



Innosuisse «TFV – Networking Event Series»:

The concept in brief

This document describes the objectives and concept of the “Specialised Events” instrument, as described in Art. 34-36 of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance ([420.231](#)).

In this document it is referred to as “TFV – Networking Events Series”

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1 Management summary

To encourage the creation and animation of communities of research and implementation partners interested in emerging technologies and business opportunities as well as interdisciplinary and cross-sectorial thematics, Innosuisse funds and supports each individual “TFV - Networking Event series” for a period from 2 to 4 years.

What are “TFV – Networking Events Series”?

“TFV - Networking Events” are series of events (workshops, brokerage events, presentations...) designed and organised by a non-profit organisation in Switzerland, with the aim of bringing together interested actors and teams from universities, business and society at national level around a defined innovation theme and stimulating the exchange of knowledge and technologies and the creation of innovative ideas.

What is the goal of a “TFV – Networking Event series”?

The series of TFV - Networking Events supported by Innosuisse have the goal of bringing together innovative minds from University (students, researchers, professors) and the private sector (entrepreneurs, startups, SMEs and big companies); create new communities; increase transfer of knowledge and technology; foster the creation of innovative ideas and create new links between actors in new and strategically important innovation themes.

The long term goal after 2 to 4 years of events is the creation of an active community of innovators around the theme chosen. To achieve this concrete objective, each event plans one or multiple sessions where matchmaking of participants, exchange of knowledge and creation of ideas is actively promoted via specific and modern methodologies and tools.

Innosuisse expects applicants to include matchmaking sessions, idea creation methodologies and proactively foster exchange between participants in all “TFV – Networking Event Series”.

What topics can be supported, and what methods can be used for technology transfer and networking?

Themes of economic and societal relevance are to be addressed in an innovative manner: new scientific findings provide important momentum and the impact that these themes might have on the Swiss economy and society is worth examining.

Who can apply for funding?

All non-profit organisation can apply to receive support, including funding up to 50% of the eligible actual costs incurred for the organisation of the events in the series.

The call for proposals

Innosuisse will setup one submission date every year in August, to which all “TFV - Networking Event series” starting from the following year can apply. The evaluation of each proposal will



result in a score that will allow Innosuisse to compile a final ranking that will decide, together with the available budget, which TFV – Networking Events series will be funded.

In line with the overall available funding budget, the best “TFV - Networking Event series” will enter into a multi-year contract with Innosuisse and profit from funding and support from January 1st of the following year. Financial contributions will cover maximum 50% of the actual eligible costs incurred for the organisation of the series of events and are limited to CHF 160'000 over four years maximum.

The support provided by Innosuisse is based on the possibility of making contributions to Specialized Events described in Art. 34–36 of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance of 20 September 2017 ([420.231](#)) and the Implementing Provisions for Networks and Specialist Events of 16 November 2017.



2 Glossary

TFV – Networking Event series	A series of events over multiple years (2 years minimum, 4 years maximum), that is centred around an innovation topic of significance to the Swiss economy and society, and presents methods and mechanisms for the active promotion of knowledge and technology transfer between research, industry and society.
Organiser	Each individual application is submitted by a single non-for-profit organisation (Art.34 of the Innosuisse Funding Ordinance ¹), which in this document is addressed as 'Organiser'.
Innovation theme	The term "innovation theme" covers both technology-based innovations (e.g. products, services or processes) as well as conceptual innovations (e.g. business model, organisation or culture).
Science-based innovations	These innovations contain elements based on scientific findings that go beyond the state-of-the-art technology or knowledge and require an exchange of know-how and/or technology between the university and implementation partners.
University representatives	These are primarily the employees of universities (professors, researchers, etc.). However, this concept also includes students who can and wish to contribute to the development of innovation ideas.

¹ <https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/20171056/index.html#a34>

3 Concept

3.1 Motivation

New, emerging technologies and business models are offering Swiss companies attractive future growth opportunities. At the same time, public institutions such as municipalities or hospitals can also benefit considerably from innovations in areas such as mobility or digitalisation.

In order to fully exploit the potential of these new possibilities we need to address and encourage individual bilateral projects as well as boosting cooperation in heterogeneous and interdisciplinary innovation teams, where different competencies are brought together. The development of sustainable innovations involves the consideration of all the essential aspects right from the outset: desirability (customers' needs), feasibility and viability.

