

Nestlé opens its largest R+D Accelerator

Nestlé has inaugurated its largest R+D Accelerator yet at its fundamental research centre in Lausanne, Switzerland. It is part of Nestlé's global R+D Accelerator network, which was launched in 2019 to provide a platform for startups, students and Nestlé intrapreneurs to bring highly differentiated innovations to the market at speed.



Source: Nestlé

The internal and external teams have full access to Nestlé's infrastructure and science, technology and business expertise. Using early trends, differentiating technologies and scientific discoveries as sources of inspiration, the teams develop innovative product solutions in a six-month immersive 'idea to shop' programme.

They can consult with Nestlé's R&D experts from around the world such as food technologists, nutritionists, regulatory and food safety experts, designers and packaging experts. Each team also receives hands-on support from dedicated innovation coaches and mentoring from Nestlé's senior management.

"We give internal and external entrepreneurs full access to all the expertise and infrastructure they need to translate their idea into a product – from analytical labs, experimental kitchens, to prototyping and production facilities – and we help them test their innovations in real-market conditions," says Tom Wagner, head of the Nestlé R+D Accelerator programme.

Currently, Nestlé's global R+D Accelerator network consists of 12 sites in 8 different countries. Each accelerator is located at a Nestlé R&D site and focuses on a specific product category or region.

For example, Nestlé has accelerators at its R&D centres for dairy, nutrition, coffee, confectionery or food products. Regional accelerators in China, India, US, Asean and sub-Saharan Africa work with local startups and students to develop innovations relevant to their regions.



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According to the company, the newly inaugurated site that is embedded at Nestlé's research facilities in Lausanne accelerates the translation of fundamental science into cross-category innovations.

It is the industry's largest accelerator, covering a 4,000m² surface with a variety of co-working stations, prototyping kitchens and mini-production facilities. It can host up to 10 teams simultaneously. Located at the heart of the Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley, teams have access to a sophisticated innovation ecosystem in the area of food and nutrition.



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"At our R+D Accelerators we combine the creativity and entrepreneurship of students, startups and intrapreneurs with Nestlé's extensive scientific and technological expertise. The initiative creates learning opportunities for both internal and external talents, builds competencies and fosters an entrepreneurial culture across our sites.

"It is great to see the passion and excitement of the teams as they go from an idea to a test launch in just a few months, overcoming many different challenges along the way!" says Stefan Palzer, Nestlé chief technology officer.

Since 2019, 165 participants have participated in the R+D Accelerator programme and almost 80 products have been tested in 18 countries. Recent launches include the pea-based milk alternative Wunda, as well as a number of science-based nutritional concepts.

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