SWESA
Swiss Entrepreneurs & Startup Association

Annual Report 2022

Bern, April 2023

Table of contents

1. Foreword 2

2. Management 3

3. Vorstand 3

4. Members 3

5. Charter 5

6. Parliamentary group 6

7. Activities and initiatives 6

8. Annual financial statement 7

9. Outlook 8

1. Foreword

The Swiss startup ecosystem enjoys an increasingly positive perception at the political level. It has been recognized that today's startups have an impact on both innovation activity and future jobs that should not be underestimated. The momentum is good, even if the macroeconomic conditions have certainly been better.

Together with the parliamentary group on Startups and Entrepreneurship, SWESA was active in various areas in 2022. We will continue to do so in 2023, participating in various initiatives at the federal level and representing the interests of our members. In particular, the findings of the "Unicorn Nation Switzerland" study will be analyzed and suitable political initiatives will be formulated.

SWESA continues to be the sponsor of the parliamentary group on Startups and Entrepreneurship. This group consists of about 20 politicians from different parties. This gives the Swiss startup ecosystem a unique and direct access to politics.

At this point I would like to thank Judith Bellaiche and Andri Silberschmidt for the pleasant and goal-oriented cooperation. A big Merci goes as always to my board colleagues Déborah Heintze, Marc Maurer and Karim Maizar!

Simon Enderli
President SWESA

2. Management

The initiator behind the establishment of SWESA was the Swiss Entrepreneurs Foundation. The foundation also pursues the goal of improving the economic policy framework for startups and entrepreneurship and is under the patronage of Federal Councilor Guy Parmelin. SWESA has transferred the management of the association to the Swiss Entrepreneurs Foundation, which continues to run the foundation on a pro bono basis.

3. Vorstand

Déborah Heintze
CMO and Co-Founder
Lunaphore Technologies SA

Marc Maurer
Co-CEO
On AG

Karim Maizar
Partner and Head Startup Desk
Kellerhals Carrard

Simon Enderli
CEO
Swiss Entrepreneurs Foundation

All members of the Board of Directors are volunteers.

4. Members

The members form the basis of the association and ensure its financing. For startups, membership is still possible for as little as one symbolic franc. SWESA members enjoy the following advantages:

- Members can submit their political concerns to SWESA. The issues are reviewed and forwarded to the Parliamentary Group for discussion.
- Informative newsletter following parliamentary sessions, which provides updates on the status of business relevant to members.
- Invitations to networking events that promote exchange between business and politics.
- Participation in polls and surveys and access to the results.
- Exchange / network with other Members.
- Support from the SWESA network on specific issues.

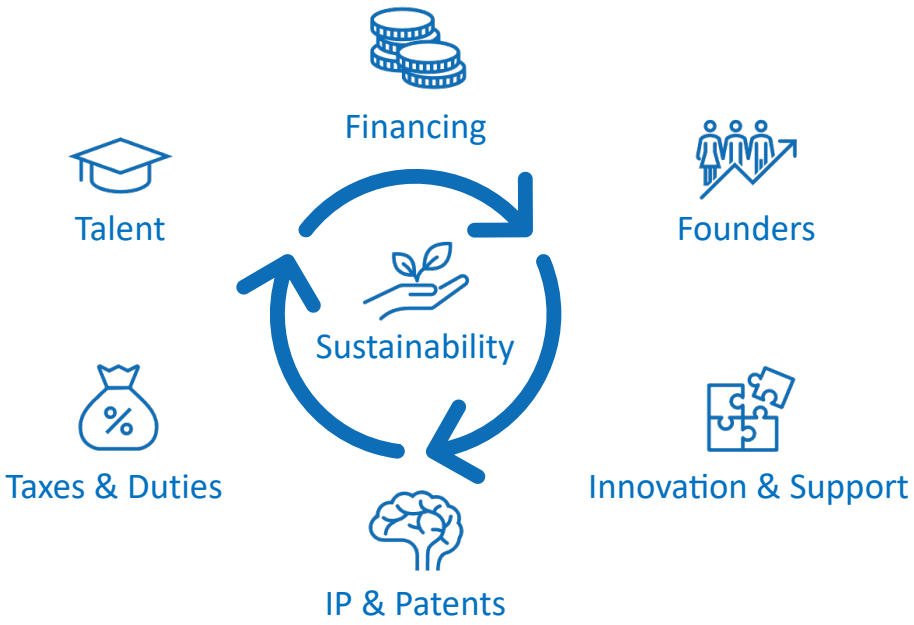
We are pleased to have nearly 200 members who support our work. We want to continue to build on this strong foundation.

