14.1 RESPONSIBILITIES AND SERVICES

In accordance with Switzerland’s federal form of government, responsibility for investment promotion is shared between the federal government and the cantons.

Acting on behalf of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the cantons, Switzerland Global Enterprise (S-GE) informs foreign potential investors about Switzerland’s particular strengths as well as the underlying conditions for doing business in Switzerland. The offices S-GE maintains abroad are known as “Swiss Business Hubs” (SBH). The specialists at these hubs are the first point of contact for foreign investors. Foreign investors from countries without SBHs can contact the S-GE team of experts in Switzerland directly. Its services for foreign companies include assessing the potential of their projects before they are presented to the cantons.

Area and cantonal economic development agencies are responsible for informing potential investors about the advantages of locating a business in their respective canton, presenting them with concrete location proposals, and organizing local support for investors as they settle in. Even after an investment project has been completed successfully, the economic development agencies continue to look after the investors through a kind of customer service.

S-GE supports foreign investors with the following tasks through the network of cantonal economic development agencies and various private-sector partners:

- Making contact with regional and cantonal economic development offices
- Looking for the ideal location in Switzerland
- Meeting legal and administrative requirements
- Working together with research centers and universities
- Obtaining work and residence permits
- Defining the ideal corporate structure and understanding the Swiss tax system

Switzerland Global Enterprise supports companies at all times throughout their investment project. Contact addresses can be found in the appendix.
14.2 PROMOTIONAL POLICY AND INSTRUMENTS

In line with Switzerland’s liberal economic system, economic policy in Switzerland focuses on optimum structuring and support for the general business environment. Financial assistance programs are time-limited and strategic. In general, financial assistance from the state always complements private initiatives.

The possible funding options, the mix of various instruments and the scale of payments depend on the specific investment project. There is always room for individual solutions. It is therefore advisable, once a project has been roughly evaluated, to discuss it with the cantonal economic development agencies first.

14.2.1 Cantonal Promotion
Most Swiss cantons have their own economic development agencies, although some of these work together with other cantons. All cantons can offer tax relief to businesses as an economic development incentive. Other forms of economic assistance vary from canton to canton, depending on interest and regional economic conditions.

14.2.2 Tax Relief as Part of Regional Policy
As part of federal regional policy, specific support is given for the economic development of structurally weak regions such as mountainous areas and rural districts. The federal government can support major investment and innovation projects as well as the establishment of new companies in these regions through tax relief. The main requirement for federal tax relief is that the canton in question also supports the project by providing an equivalent level of tax relief. Since July 1, 2016, 93 regional centers in 19 cantons belong to the regions applying such relief.

The application process for tax relief in connection with regional policies is always handled by the cantons. The cantonal economic development agencies in question provide consultation on the best way to proceed.

See also chapter 9.4.3

www.seco.admin.ch > Promotion activities > SME policy
Tax Relief as Part of Regional Policy
Languages: German, English, French, Italian

Examples of Cantonal Business Promotion Instruments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANGE OF SERVICES</th>
<th>TYPE OF SUPPORT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Procurement of sites</td>
<td>– Providing commercial premises and land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Contribution to the costs of planning and or building industrial premises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Subsidizing the cost of converting corporate buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>– Offering tax relief during the start-up or construction phase as well as for restructuring projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding investment</td>
<td>– Granting or assisting with securities for bank loans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Assisting with interest-rate cuts or paying/waiving interest costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Offering interest-free or low-interest cantonal loans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– One-off contributions (“à fonds perdu”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Areas of Application for Tax Breaks, 2016

Areas of application as per DEA directive of July 1, 2016

Sources: State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), 2017
14.2.3 Switzerland Innovation

Switzerland Innovation offers domestic and foreign business in Switzerland's first-class locations for developing innovative ideas into marketable products. As a collective instrument of the Federal Government, cantons, science, and industry, Switzerland Innovation strengthens Switzerland's innovative capacity in international competition and creates a platform for making connections between Swiss universities and innovative enterprises.

Large sites suitable for development in the vicinity of leading universities are made available to internationally operating businesses for setting up research and development facilities. Switzerland Innovation consists of five regional locations and one national foundation.

For more information on Switzerland Innovation, please see chapter 12.6.

