



The Swiss Innovation Agency's implementing provisions for start-up coaching vouchers (Implementing provisions for coaching)

of 16 November 2017 (status as of 6 March 2020)

The Innovation Council of the Swiss Innovation Agency (Innosuisse),

based on Article 10 Section 1 letter f of the Federal Act of 17 June 2016¹ on the Swiss Innovation Agency (Innosuisse Act; SIAA),
sets out the following:

Art. 1 Subject matter

These implementing provisions govern start-up coaching vouchers in relation to:

- a. form and content of the application;
- b. specification of the requirements in accordance with Article 22 and the assessment criteria in accordance with Article 23 of the Ordinance of the Swiss Innovation Promotion Agency of 20 September 2017² on its funding and other supporting measures (Innosuisse Funding Ordinance);³
- c. the amount of the voucher and the payment arrangements;
- d. the procedure.

Art. 2 Form and content of the application

¹ The application must be submitted in accordance with the procedure set out by Innosuisse.

² The application must contain all information necessary for assessing the criteria in accordance with Article 23 of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance⁴.

³ In addition to their application, the applicant may be asked to participate in a personal interview or hold a presentation before a jury to introduce their business idea, following the instructions provided by Innosuisse for the types of services for which the applicant has applied.

⁴ The application can be submitted in German, French, Italian or English.

Art. 2a⁵ Specification of the requirements for applicants

In addition to the requirements in accordance with Article 22 of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance⁶ start-up entrepreneurs must employ at least five full-time equivalents in order to submit an application for vouchers for services in accordance with Article 21 letter c of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance⁷.

Art. 3 Specification of the assessment criteria

¹ The following criteria specify the criteria mentioned in Art. 23 of the Funding Ordinance⁸:

- a. the business idea is not easy to copy or can be protected;
- b. the concept can be commercialised and the resulting company has great growth potential;
- c. the applicant has the commitment and potential necessary to implement the business idea and is prepared to accept advice as part of the coaching process.

¹ SR 420.2

² SR 420.231

³ Amended by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 22 May 2019, in force since 1 July 2019.

⁴ SR 420.231

⁵ Inserted by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 22 May 2019, in force since 1 July 2019.

⁶ SR 420.231

⁷ SR 420.231

⁸ SR 420.231

² In addition to the criteria in accordance with Section 1, applicants applying for services in accordance with Article 21 letters a and b of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance must be able to provide proof of concept or be able to provide it in the very near future.

³ In addition to the criteria in accordance with Section 1, the company applying for services in accordance with Article 21 letter c of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance⁹ must have already successfully entered the market. In this case, the assessment is also based on the applicant's performance to date. In addition, the company must seek to achieve strong growth and have the ambition of taking a leading role in the relevant market segment.¹⁰

Art. 4 Amount of the voucher

¹ In accordance with Article 51 letters a and b of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance¹¹, start-up entrepreneurs can receive coaching services up to the amount specified in the voucher at an hourly rate of CHF 200, including value added tax. The credit may only be used for services that are actually provided, are suitable and are in line with the legal requirements for the corresponding services. Further compensation and contributions are excluded.

² Depending on the type of service, coaching services set out in Article 51 letter c of The Innosuisse Funding Ordinance that were actually provided, are suitable and are in line with the relevant legal requirements will be reimbursed based on the following flat rates:

- a. for an in-depth analysis: CHF 2,500;
- b. for an individual workshop or an ordinary analysis: CHF 2,000;
- c. for a specialised learning programme: CHF 1,600;
- d. for sporadic advice: CHF 200.

³ The fixed rates specified in Section 2 include value added tax and exclude any other compensation or contributions.

⁴ During the validity period of the credit, the start-up entrepreneur can receive services in accordance with Article 21 letter b of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance provided by the same special coach in accordance with Article 51 letter c of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance of up to a maximum amount of CHF 6,000.¹²

Art. 5 Decision to grant a start-up coaching voucher

¹ Innosuisse shall decide on the application in the form of contestable decision.

² If Innosuisse approves the application, its decision shall in particular determine the following:

- a. the subject and objective of the coaching;
- b. the maximum amount of the voucher;
- c. the expiry date of the voucher;
- d. the requirements and deadlines for submitting reports;
- e. the requirements and deadlines for supervision and monitoring;
- f. other rights and obligations of the applicants.

³ The start-up entrepreneur or the coach shall govern their legal relationship in an agreement. To do so, they will use the agreement templates provided by Innosuisse. Evidence of the conclusion of the agreement between the coach and the start-up entrepreneur is to be provided at the request of Innosuisse.

