Revolutionary with laser light and SME financing: IRsweep and Advanon win 130.000 Swiss francs each at the Venture Kick final

St. Gallen / Zurich / Lausanne, December 16th, 2015 – Environmental pollution, industrial accidents or terror attacks: people and the environment can be endangered from a wide range of chemical substances. The ETH spin-off IRsweep developed laser-based analysis methods to identify dangerous substances in liquids and gases quickly and efficiently. On the other hand, the Zurich based startup Advanon provides SMEs, which require short-term liquidity, with an innovative online factoring solution. Both startups convinced the distinguished jury at the Venture Kick final and can look forward to a start capital of 130.000 Swiss francs each.

With a sales volume of 250 billion Euros, Photonics has become one of the most important innovation driver for the global economy. The spectroscopy, a partial area of photonics, analyzes materials with the help of light and thereby qualifies for a very fast determination of dangerous substances in an outstanding manner.

**Laser light makes substances in gases and liquids visible**

The ETH spin-off [IRsweep](#) develops unique spectroscopic sensors that efficiently examine the composition of gaseous and liquid substances. Compared to current methods, the technology enables a faster, more reliable and more versatile analysis of such substances. The innovation lies in the use of multi-colored and particularly precise lasers. The system is interesting for many applications in food, oil and pharmaceutical industries as well as for security solutions. "We have brought our first products on the market in 2015, the so-called "IRcell". Thanks to the Venture Kick prize, we are now able to push the commercialization of our spectroscopy system forward", says Dr. Markus Geiser, co-founder of IRsweep.

**SMEs get fast cash, and investors attractive investment opportunities**

For many SMEs, the short-term liquidity is a problem and in these situations a bank loan is not always the best choice. Alternative forms of financing can be much quicker and less complicated. Advanon solves this problem with a new form of factoring: Since July 2015, the Zurich based startup connects investors directly with SMEs on its online platform. The objective is to provide SMEs with a 24 hours access to cash by the pre-financing of outstanding invoices and to offer investors an attractive investment opportunity.

Europe’s leading financial center is waiting

With its innovative business model, Advanon was able to complete a first financing round and partnerships with several well-known companies. Furthermore, in August 2015, the British Embassy became aware of the new online platform and suggested to Advanon to relocate their company’s headquarters to London: "Venture Kick has not only helped us to expand our network and to bring well-known investors on board, we also could benefit from many valuable advice. The Venture Kick experts showed us our weaknesses and helped us with their solutions. Without the program, we would not be where we are today," remarks Phil Lojaco, CEO of Advanon, enthusiastically.
About Venture Kick

Since the launch of Venture Kick in 2007, an initiative of the Venture Kick Foundation, 403 project teams have benefited from the overall support of CHF 16.01 million. The program has contributed to the creation of 3.500 new jobs for highly qualified people and to a financing volume of CHF 700 million. 54 of this year’s «TOP 100 Swiss Startups» started with Venture Kick. Seven are even in the top 10: L.E.S.S., Abionic, Flyability, Bcomp, QualySense, Glycemicon and Lunaphore. These results show that the Venture Kick approach creates a great benefit for the Swiss economy and its workplace.

Double the number of spin-offs

The mission of Venture Kick is the early identification, structuring and promotion of promising business ideas with a clear vision: To double the number of spin-offs at Swiss universities and to raise the attractiveness of these young companies for Swiss and international investors. Thanks to Venture Kick, startups learn how to win customers and convince investors more rapidly. They benefit from hands-on execution boot camps (the kickers camps) and from quick access to extensive business networks. The program is open to young talents with innovative business ideas, who have not yet founded their company and are still enrolled or employed at Swiss institutions of higher learning: students, postgraduates, researchers and professors.

Venture Kick is highly competitive. Each month, eight projects get the chance to present themselves to a jury. The four most promising then receive CHF 10.000 and qualify for the second round held three months later, where the two best teams receive another CHF 20.000 each. In the third and final round, taking place six months later, the winner is granted CHF 100.000.

Venture Kick, an initiative of the Venture Kick Foundation, has been financed so far by Gebert Rüf Stiftung, Ernst Göhner Stiftung, Fondation ProTechno, OPO-Stiftung, Fondation Lombard Odier, Debiopharm Group, Rising Tide Foundation, André Hoffmann, Hansjörg Wyss and Martin Haefner.

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