Support to Entrepreneurship around EPFL
About Ecosystems: the Rainforest

The Rainforest by Victor W. Hwang and Greg Horowitt perfectly explains that entrepreneurial innovation is chaotic and the diversity and connection of its actors make its richness and efficiency. The complexity of the EPFL ecosystem is therefore its strength even if it may appear complicated to a first-comer. But please remember all this is about people, not institutions. Indeed the following is of utmost importance:

The #7 Rainforest Rules
– Break the Rules and Dream
– Open Doors and Listen
– Trust and Be Trusted
– Experiment and Iterate Together
– Seek Fairness, Not Advantage
– Err, Fail and Persist
– Pay it Forward

The #6 Rainforest Tools
– Learn by Doing
– Enhance Diversity
– Celebrate Role Models and Peer Interaction
– Build Tribes of trust
– Create Social Feedback Loops
– Make Social Contracts Explicit
The next slides try to give an exhaustive list of tools and support mechanisms available for EPFL entrepreneurs. If it begins with research and technology transfer, innovation is further encouraged through:

- Advice (training, coaching, mentoring)
- Funding (grants, prizes, but also investments)
- Office space (co-working spaces, incubators, accelerators, technology parks)
- Exposure (events, networking, pitching of ideas, role models, community)
- Internationalization

This document shows the richness and related complexity of the EPFL ecosystem. We wish it will still be helpful as a resource reference list.

The online content can be found on [www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/resources-for-entrepreneurs](http://www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/resources-for-entrepreneurs)
Public Funding of Education & Research

Conseil des Ecoles Polytechniques – ETH Rat
www.ethrat.ch

Fonds National Suisse – Swiss National Fund
www.snf.ch

InnoSuisse - Agence Suisse pour la l'Encouragement de l'Innovation
(Swiss Innovation Agency)
www.innosuisse.ch

European Union
ec.europa.eu/research
ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/
erc.europa.eu/
VPI - A Facilitator Between Two Worlds

VPR

- Transdisciplinary Centers & Discovery Projects
- Technology Transfer Office (TTO)
- Contracts / Licenses / PoC (Enable)
- Bachelors / Masters

VPI

- Strategic Partnerships
- Innovation Park
- Alliance - relationships / collaborations with SMEs
- Entrepreneurship
- Innogrand
- xgrants

VPE

www.epfl.ch/innovation
Innovation and Tech. Transfer

EPFL Technology Transfer Office (part of VPR)
tto.epfl.ch

Swiss TT Association
www.switt.ch

Available technologies:
www.switt.ch/pour_l_economie/swittlist

Industry Liaison Programme
www.alliance-tt.ch

Partnerships & Innovation Square
www.epfl.ch/innovation/industry/

Start-up creation
www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/start-your-venture

Innogrants
www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/innogrants

XGrant
www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/xgrants/

Tech4Impact
t4i.epfl.ch/

YGrant
Funding: Surviving the “Valley of Death” at EPFL

A rich ecosystem

Funding

Research Grants
Development Grants
Preseed Grants
Friends, Family & Fools
Business Angles, Seed VCs
Early Stage VCs, Corp. Partners
Late Stage VCs (… M&A / IPO)

Basic Research
Applied Research
Proof of Concept / Business Case
Prototype Founders
Prototype Founders
Product Development
Company Fast Growth (Revenues, Employees)

Start-Up foundation

“Valley of Death”
IT’S not about Money only: A Rich and Dense Ecosystem

Advice/Training:

Exposure/networks:

Housing:

Research Grants
Development Grants
Preseed Grants
Friends, Family & Fools
Business Angels, Seed VCs
Early Stage VCs, Corp. Partners
Late Stage VCs (… M&A / IPO)

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"Valley of Death"

Start-Up foundation

A rich ecosystem
More than funding

Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL
### A Diversity of Support Tools

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- Training, coaching, mentoring

