

Press release

Industry and academic leaders discuss the impact of scientific innovation on nutritional health

- **Innovation Forum Lausanne organises second annual conference at EPFL Lausanne.**
- **Researchers and entrepreneurs from around the world consider the future of sustainable food production and nutritional equality.**
- **Launch of IMAGINE IF!, a global competition and accelerator program for deep technology.**

Lausanne, Switzerland, 17 May 2016

Innovation Forum Lausanne (IFL) today held its second annual conference titled “From Hunger to Health”. With every ninth person not having access to sufficient nutrition, and costs for traditional therapeutic healthcare increasing, it is imperative that nutritional health becomes a shared responsibility. Speakers and delegates at the conference considered the ways in which scientific innovation helps to achieve global nutritional equality and health without overwhelming the planet.

Delegates heard from keynote speakers at leading companies and institutions including École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), École hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL), Nestlé Institute of Health Sciences, Gamaya, and Vestergaard, as well as other business leaders. Over 400 participants attended the sold out conference hosted at the Rolex Learning Forum at EPFL.

The conference also hosted the official launch of the IMAGINE IF! programme, the first truly global competition and accelerator for deep technology ventures. Projects enrolled in IMAGINE IF! aim to contribute to the transformation of our world: they address at least one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined by the United Nations, or one of the 12 Risks that threaten human civilization. Project submissions are open from now until July 1st.

Francesco Stellacci, Director of the Food and Nutrition Centre at EPFL, commented: *“The world has seen many food crises in the past which have ended in famine and/or wars. It is time for technology to step up and address a crisis that we know is coming.”*

Christine Demen Meier, Head of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at EHL, said: *“I have big hopes for our planet. I hope that through their behaviour and new habits around food, Generation Y individuals will shape the food industry into becoming more conscious of health, ethics and sustainability, thereby widely benefitting the population and the environment.”*

Yosef Akhtman, Co-Founder and CEO of Gamaya SA, commented: *“The way that human society produces and consumes its food defines us as a species and determines our relationship with our environment. We are living in a remarkable moment in history where the entire ecological niche that we currently occupy becomes unsustainable, and we have to rethink our role on the planet in order to secure the future for the generations to come.”*

Sandra Sulser and Manuel Fankhauser, co-Presidents of Innovation Forum Lausanne, said: *“Today, every ninth person does not have enough nutrition. By 2050, we will need to feed two billion more people. Our organisation is passionate about finding out how scientific innovation can help achieve the goal of global nutritional equality and health without overwhelming the planet. The Lake Geneva region which is a hotspot for food and nutrition, both in Switzerland and globally, made us devote the second annual Innovation Forum Lausanne conference to the topic “From Hunger to Health”.*”

Full details of the conference programme and speakers can be found at: <http://lausanne.inno-forum.org/event/from-hunger-to-health/>

Full details of the IMAGINE IF! Accelerator programme and application requirements can be found at: <http://inno-forum.org/accelerator/>

About Innovation Forum <http://www.inno-forum.org>

The Innovation Forum (IF) is a non-profit organisation led by entrepreneurial-minded scientists and young professionals. IF seeks to promote innovation by **building bridges between academia, industry and government** and linking innovative minds across disciplines. IF is a **global network** of innovative companies, entrepreneurs, investors, researchers and policy makers with branches located at 16 top universities in Europe, Asia and North America. This gives the organization the **unique ability to think and act in an international, cross-cultural context** and to enable global synergies for members and partners.

Innovation Forum Lausanne will leverage the current highly interdisciplinary and entrepreneurial ecosystem and aims to further strengthen the position of Lausanne as a global innovation hub by:

- 1) Facilitating the interaction of local talents with diverse academic and industrial backgrounds, encouraging them to think out of the box and dream together, thus allowing them to come up with interdisciplinary innovations for a sustainable future.
- 2) Promoting the innovations of tomorrow towards industry, investors and policy makers within the entire Innovation Forum network, thereby accelerating the appearance of Lausanne’s disruptive technologies on the global stage.
- 3) Empowering and inspiring innovative minds by fostering an environment in which the new and unknown can be embraced with an open mind.

During 2015, its first year of existence, Innovation Forum Lausanne (IFL) organised four events, allowing more than 700 people from different generations and with diverse profiles to engage with each other: academics, investors, industry representatives, entrepreneurs and policy makers.

Innovation Forum Lausanne gratefully acknowledges the support of its partners:

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