



Kanton Bern
Canton de Berne



Bern Economic Development Agency

2019 Annual Report



03
Editorial



04
Project funding



05
**Project funding
in 2018 in figures**



06
In focus



10
Funding examples



22
Annex



24
Contact/Publication details





Dr. Sebastian Friess

President, Bern Economic Development Agency
Head Official, Office of Economic Affairs

In a constant state of flux

2019 was a good year, but a turbulent one. Once again, we far exceeded our targets, both in terms of supporting companies in Bern and helping new companies from abroad to relocate here. Thanks to our promotion agency be-advanced, which we have recently future-proofed, Bernese SMEs, start-ups, and founders can access an additional panoply of services, ranging from an initial no-obligation consultation right up to individual coaching. In addition, we have spent a lot of time dealing with strategic issues relating to the future, including reviewing virtually all of our multi-year contracts and performance agreements, and we can report favorably on the impact we have had.

This is all the more pleasing, since it is not only our customers who are in a constant state of flux: we are as well. No stone has been or is being left unturned in the Department, in the Office and in the Economic Development Agency. Government dossiers are changing, departments are being divided up and responsibilities reassigned, and staff are switching offices. This is particularly noticeable in respect of personnel changes, which we ourselves went through in 2019. We are in the midst of a generation change: young minds are being ushered in, with all the attendant advantages and disadvantages. This is happening both to us in the new and young Office of Economic Affairs and to our partners in the field.

Needless to say this is challenging for us all, but still it must not define us. After all, we do not exist for ourselves but for our customers – for the companies in the Canton of Bern. Our thoughts and actions remain firmly focused on the projects being implemented by the companies here, numerous examples of which can be found in this Annual Report. Our selection illustrates just how diverse the Canton of Bern (and therefore our work) is. For those who prefer cold hard numbers, the complete statistics can be found at the end of the report as usual.

I would like to thank my colleagues and staff for their tireless efforts in support of our canton and its economy. Thank you for your interest in our work. Enjoy an exciting insight into this many-faceted year that was 2019.

Bern Economic Development Agency

The Bern Economic Development Agency (BEDA) supports companies and their activities with a wide portfolio of advisory and other services. Our services are tailored to meet the needs of export-oriented and international companies of all sizes, ranging from start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to multinationals. BEDA helps companies to get in touch with the right people in the administration. Our key services are:

- Advice
- Arranging contacts, real estate, cantonal realty, and guarantees
- Initial advice for SMEs and start-ups
- Financial assistance and tax relief

In order to boost economic development, BEDA markets the Canton of Bern as a business location abroad in collaboration with Switzerland Global Enterprise and the Greater Geneva Bern area. Other important partners in the Canton are the innovation promotion agency be-advanced and the Switzerland Innovation Park in Biel/Bienne.

Another area in which we provide strategic project support is that of innovation promotion and real estate development projects. These activities boost the long-term attractiveness of the Canton as a business location.

One of BEDA's key tasks is to improve the overall regional environment for business and tourism. Our regional policy boosts competitiveness in rural areas, generates added value and creates jobs, benefiting residents, companies, and tourists alike. The strategic action areas that define the focal points of our regional policy are tourism and industry, as well as structural reforms and innovative projects in the fields of culture, sport, leisure, education, social matters, and health.

BEDA supports the tourism sector to enable it to hold its own against the competition and develop. Key areas of our support are market promotion and events.

BEDA's success is measured in terms of the actual investments made by Bernese companies and the number of jobs they create. We therefore continuously monitor the progress of the projects and businesses we support and conduct regular reviews of the effects and benefits of our funding activities. Based on the latest review, it can be assumed that the tools we employ generate net revenues and thus ease the burden on the Canton's financial budget.

Legal basis for BEDA funding and support and number of funded projects in 2019

The work of the Bern Economic Development Agency is based on four laws:

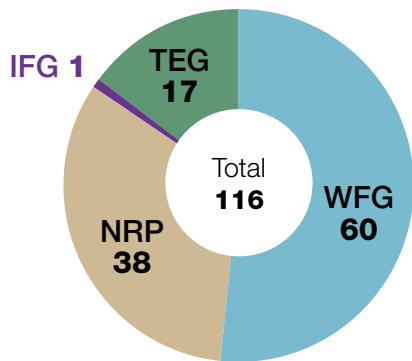
The [Economic Development Act \(WFG\)](#) enables us to support innovative projects, start-ups and companies relocating to the Canton.

The [Innovation Promotion Act \(IFG\)](#) allows us to provide funding for applied research and development institutions.

