

HeiQ Viroblock Wins Prestigious and Coveted Swiss Technology Award 2020

Zurich, November 20, 2020 – HeiQ Viroblock has bagged the coveted Swiss Technology Award 2020! The leading technology prize in Switzerland, Swiss Technology Award, yesterday announced the 2020 prizes, and among all the notable finalist innovations of the year, HeiQ was bestowed the highest honor as First Prize Winner for its breakthrough antiviral textile technology HeiQ Viroblock. This is the most notable recognition for the young company's innovative spirit and technologies as well as its contribution to stemming the spread of the global pandemic.

Developed in record time and launched after the Swiss authorities announced the lockdown in March 2020, HeiQ Viroblock has had a major impact on the global textile industry and is being unprecedently adopted by mills around the world. HeiQ Viroblock is one of the world's most efficient and effective antiviral/antimicrobial technologies and has been applied by more than 150 brands worldwide to over 1 billion products from face masks, apparels to home textiles, mattresses and curtains to date.

The technology that makes HeiQ Viroblock a unique innovation

What exemplifies HeiQ Viroblock is its ability to turn any fabric antiviral. It's among the first textile technologies in the world to be proven effective against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19). HeiQ Viroblock consists of a combination of HeiQ's patent-pending vesicle and silver technologies. The two mechanisms of attack result in an over 99.9% destruction of viruses in 5 minutes that is unrivaled in the industry. HeiQ Viroblock is a unique patent-pending formulation of 72% bio-based ingredients, made with 100% cosmetic-grade materials from the International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients list. HeiQ Viroblock is also a shining example of Swiss cooperation between academics and the industry. The silver technology was developed at ETHZ (Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich), the vesicle technology at EPFL (École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne), and the production was scaled up at FHNW (Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz).

HeiQ Viroblock has demonstrated unparalleled speed from laboratory to consumer

With unprecedented speed of a mere two months as compared to average launch time of 12-18 months, HeiQ launched the new antiviral textile technology HeiQ Viroblock on March 16, 2020 – two hours after Switzerland declared a state of emergency. This was made possible with the indispensable support of Swiss research Partner FHNW and the EPFL which helped accelerate product validation. The fast scale-up of production was enabled by the FHNW School of Life Sciences with their new Process Technology Center (PTC) by special permit. With its agile operations and global footprint, HeiQ also brought HeiQ Viroblock face masks and other PPE (personal protection equipment) to different corners of the world where are needed. Now, Swiss consumers can also acquire HeiQ Viroblock enhanced face masks online.

Reacting to the news of HeiQ Viroblock winning this year's Swiss Tech Award, Co-founder and CEO Carlo Centonze says: *"I am both amazed and honored that HeiQ has won this award a second time in just ten years, and from among some incredible tech innovation finalists. It confirms our resolve to push the boundaries and push innovations to help the world with its most pressing and imminent problems. This award is recognition for our company and team that have spared no efforts to develop and launch HeiQ Viroblock at such speed and make a valuable contribution to the global pandemic efforts. We remain true to our mission: enhancing the everyday lives of people with smart and efficient textile effects."*

HeiQ, Viroblock and HeiQ Viroblock are trademark(s) or registered trademark(s) of HeiQ Materials AG.





Carlo Centonze and his daughter Anna (Image from HeiQ)

About HeiQ

Founded in 2005 as a spin-off from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH), HeiQ is a leader in textile innovation creating some of the most effective, durable and high-performance textile technologies on the market today. HeiQ's mission is to improve the lives of billions of people by perfecting an everyday product: Textiles. Combining three areas of expertise – scientific research, specialty materials manufacturing and consumer ingredient branding – HeiQ is the ideal innovation partner to create differentiating and sustainable textile products and capture the added value at the point of sale. With a total capacity of 35'000 tons per year HeiQ manufactures in the USA, Switzerland and Australia supplying its specialty chemical products in over 60 countries worldwide.

About HeiQ Viroblock (NPJ03) technology

- Breakthrough patent-pending combination of two technologies:
 - HeiQ's registered silver technology for antiviral and antibacterial effect (non-nano) – attracts and binds the virus and inhibits growth of bacteria
 - HeiQ's cosmetic liposome vesicle technology acting as a booster – destroys the viral membrane
- Applied on at least one billion face masks during the current pandemic
- Strong antimicrobial effect proven by ISO20743 and antiviral effect by ISO18184 tests ([view test reports online](#))
- The technology was one of the first in the world to have been tested effective against SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19): 99.99% reduction in 30 minutes
- Instantaneous antiviral effect on Sendai virus, demonstrated within 2-5 minutes.
- All ingredients are listed on International Nomenclature for Cosmetic Ingredients (INCI).
- Certified by Beta Analytics laboratories as a 72% bio-based technology.
- HeiQ on media recently: HeiQ on [CNN](#).
- HeiQ on "[Good Morning America](#)" with DL1961.

- HeiQ on [Forbes](#) and [Yahoo Finance](#) with Serta Simmons Bedding (SSB), world's largest mattress maker who would be the first to introduce mattresses with HeiQ Viroblock technology into North America.
- HeiQ is the most featured textile technology company on Vogue, with [DL1961](#), [Malwee](#) and [Albini](#)
- HeiQ's contribution to the COVID-19 pandemic:
 - HeiQ has supplied HeiQ Viroblock to ca.300 customers globally since its launch and on boarded over 300 brands with this technology.
 - HeiQ Viroblock is estimated to have been applied to more than 1 billion masks worldwide.
 - From April to May, HeiQ helped the Swiss Army source 100'000 protective isolation gowns, chartering a full Swiss Airliner repurposed for transport of Personal Protective Equipment.
 - HeiQ launched disposable and washable masks featuring several of HeiQ's high performance technologies with good initial success.
 - The masks continue to be rated with 5 stars by consumers on Brack.ch. A customer who has travelled across half the globe even sent us a thank you card stating how comfortable the mask was for his 12-hour flight. What is more: 2 out of this list online of "most comfortable masks" are with the HeiQ Viroblock technology.
 - HeiQ co-sponsored 1800 masks at the VentureLab top 100 Swiss Startup Award
- Some of the brands that have adopted HeiQ Viroblock: Burberry, Mammut, Cornelia James, DL1961, SertaSimmons Bedding, Outdoor Research, Buff, Craighoppers, Aviro, Albini, Malwee and the Medical Supply Company of Switzerland.

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