Landquart, January, 2016

The MedTech start-up company Swisstom AG is part of a consortium awarded a project to develop a lung monitor for premature babies. Thanks to direct financial support by the Swiss Federal Government, Swisstom can participate in this ground-breaking European project (CRADL).

Direct monitoring of lung and heart function in living humans is a vision long sought after. Swisstom’s breakthrough technology makes this vision come true – without using x-rays. The fundamental technology is called Electrical Impedance Tomography (EIT) which Swisstom was able to develop into a marketable product within the past four years. The first generation of Swisstom’s EIT devices has been approved for use in adults a year ago and is now installed in selected European clinics. In principle, the technology would be ideal for premature babies and infants because it is completely radiation-free. However, the technology is not ready for these very small patients, yet.

Top-class consortium
Under the leadership of the worldwide renowned EIT scientist Prof. Richard Bayford, a consortium of 11 institutes and service providers – including the Hôpital Universitaire Genève (HUG) – received the award and funding to develop EIT for neonates with the highest acclaims for excellence by the Euro2020 experts. Swisstom is the sole implementation partner in the consortium and thus this project is of immense importance to the start-up company in Landquart.
With the provided means and partners to interact with, Swisstom has now the resources to expand the range of application to neonates and to expand its technological lead.

**Funding despite Switzerland’s status as a “third country”**
After accepting the initiative of mass immigration in the referendum of February 9, 2014, in Switzerland, the European Union was no longer willing to financially support Swiss research in the framework of European projects. The Swiss State Secretary for Education, Research and Innovation SBFI closed this financial gap and thus enables Swiss enterprises to still participate in Horizon 2020 projects. Thanks to this medium term action, Swisstom benefits from this exceptional opportunity. Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing the Innovation Union, a Europe 2020 flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe’s global competitiveness.