

## **adidas launches sports accelerator program “Platform A” at Station F in Paris**

**Herzogenaurach/Paris** – Today, adidas announced the launch of its new sports accelerator program “Platform A” at Station F, the world’s largest start-up campus located in Paris. 13 start-ups have been selected to work with adidas on new business initiatives for the sports industry starting in January. adidas is investing a total of one million euros in the development of the program. The accelerator aims to use the innovative power of the global start-up scene to jointly identify the potential for new strategically important projects. The focus lies on the areas of digital, global sales and community building.

“We are very excited to collaborate with Station F and the best start-ups in the sector,” said Kasper Rorsted, CEO of adidas AG. “‘Platform A’ offers them and us the opportunity to learn from each other. Together we will develop innovative and exciting new products and business models for sports.”

“Platform A” was officially launched on January 18<sup>th</sup>. Participants on the opening day in the Paris headquarters of Station F were Eric Liedtke, adidas Executive Board Member responsible for Global Brands, Guillaume de Monplanet, Senior Vice President and General Manager adidas France, Roxanne Varza, Director of Station F and Saeed Amidi, CEO of Plug and Play.

For adidas, the cooperation with the start-ups under the umbrella of Station F in Paris is part of the consistent implementation of the strategic business plan “Creating the New”. At the core of “Creating the New” stands the ambition to further drive top- and bottom-line growth by significantly increasing brand desirability. “Creating the New” is based on the three strategic choices of Speed, Cities and Open Source. adidas also focuses on digital as part of “Creating the New”.

“What unites adidas and Station F is our Open Source mindset, which is at the heart of our strategy. We know that we don’t have all the answers ourselves and working closely with diverse entrepreneurs at Station F allows us to combine our sports expertise and authority of a global brand with the agility of start-ups. At Station F we are surrounded by like-minded players who are all driven by making progress and together we focus on delivering the best digital innovation in sport,” Eric Liedtke added.

The accelerator program specifically covers the areas of Open Source, Cities and Digital. As part of Open Source, adidas works with many athletes and creatives from the world of sports, fashion



and entertainment around the world, including Pharrell Williams. adidas also has long-standing partnerships with companies and organizations such as Parley for the Oceans, BASF or Ikea.

The start-up campus Station F has quickly made a name for itself as a partner of companies such as Facebook, L'Oréal, LVMH and Microsoft. adidas is the first and only sports company to have a program on the campus. Station F is located in the heart of Paris – one of the key cities for adidas worldwide. The megacity is a trendsetter in the sports and fashion sector, with a strong start-up scene.

In December 2018, 28 selected start-ups had already pitched for entry into the “Platform A” program at adidas’ headquarters in Herzogenaurach, Germany. Together with the American innovation platform Plug and Play, adidas had previously searched worldwide for teams that fit the strategic direction of the company, have outstanding innovation potential and promise a high return on investment. The jury, including adidas business sponsors Scott Zalaznik (Senior Vice President Digital), Nigel Griffiths (Senior Vice President Global Sales) and Stefan Boegle (Senior Director Business Model Strategy & Brand Partners), together with other internal and external jury members, selected 13 start-ups that will move parts of their teams to the Station F campus in January.

The selected start-ups include “Overtime” – a sports network for the digital generation (US, NY), “Hero” – a live shopping service that connects online shoppers with store associates (UK, London/US, NY) and “Running Care” – a digital coach that helps runners to prevent and treat running injuries (France, Lille) as well as Blue Bite, SneakerCrypt, Storr, WOM, YEAY, eyecandylab, Radius8, Stuffstr, Vekia, and Neurun.

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### **About adidas**

adidas is a global leader in the sporting goods industry with the core brands adidas and Reebok. Headquartered in Herzogenaurach/Germany, the company employs around 57,000 people across the globe and generated sales of € 21 billion in 2017.

### **About Station F**

STATION F is the biggest start-up camps in the world. Based in central Paris and founded by Xavier Niel, the 34,000m<sup>2</sup> campus houses an entire start-up ecosystem under one roof. Home to 1,000 start-ups from around the world and many other actors from the ecosystem, Station F is truly one-of-a-kind.

Website: [stationf.co](http://stationf.co) | Twitter: @JoinStationF | Facebook: Station F | Instagram: JoinStationF



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