



Press Release

INNOVATION FORUM LAUNCHES FIRST BRANCH IN SWITZERLAND

- Global network of researchers & entrepreneurs
- EPFL Lausanne hosts inaugural conference on “Disruptive innovation for a sustainable future”

Lausanne, Switzerland, March 10th 2015

The Innovation Forum, a global network of researchers and entrepreneurs, today launched its first branch in Switzerland, with a conference exploring the theme of “*Disruptive Innovation for a sustainable future*”. The event was addressed by top-level representatives from Ecole Polytechnic Federale de Lausanne (EPFL), IMD Business School, University of Lausanne, Novartis, VentureLab, BioRN Cluster and CEOs of various start-ups. Over 300 participants attended the conference hosted at the Rolex Learning Centre at EPFL.

Dr Adrienne Corboud Fumagalli, VP Innovation & Technology Transfer EPFL, stated: “Innovation has become the buzzword of our times, everyone, everywhere wants to innovate. But true innovation is not an easy task! It cannot be planned neither processed. It is a state of mind which we need to encourage through education for our students and researchers. It is about encouraging risk taking without stigmatizing failure. Only by instilling a culture of innovation, with a lot of hard work, imagination, creativity, and focus on creating value will we enable a sustainable future.”

Dr Sachiko Hirosue, Co-founder of Biodesign.cc observed: “This new initiative resonates strongly with our alternative creative approach to innovation. Biodesign for the Real World is an international transdisciplinary project on water quality. We use open source Do-It-Yourself tools and crowd-sourced mapping to prototype, field test, and disseminate data. We share our work through workshops, performances, design and art. We build communities. Technologies can only be empowering if you know how to hack them creatively.”

Manuel Fankhauser, President Innovation Forum Lausanne, said: “We are delighted to mark the establishment of the first Swiss branch of the global Innovation Forum. This conference aims to showcase how innovation is a multidisciplinary activity, fostered by synergies between academia, industry and policy makers. Lausanne is at the epi-centre of many disruptive technologies both in Switzerland and globally.”

Full details of the conference programme and speakers can be found at <http://inno-lausanne.ch>

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

We are a global network of researchers and entrepreneurs active at the Universities of Cambridge, Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Copenhagen, Lausanne, Barcelona, New York, Hong Kong and Tokyo.



The Innovation Forum seeks to promote innovation by **building bridges between academia, industry and government** and linking innovative minds across disciplines. The Innovation Forum is a **global network** of innovative companies, entrepreneurs, investors, researchers and policy makers with branches 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.

Innovation Forum Lausanne gratefully acknowledges the support of its partners:

- Alba IT
- BioRN
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- Novartis
- Venturelab

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