





# The Swiss biotech ecosystem

One of the most advanced and influential ecosystems in the world

The Swiss biotech ecosystem attracts numerous foreign companies, specialists, and investors. It provides more than 50.000 jobs in R&D biotech companies as well as specialized suppliers and consultants.

## Market size

The life sciences sector, including biotech, is the largest export industry in Switzerland, comprising 38.5% (CH 105.5 billion, €97.1 billion Euro) of total Swiss exports in 2023. Switzerland benefits from an exceptionally varied and versatile talent pool, due to developed cantonal policies and the high end education system. Switzerland is well-integrated within the European talent pool and one of the five workers in Switzerland crosses the border daily for work. Additionally, the Swiss government actively supports research and innovation through various initiatives such as the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and Innosuisse.

## Financial facts

In 2023, the Swiss biotech industry turnover consisted of CHF 7.3 billion (€6.7 billion Euro). However, investments in research & development slightly decreased to CH 2.4 billion. Companies within the Swiss biotech sector raised more than CHF 2 billion (€1.8 billion Euro) in capital investments, marking an increase of more than 50% compared to the previous year.

## Strategic alliances and collaborations

Strategic alliances and collaborations are very important for Swiss biotech companies as they enable innovation and acceleration of new therapies and solutions. Swiss biotech companies are involved in numerous strategic alliances and collaborations, both nationally and internationally. Examples include the collaboration between Lonza and various biotechnological and pharmaceutical companies partners, as well as recent acquisitions such as T3 Pharma by Boehringer Ingelheim.

## Innovation and Research

Switzerland is known for its innovative approach to biotech and precision medicine and has strong capabilities in the production of biological drugs and advanced therapies. With leading companies and a wide range of contract development and manufacturing organizations (CDMOs), Switzerland remains an essential partner for the pharmaceutical industry. Besides that Switzerland is home to excellent research organizations.

Throughout Switzerland, several Innovation parks for biotech provide start-ups with essential infrastructure and flexibility, fostering innovation through the exchange of ideas and skills. Additionally, these innovation parks facilitate knowledge exchange between larger companies and newer ventures.

- Switzerland has strong R&D capabilities
- CHF 2.4 billion invested annually in R&D
- Provides over 50,000 jobs
- Home to more than 3,280 life sciences companies, including 721 biotech firms
- Raises CHF 2 billion in new funds annually
- Biotech and pharma contribute around 40% to Swiss exports
- Ranks second globally for biotechnology R&D intensity
- Holds the 7th largest share of the global biotech market
- Hosts 20% of European biotech companies

# The Swiss biotech ecosystem

## Ecosystem overview\*



Industry associations

- [Economiesuisse](#)
- [Interpharma](#)
- [scienceindustries](#)
- [Swiss Biotech Association](#)
- [Toolpoint](#)

- [Swiss Testing Labs](#)
- [Vips](#)



International networks

- [Enterprise Europe Network](#)
- [EuropaBio](#)
- [European Federation of Biotechnology](#)

- [Horizon Europe](#)



Innovation parks

- [Swiss Parks:](#)
  - [BioArk](#)
  - [Biopole Lausanne](#)
  - [Bio-Technopark Schlieren-Zurich](#)

- [Switzerland Innovation:](#)
  - [Park Network West EPFL](#)
  - [Innovation Park Basel](#)
  - [Parkinnovaare](#)
- [BioAlps](#)



Science & knowledge institutes

- [EPFL](#)
- [ETH Zurich](#)
- [Institute of Chemistry and Biotechnology, ZAHW](#)
- [Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics](#)

- [University of Zurich](#)
- [University of Basel](#)
- [University of Geneva](#)
- [Friedrich Miescher Institute](#)



Accelerators & Incubators

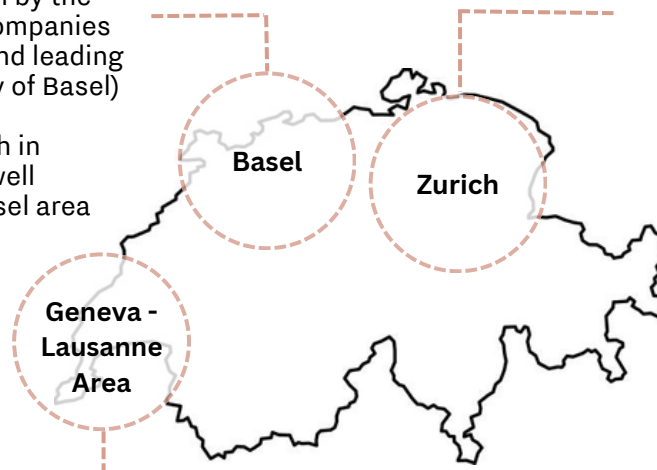
- [BaseLaunch](#)
- [Dart](#)
- [Hemex](#)
- [Innovation projects \(Innosuisse\)](#)
- [Kickstart](#)

- [MassChallenge Switzerland](#)
- [Seedstars](#)
- [Venture Kick](#)

## Regions

Despite its small size, Switzerland has three well-connected regional hubs that focus on biotechnology.

