

Press Release 16 June 2016

Eric van der Kleij joins DigitalZurich2025's Kickstart Accelerator program to develop and internationally connect FinTech in Switzerland.

The founding partners of Kickstart Accelerator – an initiative of DigitalZurich2025 - are delighted to announce that Eric van der Kleij, former CEO of TechCity UK and founder of Level39, together with an experienced international team will lead the development of the FinTech program scheduled to launch in August 2016.

Eric and the accelerator team bring with them a wealth of experience from setting up and delivering world-class accelerator programs and hubs such as Level 39 in London, to supporting and investing in high potential startups in Silicon Valley. Working for the Kickstart team they will apply their expertise and international connections throughout August to November 2016 at the Kickstart Accelerator program in the heart of Zurich.

"I am impressed with the level of ambition, resource and access that Kickstart and its leading banking, insurance, telco and consulting partners have brought together" says Eric van der Kleij. "Adding the international FinTech connections to Zurich as a world financial centre will prove hugely attractive for pioneering new talent and I believe that the close links being organised between founders and the partner companies will help to develop both high potential new concepts and the connections to rapidly scale for world markets".

The FinTech program is part of the Kickstart Accelerator, an initiative of DigitalZurich2025 and one of the largest accelerators in Europe, which aims at promoting Switzerland as one of the leading locations for digital enterprise. Operated by Impact Hub, the Kickstart Accelerator and its distinct FinTech program will provide unrivalled access for selected start-ups to leading players in the Swiss and global financial marketplace.

Furthermore, successful applicants will benefit from financial assistance for three months, a workplace in Zurich, industry-leading mentorship, exclusive meetings with prominent voices in the FinTech ecosystem, introductions to investors and, of course, the expert guidance of Eric van der Kleij and the international accelerator team.

As of today more than 900 teams from 40 countries have applied for the coveted places at one of the four Kickstart programs which are organised into four themes: FinTech, Smart & Connected Machines, Food and Emerging & Future Technologies.

For FinTech more than 200 start-ups have submitted their business cases with focus areas in Blockchain, Smart Contracts, Wealth Management, InsureTech and Digital Identity.

A detailed selection process is currently underway to identify applicants that have the most compelling concepts as well as the largest potential to benefit from the three months acceleration program. Final selections are to be expected no later than July 2016.

The FinTech program within Kickstart Accelerator is funded and facilitated collaboratively by several leading Swiss-based organisations including Credit Suisse, EY, Global FinTech Association, Swisscom, Swiss Life and UBS.



For further information:

DigitalZurich2025

DigitalZurich2025 is a cross-industry initiative which aims at making Switzerland a leading digital innovation hub in Europe. Its focus lies on enabling digital start-ups, companies and talents as well as supporting Swiss companies in managing the digital transformation. The initiative was set up in 2015 by over 20 well-known companies, academic institutions and political representatives.

Stephan Kuester | DigitalZurich2025

Managing Director

Mobile: +41 79 171 9969

Mail: stephan@dzh2025.ch

Office: Limmatquai 2, 8001 Zürich, Switzerland

Web: www.digitalzurich2025.com

Twitter: [@dzh2025](https://twitter.com/dzh2025)

Kickstart Accelerator

Kickstart is the most ambitious Swiss startup program to date. Never before has Switzerland or Europe had a multi-corporate and equity-free accelerator program welcoming over 100 founders from around the world. Backed by academia, corporates and the local startup ecosystem, it aims to put Switzerland on the map by bringing some of the

most promising early-stage startups from different fields to Switzerland for three months. Operated by Impact Hub Zürich, Kickstart Accelerator was founded in 2015 and is an initiative in cooperation with DigitalZurich2025.

Contact

Patricia Schlenter | Kickstart Accelerator
Program Manager
Mobile: +49 151 64 66 66 76
Mail: patricia@kickstart-accelerator.com

Office: c/o Impact Hub, Sihlquai 131, 8005 Zurich
Web: www.kickstart-accelerator.com
Twitter: [@ks_accelerator](https://twitter.com/ks_accelerator)
Facebook: www.facebook.com/KickstartAccelerator

Impact Hub Zürich

Impact Hub Zürich is a community of creators building a radically collaborative world. Being part of the largest network of entrepreneurship and innovation centers across the globe, Impact Hub Zürich sets out to create a thriving innovation ecosystem where people collaborate across organizations, cultures and generations to solve the grand challenges of our time. Impact Hubs offer community memberships, workspace, incubation & acceleration programs and corporate innovation services.

Contact

Christoph Birkholz | Impact Hub Zürich
Managing Director
Mobile: +41 77 420 24 45
Mail: christoph.birkholz@impacthub.ch

Office: Sihlquai 131, 8005 Zurich, Switzerland
Web: www.impacthub.ch
Twitter: [@impacthubzurich](https://twitter.com/impacthubzurich)
Facebook: www.facebook.com/impacthubzurich