



## **Swisscom seeking start-ups with international potential**

**Swisscom is launching the StartUp Challenge 2015 and is looking for start-ups from the IT & telecommunications, big data, FinTech, eCommerce, smart mobility, eHealth, media and cleantech sectors who want to conquer the world with their products and services. The five best start-ups will be awarded a place on the business acceleration programme in Silicon Valley, and will be in with a chance of receiving investment from or working together with Swisscom. The deadline for applications is 29 May 2015.**

With the StartUp Challenge, Swisscom is offering young entrepreneurs the chance to have their respective business models put through their paces by mentors as part of a one-week business acceleration programme held in Silicon Valley. During this week, the entrepreneurs will be able to establish valuable contacts with international partners and investors. Should the start-ups impress, they will gain the chance to receive investment from or work together with Swisscom. The deadline for applications for the StartUp Challenge is 29 May 2015.

### **Expert jury holds the tickets to Silicon Valley**

In order to gain a place on the business acceleration programme, the start-ups have to make a strong impression during the selection procedure. Swisscom, along with its partner Venturelab, is inviting ten young entrepreneurs to pitch their products and services. The pitches will be assessed by an expert jury, which is made up of representatives from the Group Executive Board of Swisscom and Swisscom Ventures, as well as esteemed business angels and investors. Ultimately, five start-ups will travel to Silicon Valley and take part in a tailored programme featuring coaching and mentoring.

### **Successful candidates in 2014**

More than 100 candidates applied for the StartUp Challenge last year. "The success stories of last year's participants are good examples of the innovative strength of Swiss entrepreneurship," said Roger Wüthrich-Hasenböhler, Head of the SME division and initiator of the StartUp Challenge. "The StartUp Challenge was the catalyst for success for last year's candidates. We are proud to have helped



them develop their companies into successes.” Last year’s winners included Geosatis. The start-up company develops electronic ankle tags that allow improved rehabilitation of offenders and is provided with funding by the Early Stage Fund of Swisscom Ventures. In January 2015, CashSentinel, another finalist from last year, announced that it had entered into a partnership with AutoScout24 to ensure simple and secure monetary transactions could be carried out via smartphones when purchasing a vehicle. Since participating in the StartUp Challenge, not only can Hoosh count Swisscom among its partners, but it has also enjoyed success in the US, with the company set to open an office in San Francisco in the near future. In addition, Hoosh finalised a gold partnership with Oracle and is currently in negotiations with Google regarding another potential partnership. “This success shows how we cover the entire value chain with our commitment to start-ups and promote digitalisation,” said Roger Wüthrich-Hasenböhler.

Further information and the conditions of participation for the Swisscom StartUp Challenge are available at: [www.swisscom.ch/startup](http://www.swisscom.ch/startup)

Berne, 21 April 2015

#### **Swisscom’s commitment to start-ups**

Start-ups are the SMEs of tomorrow. And these are the backbone of the Swiss economy. Swisscom has been supporting Swiss start-ups for years now, e.g. through partnerships with regional funding organisations, the online platform at [www.swisscom.ch/startup](http://www.swisscom.ch/startup) and a strong partner network. Swisscom Ventures’ Swiss Early Stage Fund aims to promote innovative start-ups and develop the transfer of knowledge.