- The pharma incubator driven by the presence of large pharma companies (Lonza, Novartis & Roche) and leading research centers (University of Basel)
- Offers a solid foundation for companies to grow or launch in Switzerland, thanks to the well developed ecosystem in Basel area



- The financial centre due to its concentration of banks, financial institutions and venture capital firms.
- Bio-Technopark Schlieren, ETH and the University of Zurich offers a rich environment for collaboration and innovation
- The Life Science Zurich Business Network promotes collaboration between Life Science stakeholders and provides an [innovation hub directory](#) to support networking.

- Newer biohub in Switzerland, encompassing the regions of Geneva, Lausanne, Vaud and the surrounding areas along Lake Geneva
- Representation of the West of Switzerland with the EPFL (Swiss Federal institute of Technology), UNIL (Lausanne University), the Wyss Center, IMD (business school Lausanne)
- Biopole Lausanne established to serve as a hub for the life sciences activities in the region



# The Netherlands biotech sector

## A connected biotech ecosystem

The Dutch biotech ecosystem is rapidly growing and forms an influential sector within the Netherlands innovative economy. Numerous foreign companies, specialists and investors are attracted by the Dutch sector.

### Market size

The Dutch biotech sector is an important part of the national economy, contributing both to the GDP and export orientation. Consisting of a dynamic network with more than 2.000 life science companies and research institutions, providing jobs to more than 50.000 people.

### Financial facts

In 2023, the Dutch biotech sector experienced significant financial activities, including venture financing and mergers & acquisitions. The Life Sciences & Health sector, including biotechnology, generates a total economic activity of €7 billion and contributes €50 billion to export value.

### Strategic alliances and collaborations

Dutch biotech companies are involved in strategic alliances and collaborations, nationally as well as internationally. These collaborations foster innovation and market expansion.

### Innovation and Research

The Netherlands is a leading hub for biotech innovation in Europe, supported by a high concentration of biotech companies and world-class universities. Despite its relatively small size, the Netherlands boasts a competitive international business climate.

Public-private partnerships are strongly supported by government programs that stimulate private investments in R&D, such as [RegMed XB](#) and the [European Lead Factory \(ELF\)](#). Furthermore, entrepreneurship is stimulated in the Dutch biotech sector, creating a fertile climate for start-ups, scale-ups, and grown-ups. Besides that, companies are also seeking business-to-business partnerships, for instance, companies like Genmab, J&J, and other major players are continually looking to form new partnerships.

### The Dutch biotech ecosystem

In the Netherlands there is a high density of networked research centers, 26 campuses, 8 University Medical Centers, and 12 universities are engaged in life sciences research. On top of that, the Netherlands is centrally located within Europe and is home to the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

### Overview innovation parks:

- [Amsterdam Science Park](#)
- [Biotech Campus Delft](#)
- [Brightlands](#)
- [Erasmus MC Campus](#)
- [Biotech Center Groningen](#)
- [Health & Innovation District Amsterdam](#)
- [High Tech Campus Eindhoven](#)
- [Leiden Bio Science Park](#)
- [Pivotpark](#)
- [Utrecht Science Park](#)
- [Wageningen Campus](#)

Examples of Biotech companies in the Netherlands are: Acerta pharma, Aduro Biotech, AM-Pharma, AMRIF, and Merus. A database of all biotech companies in the Netherlands is available on the [HollandBio website](#).

