



## >> Preface

>> Ideas are easy.  
Implementation is hard.>>

Guy Kawasaki, Alltop Co-Founder and Entrepreneur

A good idea, courage to leave the beaten track, sweat, blood, tears and much fun are certainly some of the ingredients required to found a new start-up. But when things get serious and potential entrepreneurs have to prove their concept of turning their idea into a business, it is all about people:

A serious entrepreneur needs to put together the right team – made of members who complement each other. Entrepreneurs need reliable partners. They need to constantly monitor their customers and competitors to enter their market at the right time and in the right way. And, they need to be open to the constant stream of feedback given by surrounding people and institutions.

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For the Advisory Board

**Prof. Dr. R. Eichler**  
President  
ETH Zürich

*R. Eichler*

**Dr. T. Knecht**  
Founder >>venture>>  
Knecht Holding

*T. Knecht*

Therefore, >>venture>> is not just about winning a prize. We extend a helping hand through personal coaching sessions and during workshops, by providing networking opportunities, investor days and last but not least through our jury.

Our jurors spent a hard time choosing the best entrepreneurs. They are those who listened most carefully to that constant stream of feedback while never losing their own dream out of sight. Their relentless efforts resulted not only in a convincing business plan but also in a great team. We are pleased to present the 25 best business plans out of 141 high-quality submissions.

We would like to extend our warmest thanks to our coaches and jurors for their commitment and many hours of voluntary work as well as to the >>venture>> advisory board. Without their contributions, >>venture>> 2014 would not have been possible.

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For the Advisory Board

**W. Steinlin**  
President  
CTI



**Dr. M. Winter**  
Director  
McKinsey & Company





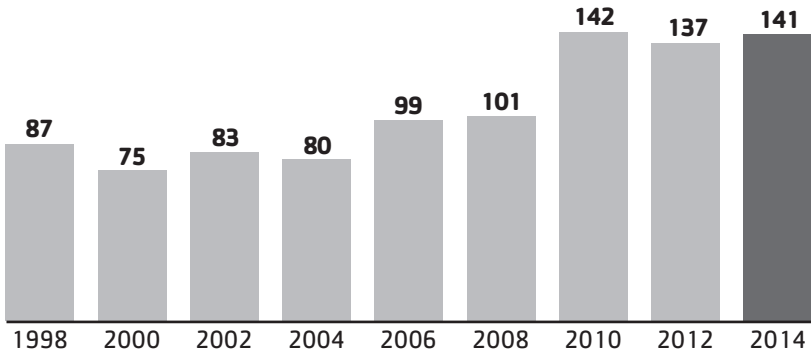
# >> Content

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## ||| Statistics

### >>venture>> 2014 nearly matches the record number of submissions of the 2010 edition

Number of submitted business plans per >>venture>> edition



### Key figures >>venture>> phase II

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**350** Team members of >>venture>> teams

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**300** Participants at >>venture>> events

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**128** Coaches supporting the >>venture>> teams

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**110** Jurors evaluating the business plans

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**20** Sponsors and partners

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**19** Schools with affiliated team members

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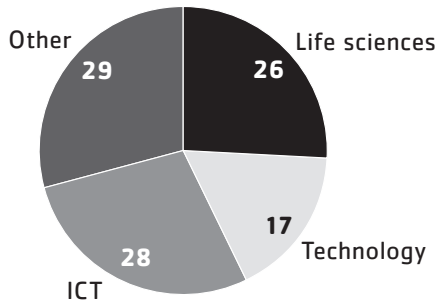
**9** Events (excl. Award Ceremony)

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# Statistics

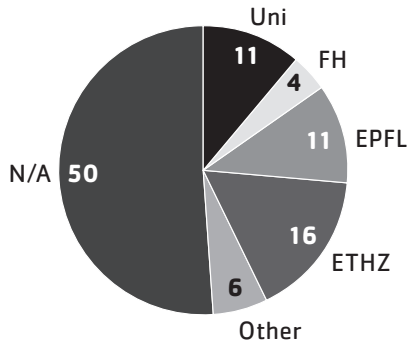
## Balanced industry distribution with high share of business plan submissions from Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology