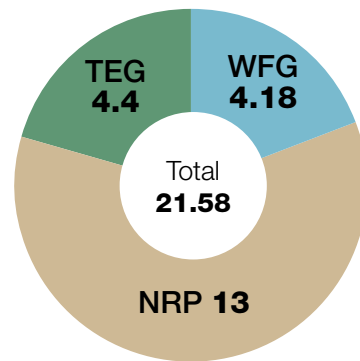
The Cantonal Investment Aid Act is the basis for the support we provide for infrastructure and development projects under the [New Regional Policy \(NRP\)](#).

And finally, the [Tourism Development Act \(TEG\)](#) enables us to support events and marketing activities in the tourism sector.

Number of projects



Promised contributions in million CHF



Planned jobs according to information provided by the companies



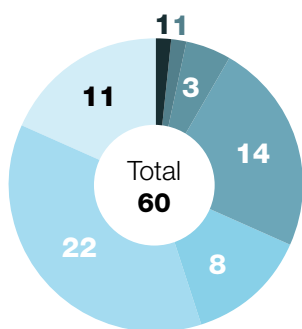
Total 1545
WFG 1130
NRP 415

Planned investments according to information provided by the companies



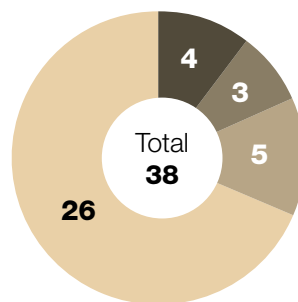
Total 305 Mio.
WFG 226 Mio.
NRP 79 Mio.

Projects by key area category



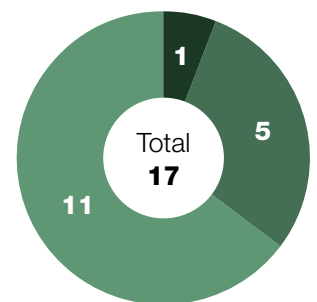
WFG

- 1 Design/luxury goods
- 1 Services (incl. finance/ administration)
- 3 Energy and environment technology
- 14 IT and communication technology
- 8 Medical technology
- 22 Precision industry
- 11 Others



NRP

- 4 Education (and health)
- 3 Energy
- 5 Industry
- 26 Tourism



TEG

- 1 Marketing
- 5 Studies/Strategies
- 11 Events



Interview: Roger Neuenschwander, CEO, be-advanced AG

Stage Designers for Innovation

Roger Neuenschwander is the new CEO of the innovation agency be-advanced. He is not entirely new to the company, however: Neuenschwander had already been head of the SME coaching program for a year. In this interview, he reveals what he wants to achieve in his new role and why he does consider himself a stage designer rather than a «dance teacher».

What does innovation mean to you?

Being innovative is something many people talk about these days. That in itself is certainly a good starting point. But the art of innovation consists of creating a specific value from an innovative idea. To transform an idea into a product or business model, you need entrepreneurship. I therefore see innovation as requiring two ingredients: an innovative business idea and a large portion of entrepreneurship.

How does innovation manifest itself today?

Nowadays, innovation often takes place in processes and business models. Products are sold in new combinations of ranges, markets, channels, and structures. The environment is constantly changing, challenging companies to adapt to these changes as well. Our customers know that they have to constantly face up to these changes.

You have been at the head of be-advanced since 2019. How were things when you joined, and what plans do you have for the future?

I was fortunate to take on a well-established, functioning agency. One of our next major steps is to clearly position be-advanced in the Bernese innovation ecosystem. We want to be the first port of call for companies wanting to change. We want to welcome them and refer them to the right agencies. In addition, we want to further develop as an organization and continually improve the range and quality of the services we offer.

You claim that you want to «see your customers dance together». What do they still have to learn?

We are lucky that we are able to work with SMEs and start-ups who are already highly accomplished stage performers. We focus on connecting companies with the right partners and providing the right stage set-up where the

two partners can perform successfully. We therefore don't consider ourselves «dance teachers», but we do provide the companies with a little impetus with our needs-based coaching services so that they can keep on developing their own individual style of dance.

You operate a coaching program. How does that work?

It is a two-stage process. First of all, our Key Account Managers analyze the company's specific innovation challenge. Based on these challenges, they work with the company to draw up an innovation roadmap and arrange appropriate services. Our core competence is acting as an intermediary and finding the right coach or partner organization's services. We create the crucial added value by providing the right combination.

What qualities do your coaches bring with them?

The key thing for us is that the coaches themselves are entrepreneurs. Rather than advise our customers, we want to work with them on equal terms – entrepreneurs helping entrepreneurs. Our coaches boast a wealth of experience in dealing with innovation processes. We ensure that the relationship with our coaches is built on solid fundamental values. The values of integrity, transparency, and collective commitment are vital to us in our working relationships.



