

Note: The coronavirus is creating a major societal and economic crisis. Venture Kick has fully transitioned to online operations to continue kicking and financing startups from Swiss Universities while preserving health and safety.

CHF 150,000.- for epigenetic testing and plant-based meat startups

In Corona times, when startups need it the most, Venture Kick continues to support and finance Swiss startups without interruption. Genknowme and Planted Foods, a Lausanne and a Zurich based company, were each awarded CHF 150,000.- last Wednesday.

Genknowme: Swiss epigenetic testing for a healthier lifestyle (www.venturekick.ch/Genknowme)

Semira and Sebastien Gonseth Nusslé co-founded Genknowme, a University Hospital's Lausanne spin-off, developing a novel blood test to determine an epigenetic profile. The test allows to measure the impact of lifestyle on health at the DNA level with unprecedented precision. The data will support healthcare professionals to coach their patients in adopting a healthier lifestyle. During their postdoctoral work at UC San Francisco and UC Berkeley, Semira Gonseth investigated the epigenetic links between cancer and lifestyle risk factors, while Sébastien Nusslé conducted key research on the links between genetics and the environment. Market launch is planned for 2021, while testing with reference clients already happens this year. *"Winning Venture Kick is an amazing financial support for us. Being granted access to their amazing network, resources and - not always "nice to hear" - but highly efficient critical feedbacks, multiplied our chances to access key players in our field as well as investors"* states CEO Semira Gonseth.

Planted Foods: plant-based meat of the future (www.venturekick.ch/planted)

More than sixty billion chickens are grown and killed annually. Planted makes animal-free 'meat' using plants. Founded by Lukas Böni, Eric Stirnemann, Pascal Bieri and Christoph Jenny, the ETH spin-off offers consumers sustainable food tasting like meat and better than the currently available gluten- and soy-based products. A proprietary extrusion process converts plant-protein and fibers from yellow peas. Planted current "chicken meat" was considered the best product in multiple tastings and won even Chefs of Gault-Millau restaurants as customers. Today Planted is already on the shelf of 200 Coop shops. A 7 million financing round was closed and another substantial round is in preparation to ramp up production and develop new products like pulled-pork. Co-founder Pascal Bieri commented: *"Venture Kick creates a very energetic environment that's necessary to challenge yourselves, the business plan as well as execution to get to the next level. The feedback helped us to refocus on the things that really matter."*



[Genknowme's profile on startup.ch](http://www.venturekick.ch/Genknowme)

Left: Semira Gonseth, co-founder / CEO
Right: Sébastien Nusslé, co-founder / CSO



[Planted Foods' profile on startup.ch](http://www.venturekick.ch/planted)

Left to right: Eric Stirnemann, Lukas Böni, Pascal Bieri, co-founders

About Venture Kick

The philanthropic initiative Venture Kick provides up to CHF 150,000 in seed funding to Swiss startups. In addition, it offers a well-structured entrepreneurial path towards building a winning business. Startups pitch to expert juries at three stages to obtain funding, gaining direct feedback and access to an international network of successful entrepreneurs and investors.

Since its launch in 2007, Venture Kick has supported 700 Swiss startup projects with 30 million francs. The program of financial support, training and network, has led to the creation of 519 companies and 7'000 jobs. Venture Kick alumni companies have attracted a total of 3.5 billion francs, and represent 54 companies ranked in the TOP 100 Swiss Startups 2019.

In 2020, Venture Kick will pay out 5 million francs to idea-stage startup projects to bring Swiss science to global markets. More information in the [Venture Kick annual report](#).

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More infos you find on venturekick.ch with [all startup projects supported by Venture Kick](#) and also follow the success stories of our startups on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).