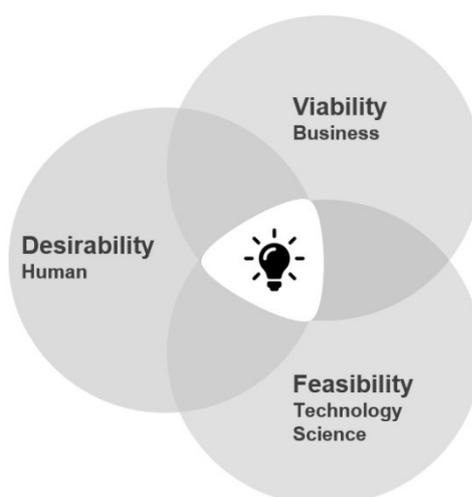


Figure 1: Concept of sustainable innovation

Innosuisse specifically supports the development of science-based² innovations resulting from cooperation between universities and implementation partners. Combining scientific findings, the latest technologies, market knowledge, strategic considerations and implementation experience makes it possible to find new and concrete solutions.

In this context, the new «TFV – Networking Event Series» provide interested actors the possibility to broaden their knowledge and network, exchange with likeminded people, discuss opportunities and challenges and spark new innovation ideas.

² Definition, see glossary.



3.2 Objectives

3.2.1 Creating and bringing a community together

The «TFV – Networking Event Series» bring together various interested parties from universities, business and society around a relevant innovation theme. They stimulate an exchange between the participants and actively support the transfer of information and knowledge. On the long term, the events series creates an active innovation community that contributes to the Swiss society and Swiss economy via the generation of ideas, science-based innovation projects, and initiatives.

3.2.2 Methodological support in the innovation process

In addition to active matchmaking and technology transfer support, a «TFV – Networking Event series» contributes to developing and applying of methods and formats for the joint development of ideas and the successful transfer of knowledge and technology.

The events managers and organisers could for instance take advantage of Innosuisse workshops and community building events organised by Innosuisse, and might use the experience and expertise present in Innosuisse to get introduced to new methods of active matchmaking and idea generation and they are encouraged to share their experiences, best practices and success stories with the rest of the organisers' community.

3.2.3 Promoting “open innovation”

Promoting an open culture of innovation between stakeholders and joint learning and exchange of experience between participants is an important element of the «TFV – Networking Event Series». The targeted exchange of knowledge and technology between the university, implementation partners and future customers/ users should be carefully activated and accompanied by the organisers all along the events' series.

3.2.4 Focus on supporting SMEs

SMEs that wish to gain a competitive advantage by working with partners along the value chain and tapping into university-level know-how, skills and technologies (see also open innovation) will particularly benefit from the participation to approved «TFV - Networking Event Series».

3.2.5 Support with further implementation

The organisers follow-up and help participants to the events, and the community in general, in identifying subsequent support. This could involve Innosuisse funding (like innovation project funding, innovation cheques, international project funding) or other suitable regional, national and international funding bodies or private sector financing with the aim of further developing promising ideas and collaborations. Synergies with existing innovation-support offerings, such

as Innosuisse innovation mentoring, EEN international matchmaking services, the NTN - Innovation Boosters initiatives, are presented at the events if relevant, are optimally exploited and any unnecessary duplications avoided.

3.2.6 Relation with the NTN - Innovation Boosters

Innosuisse separately supports, in the funding period 2021-2024 and starting on January 1st 2021, a number of thematic NTN - Innovation Booster initiatives. While during the TFV - Networking Events series a cross-thematic community is brought together, build-up and supported over 2 to 4 years, the goal of the NTN - Innovation Boosters is to support concrete idea generation, testing and development in existing strategically important communities for the Swiss economy and society.

“TFV – Networking Events series” of great success, which are able to create and animate an active and fervent community around their thematic, could think of eventually applying to the Innosuisse “NTN – Innovation Booster” call for tenders as a next step of support for their clients.

