



Press release

## EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show

# Launch of the “Watch Medtech Innovation” challenge

**Having demonstrated their true vision by bringing expertise in watchmaking, microtechnology and medical technology together under one roof, the organisers of the EPHJ- EPMT-SMT Trade Show plan to go even further by joining forces with the Inartis Foundation (Fondation Inartis) to launch the first Challenge for the development of ideas: “Watch Medtech”.**

**Geneva, 27 March 2018.** The statistics are quite clear: an increasing number of watchmaking companies are putting their expertise to good use by diversifying into the medtech sector. At the time of the 2017 event, almost a third of exhibitors stated that they were active in the medtech sector - a spectacular increase in five years. This opening enables these businesses to position themselves in other promising markets and to balance out the uncertainties in the watchmaking industry.

This gave rise to the idea of creating a Challenge, the main object of which is to develop, support and guide new, interdisciplinary projects based on harnessing collective intelligence.

*“We have to put the idea into reality”,* explains Alexandre Catton, director of the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show. *“The desire to diversify may be present among our exhibitors, but what they need most are the means and guidance to enable them to achieve this. This Challenge will respond to that need.”*

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How? By appealing to projects for repositioning technologies, products or ideas to the medtech sector, with the aim of accelerating the implementation or commercialisation of new products or services.

The EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show wishes to enable companies interested in this diversification to do so in optimum conditions, with advice from specialists who will be able to support them in their endeavours and provide some financial assistance.

*“The medtech sector is sufficiently specific and cryptic to present barriers to entry, which few would dare to tackle alone”,* points out Benoît Dubuis, President of Fondation Inartis and President of the “Watch Medtech Innovation” Challenge. *“With proper help and guidance, the entrepreneurs will all have the keys to capturing their new market and creating products that will enable them to design their businesses of tomorrow”.* The Challenge is open to all present and past exhibitors at the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Fair since 2012 who produce

ideas across various disciplines that are original, innovative and capable of being implemented in the life sciences field.

This Challenge will take place in two stages. In the first step ideas are submitted to the jury, chaired by Benoît Dubuis, President of Fondation Inartis and director of Fondation Campus Biotech. The jury will choose a maximum of 5 nominated projects, each of which will receive backing worth 5,000 francs to help the nominees put together the basics of their idea, before they submit a more detailed draft for consideration by the jury at the end of 2018. The names of the nominees will be announced at the press conference for the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show on 17 May in Basel.

The five winners will be able to benefit from the infrastructures of the community laboratory and project incubator of the Inartis Foundation, UniverCité based in Renens (Vaud), and build on the unique network of experience of the entities and experts federated by the Inartis Foundation, especially across the Health Valley.

The winning project will be announced by the Challenge jury in early 2019, before the next year's contest.

This method of stimulating ideas has already confirmed its relevance in a number of areas, including improvement of the patient's quality of life, which is the subject of an annual challenge held by the Inartis Foundation and Debiopharm Group.

The experts who will provide guidance to the winners and the members of the Challenge jury will hold a round table at the EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Trade Show, dedicated to finding the best way of moving from the simple idea to prototype. It will take place on Thursday, 14 June at 2.30 p.m.

To take part in the Inartis/EPHJ-EPMT-SMT "Watch Medtech" Challenge, candidates must submit their applications before 11 May as follows:

**By e-mail to:** [challengeinartisEPHJ@inartis.ch](mailto:challengeinartisEPHJ@inartis.ch)

**Or by letter to:** Inartis CP 76 CH-1015 Lausanne

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