

Press release

Promising start-up in glaucoma treatment awarded Falling Walls Science Start-up of the Year

EyeTechCare's non-invasive medical device could help 70 Mill. people affected by glaucoma

Berlin, 9 November 2014. More than 25 outstanding science based start-up companies from around the world presented their business ideas yesterday at the global forum Falling Walls Venture in Berlin. Nominated by leading international academic institutions and venture capitalists, each start-up had only five minutes to convince a distinguished jury of their business concepts.

The first prize of the Falling Walls Venture competition was awarded to EyeTechCare for its innovative treatment of glaucoma, a degenerative disease of the optic nerve that affects about 4% of the world population and can lead to blindness. EyeTechCare has developed the first ophthalmic device that operates with High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU). It has treated over 1000 patients so far and is clinically tested and approved for sale in Europe. So far, the French-based company has managed to collect 16 Million Euros in investments, which allowed to develop the product and to begin commercialisation.

According to the jury, EyeTechCare's business idea was the closest to being a market-ready product and one with the lowest risks involved. „We have a lot of hope in the treatment, because it can affect all of us“, said Dr. Stefan von Holtzbrinck, CEO of the Holtzbrinck Publishing Group and head of the jury at the awards ceremony. EyeTechCare presented itself as a stable company with a strong business plan and convinced the jury that it will succeed with its innovative treatment of glaucoma.

Among the finalists were also Genequine and SynVaccine, both start-up companies from the bio-technology sector. Nominated by the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel, SynVaccine works on the development of genome design algorithms to combat major human diseases. In the long-run, these are positioned to save the lives of millions annually. Hamburg-based GENEQUINE Biotherapeutics is focusing on gene therapy for the treatment of osteoarthritis by utilizing next generation gene transfer vehicles.

Falling Walls Venture is initiated by the Falling Walls Foundation and takes place in cooperation with ASTP-Proton, the Alliance of Technology Transfer Professionals (ATTP), the European Private Equity and Venture Capital Association (EVCA), the European School of Management and Technology (ESMT), A.T. Kearney, international partner universities and research institutions.

Pictures of the event can be found on www.falling-walls.com/venture/gallery.

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