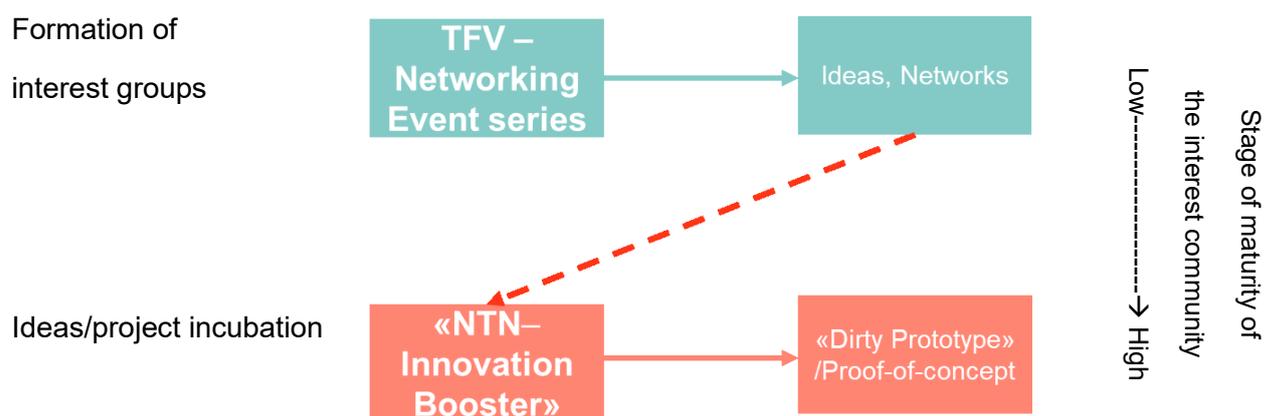


Figure 2: Positioning of TFV – Networking Events Series and «NTN – Innovation Boosters»

3.3 Innosuisse support

Innosuisse offers financial and methodological support to organisers of accepted proposals for “TFV – Networking Event series”.

- Innosuisse will fund up to half of the actual costs incurred to organise an approved “TFV – Networking Event Series”;
- Innosuisse will organise regular workshops for the organisers to exchange on best practices, methodological solutions to actively promote efficient transfer of knowledge;

- Innosuisse will organise a common channel or media platform to promote all supported “TFV – Networking Event Series” (together with the supported NTN - Innovation Boosters) and foster cross-collaboration and participants’ cross-dissemination of all approved “TFV – Networking Event Series”.

3.4 Expected impact

Via the funding and methodological support, Innosuisse expects the “TFV – Networking Events Series” to:

- Create and animate a community of active participants around a transversal thematic
- Generate new contacts and match make efficiently to ensure an active transfer of knowledge and science-based ideas between research and implementation partners
- Help with appropriate formats and methods the generation of new ideas and the identification of pertinent opportunities
- Contribute to creating a strong brand (Innosuisse supported “TFV – Networking Event Series”) with consistent quality to help potential participants find and select events to join
- Inspire other organisers and potential managers to create new “TFV – Networking Event Series” and to adapt their methods and instruments for the active knowledge transfer, via the use of success stories and sharing of best practices.