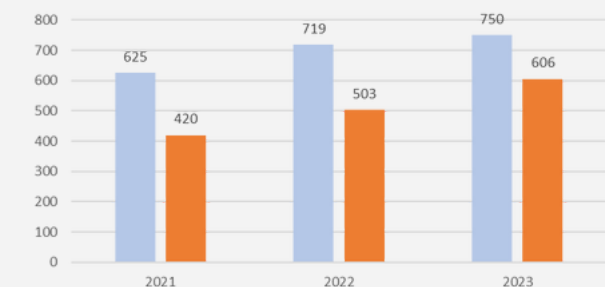
## Facts and figures

- Features more than 3100 innovative R&D life sciences companies and 606 biotech companies
- Ranked 6th worldwide for biotech patents
- > 65.000 employees working in biopharma
- High density of networked research centers
- > 700 public-private R&D projects
- 40+ Strategic public-private partnerships

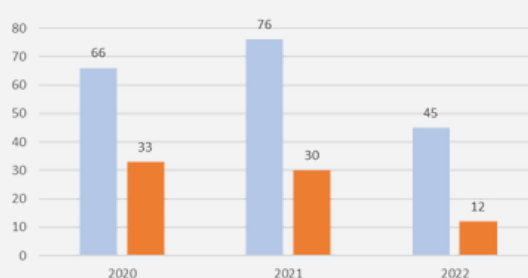
# Factsheet

## General information

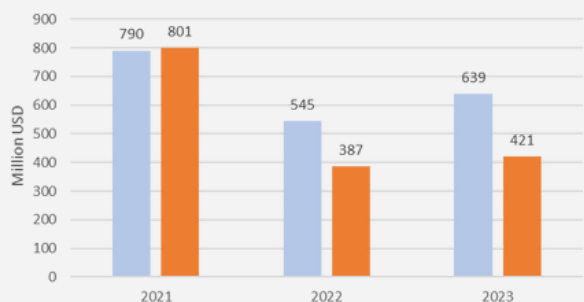
Number of Biotech companies



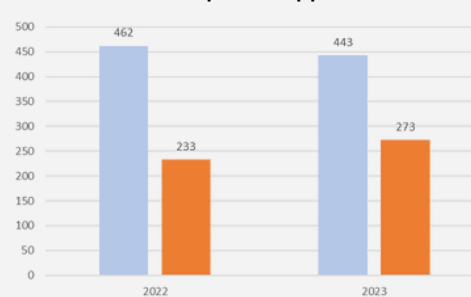
Number of new biotech companies founded



Venture financing of biotech companies



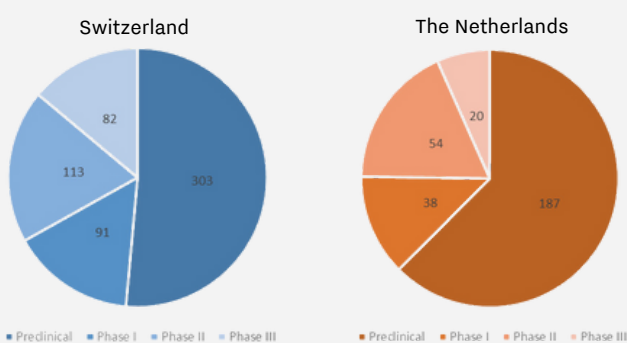
Number of patent applications



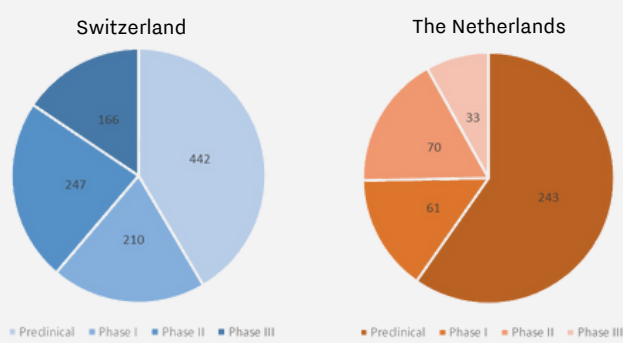
Switzerland The Netherlands

## Development overview

Therapeutics in development by development phase, 2023

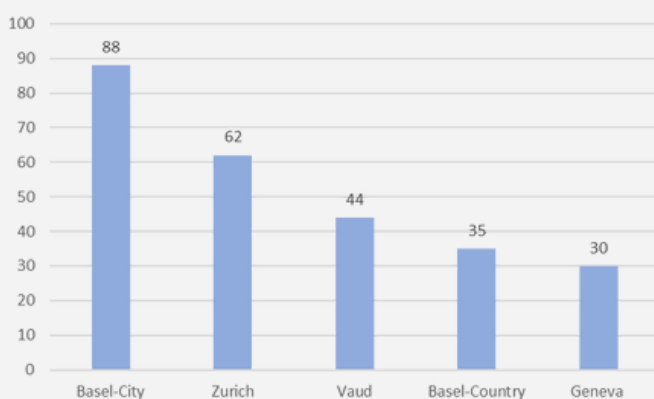


Biotech assets in clinical development, 2023

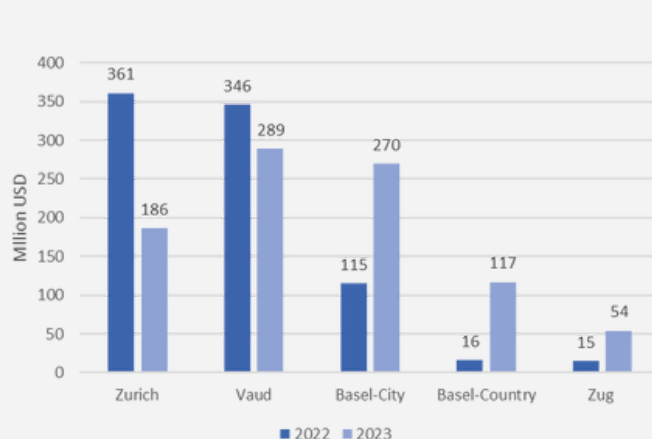


## Canton overview Switzerland

Canton overview of biotech companies



Private equity rounds by top 5 cantons



(1) BiotechGate: Switzerland Country Trend Analysis 2024. Available at BiotechGate Resource Center  
 (2) BiotechGate: Netherlands Trend Analysis Report 2024. Available at BiotechGate Resource Center  
 (3) European Patent Office. Annual report 2022 & 2023: Statistics. European Patent Office. Available at [EPO - Patent Index](#)

# Ecosystem comparison

	Netherlands	Switzerland
<b>1</b> Economic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic geographic location within Europe, serving as a logistics &amp; transport hub</li> <li>Biotech sector thrives on innovation and collaboration leveraged by the expertise in life sciences and technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong presence of multinationals</li> <li>Robust financial sector</li> <li>Significant investments in R&amp;D supported by a stable economic environment and access to capital</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> Research and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pioneering environment for innovative technologies</li> <li>Entrepreneurial spirit and dynamic startup ecosystem that fosters startups and scale-ups</li> <li>Strong emphasis on fundamental and strategic research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pioneer with cutting-edge technologies and therapies</li> <li>Known for its innovation in biotech and pharmaceuticals</li> <li>Strong emphasis on research and development</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> Market Size and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership of the EU</li> <li>Provides access to a large consumer base</li> <li>The market's ability to attract and retain talent can be further enhanced with a stronger presence of large pharmaceutical or biotech companies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serves as a global hub for biotech and pharmaceutical companies</li> <li>High concentration of multinational headquarters fostering an innovative ecosystem for suppliers, start-ups and spin-offs</li> </ul>