**Industry of business plans**  
% (100% = 141 business plans)



**Affiliation of teams**  
% (100% = 141 teams)

sum not equal to 100% due to rounding



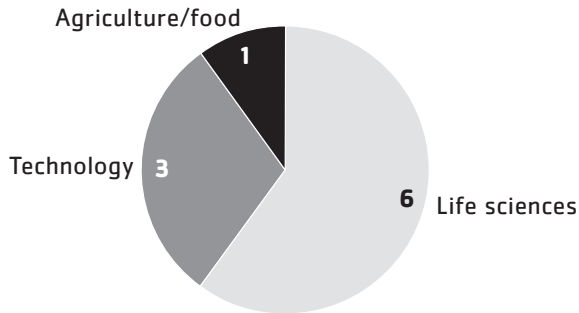
# Statistics

## High share of winners in life sciences and from Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology

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### Industry of top 10

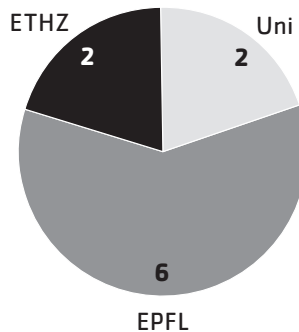
Number of teams



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### Affiliation of top 10

Number of teams

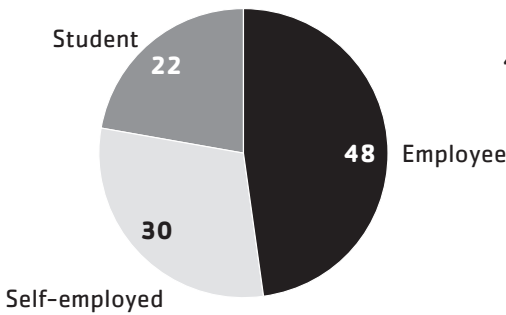




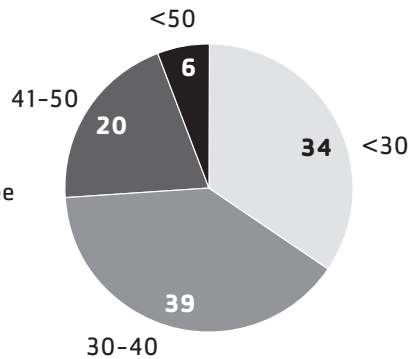
# Statistics

## >>venture>> 2014 – Background of team leaders % (100% = 141 team leaders)

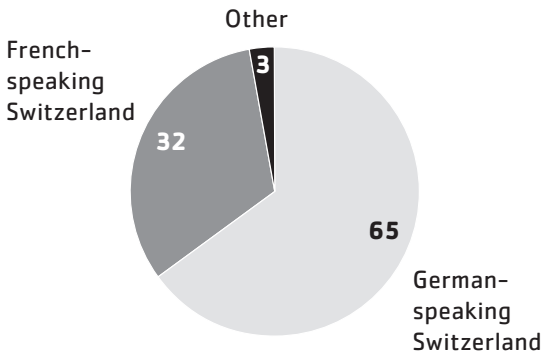
Professional status



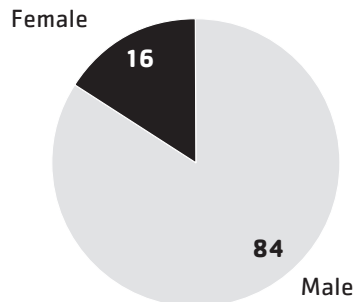
Age



Geographical distribution



Gender





# Bright Sensors

Gaël Farine, Conor Slater

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<b>Industry</b>	Energy
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## Description

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The natural gas industry is a large and growing market. Natural gas offers many benefits, but is subject to high variation in quality. This can lower the efficiency of gas appliances during combustion, thus increasing consumption and emissions, and create problems during ignition.