How do you recruit your coaches?

We are very active in our networks, so we have an in-depth knowledge of the scene. Our objective is to recruit the most suitable coaches. They are our key resources, which is why we deliberately approach potential coaches whom we consider suitable.

At what stage do customers approach you?

Some of the companies we see are looking to make a specific change and simply need the right partner or the right guidance, or don't yet have enough experience. Others simply have a gut feeling that they need to do something but don't know exactly where to start.

What happens next?

We always start with an initial interview. Our regional Key Account Managers visit the customers and analyze their needs, which above all means actively listening. They then put together a tailor-made coaching program based on these needs. This might involve taking part in our start-up program or developing new strategies, looking for suitable cooperation partners, or working on targeted organizational development and innovation financing. The coach we assign them works with them to help them overcome the challenge. The Key Account Manager then reassesses the situation. It is this interaction between the KAM and the coach that produces a support process that is geared specifically toward the company's needs.

Does it tend to be predominantly start-ups or established companies that contact you?

Approximately 40% of all companies we work with are start-ups. Their focus is on industrializing their company. It should be said that like teenagers, younger companies are motivated, curious, committed, and dynamic – qualities that make up for their lack of experience. As a general rule, a more holistic approach is required when it comes to looking after start-ups. Established companies, on the other hand, are more experienced and can be more specific about where the problem lies. Once they have been convinced about what they need to do to solve their problem, they know how to implement the advice. The coaching we provide for established companies is therefore more selective.

How would you summarize 2019? And what are your main tasks for 2020?

2019 was an excellent year for us, and 2020 looks set to be even better. In my opinion, the main challenges and opportunities for SMEs and start-ups will be dealing with change. The fact that we have so many entrepreneurs in Bern who are able to deal with change is certainly an advantage.



Swissmetal Industries AG

Swissmetal Industries AG can look back on a long and eventful history. Switzerland's first brass foundry (Bueche, Boillat & Cie) was founded in Reconvilier in the Bernese Jura in 1855. It mainly supplied the Swiss watch industry and grew with the sector. In 1895, it merged with another foundry in Dornach to become Schweizerische Metallwerke AG and later Swissmetal, an internationally operating industrial company specializing in developing and manufacturing copper products and alloys, headquartered in Dornach and Reconvilier.

A Chinese investor took over Swissmetal in 2013, renaming the company Baoshida Swissmetal AG. Following some major legal changes, Swissmetal reverted to Swiss ownership in 2019. Based in the Canton of Bern, the company now operates under the name Swissmetal Industries AG.

New buildings: Swatch and GF

This year has seen both Swatch and Georg Fischer (GF) inaugurate new buildings in Biel/Bienne which have changed the city's skyline – especially Swatch's new headquarters. The unconventional snakelike form of the imposing wooden structure, designed by award-winning Japanese architect Shigeru Ban, is particularly eye-catching. Despite being less spectacular from the outside, the new GF building is just as revolutionary on the inside. Previously spread across three sites, the GF Machining Solutions division is now housed under one roof.

The two new buildings have another thing in common: both embody a pioneering spirit and the will to create something new in the Canton of Bern. They are an important demonstration of confidence in the Canton of Bern in terms of its politics and environment and as a place to do business, and further strengthen Biel/Bienne as a hub for research and innovation.



SWISS
RIS
COMMUNITY



Swiss RIS Community

Regional Innovation Systems (RIS) are cross-cantonal umbrella organizations comprising all the organizations that contribute to a region's innovation processes. Founded in 2017, the Swiss RIS Community is a community of interests of leading personalities from the regional innovation promotion agencies. The Bernese innovation agency be-advanced is one of its members.

Among the tasks of the Swiss RIS Community are developing common standards, representing the interests of the RIS to the outside world and supporting the agencies of the federal government and the cantons in matters relating to the control and monitoring of Swiss innovation systems. In 2019, with the support of SECO, the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, the Swiss RIS Community drew up the foundations for the establishment and operation of regional key account management.

Idée Coopérative

Idée Coopérative is a cooperative for cooperatives. Founded in Bern in December 2019, it emerged from the IGG, a community of interests for cooperatives. It encourages greater cooperative entrepreneurship and, thus, more personal responsibility in business and society. It provides member companies and organizations with data and knowledge to help them succeed and is the center of excellence for cooperatives in Switzerland.

