



The three finalists for the ZKB Pionierpreis Technopark 2023 have been chosen

The jury's decision has been made. The teams from three start-ups will be in the spotlight at the award ceremony for the ZKB Pionierpreis Technopark, worth CHF 100,000, on May 31, 2023: AgroSustain from Renens, MUVON Therapeutics from Zurich and Synthara from Zug.

Zurich, March 29, 2023 – Promoting deep-tech innovations is the declared goal of the ZKB Pionierpreis Technopark, which has been awarded since 2001 and is endowed with CHF 100,000. Of the 46 start-ups who applied this year, three have reached the final round: **AgroSustain**, **MUVON Therapeutics** and **Synthara**. Two finalists will receive a check for CHF 10,000 each. The finalists will find out who will win the main award when they take the stage at the awards ceremony on May 31, 2023 at Technopark Zurich.

For the eight-member jury, it was crucial that all three start-ups nominated for the prestigious award develop innovative solutions and break new ground. Nominated are:

AgroSustain (Renens VD) – Natural plant protection

Since May 2018, company founders Olga and Sylvain Dubey and more than ten other specialists at AgroSustain have been developing coatings to extend the freshness and shelf life of fruits, vegetables and flowers after harvest. The result is a highly effective, natural coating that can be sprayed onto the crops to form an invisible, odorless and tasteless protective layer. Thanks to this coating, products have a longer shelf life of up to one month, thereby significantly reducing food waste. Some products no longer require plastic packaging at all. The agent, which is already available, protects plant products and regulates their water contents. The next generation of agents will additionally also be anti-fungicidal and this will continue to be on an all-natural basis. The start-up is a spin-off of the University of Lausanne and is now located near the university.

www.agrosustain.ch

MUVON Therapeutics (Zurich) – Personalized muscle recovery

How can the body's own cells be used to regenerate skeletal muscle tissue and increase the regeneration potential of weakened muscles? In 2020, Deana Mohr, Jenny Prange, Steve Kappenthuler and Daniel Eberli founded MUVON Therapeutics, a start-up based at the Wyss Zurich Translational Center, a joint venture of ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich. The researchers are using personalized medicine and minimally invasive, low-risk methods to treat diseases related to skeletal muscle damage or degradation. The initial focus is on treating stress urinary incontinence in women, using tissue bioengineering. Nine patients have already successfully been treated in Phase 1. Muscle precursor cells are taken and isolated from the patient's own body tissue, then expanded in a controlled manner and subsequently injected with highest precision into the affected muscle tissue. The subsequent regeneration of the bladder sphincter is expected to eliminate one of the main causes of incontinence, leading to a strong improvement in the quality of life of those affected.

www.muvon-therapeutics.com

Synthara (Zug) – In-memory computing capacities

Processors and memory need to be much more tightly integrated to achieve the system efficiencies required for tomorrow's faster and smarter devices and applications. Synthara, founded by Alessandro Aimar and Manu V Nair, makes this possible by integrating processor capacity into the memory itself. This results in a processor architecture that is 50 times more powerful than conventional ones. The resulting chips are not only faster but can also be 15 to 20 percent smaller than previous chips, enabling new product features that were previously unattainable. Most importantly, the new processors are also backward compatible with existing applications and software stacks. The first generation of Synthara products target edge computing applications such as wearables, smart sensors and similar signal processing applications. The first samples will be shipped to a select group of early adopter customers later this year.

www.synthara.ai

About ZKB Pionierpreis Technopark

The ZKB Pionierpreis Technopark has been awarded every year since 2001 by Zürcher Kantonalbank and Technopark Zürich and is one of the most important awards for young companies in Switzerland. The prize for deep-tech start-ups honors projects at the transition from innovative idea to market maturity and recognizes the commitment and risk-taking of start-up founders. In addition to the prize money of CHF 100,000 for the winner, the other two nominated start-ups will also receive prize money of CHF 10,000 each.

Further information: www.pionierpreis.ch

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