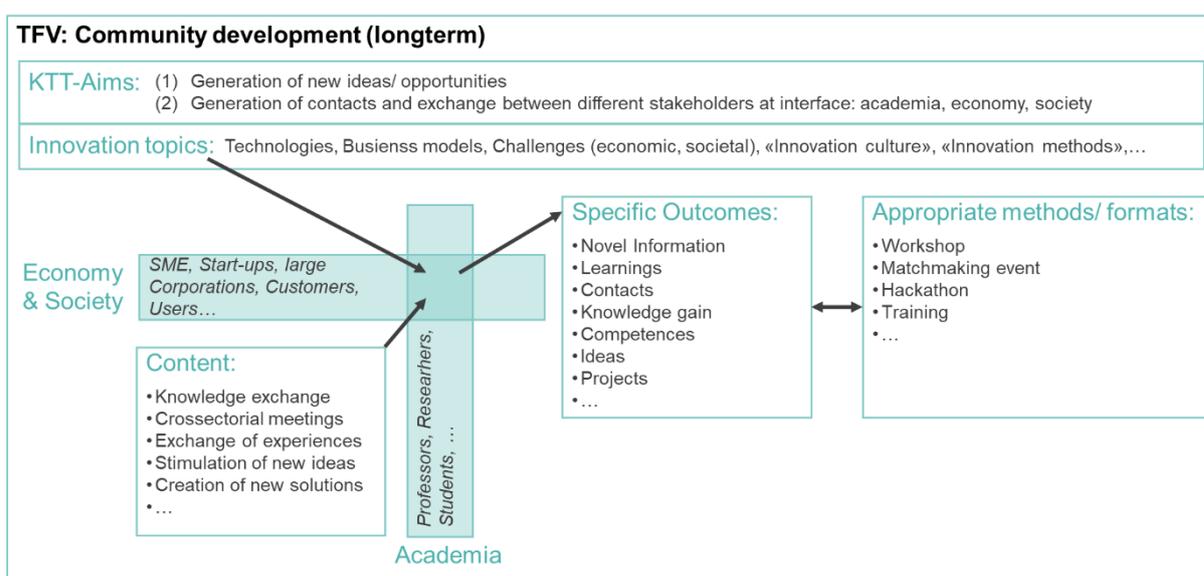


Figure 3: A “TFV – Networking Event series” framework illustration. The frame is clearly defined, but the organisers are free to choose and combine different instruments to ensure the best possible outcome, depending on their innovation topic and client base (community specificity).



3.5 Implementation

The main implementation details are listed in the table below:

Submission deadline	Every year in August
Approved grants per deadline	15 to 30 series approved every year.
Average support duration (length of the series of events)	3 years (maximum 4 years, minimum 2 years). The support could be structured around the requirements of the project; for example, one event per year for four years, or multiple smaller events the first year, some events the second year, one event for the last year of the project. The plan and structure of the series of events will have to be detailed in the application.
Average and maximum budget available per “TFV - Networking Events Series”	Average of 30'000 CHF per event, maximum of CHF 160'000 over four years
Possible use of the requested funding	Actual incurred and eligible expenses. Funding covers activities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wage costs incurred exclusively for the preparation and implementation of the specialist event• Costs for room rental• Costs for appropriate catering for participants• Compensation for speakers and moderators• Costs for advertising and communication• Costs of tools related to the mechanisms and methods for promoting knowledge and technology transfer
Own funding needed	Minimum 50% of the total expenses
Eligibility criteria	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) the significance of the innovation topic represented by the “TFV – Networking Event series” to the Swiss economy and society, as well as the focus and specific features of the topic compared with other activities;(2) the suitability of the methods and mechanisms presented at the event for the promotion of knowledge and technology transfer between research, industry and society;(3) the quality of the concept of the “TFV – Networking Event series”;(4) the budget, in particular the plausibility of the costs claimed, the cost-benefit ratio, the self-financing level and the third party funds allocated. <p>Only applications from non-profit organisations can be supported by Innosuisse.</p>
KPIs	Innosuisse will ask for some fixed KPIs to be reported after each event; other KPIs can be defined by the applicant when they submit an application.



	<p>The main KPIs defined by Innosuisse are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. number of participants to the event, including relative sector (implementation partners vs research partners) 2. delta: number of returning participants (self-declaration via follow-up survey) 3. satisfaction of participants on the quality of the event, including agenda and methods for technology transfer (self-declaration via follow-up survey) 4. number of success stories or best practices produced and shared <p>Other possible KPIs that could be suggested by the organisers are, for instance and depending on the objectives of the “TFV – Networking Events series”:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="667 855 1430 1137"> <thead> <tr> <th>Objective</th> <th>KPI</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Speed-dating matchmaking session</td> <td>Number of meetings organised per participant</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New ideas generation via specific method</td> <td>Number of new ideas generated (participant declaration via follow-up survey)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>...</td> <td>...</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Objective	KPI	Speed-dating matchmaking session	Number of meetings organised per participant	New ideas generation via specific method	Number of new ideas generated (participant declaration via follow-up survey)
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...	...								
<p>Selection and evaluation process</p>	<p>One decision date per year; projects submitted until the fixed submission date are evaluated by Innosuisse. Points are awarded for each funding criterion.</p> <p>All projects submitted will be evaluated by Innosuisse, which will decide on a final ranking and on what projects to support, according to the allocated budget per decision date, score of each project and a discussion on the content.</p>								
<p>Quality control and reporting to Innosuisse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual report on the achievement of objectives and KPI's (with feedback on improvements) - GO / NO GO decision after 2 years ('emergency stop' for poor performing " TFV – Networking Event series") - Optional and on a case-by-case basis: participation of Innosuisse to the events. - Annual workshop: community building, peer-learning and continuous support training for organisers. 								
<p>Innosuisse support in addition to the funding</p>	<p>Exchange of experiences and best practices</p> <p>Quality label & branding: «Innosuisse TFV - Networking Event series»</p> <p>TFV - Networking Events series <i>platform</i>: communication and listing of new events, success stories from organisers and clients, feedbacks and follow-ups of past events.</p>								



3.5.1 Methodological support

To achieve the goal of creating an active community in a new innovation theme, and to ensure a concrete impact of the “TFV - Networking Event Series”, the methods and mechanisms used during the events to actively promote exchange and transfer of knowledge and the creation of ideas must be adequately chosen and implemented.

