

Two new Swiss startup teams selected to conquer the US market and its investors in June

St. Gall/Zurich/Lausanne, April 6th, 2016 – As novelty in 2016, not only one, but two “Swiss startup teams” have been selected for the US journey as part of venturelab’s international program *venture leaders*. The *venture leaders in Life Sciences* and the *venture leaders in Technology* teams, composed of 10 high potential startups each, will fly to Boston and New York this summer for a “business boosting” week which will enable them to accelerate their development on the US market, meet top investors and experts. Selected after a highly competitive process, both teams offer an amazing display of startups to watch for future success.

Over the past 15 years, the venture leaders program has been a cornerstone behind the success of numerous Swiss startups at a global scale such as STAFF FINDER, Europe’s Nr. 1 on-demand marketplace for temporary staffing, who announced the completion of a [growth equity investment led by One Peak Partners and Goldman Sachs Private Capital](#) early March. “The biggest learning with the venture leaders in Boston was without doubt the glance outside Swiss frontiers. The contacts and experience were a gold mine. We could also find an investor for STAFF FINDER while there“, explains CEO and founder Viktor Calabrò. Since 2000, many alumni raised several million Swiss francs from Swiss and international investors. 39 venture leaders are listed among [Switzerland’s 2015 TOP100 Startup Ranking](#) such as L.E.S.S., Abionic, Flyability, MindMaze, Sophia Genetics, Lunaphore, Knip or QualySense.

A once in a lifetime opportunity for world-class startups

“venture leaders pursues its mission to play a key role in identifying and accelerating the development of some of the most promising Swiss startups at the international level”, explains Jordi Montserrat, Director of venturelab. “For the winning startups, to spend this intense week with top entrepreneurs who have global ambitions in thriving entrepreneurial and business ecosystems such as New York and Boston, is a once in a life time opportunity.” Whereas Switzerland is a fantastic place to launch and establish a startup, growth takes place at the international level: “Early exposure to the US market and its investors is a necessity for any startup with global potential.”

A more targeted offer for the winning startups

After 15 successful editions of venture leaders USA bringing 20 Swiss entrepreneurs to Boston and New York during 10 days, the program was split in two this year to better fit with the needs and expectations of the two ecosystems’ investors and to offer a more targeted option to the winning candidates. “Boston and New York are both world class innovation ecosystems, but have different strengths. For example, Boston is extremely strong in domains such as biotechnology, medtech or energy, whereas New York offers great opportunities in fields such as mobile apps, fintech, media or big data”, explains Felix Moesner, Swiss Consul and CEO of swissnex Boston, venturelab’s longtime partner and co-organizer of the venture leaders trips in the US. New York and Boston now await the next ambassadors of Swiss innovation in the US. We invite you to stay tuned on our social media channels [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) in June to follow their adventures (hashtags: #vleaders, #vleadersBOS, #vleadersNYC).

Meet the venture leaders in Technology and in Life Sciences on April 21st at EPFL

Come and meet the winning startups forming venture leaders’ two new “Swiss startup teams” in the US at the public event [Startup Champions](#) on April 21st at EPFL Rolex Center, from 2PM to 5PM. The 20 entrepreneurs will pitch their startup to the audience, and the public will elect the respective teams’ captains. In addition to the startups pitches, two great keynotes will be present: [Dennis Just](#), co-founder and CEO of Knip, a venture leader Boston in 2015 [who raised the largest fintech funding round in Switzerland in 2015](#), and the leading European investor and Atlantic Labs founder [Christophe Maire](#) who was involved in several exits such as Brands4Friends (eBay), StudiVZ (HB), Plista (groupM), Readmill (Dropbox), amongst others.

About the venture leaders 2016 (see respective startups' profiles below)

Both one week programs in Boston and in New York include presentations to US investors, partners and industry experts. Further to building themselves a strong network in the US, the participants will also be part of a team of entrepreneurs sharing the same objectives and challenges. This year's teams of talented individual entrepreneurs are a unique display of the numerous high potential startups created every year in Switzerland. The technologies that will be showcased in New York and in Boston range from a professional solution helping severely disabled stroke patients to perform complex movements again, to fun and interactive flying solutions to boost the attention and coverage of brands and products. www.venture-leaders.ch

The venture leaders in Life Sciences Boston 2016 at a glance:

Andrea Maesani, [Intento](#) (medtech), EPF Lausanne

A solution for the rehabilitation of severely paralyzed stroke patients, helping them to perform and recover upper limbs movements again.

Marcel Ottiger, [Amphasys AG](#) (biotech), Technopark Lucerne

A patented new technology enabling label-free, non-destructive and mobile analysis of any kind of single cells (by microfluidic impedance flow cytometry), in a similar way as a scanner at the airport. For example, analysis of pollen viability is a crucial step in the seed production because yield and quality of seed and the growing plant strongly correlate with pollen quality. Other examples are analysis of milk (somatic cells), fermentation processes (yeast, bacteria) or sperms (viability and quantity).

Martin Ostermaier, [InterAx Biotech](#), ETH Zurich

InterAx Biotech helps pharmaceutical companies to develop new and better drugs. Their unique combination of computational methods and innovative biological products allows for fast and comprehensive characterization of potential new drugs. Costly clinical trials can then be performed with reduced risks.

Natali Pennese, [Cellphmed](#) (medtech), EPF Lausanne

A method to verify the identity and quality of human cells, which will open doors for the advancement of personalized medicine.

