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Launch of Nestlé R&D Accelerator to boost innovation and speed-to-market

Nestlé today announced the creation of the Nestlé R&D Accelerator based in Lausanne, Switzerland. The accelerator brings together Nestlé scientists, students and start-ups to advance science and technology with the objective to accelerate the development of innovative products and systems. Internal, external or mixed teams are eligible to use dedicated hot desks at the accelerator over a defined period of time. They have access to Nestlé's R&D expertise and infrastructure, including shared labs, kitchens, bench-scale and pilot-scale equipment. The first teams have been selected and the accelerator will be operational by the end of 2019.

The accelerator is part of Nestlé's global R&D network and located at the company's fundamental research entity Nestlé Research, which employs around 800 people in Lausanne. It is at the heart of a unique innovation ecosystem with a high density of expertise in food and nutrition. This ecosystem includes several units of Nestlé's R&D organization, leading academic institutions such as the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL) and Zurich (ETHZ) and the Swiss Hospitality Management School in Lausanne (EHL) as well as a wide range of innovation partners, suppliers and start-ups.

Stefan Palzer, CTO of Nestlé S.A. said: "We have taken a number of steps to accelerate innovation, including our enhanced prototyping capabilities and the funding of fast-track projects. With the Nestlé R&D Accelerator and its proximity to our R&D and business teams, we will bring open innovation to a new level. Combining our internal expertise and the deep knowledge of our academic and industrial partners with the external entrepreneurial creativity is a unique approach and will create an innovation power-house. It will accelerate the translation of innovative ideas and concepts into tangible prototypes and products."

During a visit of Nestlé Research, Philippe Leuba, State Councilor of the Swiss Canton of Vaud, said: "The business potential of such a project is enormous. Nestlé's initiative embodies what we consider a key factor for innovation: connecting the talents of our academic institutions and the entrepreneurial, disruptive spirit of start-ups around the expertise of a research center dedicated to the growth of a big company."

Grégoire Junod, Mayor of Lausanne, added: "Nestlé's research center is a substantial plus for Lausanne, as it creates value in terms of economy and research, in particular by collaborating with the academic institutions of our region. This new accelerator further strengthens the links between nutrition, health or sport – other strong local assets and important focus areas of Lausanne."

Nestlé has the world's largest private food and nutrition R&D organization, involving about 4,200 people on 23 sites around the world. Switzerland remains of central importance for Nestlé, with around 60% of its global R&D budget of CHF 1.7 bio. invested in the country.

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