

## MEDIA RELEASE

# KICKSTART 2019 HAS LAUNCHED – NOW ALSO IN CYBERSECURITY AND HEALTHTECH

**The Swiss innovation acceleration program is looking for promising growth ventures in EdTech, FinTech, FoodTech, Smart City, HealthTech and Cybersecurity – and is founding its own company.**

Zurich, 15 April 2019 – The application phase for the fourth [Kickstart](#) program in Zurich has started today. Kickstart fosters innovation through partnerships between successful startups and established companies and organizations. The Swiss acceleration program is now accepting [applications](#) from national and international tech companies. Kickstart's focus is on deep technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain and Big Data across different verticals: [EdTech & Learning](#), [FinTech & Digital Assets](#), [Food & Retail Tech](#) and [Smart City & Technology](#) as well as, for the first time, [Cybersecurity](#) and [HealthTech](#). In the program, the selected startups will meet and work together with leading corporations and organizations with the purpose of launching innovation partnerships and pilot projects.

### **Building bridges in order to make innovation happen**

The Kickstart program aims to initiate successful partnerships and pilot projects between later-stage startups and corporations and organizations such as AXA, Coop, Migros, Swisscom, Mobiliar, Credit Suisse, ETH Zürich, Gebert Rüt Foundation, Mercator Foundation Switzerland, the Swiss Federal Office of Energy SFOE, the cities of Zurich as well as St.Gallen and others. During the first three programs, more than 75 business partnerships were established. *"Deep technologies have a great potential, which can only be fully exploited through the cooperation between different partners",* says Kickstart Co-Lead Katka Letzing. *"These new technologies can contribute to solving some of the biggest challenges of our time. Established players are increasingly looking to work with tech startups. Successful innovation doesn't happen in isolation – it needs cooperation. That's what Kickstart stands for."*

Swiss retailer [Migros](#) has been supporting Kickstart's Food & Retail Tech Vertical as a partner since the first edition and has launched a variety of partnerships with startups: *"With our development fund [Engagement Migros](#), we have been one of the very first partners of Kickstart and thus [Migros group](#) also has been benefitting from the beginning. Three years have passed and the platform has developed into what we consider a key element linking our own innovation initiatives and the ecosystem,"* says Stefan Schöbi, Head of Engagement Migros. *"We are building on this success story, now bringing it to a newly established HealthTech Vertical, launched together with [Swiss Healthcare Startups SHS](#) and other partners."* Additionally, Kickstart is launching a new Cybersecurity Vertical in partnership with [SATW](#), [Mobiliar](#), and other organizations.

### **Entrepreneurial and independent**

Meanwhile, Kickstart is developing further: The initiative, which was launched as *Kickstart Accelerator* by [digitalswitzerland](#) in 2015 and has since successfully been operated three times by the [Impact Hub Zurich](#) team, will become an independent company this April. As a spin-off of Impact Hub Zurich, Kickstart benefits from its network in Switzerland and worldwide, while digitalswitzerland remains on board as an important founding partner.

## Deep tech companies wanted

Tech startups from Switzerland and all around the world may [apply](#) for Kickstart 2019 until May 17. Up to 50 startups will be accepted in the program. In addition, [intrapreneurship teams](#) (innovation teams from companies, cities or universities) can register for the program. Participants will get direct access to key decision-makers of Kickstart's partner corporations and organizations, support in cooperation with these partners and access to a broad network of experts. Kickstart covers up to CHF 10,000 of business development expenses during the program and grants access to a dedicated partnering fund. As in previous years, the program will take place at the innovation space [Kraftwerk](#) in Zurich.

### Kickstart Key Dates 2019:

8 - 9 July: Final Selection at Kraftwerk Zurich  
Sept. 2 - 6: Intensive Planning Sprint at Kraftwerk Zurich  
Sept. 7 - 29: Individual preparation phase and digital content  
30 Sept - 8 Nov: Six-week Collaboration Sprint at Kraftwerk Zurich

### For more information, please contact:

Simone Bächler, Communication Lead Kickstart  
+41 77 529 63 26  
[press@kickstart-innovation.com](mailto:press@kickstart-innovation.com)

### About Kickstart

Kickstart bridges the gap between startups, corporations, cities, foundations and universities to accelerate deep tech innovation. Science and engineering driven technologies have the potential to transform humanity's biggest challenges into solvable problems. These challenges require unprecedented collaboration between established organizations and audacious entrepreneurs. Each year, Kickstart brings up to 50 later-stage startups to Switzerland to collaborate with key players for proof-of-concepts, pilot projects and other innovation partnerships. The program is free of charge (no fees, no equity) for selected growth ventures and provides exceptional access to the executives and decision-makers of Kickstart's partners. Additionally, the program supports up to 8 intrapreneurship teams from corporations and organizations every year.

Kickstart is a spin-off of [Impact Hub Zurich](#) and was launched 2015 by [digitalswitzerland](#). In 2019, Kickstart runs six verticals (EdTech & Learning, FinTech & Digital Assets, Food & Retail Tech, Smart City & Technology, HealthTech and Cybersecurity) together with partner organizations across industries and the private and public domain: [AXA](#), [Coop](#), [Migros](#), [Swisscom](#), [ETH Zürich](#), [City of Zurich](#), [Gebert Rüt Stiftung](#), [Mercator Foundation Switzerland](#), [Mobiliar](#), [Swiss Federal Office for Energy](#), [Axpo](#), [City of St. Gallen](#), [Cognizant](#), [Credit Suisse](#), [CSEM](#), [Dai-ichi Life](#), [Empa](#), [eZürich](#), [Givaudan](#), [Office for Economy and Labour of Canton Zurich](#), [Panter](#), [PostFinance](#), [PwC Switzerland](#), [SATW](#), [Stäubli](#), [Swiss Healthcare Startups SHS](#), [Swisslinx](#), [University of Zurich](#), [ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences](#), [C4DR](#), [evitive](#), [Meyerlustenberger Lachenal Ltd.](#), [Wenger & Vieli AG](#) and more.