<b>4</b> Investment and funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public-private partnerships foster collaboration</li> <li>Government grants support innovation</li> <li>Major venture capital firms, like Forbion, EQT, Gilde Healthcare, and INKEF, are located in the Netherlands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attracts private and public investments in biotech</li> <li>Government secures framework conditions</li> <li>Programs like Innosuisse provide funding and support for start-ups, research and innovative projects</li> </ul>
<b>5</b> Cultural differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong emphasis on consensus</li> <li>Direct communication and straightforwardness</li> <li>Practical and solution-oriented way of working</li> <li>Task-focused</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future oriented: long term oriented, planning in advance</li> <li>Focus on efficiency and pragmatism</li> <li>Relationship focused: long-term business relationships important</li> </ul>
<b>6</b> Regulatory environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligned with EU standards, giving access to the European Market via the European Medicines Agency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-established regulatory framework for the Swiss market</li> <li>Swissmedic: Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products, responsible for the authorization and supervision of therapeutic products in Switzerland</li> </ul>

# Practical tips to enter the market

1

## Establish a Swiss presence

The presence of a physical office can be advantageous for entering the Swiss biotech market. By having a Swiss hub or engaging local experts it is easier to build up a network, create a better understanding of the local market dynamics and to get access to local knowledge.

2

## Partnerships and Collaborations

Collaboration with Swiss companies or forming strategic partnerships is crucial. The Swiss Biotech Association offers the [Swiss Biotech Directory](#), a directory containing contact information for over 1,500 biotech companies in Switzerland.

3

## Utilizing the Swiss infrastructure

Switzerland offers a robust infrastructure for biotech companies, with a strong manufacturing base and comprehensive support services from organizations like Switzerland Global Enterprise. These institutions help companies to establish their business in Switzerland.

