Press release

Philanthropy and entrepreneurship: venture kick with an innovative support model for startups

St. Gallen/Zurich/Lausanne, December 20th, 2012 - In the last 5 years, venture kick, a privately funded initiative, has invested more than 15 million CHF to support a startup boom at Swiss universities. This has been exceedingly successful: So far, it contributed to the launch of about 200 innovative companies out of 251 startup ideas – which have created around 2'000 jobs. The amazing growth potential of these young companies also attracted more financial supporters, which invested close to 400 million Swiss francs for their development.

Venture kick will adopt a new support model including equity participation at the third and final stage, starting January 1st, 2013. All proceeds from the subsequent shares’ sale will be exclusively re-invested into the support of the next generation of promising entrepreneurs. This new model aims at strengthening the philanthropic and entrepreneurial approach of venture kick, where supported startups reaching success will be contributing part of their success to the young entrepreneur scene. It might take a few years before this new model brings concrete returns. Nevertheless, expectations are fueled by the fact that more than half of the companies currently ranking in the TOP 100 Swiss startups have been supported by venture kick.

An entrepreneurial philanthropic model to support startups

The winner of the stage 1 (brilliant business idea) or stage 2 (solid business case) will continue to receive CHF 10'000 , respectively CHF 20'000 à fonds perdu as it is the case today, with a moral pledge of giving back to the entrepreneurial scene in case of success. The new participation model is applied at the final stage, where beneficiaries can receive an additional 100'000 CHF. The ownership level will be based on a valuation obtained at a qualifying round set for an investment of CHF 0.5 million or more at a valuation higher than CHF 1.3 million . If within 3 months before the stage 3 presentation date, the company has closed such financing round, venture kick will adopt this valuation. If no such financing round has taken place, venture kick will receive 10% of the company, and will adapt its ownership to the valuation obtained at the first qualifying round during the 24 months after the presentation date at the final stage, proportionally reducing its ownership.

Increasing the number of successful startups in Switzerland

The new support model is the result of a strategic reflection initiated by the Strategy Board of venture kick. Its main objective is to strengthen and clarify venture kick’s philanthropic and entrepreneurial philosophy where it is made natural to supported startups that their success will directly benefit future generations of entrepreneurs and thus to society. At the same time, the new model should contribute to the long term success of venture kick, helping to secure the support of many more innovative projects at Swiss universities. It should eventually allow
reinforcing the cooperation with private investors, hence contributing to more private investments in the startups.

**About venture kick**

Since the launch of venture kick on September 26, 2007, 251 projects teams have benefited from a total of CHF 9.39 million in direct financial support. It contributed to the creation of more than 2000 jobs and a financing volume of around CHF 400 million. Are eligible all young talents with innovative ideas, which have not yet founded their company and are enrolled or employed at a Swiss University: students, postgraduates, researchers and professors.

The private initiative venture kick is financed by the GEBERT RÜF STIFTUNG, the ERNST GÖHNER foundation, the OPO foundation, the AVINA STIFTUNG, the FONDATION LOMBARD ODIER and DEBIOPHARM Group. The project is managed by the IFJ Institut für Jungunternehmen in St.Gallen. The objective of the initiative is to double the amount of startups originating from Swiss universities and technical colleges.

Each month, eight projects get the chance to present themselves to a jury. The four most promising receive CHF 10'000 and automatically qualify for the second round held three months later, where the two best teams receive another CHF 20'000. In the third and final round, taking place six months later, the winner is granted CHF 100'000.

