

## PRESS RELEASE

# KICKSTART ACCELERATOR CHOOSES 30 PROMISING STARTUPS FOR ITS 2017 PROGRAMME

**Kickstart Accelerator announces the startup shortlist for its second cohort comprising of FinTech, Food, Smart Cities and Robotics & Intelligent Systems verticals in Zurich**

ZURICH, 19 July 2017 – [Kickstart Accelerator](#) - one of Europe's largest multi-corporate, zero-equity technology accelerators - an initiative of [digitalswitzerland](#) and operated by [Impact Hub Zurich](#) - has today announced its shortlist of 30 startups for its second cohort in the four verticals in Zurich.

1500 startups tried it - 30 made it

The startups were carefully selected from over 1,500 applications from all over the world, after the top 60 were invited to participate in the final part of the selection process - a two day bootcamp in Zurich. At this stage, they had a chance to pitch their ideas to an experienced jury, comprised of industry professionals, investors and corporate representatives. In the end, 30 startups, 2% of all those that applied, were chosen to take part in an 11-week programme taking place from 4 September to 17 November 2017. Kickstart Accelerator will be based in Kraftwerk, an old transformer station which has been converted into a unique collaboration and innovation space [in the heart of Zurich](#).

15 countries and almost half female co-founders

This year, startups from a total of 15 countries, including South Korea, South Africa, Finland, Ukraine and Singapore have made it into the programme. Almost two thirds of the startups (19) come from Europe, whereas five startups will travel to Zurich from the US, three from Asia, two from Africa and one from Australia. *"It's great to see applications from so many countries, wanting to build, challenge and scale their businesses here in the Swiss innovation ecosystem", said Patricia Schlenter, Programme Manager at Kickstart Accelerator, "what I am particularly excited about is that 13 out of 30 startups at the Kickstart Accelerator have at least one woman as founder."*

From Pollution control to Blockchain-as-a-service

The selected startups work on a variety of innovative ideas, with aspirations to either disrupt traditional industries or capitalise on new technologies. In the Smart Cities vertical, for example, there is a lot of interest around tracking and controlling pollution and two of the selected startups, [uHoo](#) and [Hawa Dawa](#), are working on products that help to measure air pollution both outdoors and indoors as well. Meanwhile, South Korean startup [Blocko](#) aims to deliver Blockchain-as-a-service that would provide the environment with development tools and building kits for application developers who are not familiar with Blockchain. A more detailed overview of all 30 selected startups can be found [here](#) and below.

Interest from top-tier corporates grows

Kickstart Accelerator offers startup-friendly benefits packages. Unlike other leading programmes, it takes [no equity](#), [provides no strings attached funding](#) and gives access to some of the best known corporates locally and internationally. Having such strong corporate backing is one of Kickstart's most significant differentiators and allows startups to benefit greatly from partnering with well

established market players. Corporates on the other side, have strong interest too. For example AXA Winterthur and Swisscom formed a team and will join the programme as intrapreneurs.

Global consulting firm PwC returns this year as one of Kickstart Accelerator`s corporate partners. Commenting on the programme, Dr. Christian B. Westermann, Leader Data & Analytics and Partner at PwC Switzerland, said: *"Artificial intelligence and the further development of robotics will lead to long-lasting changes in our world, at a speed never seen before", We are very pleased to leverage our global network to support the most promising startups and give them the opportunity to actively shape these exciting market developments."*

Andreas Kubli, Head of Multichannel Management & Digitisation at corporate partner UBS Switzerland said: *"The fintech industry is experiencing fast growth and will continue to contribute to the future of the financial sector around the world. I am really looking forward to collaborating closely with the promising fintech startups in this year`s cohort. I am convinced that we can support young entrepreneurs with our expertise but also benefit from mutual exchange."*

### Strong support from dedicated advisors

Supporting this year`s programme is the [Centre for Digital Revolution \(C4DR\)](#), a multi-city business development hub founded by tech pioneer Eric Van der Kleij, which focuses on the technologies of the fourth industrial revolution - artificial intelligence, internet of things, blockchain and robotics. Van der Kleij and his experienced team will advise Kickstart on the creation of content-rich initiatives for the programme which will deliver market viable innovations, help the startups become resilient to market and technological changes whilst delivering measurable benefit to business and society with their products and solutions.

In addition, the startups will receive specialist advice from a dedicated team at [evitive](#), a strategy & innovation advisory firm specialized on venture building. The team will help the cohort prepare in readiness for of Proof of Concepts (PoCs) with the global partners - a key target outcome for the programme. [evitive](#) is represented by Senior Partner Pascal A. Miserez, and enhanced by FinTech Specialist Salvatore Iacangelo.

### Expansion to Lausanne and Basel

Alongside the four Zurich verticals, this year Kickstart Accelerator offers two additional verticals based in Lausanne and Basel. In cooperation with [École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne EPFL](#), Kickstart Accelerator has launched a new [EdTech](#) vertical for 10 international startups, who will be announced end of August. Furthermore, in recognition of Switzerland`s strong medical and research environment, Kickstart Accelerator has entered into a partnership with [BaseLaunch](#) to offer also a healthcare-specific vertical in Basel, which will announce participating startups in late summer.