**Bright Sensors** SA is an EPFL spin-off that manufactures and sells a natural gas quality sensor to optimize natural gas appliances and biogas production. It can sample a gas in the pipeline and measure its quality. The business is based on selling the sensor at large volumes to original equipment manufacturers that integrate it into their appliances.



## Appraisal

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Bright Sensors fits the current trend of monitoring energy efficiency and can profit from the growing gas market. Their sensor is highly innovative, relatively cheap compared to competing technologies and products, and it provides real added value to the targeted customers. The envisaged strategy to sell the sensor to OEMs is optimal for entering a mass market, such as gas appliances. The team is technologically very strong, well connected and has put forward a clear and realistic implementation plan, which they should now follow energetically to make sure they can gain momentum in the slow-moving OEM market.



# Gimball

Dr. Adrien Briod, Patrick Thévoz

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<b>Industry</b>	Electronics/Hardware
<b>Place</b>	Lausanne
<b>Affiliation</b>	EPFL
<b>Contact</b>	<a href="mailto:contact@gimball.co">contact@gimball.co</a>

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## Description

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Flyability is developing **Gimball**, a game-changing flying robot, which can be flown indoors and in complex environments: it can stay stable after collisions with obstacles and can thus go where other robots can't. Furthermore, it is safe to fly close to humans. This innovation turns robots into real partners for humans and truly unleashes the potential of flying robots by enabling countless new applications in search and rescue, firefighting, inspection, or security but also at home and for your entertainment.



## Appraisal

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Gimball is a robust solution to a complex problem: This flying robot does not try to evade objects but "keeps calm and carries on" after a collision. This makes for a clear unique selling proposition compared to the many competitors that are already operating in the field. Customer need is high and proven, and the team has cleverly identified their first target customers. Going forward, fast implementation is key to success and could potentially be sped up by outsourcing a big part of engineering and manufacturing steps.



## L.E.S.S.

Dr. Yann Tissot, Dr. Simon Rivier

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<b>Industry</b>	Electronics/Hardware
<b>Place</b>	Lausanne
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### Description

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**L.E.S.S. SA** ("Light Efficient SystemS") provides a serious alternative to today's LEDs by providing their customers with ultrathin, -bright, and -uniform lighting systems. These key assets, offered by their unique fiber technology, allowed L.E.S.S. to successfully enter the market of the industrial vision and of the display back-lighting. They recently integrated their proprietary technology in the highest resolution displays, thus attracting the attention of one of the leading manufacturers of tablets and notebooks. Designing flexible, low-power consumption and colorful displays comes within reach thanks to the innovative lighting technology developed by L.E.S.S.



## Appraisal

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L.E.S.S. has developed a highly innovative lighting technology that could potentially revolutionize the lighting of displays. The lighting system is versatile and attractive for both the high-priced industrial vision market and the mass market for mobile phone and tablet displays. As the mobile phone and tablet markets are dominated by few powerful players, market entry is difficult; nevertheless, the team has already made first contacts with very interesting partners. The L.E.S.S. team is promising and synergetic, with strong potential to build upon their initial success.



# Lunaphore

Dr. Ata Tuna Ciftlik, Diego G. Dupouy,  
Deborah Heintze

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<b>Industry</b>	Medical technology
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## Description

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The microscopic assessment of biomarker expression patterns on tissues and cells by immunohistochemistry (IHC) is a widely used method in biology and personalized cancer medicine. However, current analysis protocols are time consuming, labor intensive, and produce variable, inaccurate, and often irreproducible data-sets.

**Lunaphore** is a med-tech company that builds next-generation tumor analysis and classification platforms. Lunaphore's IHC assays take just five minutes, reduce the number of required reagents by 50%, and remove ambiguities in data by providing 90% higher diagnostic accuracy as validated by clinical studies done with breast cancer patients.





