



INVESTMENT PROMOTION

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The Greater Geneva Bern area (GGBa) is the investment promotion agency for Western Switzerland, which comprises the cantons of Bern, Fribourg, Vaud, Neuchâtel, Geneva and Valais. In collaboration with the cantonal economic development agencies, the GGBa offers a comprehensive range of support services for foreign-based companies planning to establish a business in the region. The GGBa also works closely with Switzerland Global Enterprise and the Swiss Business Hubs.

14.1 GGBA SERVICES FOR INVESTORS

The GGBa operates a network of internationally based representatives whose mission is to identify companies with high-value-added business projects for which Switzerland would offer a favorable operating environment.

Following careful review of the investor's business plans and requirements, the GGBa representative coordinates with the cantonal economic development agencies in order to meet the investor's needs.

Some of the services provided by the GGBa and the cantonal economic development agencies include:

- Advice about Switzerland's business environment
- Facilitating contact with public and private partners
- Introduction to Switzerland's academic and R&D institutions
- Advice on the taxation system and financial assistance options available
- Assistance with administrative processes (work and residence permits, etc.)
- Finding suitable premises or industrial sites (greenfield or brownfield)
- Assistance with the personal aspects of relocation (schools, housing, etc.)

Since each project is unique, the GGBa provides tailor-made assistance exclusive to each investor. Once the business structure has been established, the cantonal economic development agencies continue to provide ongoing support to investors, enabling them to develop their business in optimal conditions.

The entire gamut of services provided by the GGBa and the cantonal economic development agencies is confidential and free of charge. Each year, the team handles around 300 cases at the project stage, which result in an average of approximately sixty companies setting up their businesses in the area. Since its inception in 2010, the GGBa has successfully assisted over 350 investors who have chosen to set up business in our region.

www.ggba-switzerland.ch
Greater Geneva Bern area (GGBa)
Languages: German, English, French

14.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENTS

Switzerland operates a liberal economic policy that focuses on optimum structuring and support of the business environment for entrepreneurs.

Since the support measures available differ depending on the specific investment project, each potential project is discussed with both the GGBa and the cantonal economic development agencies.

14.2.1 At the Cantonal Level

Each canton has a variety of instruments available to it for assisting investors. Depending on the project and its potential for added value, in particular in terms of job creation, cantonal authorities may grant financial assistance or tax relief.

14.2.2 Tax Relief as Part of Regional Policy

The New Regional Policy (NRP) is designed to improve framework conditions for entrepreneurial activities, with a view to promoting innovation, generating added value, and encouraging competitiveness in defined regions.

Applications for tax relief as part of regional policy should be filed with the canton. The cantonal economic development agencies can advise investors on how to proceed and provide support throughout the process.

Please also see section 9.4.3 on this subject.

www.seco.admin.ch > Topics > Promotion activities > SME policy
Tax relief as part of regional policy
Languages: German, French, Italian

Examples of Cantonal Business Promotion Instruments

(FIG. 72)

AREA	TYPE OF SUPPORT AVAILABLE
Real estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provision of sites and premises- Subsidies for planning and/or developing industrial sites- Subsidies for conversion of plant buildings
Taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tax reliefs- Tax rulings
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Warranties and guarantees for bank loans- Assistance with and management of interest rates- Interest-free or low-interest loans- One-off grants (outright grants)
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Support for innovation-Employment grants-Training allowances-Unemployment insurance allowances

Source: legal guidelines and cantonal economic development agencies documentation

14.2.3 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 to develop products and services
- The formation and development of science-based companies
- Know-how and technology transfers 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 technology-based companies with great market potential.

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 IMS, ESA and EUREKA.

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

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

www.ctistartup.ch
CTI start-up
Language: English

14.2.4 Switzerland Innovation

Innovation is the driver of the Swiss economy. In order to maintain its position as a world leader in innovation and to ensure its competitiveness for the coming decades, Switzerland has created a multi-site structure of international scope dedicated to businesses active in R&D. Switzerland Innovation offers domestic and foreign companies premises with expansion potential in the vicinity of existing higher-education institutions. As such, businesses can benefit from one of the best scientific and academic environments in the world as they work towards marketing their innovative products and services.

The GGBa is at the heart of this initiative: the cantons of Fribourg, Vaud, Neuchâtel, Geneva and Valais have combined their expertise in the Switzerland Innovation Park Network West EPFL; the canton of Bern is home to the Switzerland Innovation Park Biel/Bienne.

The Park Network West EPFL is structured around the various branches of the EPFL, each of which has unique scientific expertise in its field. The blueFACTORY in Fribourg focuses on smart living and sustainable architecture projects. In Lausanne, the EPFL Innovation Park is active notably in robotics, bioinformatics, cloud computing, cybersecurity and social networks, and also covers nutritional health and sports. Campus Biotech in Geneva is a center of excellence in the biotechnology research and life sciences sectors, as is Biopôle in Lausanne, which specializes in personalized medicine. Microcity in Neuchâtel works in cutting-edge microtechnology, with a particular focus on miniature captors, actuators and smart microsystems. Energypolis in Sion is active in the energy and green chemistry fields.