14.2.4 Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI)

CTI is Switzerland's federal innovation promotion agency. For more than 60 years, it has fostered the transfer of knowledge and technology between businesses and universities. It brings partners from these two areas together in applied research and development projects and provides assistance to start-up companies during the development phase. Switzerland has one of the highest levels of innovation of any country in the world. CTI has a budget of about CHF 100 million and operates under the motto “Science to Market.” Companies work with universities to generate new knowledge that can be used to develop products and services and bring them to market.

CTI provides funding for:

- market-oriented R+D projects carried out jointly by companies and universities in the areas of industry and services,
- the establishment and development of science-based companies,
- transfer of knowledge and technology through platforms and networks.

R&D project grants are available in all disciplines involving scientific innovation. Project applications are submitted in accordance with the bottom-up principle. Grants are awarded on the basis of innovative content and market potential.

In its Venturelab program, CTI helps promising entrepreneurs get started by guiding them through customized training modules. The modules give them the tools and methods they need to implement an exciting business idea and establish a new company. Young entrepreneurs can also apply for professional coaching. Support is provided to knowledge-intensive technology-based companies with great market potential.

The CTI promotes knowledge and technology transfer (KTT) between universities and industry, where this does not happen without support. CTI’s KTT support strengthens knowledge and technology transfer between universities and industries in the same region. Professionally run national thematic networks (NTNs) provide on-site assistance to SMEs and universities in making contacts and developing projects.

Innovative Swiss companies and researchers are also offered development opportunities through access to international programs and networks such as IS, ESA, and EUREKA.

For the CTI to be as effective as possible in its role as a promoter of innovation and to be well equipped for the challenges of the future, it was converted on January 1, 2018 from a government commission to a public institution called Innosuisse.

- CTI Start-up
  www.ctistartup.ch
  Languages: German, English

- Venturelab
  www.venturelab.ch
  Languages: German, English

- Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI)
  www.kti.admin.ch
  Languages: German, English, French, Italian

- Innosuisse - Swiss agency for innovation promotion
  www.innosuisse.ch
  Languages: German, English, French, Italian

14.2.5 Technology Parks and Business Incubators

Facilities and support centers designed to encourage or facilitate entrepreneurial activity are now part of an economy’s infrastructure. Switzerland has a large number of technology parks and business incubators or start-up centers. Most have joined together to form networks or associations. They differ in concept and specific focus; some have developed in close cooperation with universities while others stem from purely private initiatives. They offer premises (generally at preferential rates) for the start-up and development phase as well as shared infrastructure and professional support.

Participation by their umbrella organizations in international networks enables them to use technology park infrastructures throughout Europe. This enables companies to speed up the difficult start-up phase and save on start-up costs. A number of business incubation centers have also been formed in major cities. They too serve as short-term start-up locations for foreign companies establishing new operations in Switzerland by providing flexible and expandable premises, contacts, and business incubation support.

Technology parks and business incubators have the following advantages:

- They provide services such as consultation, coaching, telephone services, etc.
- They offer contacts to universities
- Companies are surrounded by like-minded entrepreneurs
- Infrastructure and flexible premises
- Networking
- Higher chance of success: the average survival rate is more than 90%

www.swissparks.ch
Association of Swiss Technology Parks and Business Incubators
Languages: English
Technology Parks and Business Incubators

(FIG. 69)

Sources: gruenden.ch, in-house graphic

**NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Technopark-Allianz  
www.technopark-allianz.ch

SwissParks – Association of Swiss Technology Parks and Business Incubators  
www.swissparks.ch

Interest group Coworking Schweiz  
www.coworking-schweiz.ch

Switzerland Innovation, innovation park at 5 locations  
www.switzerland-innovation.com

