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
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, 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.
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)

**VPE**
- Bachelors / Masters

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

**vpi.epfl.ch**

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**EPFL Community**
- (Professors, Researchers, Students)

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**Corporates**
- SMEs
- Start-ups

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**EPFL**

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**V. P. Innovation**
"The Organization"
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
Innogrants
vpi.epfl.ch/innogrants
XGrant
vpi.epfl.ch/xgrant

Tech4Impact
t4i.epfl.ch/
YGrant
vpi.epfl.ch/ygrantprogram/
Funding: Surviving the “Valley of Death” at EPFL

A rich ecosystem  
Funding

Start-Up foundation

Research Grants  
Development Grants  
Preseed Grants  
Friends, Family & Fools  
Business Angels, 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)

“Valley of Death”

Support to Entrepreneurs around 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)

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

“Valley of Death”

Start-Up foundation
# A Diversity of Support Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advice</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
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Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL
A Diversity of Support Tools

Advice
Training, coaching, mentoring

Financial Support
Grants, awards

Housing
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Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL
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

EIP StartupTraining
www.businessconcept.ch

venturelab
www.venturelab.ch

including startup champions / ventureideas
vpi.epfl.ch/startupchampions
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
www.ctistartup.ch / www.innosuisse.ch

EPFL Alumni Mentors
www.epflalumni.ch/fr/start-up-mentoring-program/

www.genilem.ch

Start-up competition
www.imd.org/executive-mba/learning-methods/start-up-competition

www.platinn.ch
A Diversity of Support Tools

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Investments
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Enable: accelerating technology transfer through prototyping of IP
enable.epfl.ch

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

XGrants: a support tool of up to CHF10’000 for EPFL bachelor and master students - vpi.epfl.ch/xgrant

YGrants: a support tool of up to CHF10’000 for EPFL bachelor and master students in social entrepreneurship
vpi.epfl.ch/ygrantprogram/
16

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

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

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
https://ec.europa.eu/research/eic/index.cfm?pg=funding
More Funding: Foundation Grants

The Gebert Rüf Foundation “sponsored” individual projects in academic environments (50'000-500'000CHF)
www.grstiftung.ch/en/project/submission.html

Including the new Innoboooster programs (for projects backed by Venture Kick – CHF150k for 1.5 year.
www.grstiftung.ch/en/area-activity/innoboooster.html

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

Up to 200’000CHF for projects in Information Technologies & Telecom
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 loan to support to young entrepreneurs
www.volkwirtshaft-stiftung.ch
Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL

**Academic Awards**

>>Venture>> 2018  [www.venture.ch](http://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
[www.prixstrategis.ch](http://www.prixstrategis.ch)

10’000CHF plus 3x 1’000CHF, with ETHZ and EPFL as co-organizers

Deadline: March 15
[www.prixstrategis.ch](http://www.prixstrategis.ch)

**Prix Isabelle Musy pour encourager femmes entrepreneuses**

A 50’000CHF award by HEC - Uni. Lausanne
[www.prixstrategis.ch](http://www.prixstrategis.ch)

A 30’000CHF award by HEC Lausanne & EPFL students
[startlausanne.ch](http://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/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

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

Entrepreneur of the year AWARD with a start-up category
www.ey.com/ch/eoy
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
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

- edtech-collider.ch
- www.gothamco.com
- coworking.univercite.ch
- geneva.impacthub.net
- zurich.impacthub.net
- La Muse – Geneva & Lausanne
  la-muse.ch/coworking
More Science Parks

www.campusbiotech.ch

www.biopole.ch

www.y-parc.ch

www.neode.ch

www.creapole.ch

www.theark.ch

www.fongit.ch

www.geneus.ch

www.eclosion.ch

www.friup.ch

www.bluefactory.ch

www.swissparks.ch
A Diversity of Support Tools

- **Advice**
  - Training, coaching, mentoring

- **Financial Support**
  - Grants, awards

- **Housing**
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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
vpi.epfl.ch/start-upchampions

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

Most Tuesdays 5:30pm at Puur @ EIP
https://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/

STARTUP
BOOTCAMPs
digitalswitzerland
digitalswitzerland.com/startupbootcamps/

And many more…

www.euforiaction.org
techn.ch
Innovation Platforms

digitalswitzerland  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

vpi.epfl.ch/EPFL-Spin-offs

EPFL Spin-offs

www.epfl-innovationpark.ch/community/companies

Company list

SPIED
Spin-off Information ETH Domain

spied.ch

All the Swiss Startups

www.startup.ch
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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

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!

The programme is split into two sessions:
- July 9th – 13th, 2017 at Technische Universität München (TUM) and École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL)
- August 26th – 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 15th, 2017

Next session deadline: Spring 2018

www.europeanventureprogramme.com

Previous session
July 9-13, 2018 at the Technical University of Munich (TUM) and the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL),
August 26 – September 1, 2018 at the Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e) and the Technical University of Denmark (DTU)
Swiss Accelerators

kickstart-accelerator.com

masschallenge.org/programs/switzerland

fintechfusion.ch

www.swissstartupfactory.com

www.f10.ch

www.seedhopper.ch
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/


Développement économique, recherche et innovation

ge.ch/ecoguichetpmepmi

Service de la promotion économique

www.neuchateleconomie.ch

Promotion Economique

www.jura.ch/eco

Direction du développement économique (DEVS)

www.business-valais.ch

www.ggba-switzerland.org

www.lereseau.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](http://www.kmu.admin.ch/dam/kmu/fr/dokumente/Publications/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
swissnexsanfrancisco.org/Ourwork/startups/us-market-entry-camp

https://www.swissnexsanfrancisco.org/what-we-do/residents/

Also follow Swissnex webinars and events
swissnexsanfrancisco.org/Ourwork/events
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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.sictic.ch

www.startangels.ch

www.businessangels.ch

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

Platforms to connect with investors

www.investiere.ch

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)

www.swiss-venture-club.ch

A Credit Suisse initiative

www.zkb.ch

ZKB provides convertible loans

www.crcpme.ch

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

Banks (usually they do not directly fund innovation)
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
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
Venture Capital – funds in Switzerland

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
- Déc. 04: Winner of the “startup competition”
- Avril-Sept 04: Further coaching
- Sept 04: foundation of NEXThink SA
- Jun 04: Loan of CHF100k
- Apr 06: 1st round CHF 1.6M
- Jul. 07: 2nd round CHF 6M
- Jan 05: 1st pilots with customers
- Dec 04: contacts with VCs

As of 2017, more than 65M in funding, 200+ employees, www.nexthink.com

Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL
In Summary again! A rich and dense ecosystem

Generate

Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL

Financiers

Develop

Poles of excellence

Launch

Incubators & coaching

Growing

Training

Innovation & Tech. Transfer

Funding of research

Support to Entrepreneurs around EPFL