Located in the heart of Switzerland's industrial region, the Park Biel/Bienne is geared towards companies active in the production industry. It focuses on key industrial technologies such as mechatronics and microelectronics, as well as sensor, material and production technologies.

Switzerland Innovation offers the following advantages:

- Facilitates contacts with universities and research institutes
- Brings together like-minded people
- Provides infrastructure and facilities
- Facilitates connections through national and international networks.

Technology Parks and Business Incubators

(FIG. 73)



Source: GGBa internal

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Switzerland Innovation
National innovation park with an international orientation
www.switzerland-innovation.com

SwissParks
Association of Swiss technology parks and business incubators
www.swissparks.ch

BERN

1 Berner Technologiepark, Bern
Technology park
www.bernertechnologiepark.ch

2 Gesundheitswirtschaft Burgdorf, Burgdorf
Technology park and exchange platform – Health sector
gesundheitswirtschaftburgdorf.ch

3 innoBE SA, Bern
Technology park and advice for start-ups and PMEs, technology transfer between universities and businesses
www.innobe.ch

4 Parc Technologique de Saint-Imier (PTSI), Saint-Imier
Technology park – Microtech and precision industries
www.st-imier.ch

5 Sitem-insel SA, Bern
Technology park – Technology transfer between universities and businesses in the translational medicine sector
www.sitem-insel.ch

6 Switzerland Innovation Park Biel/Bienne INNOCAMPUS SA, Nidau-Biel*
Technology park – Industrial technologies
www.innocampus.ch

FRIBOURG

7 blueFACTORY, Fribourg*
Technology park – Health, plastics technology, nanotech, energy, IT security
www.bluefactory.ch

8 Fri Up Centre, Fribourg
Start-up incubator and support for SMEs
www.friup.ch

9 Fri Up Nord, Murten
Start-up incubator and support for SMEs
www.friup.ch

10 Fri Up Sud, Vaulruz
Start-up incubator and support for SMEs
www.friup.ch

11 Le Vivier SA, Villaz-St-Pierre
Technology park
www.vivier.ch

- 12 Marly Innovation Center (MIC), Marly
Technology park
www.marly-innovation-center.org
- 13 Venturi Incubateur SA, Villaz-St-Pierre
Start-up accelerator
venturi.vivier.ch
- VAUD**
- 14 Aéroport de la Broye, Payerne
Technology and industrial park – Aviation
and aerospace industry
www.aeropole.ch
- 15 Biopôle SA, Épalinges*
Technology park – Life sciences
www.biopole.ch
- 16 EPFL Innovation Park, Lausanne*
Technology park – Advanced technologies
www.epfl-innovationpark.ch
- 17 Fondation des Ateliers de la Ville de
Renens, Renens
Development and industrial hosting –
Visual communication, graphics, design,
architecture
www.ateliersvdr.ch
- 18 Switzerland Innovation Park Network
West EPFL, Lausanne*
www.sip-west.ch
- 19 Technopôle de l'Environnement d'Orbe
(TecOrbe), Orbe
Technology park – Cleantech
www.tecorbe.ch
- 20 Technopôle de Sainte-Croix, Sainte-Croix
Technology park – Microwelding and
related techniques
www.technopole1450.ch
- 21 Y-Parc – Swiss Technopôle,
Yverdon-les-Bains
Technology park – ICT, precision industry,
medical technology
www.y-parc.ch
- NEUCHÂTEL**
- 22 Innoparc SA, Hauterive
Rental space for technology businesses
www.innoparc.ch
- 23 Innoparc II, Saint-Blaise
Rental space for technology businesses
www.innoparc.ch
- 24 Microcity, Neuchâtel*
Microtechniques and nanotechnology
microcity.epfl.ch
- 25 Neode Parc technologique et industriel
SA, La Chaux-de-Fonds
Technology and industrial park
www.neode.ch
- 26 Neode Parc technologique et industriel
SA, Neuchâtel
Technology and industrial park
www.neode.ch
- GENEVA**
- 27 Campus Biotech, Geneva*
Center of excellence – Life sciences
www.campusbiotech.ch
- 28 Fintech Fusion, Geneva
Start-up accelerator – Fintech
www.fintechfusion.ch
- 29 Fondation Ecllosion, Plan-les-Ouates
Incubator – Life sciences
www.eclosion.ch
- 30 Fondation Genevoise pour l'Innovation
Technologique (Fongit), Plan-les-Ouates
Start-up incubator
www.fongit.ch
- VALAIS**
- 31 BioArk, Monthey
Technology park – Biotech
www.bioark.ch
- 32 BioArk-Visp, Visp
Technology park – Biotech
www.bioark.ch
- 33 Energypolis, Sion*
Technology park – Energy, green
chemistry, health
www.energypolis.ch
- 34 Fondation The Ark, Sion
Start-up incubator
www.theark.ch
- 35 IdeArk, Martigny
Technology park – ICT
www.ideark.ch
- 36 PhytoArk, Sion-Conthey
Technology park – Exploitation of alpine
plants
www.phytoark.ch
- 37 TechnoArk, Siere
Technology park – ICT
www.technoark.ch

* Switzerland Innovation site