## Appraisal

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Lunaphore has developed a unique and highly innovative technology to revolutionize immunohistochemical assays and brings along impressive expertise in microfluidic tissue processing. Market need and customer benefits are very convincing; their product clearly has the potential to advance personalized medical treatment. Going forward, the team needs to make sure to have sufficient marketing expertise on board to clear the hurdle of a generally difficult entry into the diagnostics market.



# Polyneuron Pharmaceuticals

Ruben Herrendorff,  
Dominik Jedlinski, Andrea Allmendinger,  
Prof. Dr. Beat Ernst

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<b>Industry</b>	Pharma/Biotechnology
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<b>Affiliation</b>	University of Basel
<b>Contact</b>	Ruben.Herrendorff@unibas.ch

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## Description

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**Polyneuron Pharmaceuticals** is an early-stage biotech start-up developing a novel drug class for the treatment of autoimmune disorders. There is an urgent medical need for effective and safe therapies in this disease area. Their technology platform "Anti-body-catch" and the derived compounds pave the way for a paradigm shift in treatment. Their compounds have the potential to selectively "catch" disease causing antibodies and furthermore suppress their production in patients with autoimmune diseases. Their first drug candidate was developed to treat patients suffering from anti-MAG neuropathy, an autoimmune nerve disorder with similarity to multiple sclerosis.



## Appraisal

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The "Antibody-catch" platform of Polyneuron Pharmaceuticals clearly has the potential for a major breakthrough in the development of targeted treatments of antibody-mediated diseases. For a project still at very early stage, chances of success appear excellent, not least thanks to the strong scientific background of the team. Given successful and timely further development of the platform and the first drug candidate, market and revenue potential will be very big. Going forward, the team should continuously advance their business skills alongside the scientific and clinical development to make sure they are ready to prepare for and capture commercial opportunities as they open up.



## Qloudlab

Arthur Queval, Maxime Etori,  
Dr. Andrea Cavallini, Simon Chaplin

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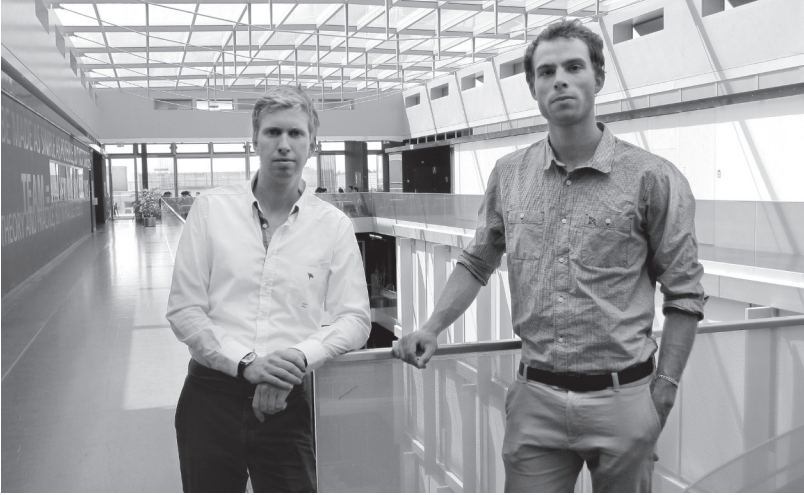
<b>Industry</b>	Medical technology
<b>Place</b>	Lausanne
<b>Affiliation</b>	EPFL
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### Description

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**Qloudlab** is the inventor and patent holder of the world's first touchscreen-based biosensor. We are developing a cost-effective technology that is able to turn your smartphone touchscreen into a medical device for multiple blood diagnostics testing: no plug-in required with just a simple disposable. Our innovation is at the convergence of smartphones, healthcare, and cloud solutions. The development is supported by EPFL (Pr. Philippe Renaud, Microsystems Laboratory) and by a major industrial player in cutting-edge touchscreen solutions for consumer, industrial, and automotive products.



