

## Press Release

Top 10 for W.A. de Vigier Award 2018

### Personality Matters

Solothurn, 10.4.2018 From over 220 submitted projects, the jury picked their Top 16 in February. The 16 were assessed and presented their ideas to the Foundation Board, who then chose the Top 10. In addition to groundbreaking products, the personality of the CEO plays an important role in the run for the W.A. de Vigier Award. Among the winning startups are artificially intelligent hearing aids, wearable muscles and cables that are unparalleled in their longevity and flexibility. On May 30th, five startups will receive the W. A. de Vigier Award, each endowed with CHF 100,000.00.

„The Top 16 were so impressive this year that the choice was harder than ever“, says Alain Nicod, member of the W.A. de Vigier Foundation Board.

### Jury Places Importance on the CEO's Personality

Before the presentations to the Foundation Board, the Top 16 were thoroughly assessed. Using a standardized questionnaire, a benchmark is defined, enabling the judges to compare the startups. In addition, the CEO of the W.A. de Vigier Foundation, Regula Buob, has an in-depth conversation with the CEOs of the nominated startups. „Not only do we want to support groundbreaking products but we also aim to invest in outstanding people, who will shape the next generation of Swiss entrepreneurs“, explains Buob, who is a trained coach with years of experience. This element of the selection process makes the W.A. de Vigier Foundation one of the few startup sponsors that systematically include the human factor.

### These Are the Top 10 (in alphabetical order)

#### ***ACUBE Technology AG from Nidau (BE) - Access by Smartphone Instead of Tickets and Badges***

Handling tickets, badges and garage door remote controls is a nuisance, both for users and for technical service providers. ACUBE uses the smartphone for easier access and automatic payment. Thanks to the combination of a patented proximity positioning system with a mobile app, misplaced tickets and embarrassing arm-stretching maneuvers in front of the parking garage barrier will soon be a thing of the past.

#### ***AgroSustain GmbH (VD) - Organic Fungicides for Sustainable Agriculture***

Producers of agricultural goods are under pressure. To avoid crop and storage losses, chemical fungicides are used regardless of their negative impact on biodiversity and our health. AgroSustain develops ecological products for the prevention and treatment of a wide range of pathogens. These products are of interest to storage companies, the timber industry, gardeners and farmers.

***AUDATIC GmbH from Zurich (ZH) - Better Performance of Hearing Aids in Noisy Environments***

Hearing aids often let their wearers down in noisy situations. AUDATIC uses the latest artificial intelligence methods to filter out background noise and significantly enhance the listening experience. Whether in a restaurant, on the road or at a business meeting - thanks to AUDATIC's technology, hearing-aid users can once again participate in conversations with more joy and self-confidence.

***hemotune AG from Zurich (ZH) - Revolutionary Blood Purification in Sepsis***

Hemotune's procedure can remove toxins from the blood that are usually hard to access. Specially developed magnetic nanoparticles bind to the toxins and can subsequently be separated magnetically. The dialysis machine is equipped with an additional device in which these nanoparticles are mixed with the blood and removed together with the toxins. The first application is being developed for the removal of endotoxins in acute sepsis.

***inVoli from Renens (VD) - Safe Integration of Drones Into Our Skies***

Collisions between drones and aircrafts are becoming increasingly dangerous. inVoli provides the infrastructure for secure integration of unmanned aerial vehicles into existing air traffic. The technology of inVoli will make air traffic data openly accessible and can equip participants as well as the flying objects with the necessary instruments to make the sky safer and more efficient.

***Myoswiss AG from Zurich (ZH) - Wearable Muscles For People With Mobility Impairments***

Myoswiss develops the Myosuit: A clothing layer of wearable muscles that supports daily life activity. The solution combines robotics and functional textiles in a convenient product that weighs less than five kilograms. Novel algorithms coupled with sensing and actuating technology control the assistive forces applied throughout the user's movements.

***nanoleq GmbH from Zurich (ZH) - A New Generation of Cables***

Cables are vulnerable. This a problem, especially with medical devices or factory robots. nanoleq has developed a fundamentally new kind of cable technology. Under mechanical stress, the Zurich Startup's FlexOne cable has up to a hundred times longer service life than a standard cable while retaining its high flexibility. Nanoleq's target markets are in med tech, high-end audio applications and robotics.

***Sensoryx AG from Zurich (ZH) – A More Immersive Experience in the Virtual World***

Previously, users had to hold disruptive controls in their hands instead of interacting directly with the virtual world. VRfree is a mobile 3D tracking system that fully maps hands and fingers in cyberspace, allowing you to have literally tangible experiences in the virtual world. This solution combines different sensor types and provides realistic, real time mobile motion detection.

### ***SUN bioscience from Lausanne (VD) - 3D Cell Cultures For More Effective Treatment Decisions***

SUN bioscience launches a platform for standardized organoid 3D cell cultures that allows patient-specific testing for the direct efficacy of treatments. Today's methods based on biomarkers are often insufficiently reliable. SUN bioscience's solution optimizes medication decisions and thus avoids ineffective therapies. This leads to billions of dollars in healthcare savings.

### ***Touchless Automation GmbH from Biel (BE) - Contactless Handling of Microcomponents***

Touchless Automation offers innovative solutions for every industry that processes microcomponents. As soon as the sensitive microcomponents are touched, there is a risk of scratching, soiling or other damage. The solution offered by the Biel based startup can move components of all materials - completely contact-free.

### **About the W.A. de Vigier Award**

The W.A. de Vigier Award is the oldest and highest endowed prize for startups in Switzerland, giving away five awards of CHF 100,000.00 each. In 28 years the foundation has distributed over CHF 10 million of seed money. The results are about 80 flourishing startups, successful IPOs, multiple company exits and above all, many newly created jobs.

The following aspects are relevant for the evaluation of the projects: The entrepreneurial personality, the degree of innovation, the value for society as a whole, the technical and financial viability, market prospects and the potential for job creation.

### **Application for the W.A. de Vigier Award 2019**

From October 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 until January 7<sup>th</sup> 2019 startups can apply for the W.A. de Vigier Award 2019. The intended audience are young entrepreneurs domiciled in Switzerland, who are usually younger than 45 and whose role in their company is the realisation and marketing of an innovative, future-oriented product or service.

## **INVITATION FOR JOURNALISTS**

We would be happy to welcome you at our award ceremony!

Date: Wednesday, May 30th, 2018

Time: Opening of the garden: 3:30 pm, beginning of the award ceremony: 4:30 pm

Location: Untere Steingrubenstrasse 25, 4500 Solothurn

RSVP: Please let us know if you're coming. See contact details below.

### **Contact details for questions and RSVP**

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