4

## Leverage the Swiss biotech investment climate

The Swiss biotech sector has a strong track record of raising capital for both public and private investments. Foreign companies can benefit from this investment climate by engaging with local investors and participating in the ecosystem.

5

## Focus on innovation and R&D

The Swiss biotech sector has a strong focus on R&D. Foreign companies can leverage this R&D ecosystem by licensing innovative technologies or investing in local start-ups.

6

## Adapt to the Swiss culture

Understanding Swiss business culture, adhere to timelines, prioritize quality in business interactions, building trust and credibility

7

## Leverage the support of the Embassy

The Netherlands Embassy in Bern can provide market & cultural insights, country specific information and facilitate connections.

8

## Regulatory support and innovation

To enter the Swiss biotech market, leverage the supportive regulatory environment that encourages innovative approaches like international work-sharing, AI and Real World Evidence data. The Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products actively supports these advancements, making it easier for foreign biotech companies to establish and grow.

9

## Attending events

Attending industry conferences and networking events can be of great benefit for expanding your professional network. Below some of the events within the Biotech industry in Switzerland are highlighted.



## Relevant events

- [BioTechX Europe](#) - October 9-10, 2024, Basel
- [Open Innovation in Life Sciences](#) - October 17, 2024, Zurich
- [Precision Liquid Handling](#) - November 19, Zurich
- [International Conference Biochemistry & Biotechnology](#) - November 25-27, 2024, Zurich
- [Swiss Biotech Days](#) - May 5-6, 2025, Congress Center Basel
- [Life Science Zurich Impact](#) - May 23, 2025, Zurich
- [The Swiss Bioinformatics Summit](#) - tba June 2025, Biel/Bienne
- [Biointerfaces International Conference](#) - tba August 2025, Muttenz, Switzerland
- [Intelligent Health](#) - tba September 2025, Basel
- [Annual Biotech in Europe CEO Forum](#) - tba September 2025, Basel
- [Biotechgate Digital Partnering](#) - Virtual events around partnering

# Additional information

## Overview ecosystem Switzerland\*

### Academic Institutions:

- ETH Zurich - Institute of Molecular Systems Biology and the Department of Biosystems Science and Engineering (D-BSSE)
- University of Zurich - The Institute of Molecular Life Sciences, Center of Microbiology and Environmental System Science
- EPFL - École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne
- University of Basel - Biozentrum + Department of Biomedicine
- University of Geneva
- University of Lausanne - Faculty of Biology and Medicine, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research
- ZAHW - Zürich University of Applied Sciences

### Research Institutes and Centers:

- Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics (SIB)
- Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI) - Natural and engineering sciences, including biotechnology and life sciences
- Friedrich Miescher Institute for Biomedical Research (FMI)
- Institute for Research in Biomedicine
- Botnar Foundation - institute for Child Health
- Balgrist Campus - Focuses on musculoskeletal research and innovation
- Institute of Oncology Research (IOR)
- Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology
- Wyss Zurich

### Collaborative Networks and Platforms:

- Swiss Biotech Association (SBA)
- Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)
- National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) Programs
- BioAlps - The life sciences cluster of Western Switzerland
- Swissnex - Network of science and technology outposts

### Innovation and Research Parks:

- Switzerland Innovation Park Network - Innovation parks across Switzerland
- Swissparks - Association of Swiss Technology Parks and Business Incubators
- Biopôle Lausanne - Life sciences campus
- Technopark Zurich - Technology and innovation hub
- Horgen Labs, Innovation Campus
- Grow - Waedenswil
- House of Lab Science

### Accelerators/Incubators:

- INCATE - Incubator for Antibacterial Therapies in Europe
- Venture Lab
- Swiss Startup Factory
- DayOne Accelerator
- Impact Hub
- BaseLaunch - Basel-based incubator for healthcare startups
- Biopôle StartLab - Life sciences incubator in Lausanne

### Regional Support:

- Canton of Zurich - Office for Business and Economic Development, contact point for interested new companies from abroad
- Basel Area Business & Innovation
- InnoVaud - Support for innovation and startups in the canton of Vaud
- Greater Geneva Bern Area
- Switzerland Global Enterprise
- GZA - Greater Zurich Area

### Business Networks:

- Life Science Zurich Business Network
- Healthtech Cluster Switzerland
- Swiss Medtech - Association for the Swiss medical technology industry

