
ETH Spin-offs in 2013

ETH spin-offs: a promising investment

Zurich, 6 January 2014. **ETH Zurich looks back at an excellent year for spin-offs. In 2013, researchers started 24 new companies, as many as in the record year of 2009. In total, ETH spin-offs achieved investments of more than CHF 80 million over the year.**

Many researchers took the plunge and started their own business in 2013, thus continuing the excellent track record of ETH's spin-offs. Twenty-four new companies, active in a number of diverse fields, originated from the university in 2013. As in the previous year, many of these new companies – seven – deal with information and communication technology; of the remaining 17, five each came from the mechanical engineering and service/consultancy sectors, three each from the biotechnology and electrical engineering sectors, and one from new materials.

Test device for rehabilitation and drug for diabetes treatment

Researchers in medical technology and life sciences showed a great deal of innovation. The founders of ReHaptix develop a sophisticated testing device to measure mobility and the sense of touch in hands and arms. The device even renders visible minor therapeutic advances in patients with neurological disorders (e.g. following a stroke). This not only helps to improve the diagnosis and treatment, but also has a motivating effect. Another spin-off, Glycemicon, instantly made it into Switzerland's top 100 start-ups, despite being founded only in January 2013. Glycemicon's active agent restores the reactivity of fat cells and should help provide diabetics with functioning blood sugar regulation. ReHaptix and Glycemicon were also among the winners of the Venture Kick competition and received CHF 130,000 each as starting capital.

Numerous awards were secured by ETH spin-offs in 2013 with total prize money of more than CHF 1.2 million. It was particularly evident in the open market that many believe in the sustainable success of the new companies, with backers investing more than CHF 80 million over the year. "Swiss spin-offs, and especially ETH Zurich spin-offs, have delivered consistently good results over the past few years. This encourages future young entrepreneurs and sends a clear message to investors both at home and abroad," says Silvio Bonaccio, Head of ETH transfer. Furthermore, these successes show how much Swiss research is able to offer society and the economy.

Start-up assistance pays off

ETH company founders are generally young: in 2013, about 70% were doctoral students and 30% master's students or employees. Roland Siegwart, Vice Pres-

ident Research and Corporate Relations, is extremely pleased that so many young people are opting for self-employment: “I believe that these 24 spin-offs are the best proof that ETH Zurich has invested wisely in the start-up culture and the support of young researchers over the last few years,” he says, alluding to the two support programmes that ETH has launched over the past three years. In 2013, no fewer than five spin-offs emerged from the [Pioneer Fellowships Program](#), which awards grants to students and doctoral students who want to convert their research results into marketable products. In the [Innovation and Entrepreneurship Labs](#) (ieLabs), young researchers – Pioneer Fellows, for example – develop prototypes and are supported by experienced coaches from industry. ETH Zurich opened the first ieLabs in 2012 and 2013, and intends to develop them further in the coming year.

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