

Thomas Dübendorfer named Business Angel of the Year 2024

Rotkreuz/Zug, 24 June 2024 - The SECA (Swiss Private Equity & Corporate Finance Association) has named Thomas Dübendorfer its 22nd Business Angel of the Year. The startup founder and active angel investor impressed the jury with his commitment to the startup scene. Thomas Dübendorfer has already co-founded nine companies and successfully sold several of them: These include the community app Spontacts to Scout24 and Contovista, whose white label product became known as ZKB's financial assistant, to the Aduno Group. He is still on the Board of Directors of the brand management portal Frontify, which he co-founded and now employs 300 people. Since 2014, as co-founder and president of the leading Swiss angel investor club SICTIC, he has helped over three hundred startups to obtain seed funding - and thus an opportunity. Last but not least, the free Swiss Angel Investor Handbook, which he publishes, serves as a practical starting aid for prospective angel investors.

After studying computer science at ETH Zurich and a specialised career with stints in Silicon Valley at hp, a doctorate in cyber security at ETH Zurich and a good seven years as technical manager of computer science engineering teams at Google in Zurich, Thomas Dübendorfer discovered startup entrepreneurship. As co-founder of nine Swiss technology startups and as an angel investor with roles on the board of directors or advisory board, he provided valuable support to the startups with his network and experience on the path from idea to product-market fit, in the growth phase and until the startup exit. Frontify AG, the largest co-founded company, today has 300 employees in New York, London, Paris and Switzerland and serves clients such as Lufthansa, UBS, Nasdaq, Uber and tiktok as a collaborative brand-building platform.

*"In addition to startups, Thomas also offers valuable support to prospective business angels during their first steps. During my first investments, he opened up his large network to exciting startups as well as other business angels. His tips and experience motivated me and enabled me to get started quickly without making any major mistakes." **David Studer, Startup investor***

When he founded the Angel Investors Club SICTIC as a non-profit organisation with an initial focus on Swiss ICT/fintech startups together with five other startup- experienced people in 2014 and took over the presidency, only CHF 80 million in venture capital was invested in the ICT/fintech sector in Switzerland. SICTIC grew rapidly and had a total of 518 active angel investors in 2022. At the same time, the venture capital received by Swiss technology startups in the ICT/Fintech sector grew to 2,000 million in 2022. By the end of 2023, SICTIC investors had invested in a total of 299 technology startups that had created over 7,000 jobs.

In addition to SICTIC, Thomas Dübendorfer has also served as a juror in various startup competitions such as >>venture>> and as an expert at DeVigier, as well as an advisor to the ETH Entrepreneur Club and on the advisory board of the Digital Society Initiative. He also teaches as a guest lecturer on angel investing, innovation and venture capital at the Universities of Zurich and Liechtenstein, at ETH Zurich, and at the Universities of Applied Sciences in Lucerne, Graubünden and Basel. Furthermore, he is the

editor and main author of the **Swiss Angel Investor Handbook**, a comprehensive practice-oriented entry guide for prospective angel investors published in 2021, which has reached over 15,000 people as a printed book or e-book, which can be obtained free of charge at angelhandbook.ch.

“Thomas' contribution to the development of the Swiss business angel scene and the entire Swiss startup ecosystem is extraordinary and cannot be overestimated. With great energy, experience and foresight, he has led SICTIC to become the largest angel investor club in Switzerland. One or more SICTIC Investors are nowadays involved in two thirds of all Swiss early-stage tech startup deals. SICTIC is now "the market" here.” **Dr. Bolko Hohaus, founder & CEO at HCP Asset Management SA and Vice President Swiss Romande at SICTIC**

As impact engagement, he has significantly supported the initiative to organise the accelerator startupbootcamp in Cape Town for the first time on the continent of Africa over three years and the VC funds Launch Africa I&II with an investment focus on B2B startups with customers in Africa with his investor network and in the selection of startups for the accelerator. As a result, a good 9,800 jobs and a further 20,200 gig jobs have been created in the 178 startups financed since 2018, creating a good 30,000 jobs in over 22 countries in Africa.

He is currently preparing to incorporate his 10th Swiss startup, which focuses on product-market fit. It deals with the unfortunately often misunderstood core problem of why startups cannot scale quickly or even fail.

The support of business angels like Thomas Dübendorfer makes it attractive for startup founders to incorporate their startup in Switzerland. The “Business Angel of the Year” award was presented to him after a laudatory speech by Dr Cornelia Gut-Villa, member of the SICTIC Board of Directors and herself a previous winner.

For over two decades, the SECA has honoured outstanding business angels for their commitment and achievements as angel investors. Previous award winners include Cornelia Gut-Villa, Managing Director of the Startfeld Foundation, Yello frontman and entrepreneur Dieter Meier, Logitech founder Daniel Borel, Joachim Schoss, founder of the Scout24 Group, Prof Dr Cuno Pümpin from the University of St. Gallen, Swiss fintech entrepreneur Gian Reto à Porta and last year's winner David Studer.

About SECA

SECA Swiss Private Equity & Corporate Finance Association represents the Swiss private equity, venture capital and corporate finance communities. SECA's objective is to represent private equity and corporate finance activities to the relevant target groups and the public. It also promotes the exchange of ideas and cooperation between members and their clientele. The promotion of professional development as well as the development of ethical rules of conduct and their implementation are further areas of responsibility.

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