Support to Entrepreneurship around EPFL
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
Entrepreneurship and Innovation are Complex

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, coaches, mentoring)
- Funding (grants, prizes, investments)
- Office space (co-working spaces, incubators, accelerators, technology parks)
- Exposure (networking, role models, pitching of ideas)
- 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.
Public Funding of Education & Research

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

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

Agence pour la Promotion de l’Innovation (Swiss Innovation Agency)
www.kti-cti.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)

**VPI**
- Strategic Partnerships
- Innovation Park
- Alliance - relationships / collaborations with SMEs
- Entrepreneurship
- Innogrants
- xgrants

**VPE**
- Bachelors / Masters

vpi.epfl.ch

EPFL Community
(Professors, Researchers, Students)

CORPORATES
SMEs
START-UPS

Innovation
The Organization

Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL | 5
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

- vpi.epfl.ch/industrycollaboration

Support to start-up creation

- vpi.epfl.ch/entrepreneurship

- vpi.epfl.ch/innogrants
Funding: Surviving the “Valley of Death” at EPFL
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)

“Valley of Death”

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

Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL
A Diversity of Support Tools

- **Advice**
  - 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 Diversity of Support Tools

Advice
Training, coaching, mentoring

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A Rich Offering in Entrepreneurship Education

College of Management of Technology

- cdm.epfl.ch

including

- smte.epfl.ch

- emba.epfl.ch

mintt.epfl.ch

A TTO course for PhDs

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

CTI Entrepreneurship Training
startuptraining.ch

venturelab
www.venturelab.ch

including startup champions / ventureideas
vpi.epfl.ch/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 Start-up coaching with various steps to acceptance

www.ctistartup.ch

EPFL Alumni Mentors

www.epflalumni.ch/fr/start-up-mentoring-program/

www.genilem.ch

www.platinn.ch

Start-up competition

www.imd.org/executive-mba/learning-methods/start-up-competition
# A Diversity of Support Tools

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**EFPL Proof of Concepts & Entrepreneurial Grants**

**Enable**: accelerating technology transfer through prototyping of IP  
[enable.epfl.ch]

**EPFL Innogrants**: a 1-year salary for EPFL future entrepreneurs  
[vpi.epfl.ch/innogrants]

**X-grants**: a new support tool of about CHF10’000 for EPFL bachelor and master students  
[xgrant@epfl.ch]
Additional Proof of Concepts Grants


The Swiss National Fund (SNF) is supporting similar mechanisms through its NCCRs [www.nccr-robotics.ch/tech-transfer/startups/spinfund](http://www.nccr-robotics.ch/tech-transfer/startups/spinfund)

Bridge: a joint SNF – CTI program [www.bridge.ch](http://www.bridge.ch)

InnoPACTT: a financial support to create your spin-off at CHUV / Unil [www.pactt.ch/pactt_home/pactt-inventor-scientist/pactt-innopacct.htm](http://www.pactt.ch/pactt_home/pactt-inventor-scientist/pactt-innopacct.htm)
**More Funding: Foundation Grants**

The Gebert Rüf Foundation sponsors individual projects in academic environments (50'000-500'000CHF)

[www.grstiftung.ch/en/project/submission.html](http://www.grstiftung.ch/en/project/submission.html)

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 130’000CHF
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 support to young entrepreneurs
www.volkwirtschaft-stiftung.ch
Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL

Academic Awards

>>Venture>> 2018  www.venture.ch
Business idea: a total of 40’000CHF
Business plan: 120’000CHF (60kCHF, 30kCHF, 20kCHF and 2x 5kCHF).

Prix Musy – 50’000CHF for a Woman Entrepreneur
vpi.epfl.ch/PrixMusy
10’000CHF plus 3x 1'000CHF, with ETHZ and EPFL as co-organizers
Deadline: March 15
vpi.epfl.ch/PJE_en & 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) for any type of company

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

ACES - European Academic Enterprise Awards

www.sciencebusiness.net/Events/InnovationConnection
External Awards

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

Marketing award www.marketingtag.ch
- 10kCHF Dyson Student Award

A European-level BP competition
www.intelchallenge.eu

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

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

### Community services
- Events, information, online services

### Development
- Summer camps, accelerators, cantons

### Investments
- Business angels, Venture Capital
Close support: the EPFL Innovation Park

- The **Innovation Park**: 13 buildings for companies partnering & collaborating with EPFL
  [epfl-innovationpark.ch](http://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](http://epfl-innovationpark.ch/legarage)