## Appraisal

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Qcloudlab clearly demonstrated its ability to develop disruptive innovation in the medical technology industry. The fact that no add-on to the mobile phone but only a simple disposable is required for testing makes the technology beautiful and highly user-friendly. In addition, the team's cooperation with the leading producer of touchscreens as well as the selected market for testing purposes reveals a very solid knowledge of the business side.

Being at an early stage of the technological development, the team needs to clearly define its product and the aimed market.



## rqmicro

Dr. Hans-Anton Keserue,  
Dr. Daniel Schaffhauser,  
Dr. David Bertsch

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<b>Industry</b>	Agriculture/Food
<b>Place</b>	Zurich
<b>Affiliation</b>	ETHZ
<b>Contact</b>	<a href="http://www.rqmicro.ch">www.rqmicro.ch</a>

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### Description

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**rqmicro** provides a novel system for the rapid detection of water- and foodborne pathogens. The main USPs are superior sensitivity and a time to result of under one hour. This is achieved through the intelligent synthesis of an enrichment technology (immuno-magnetic separation) with microfluidic lab-on-a-chip technology and high-speed single-cell counting (flow cytometry). Compared to the classic cultivation-dependent methods that require days for a result, **rqmicro's** approach yields results in a significantly shorter time with higher accuracy and lower detection limits. **rqmicro's** business aim is to bring this new system to broad application in industrial laboratory environments by providing instrumentation and consumables.



## Appraisal

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rqmicro provides an ultra-rapid and highly innovative technology to detect pathogenic microorganisms in water and food. The team behind rqmicro consists of broad-based and interdisciplinary experts. A first product is about to be launched in the Legionella market. While established Legionella tests need two weeks to produce results, the solution offered by rqmicro only needs a few hours. The offered technology clearly has the potential to be used in many markets, i.e. to save energy and money in the hotel business. Going forward, it is crucial for the team to develop a solid strategy to well protect their technology.



# SamanTree Technologies

Dr. Davor Kosanic, Dr. Bastien Rchet,  
Dr. Etienne Shaffer, Dr. Chad Brokopp,  
Prof. Dr. Dr. Simon Hoerstrup

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<b>Industry</b>	Medical technology
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<b>Affiliation</b>	EPFL
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## Description

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**SamanTree Technologies** AG is a digital microscopy company (EPFL spin-off) with the mission to enable digital in vivo histology for complete, surgical tumor removal. Early-stage cancer diagnosis and subsequent complete surgical resection compose the therapy with the highest chances for complete cure. However, cancer cells missed during surgical excisions result in the recurrence of the tumor and reoperation rates of 20 to 40%. Enabling efficient point-of-care digital pathology, SamanTree's surgical microscopes, with the largest field of view on the planet, will substitute the "frozen section analysis," and consequently improve surgical workflow, treatment decisions, and resection accuracy, while reducing reoperation rates and overall cost of procedures.





## Appraisal

During a surgery, the currently available imaging technology is not able to distinguish between cancerous and healthy tissue. The strong idea of SamanTree is to enable the surgeon to recognize intraoperatively whether tissue is cancerous or not, promising great benefits for patients. On the business side, the team of SamanTree has built up a strong network to industrial partners. Going forward, solid financing and a realistic timeline for market entry will be necessary.



## SwissLeg

Dr. Paulo Gonçalves, Roberto Agosta,  
Mohammad Shlash Ismail

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<b>Industry</b>	Medical technology
<b>Place</b>	Lugano
<b>Affiliation</b>	USI Lugano
<b>Contact</b>	info@swissleg.com

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### Description

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**SwissLeg** is a social business born at USI in Lugano and is the answer to a global humanitarian need for amputees worldwide. SwissLeg is an innovative prosthetic technology that offers affordable, high-quality, and high-mobility artificial legs, which enable amputees in the developing world to walk and run at a minimal cost. The three key innovations (alignment process, materials, and thermo-molding technique) allow for fast and localized production, giving amputees a same-day service. Our team believes that walking is a basic human right that should be affordable to all people everywhere. We intend to satisfy a global humanitarian need with an affordable viable solution by creating prosthetic centers around the world.



