

## Launch of Kickfund to boost the Swiss Deep Tech Startup Ecosystem

### Kickfund I to Propel Over 100 Swiss Deep Tech Startups from Venture Kick Programme with Its Unique Concept



Kickfund Ventures Fund I proudly announces its first closing at CHF 70m, marking a significant milestone in the Swiss startup ecosystem. The Fund includes investments from a diverse group of Venture Kick supported founders, mentors, and leading Swiss business angels, alongside esteemed anchor investors Ernst Göhner Stiftung and Gebert Rüt Stiftung. Known for their long-standing support of entrepreneurship and innovation in Switzerland, these anchor investors are pivotal to the fund's success. With full funding achieved, the final closing is slated for early 2024 and qualified investors might still be accepted to the partnership.

The unique concept of the Kickfund is based on many years of experience and successful collaboration among key supporters of the Kick Foundation initiatives being a crucial part of Switzerland's dynamic startup and innovation landscape. It is uniquely positioned to leverage the success of the esteemed Venture Kick competition, which celebrated its 15 years anniversary in 2022 and saw its 1000th company complete the program earlier this year. Exclusively targeting companies that have graduated from the program, Fund I aims to invest in ventures often recognized as some of the best in Switzerland. Venture Kick alumni notably comprised 64 of the TOP100 Swiss startups in 2023 and cumulatively they have created more than 13'000 jobs since the beginning of the programme.

Switzerland's reputation for educational and scientific excellence, with a significant portion of its students attending globally ranked universities, underpins the fund's strategy. This academic environment, conducive to technological advancements and innovation, is a fertile ground for deep tech development. The role of venture capital in this landscape is indispensable, not only in fostering highly skilled employment opportunities but also in nurturing the ambitions of entrepreneurial students, encouraging them to transform their ideas into successful ventures.

Wanja Humanes, CEO of Kickfund AG, states: "The Kickfund Venture Fund effectively builds on the work of Venture Kick, providing crucial funding and long-term support to startups. Our commitment

includes offering up to CHF 850,000 per company, providing a valuable community network while offering our investors access to a carefully curated portfolio of promising Swiss deep tech startups."

Bruno Dallo, Chairman of Kickfund AG, comments: "We are immensely thankful to our anchor investors for their crucial role in launching this fund focused on Swiss deep tech startups. Their commitment reflects our shared goals of promoting entrepreneurship and economic growth in Switzerland. This fund represents our collective belief in the power of investing in groundbreaking technology and brilliant minds, not only as a driver of innovation but also as a profitable venture for our investors."

Roger Schmid, Managing Director of Ernst Göhner Stiftung, is convinced: "Our role as one of the anchor investors in Kickfund Ventures Fund I epitomizes our commitment to fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in Switzerland. We are proud to support visionary entrepreneurs and contribute to Switzerland's evolving economic landscape."

Vincent Forster, investor and founder of Versantis, shares his journey: "Benefiting from Venture Kick was a turning point in my entrepreneurial path. Having guided my company to a successful sale, I am now honored to reinvest in this fund, supporting a new generation of Swiss innovators and entrepreneurs. Coming full circle allows me to give back to the ecosystem that was instrumental in my own success."

Pascal Vonmont, head of the strategy council of Venture Kick, adds: "Venture Kick and the Kickfund are a unique and powerful combination of charitable funding and investment. Together, we're propelling innovative Swiss deep tech university spin-offs to global tech leaders. This partnership strengthens our impact on the startup and innovation ecosystem and cements Switzerland's role as a deep tech nation."

#### **Background information:**

##### **Kickfund AG (<https://www.kickfund.ch/>)**

Kickfund AG is a FINMA-licensed portfolio manager acting as investment manager of the Fund.

##### **Venture Kick (<https://www.venturekick.ch/>)**

Venture Kick, established in 2007, is a Swiss philanthropic initiative aimed at fostering entrepreneurship and innovation. Its primary objective is to double the number of spin-offs from Swiss universities, speed up their market entry, and increase their appeal to professional investors and industry partners.

##### **Ernst Göhner Stiftung (<https://www.ernst-goehner-stiftung.ch/>)**

«The Ernst Göhner Stiftung, established 1957 by entrepreneur Ernst Göhner, is a Swiss foundation with investments mainly in Swiss companies and real estate in Switzerland. In the philanthropic field, the Ernst Göhner Stiftung is dedicated to supporting projects across culture, environment, social issues, education, and science, primarily within Switzerland. It emphasizes sustainable impact, national relevance, and interdisciplinary exchange.»

##### **Gebert Rüt Stiftung (<https://www.grstiftung.ch/>)**

The Gebert Rüt Stiftung is a leading Swiss foundation dedicated to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, established 1997 by entrepreneur Heinrich Gebert. As Switzerland's largest private science and innovation foundation, it operates with a mission to enhance Switzerland's appeal as a business location and living environment.

**Disclaimer/ Information for Swiss investors:**

This is an advertising document.

The Offering Memorandum, the Limited Partnership Agreement, other relevant fund documents as well as the annual reports of the fund may be obtained free of charge from the Swiss Representative. In respect of the Interests distributed in Switzerland to Qualified Investors, place of performance and jurisdiction is at the registered office of the Representative.

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IPConcept (Schweiz) AG, Münsterhof 12, PO Box, CH-8022 Zurich, Switzerland.

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