The complete list of members can be found at www.swesa.ch/mitglieder.

5. Charter

Unlike other associations or organizations from the startup ecosystem, SWESA continues to focus exclusively on political issues on fedral level. Based on various surveys, the board has defined a charter that guides the work of the association. Our activities are intended to influence the following topics:

▪ **Taxes & Duties**	We strive to achieve the most advantageous tax conditions possible for the entire ecosystem. This includes founders and employees as well as investors.
▪ **Talent**	W We are committed to facilitating access to the best talent for Swiss startups. This applies to both quotas and regulatory processes.
▪ **IP & Patents**	D The current patenting procedures are to be simplified. The positive image of “Swissness" is to be harnessed to conquer international markets.
▪ **Innovation & Support**	We advocate that the federal funding agencies (Innosuisse, S-GE, etc.) put companies at the center. Their services should be of high quality and easily accessible.
▪ **Founders**	We promote entrepreneurship and strive to keep the regulatory hurdles for start-ups as low as possible.
▪ **Financing**	We are driving forward the political discussion to make more Swiss venture capital available in the future.
▪ **Sustainability**	All our initiatives are based on the principle of sustainability. Be it in relation to the environment, social concerns or an attractive and sustainable business location.



6. Parliamentary Group

The parliamentary group on Startups and Entrepreneurship is our direct link to politics. The group was founded in spring 2020 by Judith Bellaiche and Andri Silberschmidt, who co-chair the committee. The group is open to all parliamentarians who are interested in the concerns of startups and innovative SMEs.

From left: Alois Gmür, Esther Friedli, Min Li Marti, Andri Silberschmidt, Judith Bellaiche, Gerhard Andrey

The Core Team:

Judith Bellaiche
NC GLP, Zürich

Alois Gmür
NC Die Mitte, Schwyz

Min Li Marti
NC SP, Zürich

Andri Silberschmidt
NC FDP, Zürich

Esther Friedli
NC SVP, St. Gallen

Gerhard Andrey
NC Grüne, Fribourg

Other members:

Marianne Binder-Keller
NC Die Mitte , Aargau

Kurt Fluri
NC FDP, Solothurn

Ruedi Noser
CoS FDP, Zürich

Damien Cottier
NC FDP, Neuenburg

Johanna Gapany
CoS FDP, Fribourg

Fabio Regazzi
NC Die Mitte , Tessin

Jacqueline De Quattro
NC FDP, Waadt

Lars Guggisberg
NC SVP, Bern

Maja Riniker
NC FDP, Aargau

Marcel Dobler
NC FDP, St. Gallen

Charles Juillard
CoS Die Mitte, Jura

Beat Walti
NC FDP, Zürich

Beat Flach
NC GLP, Aargau

Isabelle Moret
NC FDP, Waadt

7. Activities and initiatives

SWESA has been engaged in 2022 with the parliamentary group on Startups and Entrepreneurship in various areas. Below is an overview:

- **Study «Unicorn Nation Switzerland»**
  On our behalf, the University of St. Gallen comprehensively investigated the framework conditions for startups in Switzerland from a legal and economic perspective. The aim was to find out what the most important obstacles in the framework conditions are and how they can be removed. This study now provides concrete answers. The obstacles were identified and then prioritized on the basis of the evaluation of previously published studies as well as two rounds of surveys among members of the ecosystem and experts. Prioritization took into account both the effectiveness and feasibility of improvement measures. Three fields of action came out on top in the prioritization:

  - Digital notary's office (digitalization of notarization processes, especially for company formation)
  - Admission requirements in the Novel Foods and Medtech sectors
  - Tax law, in particular the tax classification of business angels and the conversion of partnerships into corporations

  The study (in German) can be downloaded at this Link.