Art. 6 Lead coach

For services in accordance with Article 21 letters a and b of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance¹³ Innosuisse supports start-up entrepreneurs in their selection of a lead coach. The lead coach is the first point of contact and has primary responsibility for accompanying the coaching process. In the coaching relationship in question, the lead coach may not simultaneously act as a special coach in accordance with Article 51 letter c of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance^{14,15}

Art. 7 Defining milestones and assessing progress

To achieve the objective set out in the decision in accordance with Article 5, Innosuisse can determine milestones and deadlines for services in accordance with Article 21 of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance¹⁶. Innosuisse can assess the attainment of the milestones no later than after the specified deadlines have expired. In such an assessment existing milestones can be modified or additional milestones can be set.¹⁷

Art. 7a¹⁸ Voucher for services in accordance with Article 21 letter c of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance¹⁹ (scale-up coaching)

⁹ SR 420.231

¹⁰ Amended by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 22 May 2019, in force since 1 July 2019.

¹¹ SR 420.231

¹² Amended by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 5 March 2020, in force since 6 March 2020.

¹³ SR 420.231

¹⁴ SR 420.231

¹⁵ Amended by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 22 May 2019, in force since 1 July 2019.

¹⁶ SR 420.231

¹⁷ Amended by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 22 May 2019, in force since 1 July 2019.

¹⁸ Inserted by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 22 May 2019, in force since 1 July 2019.

¹⁹ SR 420.231

The voucher in accordance with Article 24 Section 2 letter c of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance²⁰ is granted through separate decrees as follows:

- a. maximum CHF 15,000 on approval of the application for the first phase of coaching;
- b. The rest of the voucher is issued after the start-up entrepreneur has presented the business concept to an Innosuisse jury and Innosuisse has concluded that the company is suited to utilising further support services in accordance with Article 21 letter c of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance²¹ (second phase of coaching).

Art. 8 Payment arrangements

¹ The coach shall provide the start-up entrepreneur with an account for the services provided in accordance with Article 21 of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance²².

² The coach's account must in particular contain a detailed description of the services, including the time required and the date on which they were provided.

³ The start-up entrepreneur shall provide a statement on the services provided by the coach in accordance with Article 21 of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance, release the account and forward it to Innosuisse.

⁴ After assessing the account, Innosuisse shall reimburse the coach directly.

⁵ The account is to be submitted and released using the electronic submission system provided by Innosuisse.

Art. 9 Accumulation of start-up coaching vouchers

Two vouchers for two different types of coaching cannot be used simultaneously by the same person to develop the same business idea or start-up company. However, a voucher application for subsequent coaching may be submitted during the voucher's period of use.

Art. 10 The voucher's period of validity

¹ The voucher for services in accordance with Article 21 letter a of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance²³ has a maximum validity period of six months.

² The voucher for services in accordance with Article 21 letter b of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance has a maximum validity period of three years.

^{2bis} The vouchers in accordance with Article 7a letters a and b together have a maximum validity period of two years.²⁴

³ The periods of validity set out in Sections 1, 2 and 2^{bis} can, upon request, be extended in justified cases by a maximum of one year and once per voucher. No extension is possible for the voucher in accordance with Article 7a letter a.²⁵

Art. 11 Certificate and award²⁶

¹ When the support services in accordance with Article 21 letter b of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance²⁷ come to an end, Innosuisse shall provide the start-up entrepreneur with a certificate (Core Coaching Certificate) provided that the following criteria are fulfilled:²⁸

- a. the start-up company has a solid base and can handle growth in the future;
- b. the start-up company is prepared to receive financial funding if it is needed;
- c. the start-up company has a professional management team that has the required skills or has access to these skills;
- d. the start-up company has shown that it has access to the market and is established within the industry;
- e. the start-up company was founded in accordance with Swiss law.

² ...²⁹

Art. 12 Revocation of the decision to grant a start-up coaching voucher

¹ The decision to grant a start-up coaching voucher may be revoked if the progress necessary to achieve the objective of the coaching has not been made or if it comes to light that the objective set cannot be achieved during the voucher's period of validity.

² A decision to grant a start-up coaching voucher may also be revoked if the conditions in accordance with Article 22 of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance³⁰ are no longer fulfilled after the awarding of the grant.

Art. 13 Entry into force

These provisions enter into force on 1 January 2018.

²⁰ SR 420.231

²¹ SR 420.231

²² SR 420.231

²³ SR 420.231

²⁴ Inserted by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 22 May 2019, in force since 1 July 2019.

²⁵ Amended by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 22 May 2019, in force since 1 July 2019.

²⁶ Amended by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 22 May 2019, in force since 1 July 2019.

²⁷ SR 420.231

²⁸ Amended by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 22 May 2019, in force since 1 July 2019.

²⁹ Repealed by No I of the implementing provisions for coaching of 5 March 2020, in force since 6 March 2020.

³⁰ SR 420.231

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