## STARTUPS FOR KICKSTART ACCELERATOR ZURICH VERTICALS 2017

### Fintech

[AAAccell](#) converts and develops top research achievements into trusted solutions and tools for the financial services industry. (Switzerland)

[Adjoint](#) has created a technology solution to drive enterprise-level adoption of the game-changing Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT). (USA)

[Apiax](#) transforms complex regulations into easy-to-use digital compliance rules. (Switzerland)

[Blocko](#) develops and delivers blockchain technology solutions to clients, replacing conventional and inefficient processes and systems of trust. (South Korea)

[CityFALCON](#) provides personalised financial news and content as well as leveraging machine learning and AI to build a virtual financial assistant for investors and traders. (United Kingdom)

[CoinCube](#) tracks and trades crypto-currencies via its proprietary software for index investing. (USA)

[Fjuul Vision Oy](#) offers a Software as a Service (Saas) platform for insurers to grow their business at lower risk. (Finland)

[Libryo](#) enables any person working in any organisation to understand their legal obligations in any situation. (South Africa)

[Neuroprofiler](#) is a behavioural finance game that helps Financial Advisors assess the Investor Profile of their clients and is compliant with MiFID II. (UK)

[PriceHubble](#) enables smarter real estate decisions by bringing the latest in machine learning, big data analytics and data visualization to market participants along the entire real estate value chain. (Switzerland)

## Food

[BIOsens](#) develops Internet of Things (IoT) products using biosensors for rapid diagnostics of food safety with respect to mycotoxins. (Ukraine)

[Farmerline](#) connects small-scale farmers in Africa to information services, products and resources to improve their incomes. (Ghana)

[FlavorWiki](#) turns everyday consumers into accurate taste testers capable of working together with producers to create products perfectly suited to market demands. (Switzerland)

[Hexagro Urban Farming](#) provides scalable, modular and automated indoor farming systems, which allow anybody anywhere access to healthy food. (Italy)

[KITRO](#) provides food and beverage outlets with an innovative solution to optimize their performance by reducing avoidable food waste. (Switzerland)

[Taste of Kenya](#) is an online marketplace that connects Kenyan farmers to coffee buyers globally through direct trade. (UK)

## Smart Cities

[Antavi](#)'s command and control app helps managers of public spaces to respond faster to incidents with a bird's eye view on personnel and the crowd. (Switzerland)

[BikeLook](#) tracks bikes to provide actionable smart city data and bike theft reduction. (Ireland)

[DCbrain](#) helps network managers deal with the growing complexity in industrial flow networks, by digitizing and applying its AI software to existing company data. (France)

[Hawa Dawa](#) combines sensor networks, big data analytics and machine learning algorithms to create real-time heat-maps of air quality on a hyperlocal scale. (Germany)

[Parquery AG](#) uses snapshots from existing cameras to identify available parking spots in real-time as a service for smart city and smart mobility applications. (Switzerland)

[Spark Horizon](#) is building and operating the first free charging network for electric cars across Europe, underwritten by sustainably engaged brands and installed at highly popular locations at no charge. (Switzerland/UK)

[State of Place](#) offers a Software as a Service (SaaS) solution that helps cities and developers create more walkable, livable places by quantifying what people love about cities and forecasting the benefits of making them better. (USA)

[uHoo](#) uses data on indoor air quality to enhance health and safety, increase productivity and provide insights on energy savings to commercial and residential spaces. (Singapore)

[Rent`n`Share](#) is an intrapreneurial team co-created by ICT provider Swisscom and insurance company AXA Winterthur. Their collaboration offers a flexible long-term car-rental solution combined with a peer2peer car-sharing option. (Switzerland)

## **Robotics & Intelligent Systems**

[AstroPrint](#) is an IoT platform that makes the use of 3D printers easier and accessible to all. (USA)

[Automata](#) produces affordable robotic arms with easy-to-use controlling software, which makes the automatization of cost-sensitive applications possible. (UK)

[Flicktek](#) improves human to machine interaction thanks to a new technology that recognizes human gestures directly at the wrist. (UK)

[iFuture Robotics](#) is working on autonomous mobile robots for large warehouses to make the logistics smarter and more efficient. (India)

[Jamie & I](#) learns about your personal style through artificial intelligence, while regularly sending you a curated selection of outfits tailored to your taste. (Australia)

[R A D](#) has developed a technology based on machine learning to transform movements of two-dimensional images into 3D-models in real-time. (USA)

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#### About Kickstart Accelerator:

[Kickstart Accelerator](#) invests in solutions that work for problems that matter. The programme, an initiative of [digitalswitzerland](#) and operated by [Impact Hub Zurich](#), is one of Europe's largest zero equity, multi-corporate accelerators with the aim of putting the Swiss innovation ecosystem on the global map of entrepreneurship.

For 11 weeks, 50 startups come to Switzerland where they are provided with coworking space, seed funding as well as direct access to leading corporate partners, investors, mentors and experts. The programme is open to the best international startups within the following six verticals: FinTech, Food, Smart Cities, Robotics & Intelligent Systems, EdTech and Healthcare. EdTech vertical is in partnership with [EPFL](#) and operated by [venturelab](#). To offer the healthcare-specific vertical, Kickstart Accelerator has entered into a partnership with [BaseLaunch](#) (operated by [BaselArea.swiss](#)).

Kickstart Accelerator's corporate partners are AXA Winterthur, Coop, Credit Suisse, EY, Gebert-Rüf-Stiftung, Migros, PwC Switzerland, Raiffeisen Switzerland, Swisscom and UBS. The program is also supported by ABB, Accenture, Empa, ETH, Global Fintech Association, Helsana, Hilti, Maxon Motor, Metall Zug, Stäubli, Swiss Life as well as the city of Zurich, city of Bern and city of St. Gallen.