

Media release

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Helvetia launches venture fund for investments in start-ups

Helvetia Insurance is launching its own venture fund for investments in start-ups at the beginning of 2017. The newly established Digital Ventures department, part of Corporate Development, will be responsible for the fund. Corporate Development will be headed by Martin Tschopp.

Helvetia Insurance is launching the Helvetia Venture Fund at the beginning of 2017 to help drive forward digitisation. The fund invests systematically in start-ups which are contributing to the digital transformation of Helvetia's existing core business, thus facilitating targeted business model innovations. Around CHF 55 million will be invested in approximately 25 young companies over the next few years. Helvetia will set up a fund management company in Luxembourg for this purpose.

Focus on insurtech and start-ups that link to the business

The fund pursues strategic and financial goals. On the one hand, it will focus on insurtech start-ups. These are young companies active in the traditional value chain of an insurer. On the other hand, it will invest in start-ups whose business models link to Helvetia's business. Helvetia aims for operational cooperation with all start-ups. The investments are therefore made primarily in countries in which Helvetia operates, i.e. Switzerland, Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Spain.

"The Helvetia Venture Fund will make a substantial contribution to the successful implementation of the helvetia 20.20 strategy. In order to make use of business model innovations, we want to invest in the appropriate start-ups and work together with them," explains Philipp Gmür, Group CEO of Helvetia.

Cooperation with b-to-v

Helvetia is working together with b-to-v Partners AG, based in St.Gallen, in the venture capital sector. The Helvetia Venture Fund will thus benefit from the start-up deal flow and the experience of b-to-v. However, the investment decisions will be taken by Helvetia. This allows for the necessary agility, lean processes and short decision-making routes for all investments.

New Corporate Development division for efficient strategy implementation

The Helvetia Venture Fund is part of the Digital Ventures department in the Corporate Development function. This new function will support the efficient implementation of the helvetia 20.20 strategy and will also group and drive forward the company-wide initiatives and programmes. Corporate Development reports directly to Philipp Gmür, Group CEO of Helvetia. Martin Tschopp, who is joining Helvetia as of the first quarter of 2017, will take over as Head of Corporate Development.

Martin Tschopp has worked at UBS since 2012 and since 2015 held the role of Chief Operating Officer for Asset Management Switzerland. The 52-year-old worked at Swiss Life between 2006 and 2011 and left the company as CEO in Luxembourg. His career began in 1990 as a consultant at Andersen Consulting Switzerland. From here, he moved to the Boston Consulting Group in 1994, where he was elected as a partner in 2001. Martin Tschopp holds a licentiate from the University of St.Gallen, where he studied business administration, specialising in finance and accounting.

This media release is also available on our website
www.helvetia.com/media.

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About the Helvetia Group

In over 150 years, the Helvetia Group has grown from a number of Swiss and foreign insurance companies into a successful international insurance group. Today, Helvetia has subsidiaries in its home market Switzerland as well as in the countries that make up the Europe market area: Germany, Italy, Austria and Spain. With its Specialty Markets market area, Helvetia is also present in France and in selected regions worldwide. Some of its investment and financing activities are managed through subsidiaries and fund companies in Luxembourg and Jersey. The Group is headquartered in St.Gallen, Switzerland.

Helvetia is active in the life and non-life business, and also offers customised specialty lines and reinsurance cover. Its business activities focus on retail customers as well as small and medium-sized companies and larger corporates. With some 6,700 employees, the company provides services to more than 4.7 million customers. With a business volume of CHF 8.24 billion,

Helvetia generated underlying earnings of CHF 439 million in the 2015 financial year. The registered shares of Helvetia Holding are traded on the SIX Swiss Exchange under the symbol HELN.

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