## Appraisal

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Swissleg offers an affordable, high quality and high-mobility solution to amputees in the developing world. The prosthetic legs developed by the team combine an innovative design, a simple and fast manufacturing process and an easy adjusting mechanism that allows adaptation to the patient within just a few hours – a task that usually takes days. As a true example of social entrepreneurship the team behind Swissleg gives amputees in the developing world the possibility to walk again at a minimal cost. Working together with NGOs, a clear pricing and market-implementation strategy will be required.



## Versantis

Dr. Vincent Forster, Dr. Meriam Kabbaj,  
Prof. Dr. Jean-Christophe Leroux

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<b>Industry</b>	Pharma/Biotechnology
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<b>Contact</b>	vincent.forster@pharma.ethz.ch

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### Description

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Every day in the EU and the US, 370 people die as a result of drug overdose, and another 25'000 are hospitalized for misuse or abuse of illegal or prescription drugs. Besides drugs, endogenous waste products are also extremely life threatening when present in excess due to a deficient liver function. The most common endogenous toxin is ammonia, which is the reason that more than 350'000 people suffer from severe liver failure in the EU and the US. **Versantis** has developed an innovative peritoneal dialysis strategy based on microvesicles that can clear toxic compounds from the organism with unprecedented efficacy, and therefore save patients from metabolite intoxications and drug overdoses.



## Appraisal

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There is a clear need for the novel universal antidote developed by Versantis. It is able to rapidly remove toxic agents from the organism. Thereby, it saves the patients from acute intoxications. On top of the solid research, Versantis consists of a team of experienced researches and a strong partnering advisory board.

Going forward, a good strategy for clinical studies and a realistic timeline for market-release will be crucial for success.

## **Finalists** (in alphabetical order)

### **CALCISCO**

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Cardiovascular disease due to vascular and soft tissue calcification is a major cause of death worldwide and a major challenge for healthcare systems. It remains the number-one cause of death of patients with chronic kidney disease.

CALCISCO is developing and marketing the first and only diagnostic test available to determine calcification propensity in blood samples (Pasch et al., 2012). This offers exciting, new opportunities for the early detection of patients with an elevated risk of calcification, and for the direction and monitoring of their treatment.

### **Coteries**

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Coteries is specialized on direct-to-fans interaction for artists and musicians. We create value for both the artist and the fan by delivering mobile applications (iPhone, Android) driving fan engagement, ownership of the community, and new revenue streams for the artists. In the current app economy, fans are waiting for apps that wow them, not simply apps bringing them the same information as a Web site would. Coteries revolutionizes the business model of mobile apps for artists: there's no up-front cost for the artist and we share the brand new revenues streams generated by the app with the artist.

### **Eternity**

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Eternity has developed a novel solution, the Eternity Hub, which is the first fully automated solar power planning and optimization tool for homes and commercial buildings. Solar power technology exists for windows, facades, and practically all outward-facing building elements: The challenge for the home owner and buil-

ding operator to integrate all solar-power-producing elements with electricity-consuming devices, storage, and heating systems is overwhelmingly complex. The Eternity hub samples building power consumption and weather data in real time, allowing each homeowner to set up an optimal "smart grid" at home. We guarantee maximum autonomy and financial return for solar power.

### **Fastree3D**

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Fastree3D has developed a next generation of photo sensors that increase price/performance by a magnitude of five to ten times in the field of machine vision and ultimately other advanced vision applications. Fastree3D sensors are lowering barriers, such as cost, speed, distance, ambiguity, and adverse illumination sensitivity. The targeted applications include high-speed robotics, automatic guided vehicles in industry and automotive driving assistance. After an initial technology validation in the metrology and machine vision fields, we anticipate that the same technology will be adopted in automotive driving assistance, enabling higher safety and reducing the fatalities in the US and the EU by 50%.