**WESTERN SWITZERLAND**

1 EPFL Innovation Park, Lausanne  
www.epfl-innovationpark.ch

2 Biopôle Business Park Lausanne, Epalinges, Life Sciences  
www.biopole.ch

3 La Fondation des Ateliers de la Ville de Renens, Renens  
www.ateliersvdr.ch

4 TecOrbe, Cleantech, Orbe  
www.tecorbe.ch

5 Y-Parc - Swiss Technopole, Yverdon-les-Bains  
www.y-parc.ch

6 Center for microwelding, Sainte-Croix (VD)  
www.technopole1450.ch

7 Aéropôle Broye, Aviation and aerospace industry, Payerne  
www.aeropole.ch

8 Campus Biotech, Geneva  
www.campusbiotech.ch

9 Impact Hub Geneva  
http://geneva.impacthub.net

10 Eclosion SA, incubator, Plan-les-Ouates  
www.eclosion.com

11 FONGIT, technology center, Plan-les-Ouates  
www.fongit.ch

12 Neode Parc center for micro / nanotechnology, Neuchâtel  
www.neode.ch

13 Neode Parc center for micro- / nanotechnology, La Chaux-de-Fonds  
www.neode.ch

14 Bluefactory, innovation center, Fribourg  
www.bluefactory.ch

15 Fri Up, business incubator, Fribourg  
www.friup.ch

16 Fri Up, business incubator south, Vaulruz  
www.friup.ch

17 Fri Up, business incubator north, Murten  
www.friup.ch

18 Innovation Lab Fribourg  
www.innolabfribourg.ch

19 Marly Innovation Center, Marly  
www.marly-innovation-center.org

20 Ventures Start-up Accelerator, Villaz-St-Pierre  
http://venturi.vivier.ch

21 Le Vivier, Technology park  
Parc technologique Villaz-St-Pierre  
www.vivier.ch
medtech lab, Creapole SA, Courroux  
www.creapole.ch

media lab, Creapole SA, La Noirmont  
www.creapole.ch

micro lab, Creapole SA, Porrentruy  
www.creapole.ch

BioArk, biotechnology center, Monthey  
www.bioark.ch

BlueArk, technology center for renewable energy, Sion  
www.blueark.ch

IdeArk, technological center for multimodal interaction, Martigny  
www.ideark.ch

PhytoArk, development center for plant-based products, Sion-Conthey  
www.phytoark.ch

TechnoArk, ICT center, Sierre  
www.technoark.ch

Impact Hub Bern  
www.bern.impacthub.net

Switzerland Innovation Park, Biel/Bienne  
www.innocampus.ch

Technologieparks, Saint-Imier, TP I (Techtransfer), TP II (Cleantech)  
www.saint-imier.ch

Basel incubator, start-up center of the University of Basel and the FHNW  
www.basel-inkubator.ch

Technologiepark Basel  
www.technologiepark-basel.ch

Switzerland Innovation Park, Basel  
www.switzerland-innovation.com/baselarea

Startup Academy, Basel  
www.startup-academy.ch

Stellwerk Basel, for self-employed people in creative industries  
www.stellwerkbasel.ch

Business Park Laufental & Thierstein, Zwingen  
www.bplt.ch

Business Park Zug, business incubator  
www.businessparkzug.ch

Technopark Lucerne, ROOT D4  
www.technopark-luzern.ch

microPark Pilatus, Alpnach  
www.microparkpilatus.ch

Technology center Schwyz, Steinen  
www.tszs.ch

Technopark Zurich  
www.technopark.ch

BlueLion, Zurich; incubator for ICT and cleantech companies  
www.bluelion.ch

Impact Hub Zurich  
www.zurich.impacthub.ch

StartZentrum Zurich  
www.startzentrum.ch

Switzerland Innovation Park Zurich  
www.switzerland-innovation.com/Zurich

Swiss Startup Factory, Zurich  
www.swissstartupfactory.com

Biotechnology park, Schlieren Zurich  
www.bio-technopark.ch

startup space, Schlieren Zurich  
www.startup-space.ch

glaTec - Empa incubator, Dübendorf  
www.glatec.ch

grow - Gründerorg. Wädenswil  
www.grow-waedenswil.ch

Technopark Winterthur, Winterthur  
www.technopark-winterthur.ch

RUNWAY, Start-up incubator, ZHAW Winterthur  
www.zhaw.ch/runway

Biotechnology park, Schlieren Zurich  
www.bio-technopark.ch

startup space, Schlieren Zurich  
www.startup-space.ch

RhyTech - Materials Work, Neuhausen  
www.rhytech.ch

Futur foundation, business incubator Rapperswil-Jona  
www.futur.ch

High tech center, Tägerwil  
www.high-tech-center.ch