**Financial Support**
- Grants, awards

**Housing**
- Co-working spaces, technology parks

**Community services**
- Events, information, online services

**Development**
- Summer camps, accelerators, cantons

**Investments**
- Business angels, Venture Capital
A Rich Offering in Entrepreneurship Education

College of Management of Technology

cdm.epfl.ch

including

Master and Minor in Management, Technology and Entrepreneurship

smte.epfl.ch

A TTO course for PhDs

mintt.epfl.ch

China Hardware Innovation Camp

www.chi.camp

... and much more in EPFL colleges and SHS classes for bachelor and Master students
A Rich Offering in Entrepreneurship Education

Innosuisse Startup Training

BUSINESS CONCEPT
Powered by EPFL Innovation Park

EIP StartupTraining
www.businessconcept.ch

venturelab
www.venturelab.ch

including startup champions / ventureideas
www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/startup-champions/
Coaching

“coaching” provided by Innovation Park & subject to approval by EPFL since 1996

epfl-innovationpark.ch/get-involved/start-right-away/coaching

CTI (InnoSuisse) Start-up coaching with various steps to acceptance


EPFL Alumni Mentors

www.epflalumni.ch/mentoring-programs/

www.genilem.ch

www.platinn.ch

Start-up competition

www.imd.org/emba/program/executive-mba-startup-competition
**A Diversity of Support Tools**

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Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL
**Enable**: accelerating technology transfer through prototyping of IP  
[enable.epfl.ch](http://enable.epfl.ch)

**Innogrants**: a 1-year salary for EPFL future entrepreneurs  
[www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/innogrants](http://www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/innogrants)

**XGrants**: a support tool of up to CHF10’000 for EPFL bachelor and master students

**YGrants**: a support tool of up to CHF10’000 for EPFL bachelor and master students in social entrepreneurship
Additional Proof of Concepts Grants

The InnoSuisse “feasibility studies” or “projects without implementation partners” support R&D projects with a high applied research content

www.innosuisse.ch/inno/en/home/start-your-innovation-project/projekte-ohne-umsetzungspartner.html

The Swiss National Fund (SNF) is supporting similar mechanisms through its NCCRs

www.nccr-robotics.ch/tech-transfer/startups/spinfund

InnoPACTT: a financial support to create your spin-off at CHUV / Unil

www.pactt.ch/pactt_home/pactt-inventor-scientist/pactt-innopacct.htm

European Innovation Council (EIC) pilot

ec.europa.eu/research/eic/index.cfm?pg=funding

Bridge: a joint SNF – CTI (InnoSuisse) program

www.bridge.ch
More Funding: Foundation Grants

The Gebert Rüf Foundation “sponsored” individual projects in academic environments [www.grstiftung.ch/en.html](http://www.grstiftung.ch/en.html)
Mostly through the Innobooster program
(for projects backed by Venture Kick – CHF150k for 1.5 year).

50’000CHF “Coup de pouce” award (1-3 per year)
[www.fondation-liechti.ch](http://www.fondation-liechti.ch)

Up to 200’000CHF for projects in Information Technologies & Telecom
[www.haslerstiftung.ch](http://www.haslerstiftung.ch)

and foundations are numerous in Switzerland
Funding & Loans

Venturekick provides seed funding up to 150’000CHF
www.venturekick.ch

A 100’000CHF loan mechanism by Fondation pour l’Innovation Technologique as well as other tools from Innovaud
www.fondation-fit.ch  www.innovaud.ch

Loans of 100’000-500’000CHF to founders
www.sti-stiftung.ch

Volkwirtschaft foundation: A 150’000CHF loan to support to young entrepreneurs
www.volkswirtschaft-stiftung.ch/en
Academic Awards

>>Venture>> 2019  www.venture.ch
Up to CHF150’000 awards

Prix Musy – 50’000CHF for a Woman Entrepreneur
www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/prix-musy/

10’000CHF plus 3x 1’000CHF, with ETHZ and EPFL as co-organizers
www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/young-entrepreneur-award
& www.cnccef.org