- **Swiss Innovation Fund**
  In the medium and long term, Switzerland should continue to be one of the most productive, competitive and innovative locations in the world and be able to secure jobs, value creation and tax substrate. In the wake of the Covid 19 crisis, the Federal Council examined new approaches to achieving these goals. In August 2021, the Federal Council therefore commissioned the EAER to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of a Swiss innovation fund. The aim was to explore the extent to which such a fund could expand the venture capital market in Switzerland and thus improve the growth opportunities of innovative companies in Switzerland.

  SWESA was and is part of the sounding board which, under the direction of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO, critically examines the possible implementation options and submits proposals. The analyses have shown that an innovation fund can increase the maturity of the Swiss venture capital market, strengthen its resilience and thus improve Switzerland's attractiveness as a business location. An innovation fund also helps to compensate for the discontinuation of individual instruments of the European framework programs.

  The Federal Council will discuss and decide in the course of 2023 whether and in what form the implementation plans for a Swiss innovation fund will be pursued further.

- **Consultations**
  SWESA participates in consultations relevant to the startup ecosystem. In 2022/23, submissions were formulated for the following consultations:

  - Total revision of the Innosuisse Contribution Ordinance (Link)
  - Employees in start-ups with company shareholdings should be exempt from recording working hours (Link)
  - Consultation on the Federal Law on the Fund for the Promotion of International Cooperation and Excellence in Research and Innovation (Link)

8. Annual financial statement

For startups and SMEs, it is still possible to become a SWESA member for as little as one symbolic franc. The income from membership fees is primarily used to finance infrastructure and tools, the monitoring of political business and the organization of meetings and events.

Income statement January 1 - December 31, 2022

	2022	2021
Membership fees	15’847	11’927
Donations	-	-
Purchase of services	31'987	18
Gross profit	**-16’140**	**11’909**
Personnel expenses	-	-
Other personnel expenses	-	-
Marketing effort	-	-
IT and administration effort	-6’037	-5’748
Customer occasions & events	-2’000	
Operating result (EBIT)	**-24’177**	**6’137**
Financial expenses	-183	-138
Revenue Sponsoring Study «Unicorn Nation»	40’000	
Net result	**15’640**	**5’999**
Association capital as of 31.12.2022	26’635	

Commentary on the financial statements

The cost of the "Unicorn Nation Switzerland" study is by far the association's largest outlay to date. The realization was only possible thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Schweizerische Mobiliar Genossenschaft. It should be noted that the remaining amount for the completion of the study will not be invoiced until 2023. The annual profit for 2022 is therefore significantly higher than in the previous year, primarily as a result of this one-time special effect.

The income from membership fees could be increased as a result of newly acquired members, but is still at a modest level due to the very low minimum amount. If the association wants to expand the scope of its activities, it is imperative that additional sources of income are tapped and/or membership fees are increased.

9. Outlook

In the fourth year of our existence, we want to further focus and sharpen our activities and strengthen our membership base as far as possible. Prior to this, the strategy for the next few years is to be defined and the related questions regarding financing possibilities and potential partners are to be clarified.

We continue to pursue the goal of making the concerns of startups and innovative SMEs more heard in Bern. This is what we focus on and measure ourselves by.

As always, our final thanks go to all those who have supported SWESA in its third year in any way. Whether as a member, advisor, sponsor, board member, partner or politician.

18 April, 2023

Swiss Entrepreneurs & Startup Association SWESA
Bundesgasse 35
3001 Bern

info@swesa.ch
www.swesa.ch