### **G-Therapeutics**

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G-Therapeutics is an EPFL spin-off with the aim of making a fundamentally new treatment paradigm that restored voluntary locomotion in paralyzed animals with a success rate of 100% available for human use. G-Therapeutics is developing an implantable electrochemical spinal neuroprosthesis and a robot-assisted training program to rehabilitate individuals with spinal cord injury. The entire therapeutic package will include an implantable stimulation system, a pharmacological cocktail for the most severe lesions, and a walk rehabilitation robot. The latter can also be used for walk rehabilitation in a wide variety of clinical indications, including strokes, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, and orthopedics.

### **Geneemo**

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Geneemo is an innovative technology for staging the text by adding expressions, emotions, and characters to synthesized/natural voices. There are many voice applications: GPS, announcement systems, toys/mobile applications, audiobooks/media content generation, gaming applications, interactive dialog systems, and other assistive/entertaining tools. Lack of emotion hurts applications such as speech-generating machines used by people with a speaking handicap unable to express their feelings. Geneemo adds emotions, expressions, characterization, background, and even personalization (convert voice to user's own voice) to audio. This voice- and language-independent technology can open up a new portfolio of voice applications, such as automatic dubbing of movies or personalized game characters.

### **Glycemicon**

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Glycemicon AG, a spin-off from the ETH Zurich incorporated in January 2013, is working on the development of natural medical foods and pharmaceuticals for the prevention, management, and treatment of adult-onset diabetes and obesity. The company's first product uses a unique mechanism and modifies fat tissue to be more efficient in decreasing elevated blood sugar levels, a hallmark of adult-onset diabetes. The active compound is naturally occurring in humans and found in food, which allows Glycemicon to develop it as a medical food, a form of healthcare nutrition that can be prescribed and has to be monitored by a physician.

### **LockStyler**

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LockStyler provides a revolutionary, patented, professional hair highlights and lowlights coloring system. The system consists of an applicator and disposable hair dye coloring cartridges. LockStyler offers a solution that is much simpler, cleaner, and quicker



by 50% than anything existing. LockStyler is designed for hair and beauty professionals serving active women, who have limited time available to create or renew hair highlights.

### **mininavident**

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mininavident developed a 3D-real-time surgical navigation system for dental implants. The complication rate related to dental implants is high (2-20%) and could be reduced by smart systems to guide the dental surgeon during the procedure. Unlike current solutions, the MiniNaviDent system carries a stereoscopic camera directly on the surgical handpiece, which makes it more efficient and easy to use for the dental surgeon.

### **Nanolive**

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Nanolive has developed a disruptive proprietary technology, which allows for the very first time to explore a living cell in 3D without damaging it. By experiencing the living cell in a completely new way, our 3D Cell-Explorer shows a comprehensive color representation of its activity. Since the cell is the basis of all life on earth, this is a major milestone in the history of microscopy, which may change all the rules in the fields of education, biology, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, labs, and industry. Those markets represent 100'000s of devices, which we will address in connection with our cloud biotech apps and communities. With our affordable 3D Cell-Explorer, researchers will never again have to "guess" what happens inside a living cell.

### **Parquetry**

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Anyone who drives in Switzerland will understand the pains of looking for a parking space. Imagine now that your phone could navigate you directly to an empty parking spot close to your destination. How much time, gas, and frustration would you save?

We have developed a camera-based smart parking system for determining on-street parking availability. Existing sensors must be embedded into the street and can monitor only one parking spot per sensor. Our solution is easier to deploy, covers multiple spots, and can facilitate parking enforcement. Our vision is to improve urban mobility and make our cities more livable.

### **Play! by Uberchord**

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Learning a musical instrument is tough. Even with the support from a great teacher, it requires dedication, discipline, and time. With new technology there have come new ways of learning, such as music learning software. However, the problem with existing music learning software is that they do not work well with polyphonic instruments, such as the guitar. Play! is a mobile app that teaches you to play the guitar in a completely new way, building on the most advanced audio recognition technology. It also works with other polyphonic instruments and provides a new concept to learning a musical instrument.