A 50’000CHF award by HEC - Uni. Lausanne
www.prixstrategis.ch

A 30’000CHF award by HEC Lausanne & EPFL students
startlausanne.ch
External Awards

Fondation de Vigier (restricted to Swiss residents)

www.devigier.ch
100'000CHF per project (usually 4-5 per year)

PERL award

www.lausanne-region.ch
A total of 100'000CHF (50'000CHF, 20'000CHF and 3x – 10'000CHF)

A 160'000 € pan-European competition
for <2-year old start-ups and projects

www.hello-tomorrow.org

Generation Entrepreneur – in Romandie

www.generationentrepreneur.ch
External Awards

Swiss Economic Award - A total of 75’000CHF for Swiss-based companies set up in the past six years
www.swisseconomic.ch/en/sef-award

Swiss Technology Award
www.swiss-innovation.com/award
www.en.swiss-innovation.com/award

All type of business ventures with high growth potential. For German-speaking Swiss entrepreneurs
150’000CHF amount (3 prizes; every two years)
www.jungunternehmerpreis.ch

A 200’000CHF total. Annual business plan competition sponsored by several partners. 4 awards. www.swiss-startups-awards.ch
External Awards

20k & 10k Awards around ideas for sustainable development in Geneva
www.prix-iddea.ch

10kCHF Dyson Student Award
Marketing award
https://www.swissmarketingforum.ch/events/marketing-tag

Entrepreneur of the year AWARD with a start-up category
www.ey.com/ch/eoy
# A Diversity of Support Tools

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Close support: the EPFL Innovation Park

- The Innovation Park: 13 buildings for companies partnering & collaborating with EPFL
  epfl-innovationpark.ch

- Including 6 buildings for start-ups, offering a variety of value-added services (coaching, training, funding,…)

- The Garage (opened in 2008) for very early stage ventures
  epfl-innovationpark.ch/legarage

- A co-working open-space for early-stage projects
  epfl-innovationpark.ch/laforge
More Co-Working Spaces

- [EdTech Collider](edtech-collider.ch)
- [Gotham](www.gothamco.com)
- [Coworking@UC](coworking.univercite.ch)
- [La Muse – Geneva & Lausanne](la-muse.ch/coworking)
- [Lausanne Impact Hub](lausanne.impacthub.net)
- [Geneva Impact Hub](geneva.impacthub.net)
- [Zurich Impact Hub](zurich.impacthub.net)
- [Impact Hub](www.gothamco.com)
- [EdTech Collider](edtech-collider.ch)
- [La Muse – Geneva & Lausanne](la-muse.ch/coworking)
More Science Parks

- www.campusbiotech.ch
- geneus.ch
- www.biopole.ch
- www.eclosion.ch
- www.y-parc.ch
- www.friup.ch
- www.neode.ch
- www.bluefactory.ch
- www.creapole.ch
- www.theark.ch
- www.fongit.ch
- www.swissparks.ch
## A Diversity of Support Tools

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Building a community

Join the EPFL start-up community on
www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=516530

Subscribe to the EPFL start-up events memento
memento.epfl.ch/subscription/start-up

Steve Jobs was mentored by
Robert Noyce, founder of Intel
EPFL VPI Events

Startup Champions @ EPFL
www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/startup-champions/

Pizzas & Start-up

Most Tuesdays 5:30pm at Puur @EIP
epfl-innovationpark.ch/happy-hour
EPFL Events

Start-Up Day  http://forum.epfl.ch

Startup Weekends – lausanne.startupweekend.org

Salon des Technologies et de l’Innovation de Lausanne en.salon-stil.ch

Startup Corner www.facebook.com/pages/A3-Startup-Corner/120165334746207

beyondlab.org
External Events

Swiss Start-up Day
www.swiss-startup-day.ch/

LIFT Innovation Conference –
www.liftconference.com

Innovation Forum Lausanne –
inno-lausanne.ch/

And many more...

