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>>Venture>>, Switzerland's Leading Startup Competition, Successfully Hosts Inspiring Award Ceremony Celebrating Innovation, and Inaugural Social Impact Award

[LAUSANNE – JUNE 26, 2023] - >>venture>>, Switzerland's leading early-stage startup competition, held its highly anticipated Award Ceremony on June 26, 2023, at the Swiss Tech Convention Center located at EPFL. The event marked a significant milestone for >>venture>> as it expanded its impact by introducing the Non-Profit Organization (NPO) track. The ceremony unveiled the winners of various awards, including the Grand Prize, the inaugural NPO Track winner, and the recipients of the Audience Award presented by RTS.

The startup Biosimo emerged as the winner of the Grand Prize, solidifying its position as Switzerland's most promising early-stage startup. Their exceptional achievements in advancing the transition to a fossil-free chemical industry through low-cost bio-based chemicals propelled them to win this prestigious title. As the Grand Prize winner, Biosimo was honored with CHF 150,000 in non-dilutive funds and a McKinsey & Company business consulting package.

For the first time in its 25-year history, >>venture>> proudly announced the champion of its inaugural NPO Track. Openversum, with their innovative approach to provide safe drinking water to underserved communities, emerged as the winner among the nonprofit organizations. Their dedication to training local entrepreneurs in Colombia and Ecuador to provide safe drinking water through the manufacturing and distribution of household-level filters resonated with the jurors, earning them the coveted 1st place rank. In recognition of their outstanding work, Openversum received CHF 50,000 in non-dilutive funding to help jumpstart their nonprofit journeys.

Ulrich Jakob Looser, Chairman of the >>venture>> foundation, expressed his satisfaction with the competition's evolution, stating, ">>venture>>'s expansion with the NPO track reflects our commitment to fostering innovative solutions. By providing a platform for profit-driven and social impact-driven ventures, we help create an environment conducive to driving economic growth and positive change."

Additionally, the >>venture>> Audience Award presented by RTS, recognized the startups that captured the hearts and votes of the Swiss audience. Among the 5 competing Business Track startups, Zizania won first place. The spinoff from Zollinger Bio upcycles plant materials to make natural and organic cosmetic products that are good for you and the planet. Within the NPO Track, GirlsCodeToo was selected as the winner by the audience. Both startups showcased their strong appeal and alignment with the values of the community. They were rewarded with CHF 10,000, and CHF 2,000, respectively.

This year, >>venture>> received an overwhelming response with 336 applications, reflecting the vibrant and dynamic startup ecosystem in Switzerland. The competition returned to Western Switzerland after five years, emphasizing the region's significance as an innovation hub. Out of the 18 winners announced, 8 startups hail from Western Switzerland, specifically cantons Vaud, Geneva, and Jura.

The Award Ceremony celebrated the top three winners from the NPO Track as well as each industry vertical within the Business track, including Health & Nutrition, ICT, Industrial Engineering & Hardware, Retail & Customer Services, and Finance & Insurance. The respective winners were bestowed with nondilutive cash prizes of CHF 50,000, CHF 20,000, and CHF 10,000 for achieving the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd positions, respectively. In addition to cash prizes, all first-place teams in their industry vertical were awarded a business consulting package from McKinsey & Company.

The following is a recap of the winners in each industry vertical and NPO track including ranking:

FINANCE & INSURANCE

1st place: Frigg (Zug, ZG): Streamlining sustainable finance processes for small to mid-sized renewable energy developers, reducing manual efforts and costs.

2nd place: Grape Health (Zurich, ZH): Providing fully digital employee insurance that prioritizes physical and mental well-being, investing in preventive services for healthier teams.

3rd place: Ascentys (Courroux, JU): Automation of ESG assessment and reporting for companies, simplifying the process and enabling actionable reports.

HEALTH & NUTRITION

1st place: Diatheris (Geneva, GE): Developing improved therapeutic solutions for type 1 diabetes management, offering an alternative to insulin therapy.

2nd place: metaLead (Zurich, ZH): Developing cutting-edge treatments against toxic metal poisoning, starting with lead, to provide effective treatment options.

3rd place: Lighthouse Tech Sagl (Morbio Inferiore, TI): Creating a fashionable eyewear frame as a wearable device to enhance safe mobility for blind and vision-impaired individuals.

ICT

1st place: Bearmind (Lausanne, VD): Innovating helmet-worn sensors and software for brain injury prevention and cognitive performance monitoring in sports.

2nd place: ClearSky (Lausanne, VD): Augmenting confidential conversations with privacy-focused AI assistance, ensuring data remains secure.

3rd place: EMPATH (Yverdon-les-Bains, VD): Offering a plug-and-play over-the-air test solution for wireless systems, ensuring safety and performance.

INDUSTRIALS & ENGINEERING

1st place: Biosimo (Zurich, ZH): Introducing low-cost bio-based chemicals, reducing CO2 emissions, and advancing the transition to a fossil-free chemical industry.



2nd place: Perovskia (Aubonne, VD): Providing digitally printed perovskite solar cells for customized integration into electronic devices, sensors, and low-light conditions.

3rd place: Voltiris (Lausanne, VD): Empowering greenhouse growers with solar modules that enable energy independence without impacting crop growth.

RETAIL & CONSUMER SERVICES

1st place: Viatu (Zug, ZG): Facilitating sustainable travel by providing a platform for booking connected trips and promoting sustainable tourism partners.

2nd place: Clever Forever (St. Gallen, SG): Offering a math and literacy app for preschoolers, leveraging AI to create interactive educational games.

3rd place: NOW CARE (Aubonne, VD): Revolutionizing personal care with a powdered formula that transforms into liquid, foaming soap, promoting conscious soap consumption.

NPO

1st place: Openversum (Schlieren, ZH): Training local entrepreneurs in Colombia and Ecuador to provide safe drinking water to underserved communities through the manufacture and distribution of household-level filters.

2nd place: HEMLATA (Zurich, ZH): Empowering young women from India's lower socio-economic strata through quality education to achieve gender equality.

3rd place: Adaire Academy (Winterthur, ZH): Enabling qualified African adults to pursue rewarding tech careers remotely, filling the demand for technologists in Switzerland.

The success of these remarkable winners, both in the Business and NPO Tracks, exemplifies the entrepreneurial spirit and dedication to innovation that drives the >>venture>> competition. The evening's celebrations provided a glimpse into the future of the Swiss startup ecosystem, where groundbreaking ideas and visionary leadership converge to shape a brighter tomorrow.

To learn more about >>venture>> and stay updated on future events, please visit www.venture.ch.

About >>venture>>:

>>venture>> is Switzerland's leading annual startup competition, organized by the non-profit >>venture>> foundation. Since its establishment in 1997, >>venture>> has been at the forefront of empowering entrepreneurs and fostering innovation across Switzerland. Co-organized by ETH Zurich, McKinsey & Company, Knecht Holding, Innosuisse, and EPFL, >>venture>> provides a vital platform for early-stage innovative startups to showcase their ideas, access mentorship, and build an extensive network of experts. The competition features two tracks, Business and NPO, with the former encompassing a range of industry verticals. Offering a total of CHF 590,000 in non-dilutive funds, along with valuable mentorship and support, >>venture>> continues to shape the entrepreneurial landscape in Switzerland and drive economic growth through innovation. For more information, visit www.venture.ch.