

## Media Release

Davos, January 19, 2023

### **Demis Hassabis, Co-Founder and CEO of Deepmind, receives the Global Swiss AI Award for outstanding global impact in AI**

**Davos, January 19, 2023.** On the occasion of the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2023 with its theme of 'Cooperation in a Fragmented World,' the Mindfire Foundation announces Demis Hassabis as the winner of the Global Swiss AI Award for outstanding global impact in AI 2022. The trophy was handed over by the Mayor of Davos, Philipp Wilhelm and the president of the Swiss AI Award, Pascal Kaufmann.

Around 50 leading representatives from AI, politics, research, and talent communities were attending the ceremony taking place in the historic town hall in the house of the Mayor in Davos, Switzerland, a showpiece of higher architecture, connecting tradition with modernity, and a popular venue for state receptions.

In his laudation speech, Prof. Dr. Thilo Stadelmann, Head of the Centre for Artificial Intelligence, ZHAW, noted that *'Recently, Demis and his team made a breakthrough in the field of protein folding, a crucial area of research in the life sciences, accelerating protein science by taking a process that would previously have taken months or even years, to minutes. The new AI system, known as AlphaFold, can predict the 3D structure of essentially any known protein with unprecedented accuracy and speed.'* The AlphaFold system has provided researchers with a powerful new tool for studying and designing complex 3D proteins, accelerating the development of new drugs but also helping to improve our understanding of diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. Prof. Dr. Thilo Stadelmann closed with the following words: *'Demis has been at the forefront of AI research for many years and has been a tireless advocate for the responsible development and deployment of cutting-edge AI technologies. Demis is a role model for uniting entrepreneurship and curiosity to push the edge of the unknown. Thus, the jury honoured him with the Swiss Global AI Award today.'*

The president of the Mindfire Foundation, Pascal Kaufmann stated: *'Demis and his team consistently pushed research boundaries showing other fields what is possible with today's AI systems. For the future, I am certain that his commitment to developing AIs will benefit society, and I consider him a shining example of what we can achieve when science and entrepreneurship goes hand in hand.'* The Mindfire Foundation conducts research in the field of AI, and with its AI institute in Davos, Lab42, Mindfire aims to systematically identify and select the world's leading researchers in the field of artificial intelligence and integrate them into the foundation's program. Ultimately bringing Switzerland to the forefront of the world in the development and application of AI for humankind.

#### **About Demis Hassabis**

The winner, Demis Hassabis (born July 27, 1976), is an AI researcher and entrepreneur. He is currently Chief Executive Officer at DeepMind and Isomorphic Labs and a UK Government AI Advisor. After successful academic careers and computer game development, he co-founded DeepMind in 2010. A child chess prodigy, he designed and programmed the multi-million-selling, award-winning game Theme Park at 17. After graduating from Cambridge University, he founded the pioneering videogames firm Elixir Studios and completed a Ph.D. in cognitive

neuroscience at UCL. Demis is a Fellow of the Royal Society. In 2017 he was featured in the Time 100 list of most influential people, and in 2018 he was awarded a CBE for services to science and technology. In 2022, he won the Princess of Asturias Award for Technical and Scientific Research, and in 2023 the Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences for developing AlphaFold.

### **About DeepMind**

DeepMind is a scientific discovery company committed to ‘solving intelligence to advance science and benefit humanity.’ Solving intelligence requires a diverse and interdisciplinary team working closely together – from scientists and designers to engineers and ethicists – to pioneer the development of advanced artificial intelligence. The company’s breakthroughs include AlphaGo, AlphaFold, over one thousand published research papers (including more than twenty in Nature or Science), partnerships with scientific organisations, and hundreds of contributions to Google’s products (in everything from Android battery efficiency to Assistant text-to-speech).

### **About the Global Swiss AI Award**

The Global Swiss AI Award honours the most promising and innovative AI start-ups from across Switzerland and selects an individual who has impacted the field of AI at a global scale. The application process grounds a scouting process, tracing and following hundreds of AI companies in Switzerland and beyond. From these, several scientists, entrepreneurs, and other leaders in the field are profiled and rated along an established catalogue of criteria. An important decision criterion is the timeframe of the impact, which should encompass timeframes at maximum 3 years until a significant impact can be assessed, hence allowing young scientists and yet unknown individuals to gain visibility and become a nominee. The selection process and the jury are headed and organized by the Mindfire Foundation. In 2021, François Chollet won the last Global Swiss AI Award ‘for outstanding global impact in AI’. He is the inventor and main driver behind the Keras deep learning environment and the author of several high-impact publications.

### **About Mindfire Foundation**

The Mindfire Foundation conducts research in the field of human-level Artificial Intelligence (AI) to gain new insights into this field. Mindfire systematically identifies and selects the world's leading researchers in the field of artificial intelligence and integrates them into the foundation's program. With the Lab42 initiative, the foundation has set itself the goal of bringing Switzerland to the forefront of the world in the development and application of AI for humankind.

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### **Relevant links**

<https://www.mindfire.global>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demis\\_Hassabis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demis_Hassabis)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascal\\_Kaufmann](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascal_Kaufmann)

Pictures



Pascal Kaufmann, Demis Hassabis, Philipp Wilhelm



Global Swiss AI Award 2022 for outstanding achievements in AI