs work, pitching to investors and getting insights from experts. This unique experience in the Chinese business ecosystem has already proven key for previous generations. “It was through Venture Leaders China that I first discovered the business culture in China. It allowed me to meet serious partners who advised me and shared some of their expertise with me. Their knowledge was incredibly useful in negotiations with our new partner” shared Staffan Ahlgren, a 2016 alumnus, CEO and co-founder of TRS, after he signed a strategic alliance with the Longjiang Environmental Protection Group.

A unique sample of Swiss hightech startups for a unique program

For the past few years, China has seen its economy grow at a fast-paced rhythm with a keen interest towards innovation, making it an ideal location for hightech startups to stress-test ground-breaking technologies while seeking international expansion. China also opens doors to other Asian markets. Chosen by a jury of experts and investors, the team members comprise top Swiss startups in the fields of cleantech, medtech, biotech, IT and electronics. Six out of the ten are listed amongst the TOP 100 Swiss Startups ranking of 2017, and a summary of each one is given below. “The quality of the Swiss startups taking part in the program combined with the impressive opportunities offered by the Chinese market have proven to be winning combination” explained Jordi Montserrat, managing partner of Venturelab “everyone says how much of a challenge and potential risk it is, but this program is all about getting the network and tools to master it.”

Venture Leaders China is co-organized by Venturelab and swissnex China, and supported by digitalswitzerland, Canton de Vaud, Canton of Zurich, EPF Lausanne, ETH Zurich and Gebert Rüf Stiftung.

The Swiss team at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of New Leaders

Between September 18th and 20th, the Swiss National Startup Team China will join the World Economic Forum’s 12th Annual Meeting of the New Champions in Tianjin. The global summit focuses on innovation, science and technology while promoting entrepreneurship for the public interest. This represents an incredible occasion for Swiss hightech startups to gain more exposure and key networking opportunities.

Winners of Venture Leaders China 2018 at a glance

Cellestia Biotech AG | Rajwinder Lehal | www.cellestia.com | EPFL

Cellestia Biotech AG conceives innovative first-in-class target therapeutics to address unmet medical need in patients with oncological and immunological disorders. The startup has developed an oral pan-NOTCH inhibitor with a unique mode of action for treatment of NOTCH dependent leukemias, lymphomas and solid tumors.

DistalMotion | Michael Friedrich | www.distalmotion.ch | EPFL
DistalMotion creates and commercializes advanced surgical devices for minimally invasive surgery, bringing the benefits of robotics to operating rooms. Its solutions aim at simplifying procedures in urology, gynecology and general surgery with improved dexterity, control and ergonomics while lowering the costs of operations.

**Fixposition | Zhenzhong Su | www.fixposition.ch | ETH Zurich**

Fixposition conceives reliable high accuracy navigation solutions for autonomous vehicles. Its products provide accurate positioning with superior robustness, based on deep integration of computer vision and RTK GNS technologies, allowing manufacturers to sell drones or other autonomous vehicles for outdoor environments.

**Foldaway | Marco Salerno | www.foldaway-haptics.com | EPFL**

Foldaway creates ultra-portable and low-cost interfaces that fold-away when not in use and that provide rich force rendering. The startup’s devices are enabled by origami manufacturing, an innovative multilayer process technique requiring no manual assembly. They can be embedded in Virtual Reality joysticks, laptops, drone controllers and smartphones.

**GRZ Technologies | Noris Gallandat | www.grz-technologies.com | EPFL**

GRZ Technologies develops hydrogen-related technologies for renewable energy. Its products include laboratory equipment for hydrogen research and hydrogen storage units. Using metal hydride, the startup can provide safe, efficient and compact hydrogen storage solutions.

**InterAx Biotech | Aurélien Rizk | www.interaxbiotech.com | ETH Zurich**

InterAx Biotech develops different assets for the discovery of functionally optimized drugs with improved efficacy and reduced side effects for the largest class of human receptors: G-Protein coupled Receptors (GPCRs). The Interax discovery platform currently consists of three core assets: Virtual screening, state-of-the-art signaling assays including IP-protected protein-based biosensors for drug-induced signaling analysis, and systems biology for identification of most informative drug screening assays and prediction of in vivo effects.

**Nomoko | Nilson Kufus | www.nomoko.camera | ETH Zurich**

Nomoko provides digital solutions based on a digital twin of the world platform. Using a combination of 3D modeling, weather information, traffic data and other contextual information, the platform allows for precise simulations and recreation of real life conditions. Applications are numerous, such as testing self-driving cars in traffic, testing solar roof top efficiency, Augmented Reality experiences for a city or bringing existing games to different locations.

**RetinAI | Carlos Ciller | www.retinai.com | UNIL / Unibern**

RetinAI provides healthcare solutions to prevent patients vision loss using Artificial Intelligence. The startup designs a software for the automatic analysis of medical images and data, solving many of the current existing challenges in screening and monitoring and capable of detecting eye pathologies and sources of blindness.

**SimplicityBio | Matthew Hall | www.simplicitybio.com | UNIL**

SimplicityBio develops a Machine Learning platform for translational medicine: BOSS. The platform analyses patients’ data streams to extract knowledge and insight leading to drug target discovery, biomarker identification, patient stratification and drug repositioning.

**Topadur | Reto Naef | www.topadur.com | Zurich**

Topadur develops innovative drugs for severe unsolved wound-healing problems in hospitals. The startup has developed two main solutions: a drug increasing local blood flow in the wound area and addressing the impaired blood flow, a central problem in non-healing wounds, and another inhibiting excessive scar formation, targeting a huge medical need after burn wounds.
Meet the team and vote for the captain on June 19th

Save the date of June 19th, 2018 for the kick-off event at startup space in Schlieren. Starting at 6pm, the event will introduce the ten winners of Venture Leaders China and ten future winners of Venture Leaders Fintech (New York). The two teams will pitch to choose their respective captains. Full program and registration here.

Follow the kick-off event on June 19th and the Venture Leaders China roadshow from September 10th to 21st on Twitter and Facebook, using the hashtags #SUChamps and #vleadersChina.

About Venture Leaders

The Venture Leaders - the members of the Swiss National Startup Teams - have a clear-cut goal. They envision themselves as global players and want to take the first step to their global expansion. Venturelab has 17 years of bringing Swiss startup teams to high-tech hotspots: Silicon Valley, New York, Boston, Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hong Kong. The 300+ alumni have created 3500+ jobs, generated more than CHF 1.4 billion in investments and won multiple awards. These business development programs are specifically structured to help them achieve this goal.

See full Venture Leaders Alumni list here: https://www.venture-leaders.ch/venture-leaders-alumni

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