Philipp Knechtle, [Selmod](#) (biotech), Uni Basel

Development of innovative small molecule therapies for the treatment of life-threatening invasive fungal infections, which represent around 2 million new cases every year worldwide.

Reto Naef, [Topadur Pharma](#) (biotech), Schlieren

Specialized drugs for the treatment of severe wound healing, which enables a higher life's quality for patients.

Sabrina Badir, [pregnolia](#) (medtech), ETH Zurich

A diagnostic tool that measures the cervical stiffness in pregnant women, allowing to reliably identify women at risk of preterm birth, thus solving the long-standing problem of preterm birth risk assessment and management in pregnancy.

Sandeep Raghunathan, [PB&B SA](#) (biotech), Uni Genève

A new generation of fillers and anti-aging medicine for plastic surgeons and dermatologists. The patented technology stimulates a patient's soft tissues to naturally gain volume with locally delivered lipids.

Sylke Hoehnel, [SUNbioscience](#) (biotech), EPF Lausanne

Standardized cultures of stem cell-derived organoids, which are self-organizing 3D miniature tissues with organ-mimicking functions. The technology opens the door to personalized medicine, which means more effective treatments and fewer side effects than the current "one drug fits all" principle.

Tomas de Wouters, [PharmaBiome](#) (biotech), ETH Zurich

Antibiotic resistances make intestinal infections (i.e. C. difficile infection) life-threatening. Fecal microbiota transplant, the transplant of feces from a healthy donor to the infected patient, is currently the only lifesaving but experimental therapy with success rates of over 90%. PharmaBiome develops a scalable, controllable and efficient alternative to the use of fecal material to make it the treatment of choice for intestinal infections.

[Check all venture leaders in Life Sciences online profiles](#)

The venture leaders in Technology New York 2016 at a glance:

Alberto Hernando, [SthAR](#) (software), EPF Lausanne

Algorithms that draw on large quantities of telecommunications data to identify where and when to deliver a message most effectively. The software product could be useful in both electoral and advertising campaigns.

Alexandre Catsicas, [Artmyn](#) (software), EPF Lausanne

A unique digitizing service setting new standards in the way Fine Art can be experienced and promoted on screen, via a web browser, accessible from any mobile device.

Andreas Hempel, [embotech GmbH](#) (software), ETH Zurich

Software that transforms the way to build and design optimal decision making systems such as autonomous machines. This reduces development cost, and increases productivity and reliability of anything from dishwashers to complex air traffic control systems, in fields such as automotive, robotics, and even healthcare.

Daniel Meier, [Aerotain](#) (engineering), ETH Zurich

Fun and interactive flying solutions to boost the attention and coverage of brands and products. Applications range from advertisement and entertainment to live streams of events from the air. Check an example in video [here](#)

Elias Kleinmann, [Wingtra](#) (engineering), ETH Zurich

Wingtra develops a convertible aerial robot that takes off and lands like a helicopter, but flies like a plane. Thanks to the combination of range and flexibility, the fully autonomous Wingtra 1 is best suited for various civil applications, i.e. for the inspection of farmland, mining or even for parcel delivery. Check out their video [here](#)

Julien Moix, [Advanced Sport Instrument](#) (engineering), HES-SO

FieldWiz is a strategy and physical performance tracking system for outdoor team sports players. It is a standalone device worn on a player's back to collect statistics, which are synchronized at the end of the game or practice. Check out their video [here](#)

Mathias Haussmann, [Uepaa AG](#) (web, mobile), ETH spin-off

Uepaa is a quickly growing «peer-to-peer» software company (SaaS) based in Zurich Switzerland that enables developers to integrate proximity features into their apps. Internationally awarded for its disruptive p2p safety app in 2013, the company launched its Software Development Kit (SDK called [www.p2pkit.io](#)) in October 2015. Uepaa has already seen tremendous uptake, with over 300+ clients from over 40 countries. Additionally Uepaa was recognized by 451 Research among others, as being a first-mover and leader in the proximity-based services space! [Find out more in the video](#)

Michela Puddu, [Haelixa](#) (materials), ETH Zurich

Haelixa provides intelligent DNA-based tracing solutions allowing fluid/item tracking and parameter monitoring (temperature, light, pH, oxidants) to support the energy industry (underground exploration and monitoring), and ensure product authentication and quality control as well as liability management.

Olivier Hamel, [Prodibi](#) (web, mobile), Geneva

A high-quality, powerful and easy solution to showcase images beautifully. With Prodibi, brands can directly use their images online without costly optimization.

Timo Steitz, [ShoeSize.Me AG](#) (web, mobile), St. Gallen

ShoeSize.Me offers data-driven business intelligence solutions to footwear retailers and brands. Their core solution enables online shops to provide their customers with precise shoe size recommendations for every shoe model they want to buy.

[Check all venture leaders in Technology online profiles](#)

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venture leaders: a wide network of national partners

This year's trip and business development programs, worth the equivalent of CHF 10'000 per participant, is made possible thanks to the support of our partners EPFL Innovation Park, EPF Lausanne, Canton de Vaud, ETH Zurich, Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year, CTI, and the Hansjörg Wyss and the Wyss Charitable Endowment. IMMOMIG and InSphero, two members of the Swiss startup team in 2007 and 2010, are also supporting the initiative, setting a valued precedent of former alumni giving back to the Swiss startup community. The programs are co-organised in the US by swissnex Boston and swissnex Boston New York Outpost.