

## Press release

25 new spin-offs

# The strength of digitalisation and a strong community

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25 spin-offs were founded at ETH Zurich last year. This equals the previous year's record level for new ETH spin-offs. Digital transformation is a prominent factor in these new enterprises, with many spin-offs emerging from the area of digital technology and data science.

ETH Zurich can look back on a successful spin-off year, maintaining its record for the third consecutive year. In 2017, ETH researchers started 25 new companies; eight of these new spin-offs arose from ETH's own Pioneer Fellowship programme, which actively supports students as they establish businesses. "Early support pays off," says Detlef Günther, Vice President Research and Corporate Relations at ETH Zurich. "It is great to see that young Master's students can pursue their business ideas just as successfully as experienced scientists." This support is particularly well received by young female researchers. "Seven of the new ETH Zurich spin-offs were co-founded by women, which is particularly pleasing. We are doing everything in our power to ensure that more and more women scientists become entrepreneurs," said Detlef Günther.

### **Digital transformation on the rise**

The orientation of these ETH spin-offs reflects the entire breadth of the university's research topics. However, digital transformation is very much apparent in these new companies. Over the past year, a significant number of companies have emerged from the area of digital technology and data science. An app devised by Pathmate Technologies, for instance, allows patients to measure the effectiveness of their individual therapy based on data, while the spin-off DataHow uses machine-learning technology to optimise industrial processes in pharmaceutical companies. The ETH spin-off aiNET provides immuno-informatics to accelerate the discovery of new therapeutic antibodies.

### **Vibrant spin-off scene**

The numerous spin-offs that have emerged from ETH Zurich have developed into a lively scene that is not just growing in number, but also becoming better connected. "I am very pleased to see that more and more spin-offs are working with young researchers from the Pioneer Fellowship programme. This

stimulates the spin-off scene and brings astonishing impetus,” says Marjan Kraak, head of the spin-off group at ETH Zurich. For example, the successful spin-off Climeworks, which was established in 2009, works with Sunredox, a company that was formed only last year. Sunredox develops clean and sustainable fuels with a focus on solar reactor technology, which produces fuel from the air and sunlight.

### Numerous investments in 2017

The success of existing ETH spin-offs can also be seen from the extent of investment in these companies were resumed in 2017. In the last year over CHF120 million were invested into ETH Zurich spin-offs. Of this, CHF 75 million alone went to GetYourGuide. The internet company has established itself as the market leader for guided tours and travel activities in more than 7,000 destinations, and is now planning to double the size of its workforce at its Zurich site. A further CHF 8 million went to the spin-off Beekeeper, which has developed a mobile platform that companies can use to keep in touch with employees who do not have access to email. Meanwhile, Scandit, a company that specialises in data capture and barcode-decoding, attracted CHF 7.5 million in investment.

### Further information

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### ETH spin-offs at a glance

Since 1996, 380 spin-offs have been established at ETH Zurich. A helpful overview can be found at the [spin-off website](#). Recognised ETH spin-offs are supported by ETH transfer, the technology transfer office at ETH Zurich, throughout the establishment process and in their first year of operation with advice, licensing of ETH technologies and contacts. The [Pioneer Fellowship programme](#) is an instrument to assist young researchers in the development of innovative products and services in connection with and based on their scientific work at ETH Zurich. Scholarships are granted on a competitive basis and are decided by a jury comprising ETH professors, technology and licensing managers and representatives from the business sector. The [Innovation and Entrepreneurship Lab](#) (ieLab) brings together young ETH talent, experienced entrepreneurs and industry partners.

[www.transfer.ethz.ch](http://www.transfer.ethz.ch) →