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### **Pioneers in the Swiss Startup Ecosystem, >>venture>>, Proudly Celebrate 25 years of Supporting Innovative Startups**

*The leading Swiss startup competition announces the addition of non-profits into its program starting 2023*

28/6/22 ZURICH-- >>venture>>, Switzerland's leading startup competition, celebrated 25 years of fostering Swiss innovation and entrepreneurship on Tuesday evening at ETH Zurich. The anniversary celebration was highlighted by the 2022 Award Ceremony where >>venture>> awarded over CHF 500,000 in non-dilutive cash to the nation's most promising early-stage startups. The competition ranked and celebrated the 15 winning startups across 5 different industry verticals, crowning Enerdrap as the Grand Prize Winner.

Enerdrap has developed a technology that turns underground infrastructure into renewable heat sources for the heating and cooling needs of buildings. Considered the most innovative early-stage Swiss startup of 2022, Enerdrap was awarded CHF 150,000 in non-dilutive funds and a McKinsey & Company business consulting package.

"It's exciting to get a front-row seat to the future of Switzerland," said Ulrich Looser, chairman of the >>venture>> foundation. "We're very proud of Enerdrap and we're looking forward to seeing their success unfold."

The evening was peppered with anecdotes and accomplishments of the past 25 years. It included a congratulatory video message from special guest, Swiss Federal Councilor, Guy Parmelin, who warmly applauded the boldness of the entrepreneurs and the efforts of the >>venture>> competition.

Since its inception, >>venture>> has helped over 1,500 startups that have gone on to create over 15,000 jobs. Their alumni roster boasts familiar success stories some of which have IPO'd including: Sophia Genetics, Sensirion, Molecular Partners Onward, and HEIQ. Others tout impressive corporate exits such as ESBA Tech to Novartis, Glycart to Roche, Covagen to Johnson & Johnson, Zattoo to TX Media, and Lemoptix to Intel.

"What I've learned over the years is that in order to be a successful company or foundation, it's important to keep one's finger on the pulse of the ever-changing shifts in society and the economy." said Thomas Knecht, founder and honorary chairman of the >>venture>> foundation. "This keeps you evolving in a timely manner and allows you to create more relevant impact."

The next evolution of the competition was formally announced by Dr. Knecht at the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Starting in 2023, the competition will open its doors to nonprofit startups. Awarding startups that aim for societal and environmental benefit, basing themselves on a financially sustainable business model is the next step in the foundation's quest to address the challenges of the Swiss economy.

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"When I founded >>venture>> in the 90s, the Swiss economy lacked jobs and innovation. Today, other issues have come into focus that we need to tackle and that cannot all be realized with a "for profit" model. >>venture>> itself is "not for profit". It is very important to me that we institutionalize the considerations that have led to the functioning of >>venture>>. With an extended >>venture>>, we can make an additional contribution to a flourishing Switzerland by promoting innovative approaches, including "not for profit" approaches, which create additional benefits for society and the environment," says Dr. Knecht.

The evening concluded with the rankings of the 15 winners as listed below:

## **Finance & Insurance:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: Veritic (ZG):** VERITIC develops user-friendly, multi-chain NFT platforms in collaboration with leading institutions, and is based on highly secure minting and custody infrastructure.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Correntics (ZH):** Correntics makes supply chains future proof. The software helps to reduce financial risks from climate extremes and emerging risks in global value chains.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Kaspar& (SG):** Kaspar& offers an all-in-one app including a Swiss bank account, and an automatic transaction-based round-up mechanism that invests the resulting micro-payments in professionally managed investment strategies.

## **Health & Nutrition:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: Bionter (BS):** Bionter revolutionizes analytical testing in the biotech sector by innovating and tailoring technology to the true needs of the pharmaceutical industry.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place: DeepPsy (BS):** DeepPsy improves psychiatric treatment by enabling treatment personalization based on the individual biological profile of patients in the EEG and ECG.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Amporin Pharmaceuticals (ZH):** Amporin Pharmaceuticals is an emerging Swiss biotech company that is pioneering the development of a new class of pore-targeting therapies for the treatment of protein misfolding diseases, including ALS, Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's disease.

## **ICT:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: ReFFIT (GE):** ReFFIT delivers disruptive software for the material industry to efficiently analyze spectroscopy data.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place: DeepJudge (ZH):** Founded by four ETH Machine Learning PhDs, DeepJudge sets new standards in context-based understanding and processing of legal documents.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Versics (ZH):** Versics is an ETH spin-off offering optoelectronic devices that exchange data globally. The mission of Versics is to enable the data of tomorrow, today.

## **Industrials & Engineering:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: Enerdrape (VD):** Enerdrape turns underground infrastructures into renewable heat sources for the heating and cooling needs of buildings.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Composite Recycling (VD):** Composite Recycling developed an innovative technology to close the loop on glass fibre reinforced plastics, common in boats, planes, trains, and wind turbines.

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**3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Groam (ZH):** Groam is a provider of biodegradable foamed biomaterials for fast disposables such as protective packaging or plant substrates.

## Retail & Consumer Services:

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: Bravo (ZH):** bravo is a simple app, allowing restaurants to order from all their suppliers from one place.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Samplab (LU):** Samplab provides an AI tool for easy and creative music production.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Alter Ego (ZH):** Alter Ego reduces the rate of online-purchased returned apparel by allowing shoppers to digitally try on their clothes with a 3D avatar created from 1 photo.

In addition to the vertical winners, >>venture>> also partnered with RTS to allow the Swiss public to vote for their favorite startups and help them win CHF 10,000. With the vote of the Swiss public, Big Wave VR Game was crowned 2022 Audience Award winner. Big Wave VR Game is a startup driven by science to improve people's lives through daily mind and body VR training using the skills learned in big ocean surfing.

## About >>venture>>

>>venture>> is Switzerland's leading and largest annual startup competition co-organized by ETH Zurich, McKinsey & Company, Knecht Holding, Innosuisse, and EPFL. Established in 1997, it is governed by the non-profit >>venture>> foundation with the purpose of empowering entrepreneurs and fostering innovation across Switzerland. Participants can apply each year under one of the following five industry verticals: Health & Nutrition, ICT, Industrial Engineering & Hardware, Retail & Customer Services, and Finance & Insurance. >>venture>> offers a total of CHF 510,000 in non-dilutive funds, mentorship and an extensive network of experts. For more information, please visit [www.venture.ch](http://www.venture.ch) or contact [office@venture.ch](mailto:office@venture.ch).