### **ScanTrust**

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ScanTrust offers a platform to protect brands against the destructive effects of counterfeiting by empowering authorized parties to authenticate a product. The platform is built around our invention, the world's first copy-proof QR code (patent pending). It includes a secure graphical layer that defies even the most professional counterfeits. ScanTrust's copy-proof QR code can be easily integrated into a product's packaging or label with standard printing equipment, and authenticated with today's smartphones.

## **TwingTec**

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TwingTec has developed a new technology to harness wind energy. The kite-like twing flies up into the sky while the mechanical energy is converted into electrical power in a ground-based generator. The system does not need a tower or a foundation, so that 90% of the material of a wind turbine can be saved. Twings easily reach higher altitudes, where stronger and more consistent wind blows, allowing for a considerable reduction of the costs of wind energy. The mobile TwingTec system is attractive e.g. for the displacement of diesel generators in remote areas.

## **Yellow Shades**

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Yellow Shades is setting a new standard for the fashion shopping experience by combining the transparency of online shopping with the touch-and-feel experience of shopping locally and an extra bit of fun and viral engagement. It allows its users to find exactly what they are looking for in their very own area anytime and from anywhere, and to receive news and sales corresponding to their own interests.



# Advisory board members

**ascom**

Juhani Anttila



Christoph Loos

**SULZER**

Klaus Stahlmann



Pascal Kiener



Reinhard Ambros



Urs Schächli



Calvin Grieder



Markus Neuhaus



Thierry Léger



Hariolf Kottmann



Severin Schwan



Lukas Gähwiler



Barend Fruithof



Urs Rügsegger



Matthias Reinhart



Dieter Bambauer

**sonova**

Lukas Braunschweiler



Alexander Zschokke



Gilbert Achermann

Medienpartner:

*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*



## Coaches & jurors (A-F)

Many thanks to all our coaches and jurors for their time and expertise!

Ambros Barbara

Amstutz Patrick

Baumann Brigitte

Baumgartner Peter

Becker René

Belsey Mark

Biedermann Theo

Binz Kaspar

Bjønness Søren

Blarer Stefan

Boichat Romain

Brägger Stefan

Braun Aron

Brunner Hans

Brunner Peter O.

Bührer Adrian

Burckhardt Peter

Burckhardt Peter E.

Bürki Christian

Caro Adriel

Chapero Valentin

Christen Jakob Mariana

Christen Gert

Claesson Ulf

Cometta Silvano

Crochat Olivier

Day Stefan

Decker Markus

Dennis John

Dequesne Romain

Derungs Bruno

Desbonnet Joe

Dubrulle François

Dudek Peter

Dürr Josef A.

Fantini Nicola

Felber Josef

Feuz Hans Rudolf



## Coaches & jurors (F-M)

Fischer Peter E.

Florez Milagros

Florin Claude

Fülscher Jan

Gandar Marc

Garcia Pedraza Marcos

Glauser Markus

Govinder Nanci

Greif Holger

Güttinger Jörg

Gygax Ruedi

Hacklin Aino

Hamilton Rhea

Hardtmuth Alexander

Hartschen Michael

Hasler Philipp

Hatz Jann J.

Hegarty Aoife

Heil Guntram

Hilb Michael

Hofer Markus

Hohl Heinz

Hölling Matthias

Hotz Peter Georg

Isenegger Urs

Iwankowska Malgosia

Kalt Adrian

Kaltofen-Ehmann Arnd

Keiser Olivier

Kirchhoff Katharina

Kirschner Lutz

Kiseljak Rudolf

Knecht Stephan

Knecht Stephan

Knight Christopher

Krüsi Monika

Kuhlen Francis

Lamminger Daniel

Lingg Hansruedi

Looser Ulrich Jakob

Looser Walter

Mabillard Sébastien

Macina Sergio J.

Margadant Reto

Mariéthoz Jérôme

Martin-Garcia Jesus



## Coaches & jurors (M-W)

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## Imprint

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