

PRESS RELEASE

KICKSTART ACCELERATOR INVITES STARTUPS IN EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY TO APPLY FOR NEW EDTECH VERTICAL

Swiss accelerator program Kickstart Accelerator taps into the field of education technology launching a new EdTech vertical together with EPFL

LAUSANNE/ ZURICH, 14 June 2017 – [Kickstart Accelerator](#) is proud to announce a sixth vertical together with the [Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne \(EPFL\)](#). The multi-corporate and zero-equity accelerator launches the new EdTech vertical in Lausanne. The new acceleration program specifically for startups in education technology will be operated by [venturelab](#) and will have its homebase in the recently launched [EdTech Collider](#) at the EPFL Innovation Park (EIP) in Lausanne. The accelerator will welcome the 10 most promising international and Swiss startups in the field of education technology.

Startups are invited to apply now

Applications for the new vertical are open from today. International and Swiss startups with a promising prototype within EdTech can [apply](#) until July 10th. The selected startups will be invited to Lausanne from September to November 2017. They are provided with stipends of CHF 10'000, coworking-space at the EdTech Collider as well as access to a broad network of investors, experts, mentors and business partners. Furthermore, seven startups have the chance to win up to CHF 25'000 in a competitive pitching process at the end of the program.

With the launch of the new EdTech Vertical, Kickstart Accelerator is moving strongly towards its goal of becoming the biggest startup accelerator in Europe, active in Zurich and Basel (HealthCare vertical in partnership with [BaseLaunch](#)), and in Western Switzerland.

Education technology will be seeing a boost

Education is poised to undergo drastic technological evolution in the coming years. With its combined leadership in education and innovation, Switzerland offers a unique environment to accelerate the next generation of EdTech startups that will bring global impact. Located at the heart of the thriving startup community on the EPFL campus, the selected startups will benefit from collision and connection through a unique package comprising a structured acceleration program to boost their development.

Lausanne is a thriving EdTech hub

The EPFL has already established a strong education and learning ecosystem, coupled with a strong startup community and key players such as [venturelab](#). This ecosystem will be further enriched by the new EdTech Vertical of Kickstart Accelerator. Program's host, the EdTech Collider, is Switzerland's first collaborative space dedicated to ambitious entrepreneurs transforming education and learning through technology. The incubator already hosts world-class innovative startups.

Nicolas Bürer, Managing Director of [digitalswitzerland](#), says: "The launch of the EdTech vertical in Western Switzerland confirms the commitment and capacity of the region to develop groundbreaking technologies that change people's lives. The ecosystem here is stimulating and innovative while providing a stable infrastructure and access to finance and expertise."

“With EPFL taking leadership in the European MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) landscape, Lausanne has become an important hub for education of the future, offering the perfect environment and opportunities to significantly expand educational technologies” says Pierre Dillenbourg, Professor at EPFL.

This is a great addition to Kickstart Accelerator too: “With the new EdTech vertical, Kickstart Accelerator is able to tap into another exciting field of innovation”, says Patricia Schlechter, Program Manager at Kickstart Accelerator. “The digital technologies will disrupt the traditional way of learning and will bring major changes to classrooms. Thanks to this sixth vertical in Lausanne, Kickstart Accelerator will be part of that development”.

Jordi Montserrat, venturelab Director, emphasizes Patricia Schlechter’s statement: “This exciting development is further fueled by multiple educational projects, cutting-edge research projects on learning technologies and promising digital education startups emerging in Switzerland and Europe. Bringing these actors together and helping them thrive by offering a collaborative space and building a strong support ecosystem, can significantly contribute to the development of the Swiss education and learning technology sector”.

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KICKSTART ACCELERATOR

About Kickstart Accelerator:

[Kickstart Accelerator](#) invests in solutions that work for problems that matter. The program, 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 program 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](#)).

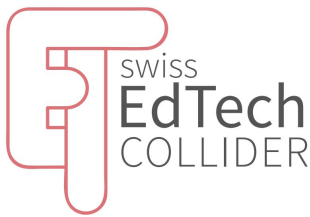
Kickstart Accelerator's corporate partners are AXA Winterthur, Coop, Credit Suisse, EY, Gebert-Rüf-Stiftung, Migros, PwC Switzerland, Raiffeisen Switzerland, Swisscom and UBS. The program is also

supported by ABB, Accenture, Empa, ETH, Global Fintech Association, Helsana, Hilti, Metall Zug, Stäubli, Swiss Life as well as the city of Zurich, city of Bern and city of St. Gallen.



About venturelab

Together with successful founders, key academic and industry partners such as BKW and Swisscom, [venturelab](#) designs and operates support programs to bring the best startup talents to their next development level. It is part of the [IFJ](#) Institute for Young Entrepreneurs, a company with office in St. Gallen and Lausanne and a startup space in Zurich. It includes programs such as *Venture Kick*, a pre-seed fund which has supported 500+ projects in the past 10 years, resulting in the launch of over 300 new ventures which have cumulatively attracted 1.43 billion of investment, or *venture leaders*, the Swiss startups national teams platforms, which selects and boosts startups on their funding and global expansion path.



About EdTech Collider

The [Swiss EdTech Collider](#) is Switzerland's first collaborative space dedicated to ambitious entrepreneurs transforming education and learning through technology. Located in the [EPFL](#) Innovation Park just a few steps away from EPFL's Center for Digital Education, we provide a modern coworking space to our members ranging from early-stage to established startups. Unlike a classical startup incubator or accelerator program, we offer ongoing support and access to edtech experts, industry leaders and investors.