Digital Switzerland
digitalswitzerland.com/startupbootcamps/

www.euforiactio.org

techup.ch
Innovation Platforms

digital switzerland
digitalswitzerland.com

Strengthen the country’s position as a digital hub

In addition to many platforms supported by FNS or CTI such as the NCCRs or Nano-Tera, French-speaking Switzerland has its own clusters and support organizations:

BioAlps  www.bioalps.org
MicronArc  www.micronarc.ch
Alp ICT  www.alpict.com
CleantechAlps  www.cleantech-alps.com

www.nano-tera.ch
Innovation Related-media in Switzerland

A local student media
innovation-time.com

www.startupticker.ch

www.inno-swiss.com

republic-of-innovation.ch
Information about Swiss Start-ups

**VICE PRESIDENCY FOR INNOVATION VPI**

- **Collaboration with industry**
- **Entrepreneurship and Startup**
- **Innovation**

**EPFL Spin-offs**

**EPFL Innovation Park**

- **Company list**

**SPIED**

- **Spin-off Information ETH Domain**

**Start-up.ch**

- **All the Swiss Startups**

**www.epfl.ch/innovation/entrepreneurship/epfl-spin-offs**

**www.epfl-innovationpark.ch/community/companies**

**spied.ch**

**www.startup.ch**
A Diversity of Support Tools

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Investments
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Exposure to US entrepreneurship

Vleaders by Venturelab and sponsored by EPFL: a free training in the USA and China of selected individuals (a Prize format)

venturelab.ch/ventureleaders

A week in Silicon Valley: a competition opened to residents of Canton de Vaud under 25 year-old.

www.facebook.com/BCVsvsc

www.bcv.ch/La-BCV/Responsabilite-d-entreprise/Silicon-Valley-Startup-Camp
Exposure to Entrepreneurship in Europe

Become a European Entrepreneur in 12 days

Are you eager to boost your business beyond borders?

APPLY NOW to embark on a journey to learn from the best and brightest in European technical entrepreneurship.

The European Venture Programme will help you kick-start your business into a successful European (ad)venture!

Intensive 12-day programme at all alliance locations
Build your international network
Workshops, pitching sessions, startup visits
Programme travel and accommodation costs covered

The programme is split into two sessions:
- July 9th – 15th, 2017 at Technische Universität München (TUM) and École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL)
- August 28th – September 2nd, 2017 at the Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e) and the Technical University of Denmark (DTU)

Find out more at www.europeanventureprogramme.com Application deadline: March 19th, 2017

www.europeanventureprogramme.com

Previous session
July 7-13, 2019 at the Technical University of Munich (TUM) and the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL),
August 25-31, 2019 at the Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e) and the Technical University of Denmark (DTU)

Next session deadline: March 29, 2019
Swiss Accelerators

kickstart-accelerator.com

masschallenge.org/programs/switzerland

fintechfusion.ch

www.swissstartupfactory.com

www.f10.ch

www.seedhopper.ch
International Accelerator Programs

Support from the Cantons

Service de la promotion de l’économie et de l’innovation (SPEI)  
(Upto 50kCHF per year)  
https://www.vd.ch/themes/economie/soutien-aux-entreprises/soutiens-aux-entreprises/  

Développement économique, recherche et innovation  
https://www.ge.ch/comment-creer-entreprise/aides-aux-entreprises-encouragement-innovation

Service de la promotion économique  
www.neuchateleconomie.ch

Promotion Economique  
www.jura.ch/eco

www.promfr.ch

Direction du développement économique (DEVS)  
www.business-valais.ch
Creating the Company


Swissnex – Embassy Antennas

Swiss House for Advanced Research and Education
Boston
www.swissnexboston.org

Swiss House for Scientific and Technological Cooperation
San Francisco
www.swissnexsanfrancisco.org

Knowledge and Competencies in Science, Education, Art, and Innovation
Shanghai
www.swissnexchina.org