- **A co-working open-space for early-stage projects**
  [epfl-innovationpark.ch/laforge](http://epfl-innovationpark.ch/laforge)
More Co-Working Spaces

epfl-innovationpark.ch/laforge

www.gothamco.com

edtech-collider.ch

geneva.impacthub.net
zurich.impacthub.net

La Muse – Geneva & Lausanne
la-muse.ch/coworking
Incubators / Science Parks

- epfl-innovationpark.ch
- www.campusbiotech.ch
- www.y-parc.ch
- www.neode.ch
- www.creapole.ch
- www.theark.ch
- www.fongit.ch
- www.biopole.ch
- www.eclosion.ch
- www.friup.ch
- www.bluefactory.ch
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Building a community

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

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

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

Startup Champions @ EPFL
vpi.epfl.ch/start-up_champions

Pizzas & Start-up
vpi.epfl.ch/pizzas-start-up

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

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

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

Startup Weekends – lausanne.startupweekend.org
21-23 April 2017

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/

www.euforiaction.org

And many more…
tech up .ch

Swiss tech meetups
Innovation Platforms

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](http://www.bioalps.org)
- MicronArc [www.micronarc.ch](http://www.micronarc.ch)
- Alp ICT [www.alpict.com](http://www.alpict.com)
- CleantechAlps [www.cleantech-alps.com](http://www.cleantech-alps.com)
- www.nano-tera.ch
Innovation Related-media in Switzerland

www.startupticker.ch

www.inno-swiss.com

republic-of-innovation.ch
A Diversity of Support Tools

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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
Exposure to Entrepreneurship in Europe

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!

Become a European Entrepreneur in 12 days

www.europeanventureprogramme.com

July 9th – July 15th, 2017 at the Technical University of Munich (TUM) and the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL),

August 27th – September 1st, 2017 at the Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e) and the Technical University of Denmark (DTU)

Deadline: April, 2017
Swiss Accelerators

www.swissstartupfactory.com

kickstart-accelerator.com

masschallenge.org/programs/switzerland

fintechfusion.ch

www.f10.ch

www.seedhopper.ch
International Accelerator Programs

Support from the Cantons

Service de la promotion économique et du commerce (SPeCo)
(Up to 50kCHF per year)
www.vd.ch/themes/economie/developpement-economique/promotion-economique/publications/organismes-daide/

Promotion Economique
www.geneve.ch/promo-eco

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

A lot of advice on [www.gruenden.ch/en](http://www.gruenden.ch/en) and a very complete pdf guide: [www.kmu.admin.ch/dam/kmu/fr/dokumente/Publications/g3_engl_version_201212.pdf.download.pdf/g3_engl_version_201212.pdf](http://www.kmu.admin.ch/dam/kmu/fr/dokumente/Publications/g3_engl_version_201212.pdf.download.pdf/g3_engl_version_201212.pdf)

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

www.cticamp.us
swissnexasanfrancisco.org/Ourwork/startups/us-market-entry-camp

PRIX VITTOZ CAP INTERNATIONAL
With the support of the Vaud Canton, the prize focuses on international expansion.
epfl-innovationpark.ch

Also follow Swissnex webinars and events
swissnexasanfrancisco.org/Ourwork/events
## A Diversity of Support Tools

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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.startangels.ch

www.businessangels.ch

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

Platforms to connect with investors

investiere:chbeta  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  A Credit Suisse initiative  www.swiss-venture-club.ch

Zürcher Kantonalbank  ZKB provides convertible loans  www.zkb.ch

www.crcpme.ch
Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL

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
renaissance.net

Swiss Private Equity Association
www.seca.ch

www.investeurope.eu

THE VOICE OF PRIVATE CAPITAL
VENTURE CAPITAL
PRIVATE EQUITY
INFRASTRUCTURE
LONG TERM INVESTORS
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
€160M Endeavour II fund
www.endeavourvision.com

Geneva based Life-science seed fund
www.eclosion.com

A Vevey cooperative company whose aim is to support the rapid expansion of environmental technologies
www.onecreation.org
Venture Capital – funds in Switzerland

Office in Basel
www.venturefund.novartis.com

Office in Schlieren - ZH

Office in Zurich
www.emerald-ventures.com

Office in Basel
www.versantventures.com

German, French VCs invest in CH (eg Wellington, Sofinnova, Auriga, Banexi, etc) as well US ones (Highland, Oak, Matrix, Austin, Greylock…)

www.actionpotentialvc.com
Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL

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
Sept 04: foundation of NEXThink SA
April-Sept 04: Further coaching
Dec 04: Winner of the “startup competition”
Jan 05: 1st pilots with customers
Apr 06: 1st round CHF 1.6M
Jul. 07: 2nd round CHF 6M
Dec 04: contacts with VCs

As of 2016, more than 65M in funding,
200+ employees,
www.nexthink.com
In Summary again! A rich and dense ecosystem

Financiers

Incubators & coaching

Training

Poles of excellence

Funding of research

Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL