

Support strategy

dated 26 November 2009

Contents

Contents.....	2
1. Purpose of the support strategy	3
2. Vision	3
3. General support objectives.....	3
3.1. Educational objectives.....	3
3.2. Research objectives	4
3.3. Innovation objectives.....	4
4. Implementation of the support objectives	4
4.1. Non-specific support.....	5
4.1.1. Educational projects	5
4.1.2. Research projects.....	5
4.1.3. Innovation projects.....	6
4.1.4. Support memberships.....	6
4.1.5. Seed money.....	6
4.1.6. Grants.....	7
4.2. Support programmes.....	7
4.2.1. Active support programmes.....	7
4.2.2. Passive support programmes (invitations for theme-based applications).....	7
5. Concluding remarks	8

1. Purpose of the support strategy

The support strategy of the Hasler Foundation sets out in specific terms the purpose of the Foundation, as laid down in Article 5, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Deed of Foundation:

- 5¹ *The purpose of the Hasler Foundation is to promote information and communication technologies (ICT) for the benefit of Switzerland as an intellectual and industrial centre.*
- 5² *The Hasler Foundation carries out its support work by financing or co-financing selected educational, research and innovation projects in the field of ICT.*

The strategy defines the applicable general long-term support objectives of the Hasler Foundation.

More specific versions of the support strategy, setting concrete objectives, shall be defined as required in the form of annual strategies (e.g. "Support Strategy 2010 - 2012") or partial strategies (e.g. "FIT Support Programme Strategy") and must fall within the scope of this general support strategy.

2. Vision

The Foundation employs its means and influence to ensure that Switzerland takes a leading position in the area of ICT within an international context. As a renowned and influential foundation, its aim is to influence significantly the public image of ICT and to make a contribution to the general recognition of ICT's societal and economic importance.

3. General support objectives

3.1. Educational objectives

The Foundation contributes to

- the promotion of scientifically highly qualified young academics in education and research in the area of ICT at Swiss universities;
- the promotion of knowledgeable young ICT specialists in Swiss companies;
- the establishment of informatics as a subject in Swiss school curricula;
- the recognition of ICT's social relevance by the political establishment and the general public.

3.2. Research objectives

The Hasler Foundation supports original and scientifically important research projects at Swiss universities and public research institutes,

- which are relevant for ICT theory or practice;
- which promote education in ICT;
- which address the socially relevant effects of ICT.

Moreover, the Hasler Foundation promotes an effective and rapid exchange of expertise amongst Swiss scientific circles as well as with universities abroad.

3.3. Innovation objectives

The Foundation

- promotes product-oriented development projects at Swiss universities which are based on innovative scientific findings and accompanied by market-oriented measures;
- provides limited amounts of capital for new enterprises in the area of ICT, within strictly defined conditions;
- generally supports measures to ensure effective and rapid know-how transfer from the research to the application stage.

4. Implementation of the support objectives

The Foundation is at liberty to make use of any measures it deems suitable to help achieve its support objectives. It has recourse to the following two types of support in particular:

- 1) Non-specific support:
 - financing of individual projects in response to requests
 - financial support for organisations and institutions that, directly or indirectly, pursue the support objectives of the Foundation (support memberships)
 - financial participation in innovative start-up companies in the ICT sector (seed money)
 - financial support for individuals (grants)
- 2) Support programmes:
 - active support programmes: specifically targeted support programmes are launched by the Hasler Foundation

- passive support programmes: applications are invited within a prescribed thematic framework

The details, procedures and competencies for the support activity of the Hasler Foundation are laid down in the *Terms and conditions for support* dated 26 November 2009.

4.1. Non-specific support

Within the framework of non-specific support, educational, research and innovation projects may be supported, membership of organisations may be set up, start-up companies supported and grants awarded.

4.1.1. Educational projects

Educational projects are supported in those areas where either no support is received from public funds, or where support has been neglected by such funds.

In particular, innovative projects are supported which

- lead to the establishment of new training opportunities in computer science and ICT;
- have the potential to be applied across Switzerland;
- can be expected to have particular social or cultural relevance in terms of information and communication technologies.

The following types of projects will not be supported, or only in exceptional cases where there is good reason:

- those where the focus is not on information and communication technologies or their connection with other areas of knowledge;
- those that have a commercial purpose;
- those leading to the setting up or expansion of ICT infrastructure, with no significant innovative content.

4.1.2. Research projects

Cutting-edge technical or scientific research projects at universities or non-commercial research organisations will be supported in relation to their potential for Switzerland as a centre for science or industry.

In particular, projects are supported

- which lay the groundwork for more extensive undertakings for which (joint) financing could be requested from other institutions (start-up finance);
- which are in the pre-competitive field and fall in the support gap between pure research (Swiss National Fund SNF) and applied research where industry participation is essential (the federal innovation promotion agency CTI);

- where it can be expected that findings from other disciplines or cooperation with other disciplines will stimulate ICT.

The following types of projects will not be supported, or only in exceptional cases where there is good reason:

- those where the academic focus is not on information and communication technologies or their connection with other areas of knowledge;
- those which are purely applications, with no innovative content in terms of ICT;
- those that fall under the research remit of the SNF or CTI;
- those which have been rejected by other sponsoring institutions on the grounds of quality.

4.1.3. *Innovation projects*

Projects at universities or non-commercial research institutions that have as their aim innovation for the marketplace, and not solely scientific insight, will also be supported within the context of non-specific support.

In particular, projects are supported

- which follow on from a dissertation where research results are translated into marketable products, processes or services, so as to create the circumstances permitting a company to be set up, and which are supported by a start-up support agency¹;
- which consolidate the results of research in such a way that they could lead to additional investment in market-oriented technologies and product developments in the private sector.

The following types of projects will not be supported, or only in exceptional cases where there is good reason:

- where the main focus for the technology or innovation is not in the field of ICT;
- where the sole purpose is product development.

4.1.4. *Support memberships*

Organisations and institutions that are either directly or indirectly conducive to the support objectives of the Hasler Foundation may be supported financially by taking out a membership or by sponsorship contributions.

4.1.5. *Seed money*

The tool of seed money serves to promote innovation in the field of ICT. The technology and/or process must be novel and have clear market potential.

¹ e.g. by CTI Start-up

The Hasler Foundation may hold a stake in a new innovative company in the ICT sector or support it financially, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:

- The company is managed by an effective team.
- A clear concept exists for market development. A *proof of concept* must already have been generated through the company's own efforts.
- The potential of the innovative product, process or service is clearly recognisable. All *intellectual property rights* are held by the company, and they cannot be easily copied.

4.1.6. *Grants*

Student grants can be awarded to gifted, motivated students who are studying in the field of ICT at university level. Such awards are subsidiary to state student grants and mainly take into account cases which have fallen through the net of state student grants, yet remain worthy of support.

4.2. **Support programmes**

The objectives and themes of support programmes are laid down by the Foundation Board, as are the procedural rules for the individual programmes.

4.2.1. *Active support programmes*

The Hasler Foundation can itself take steps to achieve a specific objective by launching one of its support programmes. The Hasler Foundation will itself commission projects and take supporting measures, for example in the field of public relations.

4.2.2. *Passive support programmes (invitations for theme-based applications)*

By inviting theme-based applications, the Hasler Foundation aims to initiate targeted research programmes which allow several research groups at different universities to research the same topic. The idea is that young researchers at universities, in particular, will be given an incentive to carry out research in challenging areas of ICT. This type of initiative should also lead to the formation of networks within and between universities.

Projects are selected competitively according to their relevance to the theme and their academic quality.

5. Concluding remarks

This document replaces the *Support Strategy* document dated 4 December 2008 and comes into force with immediate effect.

Bern, 26 November 2009

On behalf of the Foundation Board:

Dr. Max Gsell
President

Dr. Paul Kleiner
Secretary