

Almost as fast as light: Lumiphase wins Swiss Pionierpreis

Switzerland's leading startup award recognizes the development of electro-optical processors for future generations of communication technology.

Zurich, May 11, 2022 – Lumiphase AG in Zurich-Kilchberg has won the ZKB Pionierpreis Technopark 2022, one of the most prestigious startup awards in Switzerland, with prize money of nearly 100,000 Swiss francs. The announcement was made at a gala event attended by 250 guests at Technopark Zurich.

The team of Lumiphase engineers around company founders Stefan Abel, Lukas Czornomaz, Felix Eltes, and Jean Fompeyrine have developed a revolutionary technology for producing electro-optical semiconductor chips. The young company is the world's only supplier of this new technology, which will help to increase data transmission rates for years to come, enabling ever greater volumes of data to be transmitted cost-effectively and energy-efficiently. Lumiphase covers the value chain from the manufacture of the barium titanate-based semiconductor, through integration with silicon, to device and circuit design.

The transceiver modules developed by Lumiphase are required in particularly large quantities in data centers, where optical transmission distances typically range from a few meters to 10 kilometers. However, considerable amounts of data also circulate between different data centers via high-speed optical lines.

The efficient and cost-effective data connections enabled by Lumiphase technology could also make it possible to open up regions of the world where Internet access is still a luxury. This would help the three billion people who currently have no access to the Internet.

Stefan Abel, Co-CEO of Lumiphase AG, says: "Winning the Pionierpreis is an outstanding recognition of our team's achievement. We truly consider ourselves pioneers of a groundbreaking technology. The increased visibility will help us to attract more pioneers to the team. We will invest the prize money in human resources, especially creating additional positions for students."

Further awards for LifeMatrix Technologies AG and Isochronic AG

The two co-finalists LifeMatrix Technologies AG and Isochronic AG each received around 10,000 Swiss francs. At LifeMatrix Technologies, a spin-off of the University of Zurich, the scientists led by CEO Maximilian Emmert have developed a unique biomimetic tissue technology over years of research. This process produces implants

that transform into living tissue, just as it is needed at the site where it is inserted. Over time, the patient's body replaces the LifeMatrix implant with its own healthy tissue with all its basic properties: it regenerates and grows with the patient. A one-time surgery with LifeMatrix thus offers a lifelong solution for children with cardiovascular malformations.

At Isochronic AG in Denges VD, everything revolves around pick and place industrial robots, a standard operation in food production, the pharmaceutical industry, and electronics. The founders of the young Swiss industrial company led by CEO Melvin Haas have developed a new system with multiple, simultaneously active pick heads. Even a single one of these "isochronous" industrial robots is significantly more powerful than conventional robots. Since the new robots require less mass to be moved, energy and operating costs sink.

Pionierpreis with completely new appearance

The ZKB Pionierpreis Technopark is considered one of the most important innovation awards for young companies in Switzerland. It has been awarded every year since 2001 by the Zürcher Kantonalbank and the Technopark Zurich Foundation. This year's award ceremony also unveils a new look for the award. Communications will focus entirely on startups, which are now eligible to compete up to five years after their founding. "We aim to noticeably increase the reach of the award," says Dr. Matthias Hölling, Team Leader Foundation Affairs at the Technopark Zurich Foundation. He continues, "the website and most communication tools are now in English to make the award more accessible to potential applicants from all over Switzerland and to founders who speak a foreign language." By reaching out, the ZKB Pionierpreis Technopark aims to live up to Switzerland's global reputation as a leading location for innovation.

Further information: www.pionierpreis.ch

Contact (for photos, etc.)

Dr. Matthias Hölling
Leader Pionierpreis
Technopark Zurich Foundation
+41 44 445 11 58
matthias.hoelling@technopark.ch

Agency contact

Dr. Eberhard Zangger
science communications
+41 44 250 74 90
e.zangger@science-communications.ch