### Support Institutions for Start-ups:

- Startup Academy's Scaleup Program
- Impact Hub
- IFJ (Institut für Jungunternehmen)
- Startup Baselland
- Standortförderung Baselland
- Standortförderung Basel-Stadt
- Tech Park Basel
- Business Park Baselland
- BioArk - Biotech incubator in Valais

### Pre-seed & Seed Phase Support for Biotech Companies:

- Venture Kick
- BRIDGE Program by Innosuisse & SNSF
- FIT Seed & FIT Grant
- BlueLion Incubator
- BaseLaunch
- Genilem - Coaching for startups in the early phases

### Venture Groups:

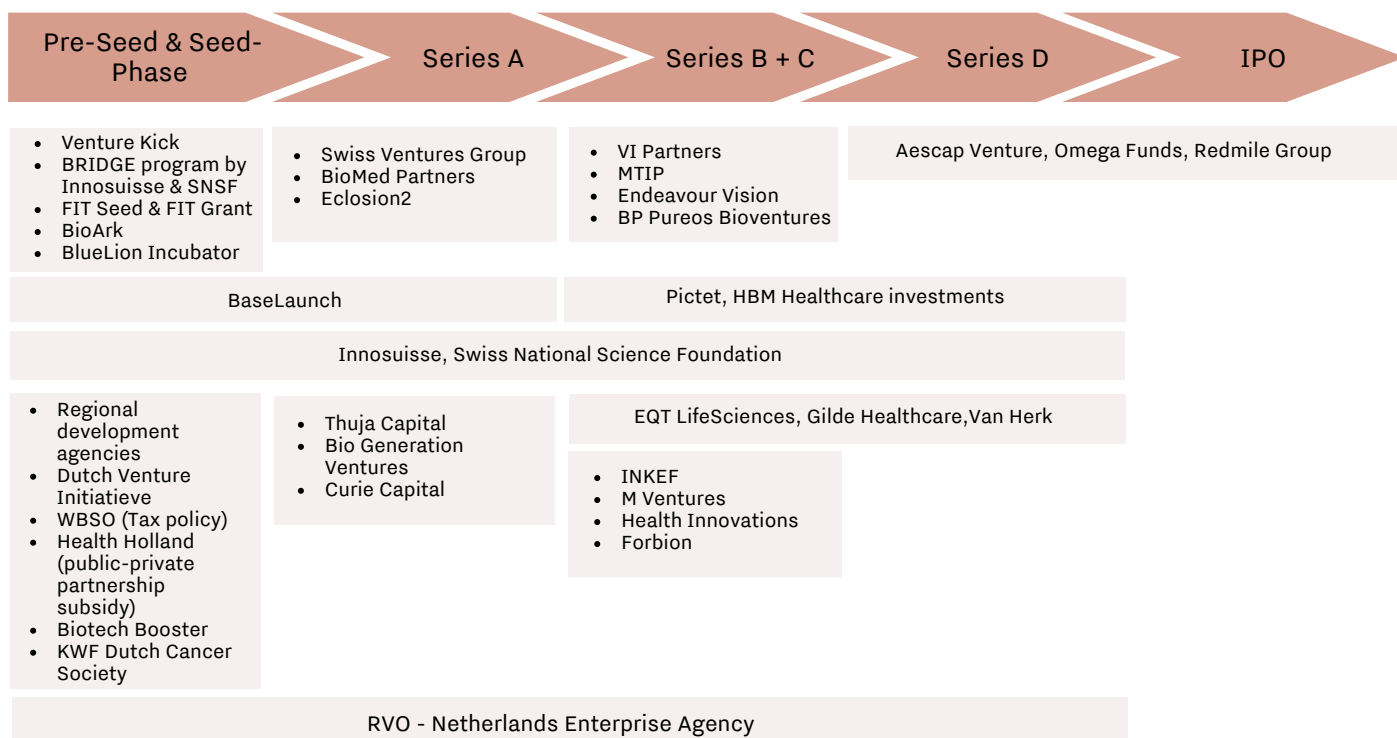
- Swiss Ventures Group
- BioMed Partners
- Eclosion2
- VI Partners
- MTIP
- Endeavour Vision
- BP Pureos Bioventure
- Aescap Venture
- Omega Funds
- Redmile Group
- Pictet
- HBM Healthcare Investments
- Aravis
- Index Ventures

\*This list is not exhaustive



# Additional information

## Support for Biotech companies\*



\*This list is not exhaustive and represents a selection of the available support options in the Biotech sector

## Special thanks to

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