Connecting Switzerland and India in Science, Education, Art, and Innovation
Bangalore
www.swissnexbangalore.org

Connecting Switzerland and Brazil in Science, Education and Innovation
Rio de Janeiro
www.swissnexbrazil.org
US Market Entry and Swissnex

Also follow Swissnex webinars and events
swissnexusanfrancisco.org/Ourwork/events

www.swissnexusanfrancisco.org/what-we-do/residents/
A Diversity of Support Tools

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  - Training, coaching, mentoring

- **Financial Support**
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  - Business angels, Venture Capital
Seed Investors

Swiss Private Equity Association
www.seca.ch

Swiss Investor Association
www.swiss-startup-invest.ch

www.blueocean-ventures.com

www.go-beyond.biz

www.redalpine.com

www.b-to-v.com

www.sctic.ch

www.startangels.ch

www.businessangels.ch

EPFL Alumni – Angels
www.epflalumni.ch/start-up-services/
More Funding Tools

Platforms to connect with investors

- **investiere:ch**
  - www.investiere.ch

- **c-crowd**
  - www.c-crowd.com

Even Micro-credit initiatives should be looked at
(World Microfinance Geneva, Microcredit solidaire)

Banks (usually they do not directly fund innovation)

- **Swiss Venture Club**
  - www.swiss-venture-club.ch

- **Zürcher Kantonalbank**
  - ZKB provides convertible loans
  - www.zkb.ch

A Credit Suisse initiative

- **www.technologyfund.ch/**

- **www.crcpme.ch**

- **www.c-crowd.com**

- **www.investiere.ch**

- **home.angelsquare.co**

- **https://wemakeit.com**
Venture Capital – 3 funds at EIP

Seed fund office at EIP
www.polytechventures.ch

CHF100M, office at EIP
www.vipartners.ch

CHF190M, office at EIP
renaisance.net

Swiss Private Equity Association
www.seca.ch

www.investeurope.eu
Venture Capital – more funds in Romandie

Pan-European fund with offices in Geneva, London & San Francisco
Fund V of €300M
www.indexventures.com

Index spin-off in life sciences
www.medicxi.com

Geneva based
$200M Fund I
www.forestaycapital.com

Geneva based
€160M Endeavour II fund
www.endeavourvision.com

Geneva based Life-science seed fund
www.eclosion.com
German, French VCs invest in CH (eg Wellington, Sofinnova, Auriga, Banexi, etc) as well US ones (Highland, Oak, Matrix, Austin, Greylock…)

Office in Basel
www.venturefund.novartis.com

Office in Schlieren - ZH

Office in Zurich
www.emerald-ventures.com

Office in Zurich
www.creathor.de

The GSK VC arm in Bioelectronics
www.actionpotentialvc.com
Remember: any project takes time

Pedro Bados (Nexthink) is a just one but clear illustration that even a friendly ecosystem will not avoid a long maturation.

Sept 03: Invention disclosure
March 04: Option for License
April 04: Patent filing
Janv. 04: contact with an IT expert
May 04: publication in Dialogue newsletter
Mar 04-Jun 04: coaching PSE financed by EPFL
Jun 04: Loan of CHF100k
Sept 04: foundation of NEXThink SA
Avril-Sept 04: Further coaching
Déc. 04: Winner of the “startup competition”
Dec 04: contacts with VCs
April 06: 1st round CHF 1.6M
Jul. 07: 2nd round CHF 6M
Jan 05: 1st pilots with customers
Jun 04: Loan of CHF100k

As of 2018, more than 150M in funding, 200+ employees, www.nexthink.com
In Summary again! A rich and dense ecosystem

- **Financiers**
- **Incubators & coaching**
- **Training**
- **Poles of excellence**
- **EPFL**
- **Funding of research**

**Generate**

**Develop**

**Launch**

**Grow**

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**Innovation & Tech. Transfer**

The ecosystem

Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL