

# MAKE WAY FOR...

Sparks – preparations are going according to plan, with Venturelab as the official partner of the new equity segment for SMEs and scale-ups.

Investment in unlisted companies is rising steadily in Switzerland: in 2020, Swiss start-ups raised more than CHF 2 billion in venture capital, which is equal to a five-fold increase over seven years. However, what is still missing is a stock exchange for innovative SMEs and scale-ups. In addition to the main segment of the Swiss stock exchange, Swiss companies seeking access to the capital markets must depend on foreign technology exchanges such as the Nasdaq.

That is about to change: The Swiss stock exchange is planning to open a new segment for fast-growing and capital-seeking SMEs. In addition to a minimum age of two years, conditions for an Initial Public Offering (IPO) on Sparks comprise a shareholder base of more than 50 investors at the time of listing and equity of at least CHF 12 million, of which CHF 8 million must come from a capital increase as part of the IPO.

Fabian Gerber from the Primary Markets team at SIX has

accompanied the project from the start. He is convinced of its appeal: “With Sparks, we are closing a hole in the Swiss financial center.” The synergy effects will be big, he said.

Over-the-counter investors will have an additional exit option, institutional and private investors will be able to invest directly in the flourishing innovation ecosystem, and fast-growing companies will have the opportunity to raise equity quickly and efficiently: Capital increases of up to 20% of those equity securities that have already been approved will not require a listing prospectus in the Sparks segment.

Sparks will begin operations as soon as approval from the relevant authorities has been received. From that point on, the first scale-ups and SMEs should be able to list themselves. “We have been working hard for months to show stakeholders – investors, banks, private equity and venture capital investors, and entrepreneurs – the advantages to them of the new segment,” said Gerber.

The Swiss stock exchange relies on a partnership with Venturelab to address business angels, investors, and founders: “No other Swiss funding organization,” said Gerber, “enjoys as much credibility with startups and scale-ups as Venturelab.”

## WELCOME TO NEW YORK

About two years ago, it became known that the former US Vice President Al Gore had invested in SOPHiA GENETICS. Since then, banks and private investors have also had the opportunity to participate in the Vaud-based bio-informatics company. On 26 July this year, the traditional bell rang for the IPO on New York’s Nasdaq. SOPHiA, founded in 2011 in EPFL’s Innovation Park and since then a frequent guest among the TOP 100 Startups, offers a standardized analysis of genetic patient data for hospitals and identifies characteristic mutations for genetically determined diseases. The data analysis is fully automatic and the algorithms are continuously improved – the broader the growing database, the more precise the results. The flotation brought founder and CEO Jurgi Camblong and his team USD 234 million in new capital.



In close contact with companies, investors and banks: Fabian Gerber from the Primary Markets team of stock exchange operator SIX

## ACQUISITIONS OF TOP 100 STARTUPS SINCE SEPTEMBER 2020

Closing date	Startup	Category	Acquired by
18.09.20	<b>Bluebox Shop (Amorana)</b>	ICT	Lovehoney
24.09.20	<b>DeepCode</b>	ICT	Snyk
24.09.20	<b>CoreMedica</b>	Biotech	Swiss Medical Group
10.12.20	<b>NBE-Therapeutics LLC</b>	Biotech	Boehringer Ingelheim
10.05.21	<b>IRsweep</b>	Engineering	Sensirion
29.06.21	<b>Crypto Finance</b>	Fintech	Deutsche Börse
06.07.21	<b>Zurich Instruments</b>	Engineering	Rohde & Schwarz

## DAILY STARTUP NEWS

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