



# FAQ: Swiss Accelerator

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Please find all information regarding the Swiss Accelerator programme on the Innosuisse [webpage](#).  
The form for the short application can be downloaded [here](#).

## 1 General Questions

### 1.1 Q: What are the general criteria to participate in the Swiss Accelerator?

**A:** Please see the Innosuisse [website](#) for the information regarding the Swiss Accelerator, including the eligibility and evaluation criteria.

### 1.2 Q: Will there be another call in the context of the Swiss Accelerator programme?

**A:** The Swiss Accelerator is a transitory measure to substitute the EIC Accelerator to which Swiss companies have currently no access. Depending on Switzerland's status, whether it remains a non-associated third country in the EU's Horizon Europe framework programme or not, there will either be a Swiss Accelerator call, or SME's will have access to the EIC Accelerator again.

### 1.3 Q: When will be the earliest possible start of the project?

**A:** The project will start at the earliest in Q1 2023 after the subvention agreement is signed.

### 1.4 Q: Is there a lower and/or upper limit to funds that can be requested in a Swiss Accelerator application?

**A:** The Innosuisse contribution to the total eligible project costs can amount to a maximum of CHF 2.5m. No minimal funding has been defined, however, it is expected that the supported projects are more ambitious and mature projects requiring an average project funding of around CHF 2m.

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<sup>1</sup> Small and medium-sized enterprises

**1.5 Q: What is the minimal and maximal duration of project that can be requested?**

**A:** There is no predefined minimal or maximal duration. However, projects are expected to be similar in nature and size to those supported by the EIC Accelerator and therefore have a duration of approximately 2-3 years.

**1.6 Q: Which level of maturity should a project have that applies for a Swiss Accelerator grant?**

**A:** The required maturity level corresponds to that from the EIC Accelerator: TRL 5+.

**1.7 Q: Does the project team need to be in place already at the time of the application or can new members be acquired if the funds are granted?**

**A:** It is possible to add missing competencies to the team during the project.

**1.8 Q: Is it possible to insert images and tables in the application?**

**A:** Yes, as long as this is not used to circumvent the maximum number of characters mentioned in the form

**1.9 Q: How do you assess value creation?**

**A:** The different aspects used to assess the value creation of an innovation are specified [here](#).

## **2 Eligibility**

**2.1 Q: Am I allowed to apply for a Swiss Accelerator grant, if I have an ongoing funding by the EIC Accelerator for the same project, this however ends before the project under the Swiss Accelerator would start?**

**A:** The project funded by the EIC Accelerator must be finalised, i.e. all the activities (incl. final report) must be terminated and submitted, at the latest by 10 May 2022, the deadline for the submission of the short application. Otherwise, the project is considered as ongoing.

**2.2 Q: If my company has been awarded a eurostar grant by Innosuisse, is it still eligible for a Swiss Accelerator grant?**

**A:** This is possible. However, it must be ensured and evident that the requested Swiss Accelerator funds will be used for other and independent activities, so that there is no risk of multiple payments for the same costs.

**2.3 Q: If I currently have an Innosuisse grant, can I apply for a Swiss Accelerator grant?**

**A:** Yes. It is possible to apply for a Swiss Accelerator grant even if another application has already been granted. However, the same project will not be funded twice and you must have the resources and capacity to carry out two projects at the same time.

**2.4 Q: Is an ongoing Innovation cheque a reason for non-eligibility?**

**A:** If the Innovation cheque is terminated before the deadline for the submission of the full application, then the application is admissible. Please declare the title, number and expected end date of your Innovation cheque in the application.

**2.5 Q: We are currently receiving an Innosuisse coaching, can we apply for a Swiss Accelerator grant?**

**A:** Yes, the Innosuisse coaching does not affect your eligibility for the Swiss Accelerator.

**2.6 Q: Is it possible to submit several different projects in the context of the Swiss Accelerator?**

**A:** Yes, this is possible, although you must demonstrate that you are able to sustain financially and administratively several projects.

**2.7 Q: Can an early stage start-up apply?**

**A:** There is no predefined lower limit regarding the age of a company. However, the Swiss Accelerator is aimed at mature projects (TRL 5+) that require an average Innosuisse contribution of around CHF 2 million. The latter is not to be understood as a strict target, but is intended to give a sense of scale. The company must be mature enough to demonstrate that it can cover its own at least 30% of total costs.

**2.8 Does the company need to show the non-bankability of the project?**

It may, but Innosuisse does not expect any proof of non-bankability.

**2.9 Q: Can a foreign owned start-up or SME apply?**

**A:** Yes, this is possible, as long as the start-up or SME has no more than 250 FTE and a Swiss company identification number (UID number). However, Innosuisse will evaluate how the ownership structure could influence the value creation of the innovation in Switzerland, which is an essential criteria for a positive evaluation of the application.

**2.10 Q: Can a non-profit SME apply?**

**A:** Yes, this is possible, provided it can cover at least 30% of the eligible project costs.

## **3 Submission process**

**3.1 Q: How and when can the short application be submitted?**

**A:** The short application must be submitted via the [PrivaSphere transfer platform](#). The submission deadline is on 10 May 2022 (12:00 CEST).

**3.2 Q: How does the submission process occur?**

**A:** The application process is competitive and will be a 3-step procedure as within the EIC Accelerator: short application, full application and a jury presentation. The submission of a short application is mandatory to be eligible to submit a full application. Please refer to the Innosuisse [website](#).

**3.3 Q: Who will evaluate our application?**

**A:** The applications are evaluated at short application and full application stages by three independent Innosuisse-experts. Different profiles are selected in order to ensure a variety of high-level skills, knowledge and experience in different domains and sectors. Experts are selected based upon their experience and knowledge in project management, technology and innovation, investment and finance and entrepreneurship and business.