**Selection of winners supported by the venture kick pre-seed funding**

- Bettina Ernst, Preclin Biosystems, ETH Zürich (Biotech), [www.preclinbiosystems.com](http://www.preclinbiosystems.com)
- Manuel Aschwanden, Optotune, ETH Zürich (Optics), [www.optotune.ch](http://www.optotune.ch)
- Patrizia Fischer, Pearltec, ETH Zürich (Medtech), [www.pearltec.ch](http://www.pearltec.ch)
- Martin Bartholet, Celeroton, ETH Zürich (Electronics), [www.celeroton.ch](http://www.celeroton.ch)
- Marc Gitzinger, BioVersys, ETH Zürich (Biotech), [www.bioversys.com](http://www.bioversys.com)
- Sadik Hafizovic, Zurich Instruments, ETH Zürich (Electronics), [www.zhinst.com](http://www.zhinst.com)
- Wolfgang Moritz, Insphero, Uni Zürich (Biotech), [www.insphero.com](http://www.insphero.com)
- Stefan Tuchschild, Virtamed, ETH Zürich (Medtech), [www.virtamed.com](http://www.virtamed.com)
- Stephane Doutriaux, Poken, IMD Lausanne (Electronics/Internet), [www.poken.com](http://www.poken.com)
- Jochen Mundinger, RouteRank, EPF Lausanne (Internet), [www.routerrank.com](http://www.routerrank.com)
- Vincent Schickel, Prediggo, EPF Lausanne (Internet), [www.prediggo.com](http://www.prediggo.com)
- Florian Kowalke, Aiducation International, ETH Zürich (NPO), [www.aiducation.org](http://www.aiducation.org)
- Benoît Dagon, Imina Technologies, EPF Lausanne (Nanotech), [www.imina.ch](http://www.imina.ch)
- Ralph Schiess, ProteoMediX, ETH Zürich (Biotech), [www.proteomedix.ch](http://www.proteomedix.ch)
- Christof Roduner, Mirasense, ETH Zürich (Internet), [www.mirasense.com](http://www.mirasense.com)
- Christoph Gebald, Climeworks, ETH Zürich (CleanTech), [www.climeworks.com](http://www.climeworks.com)
- Michael Dupertuis, Geroco, HES-SO Valais (CleanTech/Internet), [www.geroco.com](http://www.geroco.com)
- Marcus Aebi, Malcisbo, ETH Zürich (Biotech), [www.malcisbo.com](http://www.malcisbo.com)
- Jean-Christophe Zufferey, SenseFly, EPF Lausanne (Electronics), [www.sensefly.com](http://www.sensefly.com)
- Alfredo E. Bruno, AdvancedOsteotomy Tools, Uni Basel (Medtech), [www.aot-swiss.com](http://www.aot-swiss.com)
- Francesco Dell’Endice, QualySense, Uni Zürich (Industry), [www.qualysense.com](http://www.qualysense.com)
- Nicolas Durand, Abionic, EPF Lausanne (Medtech), [www.abionic.com](http://www.abionic.com)
- Thorsten Schwenke, ZHAW, Thelkin (Electronics/Medtech), [www.thelkin.com](http://www.thelkin.com)
- Martin Odersky, Scala SolutionsSàrl, EPF Lausanne(ICT), www.scalasolutions.com
- Susanne Wechsler, Uni St. Gallen, BOOKBRIDGE (Social), www.bookbridge.org
- Dominik Bell, Aeon Scientific, ETH Zürich (Medtech), www.aeon-scientific.com
- David Bonzon, Pandora, EPFL (Electronics), www.pandora-uwe.com
- Amin Shokrollahi,Kandou Technologies, EPF Lausanne (ICT), www.kandou.com
- Nils A. Reinke, Winterthur Instruments, ZHAW (ICT), www.winterthurinstruments.com
- Timo Hafner, Gastros AG, Uni St. Gallen(Food / Materials), www.gastros.ch
- Andreas Brülhart, Bcomp, Hochschule für Wirtschaft Freiburg (Materials), www.bcomp.ch
- Matthias Haussmann, Uepaa, ETH Zürich (ICT / Mobile), www.uepaa.ch
- Serguei Okhonin, ActLight, EPF Lausanne (Energy), www.act-light.com
- Andreas Graber, UrbanFarmers, ZHAW (Cleantech), www.urbanfarmers.ch
- Ricardo Beira, DistalMotion, EPF Lausanne (Medtech), www.distalmotion.com
- Olivier Küng, Pix4D, EPF Lausanne (ICT / Multimedia), www.pix4d.com
- Emile de Rijk, SWISSsto12 EPF Lausanne (Electronics), www.swissto12.ch
- Daniel Lepori, Designergy SA, SUPSI/ISAAC (Energy), www.designergy.ch
- Yann Tissot, L.E.S.S – Light Efficient SystemS SA (Energy), www.less-optic.com
- Felix Holzner, SwissLitho, ETH (Nano), www.swisslitho.ch
- Carlos Ruiz, Flatev, UZH (Food/Electronics), www.flatev.com

Complete list of the startup projects of venture kick: www.venturekick.ch/startups