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This was Pioneers '19: The Hofburg Goes Deep Tech - Facts & Figures

Vienna – The Pioneers Flagship Event on May 9th and 10th was themed 'Walk the Talks' and led through an inspiring journey from the beginning to the end of life. 2,500 international investors, corporates and startup founders joined forces at the Vienna Hofburg Imperial Palace to discover how deep tech is redefining our world.

Pioneers '19 - that means 2.500 attendees, including 1,300 startup founders, 600 decision makers from international and national corporations, 150 public sector officials, 300 investors and 150 media representatives. The majority of attendees joined from Germany, Austria and Switzerland (47%), although Eastern Asian, Middle Eastern, African and South American nationals were also largely represented on site. Similar numbers could be observed for attendees hailing from the UK, the USA, Italy and CEE countries such as Hungary, Poland, Estonia and the Czech Republic.

Creating an inclusive platform such as Pioneers means removing boundaries between participants. At Pioneers '19, everyone was able to meet each other: attendees from all backgrounds networked in the designated *Grand Hall*, where over 1,500 meetings were scheduled using the automated Match & Meet tool.

“Pioneers flagship events allow attendees to truly meet with everybody,” says Oliver Csendes, CEO of Pioneers. “We don't care if you come in sneakers or wearing a suit, our matchmaking tool focuses only on the benefits a single meeting can bring for both you and your new business contact. Whether it's your startup's next big investor or a pioneering speaker, like Wikipedia Co-Founder Larry Sanger, you'll find everyone in our Match & Meet area.”

Social entrepreneur **Nikki Eberhardt**, and improviser and narrator **Chris Wells** moderated the two days together with radio presenter and podcast host **Bilal Khan**.

The four Pioneers '19 stages hosted 145 speakers and moderators from as far off as France, Middle and Eastern Europe, Nigeria, Spain and Japan. Over one third of the speakers on stage were female, as were 40% of the pitching jury. The finale showed a fully balanced gender ratio amongst the judges: Sitting at the Jurors' Table were **Geraldine le Meur** (The Refiners), **Collete Davis** (professional race car driver) and **Amy Wu** (Lightspeed Venture Partners).

Topics: Inspiration From the Real Forerunners

Pete Worden shared the latest on the **Breakthrough Foundation's** search for life in Alpha Centauri, our neighbouring galaxy, while **NASA Systems and Human Factors Engineer Kerry McGuire**

spoke about the ways in which automated systems can help astronauts deal with technical issues in the era of interplanetary travel.

Erik Gatenholm of **CELLINK** offered insights into his company's contribution to 3D bioprinting tech: "We've launched the most cost-effective bioprinter in the world and are selling it for \$5,000. That has really impacted the field, and we've seen it used to print human skin, hearts, muscles and corneas."

Siri creator Adam Cheyer meanwhile gave *Bixby Studio* its global debut. Backed by Samsung, this tool allows smaller players to harness the power of machine learning to build a personal assistant. "If you're a third party in the virtual assistant world, you are a second-class citizen," said Cheyer. "You do not have the tools a developer at Amazon has. We want to change that."

Oriente's Geoffrey Prentice shared more about how his explosive company is bringing credit to the 'unbanked' in Indonesia and the Philippines. "The demographics and the growth rates in South-East Asia are fantastic," he said. "It's a younger market even than China, and has an optimism that's really fun to be a part of. I'm surprised more Western companies haven't gotten involved in it yet."

Ian Khan (Futuracy) and **Wikipedia Co-Founder Larry Sanger** highlighted some of Blockchain's real benefits, including tackling fraud, breaking the trend towards centralization and preserving truth and democracy. "Bitcoin is not Blockchain," said Khan, "and I'm on a mission to separate the two."

Professor Thomas Schäfer-Elmayer of the **Elmayer Dance School** led our tech innovators in dancing a Viennese classic, the Quadrille, in the *Grand Hall* on Day 2 and held a Business Etiquette Workshop for selected attendees.

The event's second day additionally featured entrepreneurship reaching from Austria to Africa: The panel discussion *Building the Austrian Startup Ecosystem* featured **Johann 'Hansi' Hansmann (Austrian Angel Investor Association)**, **Selma Prodanovic (1MillionStartups)**, **Oliver Holle (SpeedInvest)** and **Michael Altrichter (startup300)**, and was followed by the *Founders Stories* panel, where **Florian Gschwandtner, Katharina Klausberger, Frank Westermann** and **Travis Pittman**, the founders of local success stories **Runtastic, Shpock, mySugr** and **TourRadar** respectively, shared their insights.

The main stage welcomed **Dr Obiageli Ezekwesili** to a panel discussion on Africa's potential to grow into a substantial technology hub. The **former Vice President of the World Bank (Africa Region)** was joined by **Maryanne Akoth** of **TechBridge Invest** and the **University of Nairobi**.

Director of Cloud and Data Engineering and **Data Protection Officer** at **EMOTIV Matthew Bosworth** talked brain-computer interfaces, quantified mental states, and the virtuous cycle that occurs when everyone has access to technology and the resulting data is used for the good of all.

About Pioneers

At Pioneers, we inspire, empower and create. Our purpose is to foster growth and innovation with a focus on deep tech. Since 2009, our diverse team has built an ecosystem, creating collaboration opportunities for tech innovators. We bring together startups, corporate executives, public sector

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innovators, and investors through digital solutions, consultancy services, events and investments to create a prosperous future.

Find out more about our various offerings and network under <https://pioneers.io/#/> or follow us on social media.



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