**3.4 Q: Our company was awarded a Seal of Excellence in the context of the EIC Accelerator. Can we directly submit a full application?**

**A:** No. The submission of a short application is a mandatory requirement for submission of a full application. Projects that have gone through one or more stages of the EIC process will not be given preferential treatment.

**3.5 Q: When will we know, whether we are admitted to the second phase and how much time would we have to submit the full application?**

**A:** The duration of the evaluation process strongly depends on the number of application we receive. We expect to communicate whether you can submit a full application (GO) or not (NO GO) during the summer. You will have about 6 weeks to prepare the full application.

**3.6 Q: Can I submit a full application even though I have received a decision letter of “NO GO”?**

**A:** No, the decision by the Innovation Council is definitive and precludes the further participation in the application process.

**3.7 Q: If my application receives a “NO GO” decision, am I allowed to resubmit?**

**A:** Short applications for the Swiss Accelerator can only be submitted in the context of calls for tender and there is no possibility to revise the short application during the same call. However, it is possible to apply again in a next call.

**3.8 Q: Can I appeal against Innosuisse's decision?**

**A:** Within 30 days after the notification of the decision letter you can lodge an appeal to the Federal Administrative Court.

**3.9 Q: When will we receive the grant?**

**A:** Innosuisse releases the first payment when the subvention contract is signed; we expect this to be in Q1 2023.

## **4 Budget and costs**

### **4.1 Q: What should I fill in the lower part of the table in question no. 29 (financial planning)?**

**A:** In the section “company” of the table you insert the total revenues and costs of your company, incl. the ones of the project. If your company has no other revenues and costs than the ones related to the innovation you aim to develop with the Swiss Accelerator project, then the figures in both rows (project/company) are identical.

Please note that you have to fill in the entire table, regardless of the duration of the Swiss Accelerator project. If no costs/revenues have been realized for the project in the years 2021-2022, please enter 0 for these years.

### **4.2 Q: What is the budget for the Swiss Accelerator?**

**A:** The budget for the current call for projects under the Swiss Accelerator programme is CHF 86m.

### **4.3 Q: Can the participation to the project costs (30% own contribution) also consist of an in-kind contribution?**

**A:** In the context of the Swiss Accelerator programme we do not differentiate between cash and in-kind contributions. Eligible are costs for wages and material costs that are actually incurred and necessary to develop the innovation to competitive market readiness in the target market. Please find more information [here](#).

### **4.4 Q: Can the participation to the project costs (30% own contribution) be covered by an investor?**

**A:** Yes.

### **4.5 Q: Is a reduction or complete omission of the 30% own contribution possible?**

**A:** No, a reduction or omission is not possible.

### **4.6 Q: Are the working hours of start-up founders, who are working without formal salary, eligible as costs?**

**A:** Yes, but during the project they will have to pay themselves a corresponding salary, of which 30% must come from own funds.

### **4.7 Q: Will the overheads of 15% still be applicable?**

**A:** No.

### **4.8 Q: Are the fees of a company consulting the start-up or SME for the submission of the application eligible as project costs?**

**A:** No, only costs incurred after the start of the project and necessary to develop the innovation

to competitive market readiness in the target market are eligible.

**4.9 Q: Will pre-clinical studies be financed or only clinical studies?**

**A:** Costs for pre-clinical studies may be eligible. It is not possible to make a general statement, about which preconditions must be met in order for the pre-clinical trial costs to be admitted. This will be the matter of the case-by-case evaluation.

**4.10 Q: Are there maximum hourly rates?**

**A:** No, the eligible personnel costs are salaries of the project team members in accordance with their hourly workload in the project and actually paid employer contributions. The maximum contribution to a project team member corresponds to the maximum annual salary of a project leader in a regular Innosuisse innovation project, which is CHF 220'500.

**4.11 Q: What counts as material costs?**

**A:** Please find a description of the eligible material costs [here](#).

**4.12 Q: Are marketing costs eligible?**

**A:** Only the costs that are necessary and related to the development of the innovation (products or services) to its competitive market readiness are eligible. The costs of activities that do not contribute to the innovation reaching competitive market maturity are not eligible. For example: customer acquisition, marketing, building up branch office in new market etc.

**4.13 Q: Will it be possible to change the amount of funding requested in the second phase, i.e. during the preparation of the full application?**

**A:** Yes, this is possible.

**4.14 Q: How will the funds be payed?**

**A:** Once the contract is signed, Innosuisse releases the first instalment of 50% of the total subsidy. As a rule, the second instalment is 30% and will be payed after a milestone review has successfully taken place (generally after 12 months). The final instalment (20%) will be released after the scientific and financial report has been submitted and approved.

**4.15 Q: Are third-party services or subcontracting costs eligible?**

**A:** Yes, they are eligible. The experts will evaluate, whether they are necessary and adequate in the context of the project.

**4.16 Q: Can the subcontractors be outside Switzerland?**

**A:** Yes, subcontracting costs outside Switzerland are eligible, if there is no comparable offer in Switzerland.

## **5 Contracts and project reporting**

### **5.1 Q: Will a milestone review take place?**

**A:** Yes. Usually, a milestone review will take place after 12 months, to which a payment will be attached if the project develops according to the planning. Additional reviews can be initiated by the Innosuisse office, experts, or Innovation Council members.

### **5.2 Q: Which project changes must be applied for/notified?**

**A:** You must report all important changes of your project to Innosuisse. In particular changes to the project plan, the aims of the project and project team members who cannot be replaced at short notice due to their knowledge (key people) may only be made with the prior consent of Innosuisse.

### **5.3 Q: Can the project duration be extended?**

**A:** It is possible to apply for a project extension.