A range of tools to optimize matchmaking of participants, platforms to efficiently foster the creation of new ideas and solutions, exists on the market. Organisers are encouraged to use the best available solutions. Innosuisse will also support the organisers not only by accepting related costs as eligible, but also offering a platform for the communication and promotion of all events in the “TFV – Networking Event Series”, and by encouraging the exchange of expertise and experience of organisers via the sharing of best practices, success stories, experiences.

The effectiveness and added value of the methods and formats used should be a topic discussed with the participants. The feedback should lead to further development and improvements for future events.

3.5.2 Support with further implementation

Within the process of implementing a promising innovation idea, many additional support measures are available after participation to a «TFV – Networking Events Series». The organisers cultivate an exchange with Innosuisse and other organisations and actively help their participants to understand and plan suitable next steps. Innosuisse offers a wide range of support options, such as advice for start-ups ([coaching programme](#)), assistance in setting up innovation projects ([mentoring programme](#)), access to project funding ([national](#) and [international](#)) and support in finding international partners ([Enterprise Europe Network](#)).

In addition to the Innosuisse offers, other interesting support is available. For example, if an implementation partner needs help embedding the innovation idea into the existing organisation, specialised staff in the cantons and regions may be able to help ([contact information for each region here](#)).

Further implementation and support after an event is only possible with careful and well planned process. The organisers are responsible to implement a structured follow-up, to collect feedbacks and evaluations on the events by the participants (some of the feedbacks are needed as KPIs towards Innosuisse) and to organise signposting towards Innosuisse or other support organisations when relevant.



4 Appendix

Terms related to some innovation support methods that could be used or implemented in the “TFV – Networking Events series”:³

A/B test	A/B tests are a randomised experiment with two variants, A and B. They provide an opportunity to compare two versions of a single variable, typically by testing a subject’s response to variant A versus variant B and determining which of the two variants is more effective.
Brain dates	These are individual or small group meetings (also known as “appointments”) during which participants with overlapping interests can exchange information. Participants formulate offers or questions on themes, which are then compared with the interests of other participants (this can be done manually or via an app). The objective is to promote learning and networking.
Design sprint	An agile five-day approach designed to help companies find unconventional answers to critical business questions through idea generation, prototyping and testing. This approach includes strategic elements, design elements and behavioural elements.
“Dirty prototype”	A first rough version of a visualisation or physical implementation of an idea aimed at serving as a basis to enter into dialogue with the user. A minimum of money, time and resources should be invested.
Idea napkin	Idea napkin is an inspiring visual thinking tool that provides a simple, consistent form of summarising and communicating a new concept.
Fireside discussions	A fireside discussion is an informal but structured conversation between a moderator and a guest. It offers a unique opportunity to get to know the speaker’s personal stories and ideas.
Mock-up	The most common application of mock-ups is the creation of simple web applications that show the end user how the digital solution will look and function without having to create the software or the underlying functionality.
Pitching events	Pitching events are a series of presentations where teams present their ideas convincingly to decision-makers within a very short space of time (c.3-5 minutes).
Smoke test	A smoke test is a technique used to test an idea. It aims to find out whether an idea really arouses customer interest and can be profitable before money, time and resources are invested in its implementation and production.
Storyboard	Thanks to this visualisation technique, short scenarios can be created as a series of sketches, illustrations or photo collages to express how concepts are used by potential users in proposed situations.
Wireframe	A wireframe is a simple sketch that illustrates the type of things the user can do. It clearly shows a presentation of all the important aspects of the final solution. For example, a wireframe of a website shows the navigation, main buttons, columns and placement of various elements.

³ For more details on each method, check out the Innosuisse and Spark Works brochure on design thinking: [link to Innosuisse website](#)