



Press release

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The 7th annual Vaud International Business Awards announces its three winners

Lausanne, 3 December 2020 – The three winners of this year's Vaud International Business Awards are Intuitive Surgical Inc., the pioneer in minimally invasive robotic-assisted surgery; Boschung Group, a global leader in technology for clearing road surfaces; and Green Motion, a company that has been developing innovative electric-vehicle charging systems since 2009. The awards are handed out jointly every year by the Vaud Department of Economy, Innovation and Sports (DEIS), the Vaud Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CVCI) and Innovaud, and showcase three thriving local businesses that have also made a name for themselves internationally. This year's awards ceremony took place on 3 December and, owing to the pandemic, was held on the set of local TV station *La Télé Vaud Fribourg*.

Intuitive, a US company that set up its European headquarters in Aubonne about 14 years ago, is the winner in the **Best Foreign Company** category. The company has developed a pioneering system for minimally invasive, robotic-assisted surgery, called da Vinci®. Launched in 1999, da Vinci® was the first such system to receive the CE mark and to obtain market approval from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). It employs advanced technology that scales, filters and translates a surgeon's hand motions into more precise movements. The system is used in nearly 70 countries, and over 52,000 surgeons around the world have been trained on it. Some 40 da Vinci® systems are installed in Switzerland. The firm was founded in 1995 and completed an IPO in 2000. Today it has over 7,000 employees worldwide, including 162 in Aubonne. Intuitive has never stopped innovating and has issued or owns more than 2,900 patents.

Boschung Group, founded in Fribourg Canton in 1947 and active in Vaud for the past three years, won the **Best Swiss Company** award. The company engineers, manufactures, operates and services comprehensive integrated solutions for the efficiency and safety of traffic surfaces. It is the world leader in "Surface Condition Management" – a process at the core of its business model and that spans all three aspects of road clearing: hazard detection, through early-warning systems that identify potentially dangerous patches of black ice; action, through mobile and fixed de-icing and surface clearing equipment; and management, through digital platforms and applications. The process is used at airports, on roads and highways and by towns and municipalities. Boschung Group has 11 branch offices in ten countries and over 600 employees worldwide, including around 140 at Payerne. Some 80% of its revenue comes from exports.

Green Motion SA, an international firm based in Le Mont-sur-Lausanne, won the **Special Jury award**. The company was founded in 2009 to develop, manufacture, install and service electric-vehicle charging systems. More specifically, it manufactures charging stations, designs management software for charging networks and provides services for electric-powered transportation. Green Motion operates its own network of charging stations under the "evpass" brand; its network is the most extensive in Switzerland and one of the leaders in Europe. Over 10,000 of its charging stations – fully designed and engineered in Switzerland – have already been installed worldwide. The company has developed other breakthrough technology as well, such as charging stations for electric planes and onboard chargers for the automotive industry. Green Motion has obtained the Vaud Scale-Up label and currently employs 60 people in Lausanne and around a dozen in Zurich. It has projects under way in various European countries as well as the US, China, India and Israel.

The awards were handed out on 3 December by members of the selection panel and the three sponsor organisations. The selection panel was chaired by Philippe Leuba, the head of the DEIS, and included Aude Pugin, the chairman of the CVCI; Rémi Walbaum, the chairman of Innovaud; Jean-Philippe Bonardi, a professor and dean of HEC Lausanne; Dominique Turpin, dean of external relations at IMD in Lausanne; and representatives from last year's three winners – Christophe Baur, the plant manager at Schott Suisse; Philippe Prat, the CEO of Plumettaz; and Jean-Michel Rapin, the founder of Fromagerie Le Maréchal.

Awarding local businesses in three categories

The Vaud International Business Awards were introduced in 2014 to recognise companies that have had their headquarters in Vaud for at least three years and have successfully expanded internationally. The companies must also play a role in boosting Vaud's image abroad and creating jobs at home. Additional selection criteria for the Best Foreign Company award are whether the company's goods and services are produced locally, how much it helps diversify the Vaud economy, how many of its suppliers are local, and how well it is integrated into the canton. Additional selection criteria for the Best Swiss Company award are how much the company helps train local workers, whether it has any joint R&D programs, and how much of its revenue is generated internationally. And finally, the additional selection criteria for the Special Jury award are how innovative the company is, how big of a role it plays in the local community, and to what extent it works with other local businesses. We would like to take this opportunity to thank *24 heures* and *La Télé Vaud Fribourg*, which provided media coverage for the awards.

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