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Interest from startups in the BaseLaunch healthcare accelerator exceeds expectations

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More than 100 projects from Switzerland and abroad competed for a place in the BaselArea.swiss accelerator program for healthcare startups

By the closing date of June 30, the BaseLaunch startup accelerator received 112 applications. 77 percent of the projects were from Europe, with a total of 45 percent from Switzerland and 25 projects from the rest of the world. A third of applications involved therapeutics, 20 percent were concerned with diagnostics, and 18 percent with digital healthcare and healthcare services. Other projects focused on therapeutic platforms and services, medtech, and related fields. BaseLaunch offers startups infusions of funds, insight, infrastructure and industry access, and integrates them into one of the most dynamic biotech and healthcare ecosystems in Europe. The accelerator program initiated and operated by BaselArea.swiss aims to attract the next generation of successful healthcare companies by harnessing the unique position of the Basel region as a global life sciences hub. BaseLaunch is backed by healthcare partners Novartis Venture Fund, Johnson & Johnson Innovation and Pfizer. BaseLaunch also collaborates with digitalswitzerland as a healthcare vertical of Kickstart Accelerator.

Positive response to the call for applications
"The number of applicants far exceeded our expectations," says Alethia de León, Managing Director of BaseLaunch. "We now have the task of selecting up to ten of the most promising projects for the first phase." A selection committee made up of industry experts will be responsible for the selection process. Ventures accepted for the first phase of the program will receive grants of up to 10,000 Swiss francs beginning in September 2017. They will then have three months to develop their business ideas in close collaboration with the BaseLaunch team and a network of experienced entrepreneurs. Up to three startups will be selected from these companies for the second phase. They will each receive up to 250,000 Swiss francs and the opportunity to generate research data for one year in the laboratory of the Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area and thereby achieve milestones in their business plan. Experts will also be available to advise and mentor during this time.

For Christof Klöpper, CEO of BaselArea.swiss, the large number of applications from abroad is a sure sign of the Basel region's international reputation as a world-leading life sciences center. BaselArea.swiss has passed on to BaseLaunch all of its expertise in promoting innovation and investment. "We have many years of experience of networking innovators in the local area and supporting entrepreneurs by identifying suitable partners. BaseLaunch takes full advantage of this expertise, which is particularly valuable to participants from outside the region."

The selected startups for the first phase will be announced in late summer.

BaseLaunch
BaseLaunch was set up in 2017 by BaselArea.swiss and offers in partnership with digitalswitzerland's Kickstart Accelerator the healthcare vertical of the programme. BaseLaunch has set itself the task of accelerating the

development of promising and pioneering healthcare startups and strengthening the leadership position of the Basel region as the pre-eminent life sciences hub. The accelerator program offers infusions of funds, insight, infrastructure and industry access to promising new ventures, and integrates them into one of the most dynamic biotech and pharma ecosystems in Europe. BaseLaunch is supported by healthcare partners Novartis Venture Fund, Johnson & Johnson Innovation and Pfizer as well as other public and private partners. Applications are reviewed by a selection committee consisting of Dr. Fabian Buller, Director New Ventures, Johnson & Johnson Innovation, Dr. Phillipe Dro, CEO, NeMoDevices, Trudi Haemmerli, CEO and Director, PerioC Ltd, Managing Director, TruStep Consulting GmbH, Dr. Anja König, Global Head Novartis Venture Fund, Dr. Alex Mayweg, Venture Partner, Versant Ventures and Dr. Nathalie ter Wengel MD, European Head External Science and Innovation, Pfizer.

For more information, please visit: www.baselaunch.ch.

Important dates:
Phase I: September 15 – December 7, 2017
Phase II: January 2 – December 21, 2018

BaselArea.swiss
BaselArea.swiss is the office for promoting innovation and inward investment for the northwest cantons of Basel-Stadt, Basel-Landschaft and Jura. BaselArea.swiss currently employs 18 people and has an annual budget of 3.6 million francs, provided by the three cantons and by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The core function of BaselArea.swiss is to promote the strengths of northwest Switzerland as a center for business and to help both Swiss and foreign entrepreneurs and companies implement their innovation and business projects in the region. By means of its extensive information platform and regular innovation reports, BaselArea.swiss contributes to the sustainable positioning of the Basel region as a leading center for innovation and commerce.

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