Media release / for immediate release

Venture Kick gains influential partner in Rising Tide Foundation

St. Gallen / Zurich / Lausanne, October 28, 2015 – Rising Tide Foundation is funding the Venture Kick program to develop and bring to market high potential business ideas at Swiss universities and institutes of higher learnings.

Established in 2010 in Switzerland, Rising Tide Foundation is an entrepreneurial, privately-endowed foundation with an international, impact-driven philanthropic grant program focused on three main areas: cancer research, libertarian, and social/educational causes. Its mission is to maximize individual potential, build capacities through education and create opportunities to ensure that everyone can achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Rising Tide Foundation firmly believes that empowerment and the development of individual skills and lifelong learning are the most effective agents of change to bringing about a progressive society. While many individuals are eager to progress economically and socially, they are hindered not due to a lack of talent, but rather to a lack of resources or opportunities presented. As in the case of new startups, in the very early stages, innovators bear very high risks that are neither carried by public money nor by private investors. Through the Venture Kick program, innovators are empowered to pursue their vision and embrace the entrepreneurial path.

“Entrepreneurship is not just about ideas, but rather about making ideas happen. At our Foundation, we are focused on cultivating a rising tide of social change. That’s why we are very excited to partner with Venture Kick to provide innovators with the right tools and training, so that they can successfully move their innovative ideas to market, create new jobs and contribute back to the community,” said Eveline Mumenthaler, Director, Rising Tide Foundation.

The potential of Swiss universities is still not fully exploited

Pascale Vonmont, president of Venture Kick’s strategy committee and deputy director of Gebert Rüf Stiftung, underscores the importance of this new partnership: “We are very pleased to welcome Rising Tide Foundation amongst the donators of the Venture Kick Foundation. The work of Venture Kick has borne amazing ventures in the past eight years. However, an untapped potential is still to be found in the laboratories and among students at Swiss universities. Not the lack of ideas, but the scarce resources and more “kicks” are the limiting factor to fully promote all potential entrepreneurs and their top-quality business ideas. It remains of crucial importance that even more partners join our initiative to continue to support this effort in the years to come.”

Leveraging Switzerland’s innovation potential

Beat Schillig and Jordi Montserrat, managing directors of Venture Kick, are delighted to partner with Rising Tide Foundation: “More than half of the companies, which are currently ranked in the TOP 100 Swiss Startups have been supported by Venture Kick. The new partnership with the Rising Tide Foundation will leverage Switzerland’s innovative potential even more effectively and further strengthen Venture Kick’s philanthropic and entrepreneurial philosophy.”
About Venture Kick

Since the launch of Venture Kick in 2007, an initiative of the Venture Kick Foundation, 395 project teams have benefited from the overall support of CHF 15.65 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. www.venturekick.ch

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