Idée Coopérative currently has 13 members, including founding members Fenaco, Die Schweizerische Mobilien, Raiffeisen, Mobility, GLB, Reka and the housing cooperative Allgemeine Baugenossenschaft Zürich. Idée Coopérative is chaired by Ursula Nold-Meier, and Henrik Schoop is responsible for operational management.



iazzu GmbH

iazzu has been developing technologies to better present art digitally in order to make it more easily accessible since 2017. Specifically, the company has developed an augmented reality app that guarantees and extends easy digital access to physical exhibitions and collections. With the free app, users can discover artworks and visualize them in their own environment to make sure the artworks are a good fit for their premises before going ahead with the purchase.

This successful start-up decided to relocate its headquarters from Zürich to Biel/Bienne in 2019, making them one of the first companies to move into the new Switzerland Innovation Park Biel/Bienne (SIPBB).



” We met the founders of iazzu at the general meeting of the Swiss-French Chamber of Commerce and Industry and convinced them that the Biel/Bienne tech ecosystem is the ideal place for its future development.

“

Jean-Philippe Devaux, project manager

MyLivezone AG

Successful innovations require new problem-solving approaches in new areas. In line with this maxim, Thomas Zürcher, the founder of MyLiveZone AG, has developed an IoT platform for product training and presentations. MyLiveZone offers plug and play solutions for marketing technological products. The USP: skilled professionals can give product and technology training on real equipment anywhere in the world via an internet browser. This also gives SMEs the opportunity to market their innovative products and solutions worldwide in a cost-efficient and CO₂-friendly manner.

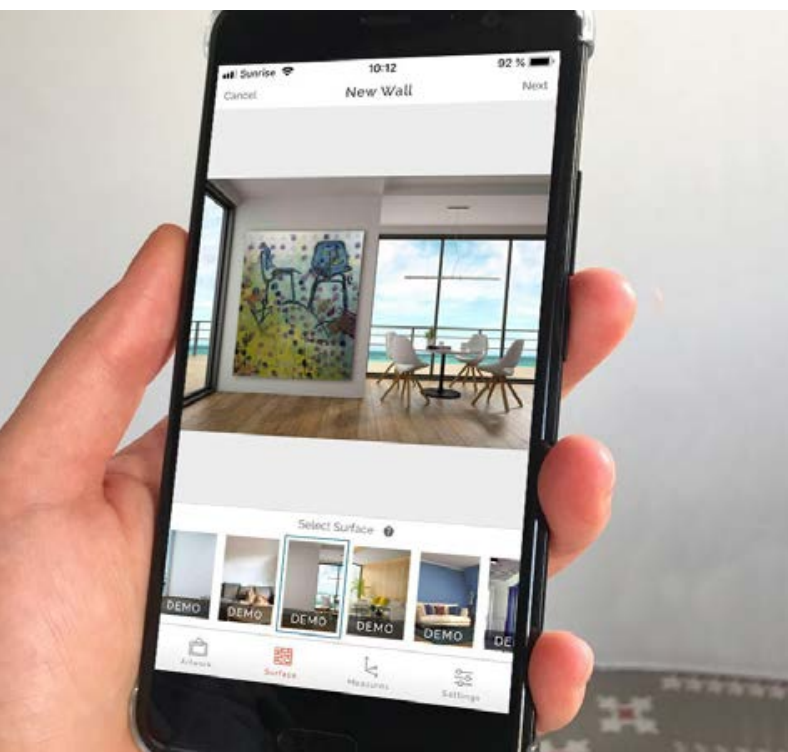
MyLiveZone is becoming the largest community for vendors, developers, university lecturers and students in the rapidly changing automation industry.



” Thomas Zürcher anticipated the trend towards digitalization years ago, developing solutions and expanding the basic digital rules early on into new and, at that time, unusual fields such as education and training. We congratulate him and wish him continued success!

“

Manfred Böhnner, project manager



SIP Biel/Bienne

In 2019, Switzerland Innovation Park Biel/Bienne laid the foundation stone for its new building. Present at the festivities were Federal Councilor Guy Parmelin, President of the Cantonal Government Christoph Ammann and the Mayor of Biel/Bienne Erich Fehr. This marks the construction of the first new building for the national Switzerland Innovation project in Biel/Bienne. Covering an area of 15,500 m², the Innovation Park will offer a unique mix of laboratories, research areas, workshops and meeting spaces from 2021.

Teams from the worlds of research, engineering and marketing are already working on numerous Swiss and European research projects. Although the preliminary development work is happening in temporary premises for the time being, the professionally fitted-out rooms in the new building will not be long in coming.

” *The SIPBB is one of the showcase projects of the Department of Economic Affairs, Energy and Environment. Following the groundbreaking ceremony, the project is now becoming a reality: a further hot-spot for research and innovation is being created in the heart of the Swiss watch city, only two minutes’ walk from Biel/Bienne train station.*



“

Sebastian Friess, project manager

SSF demo factory and association

Since it opened in May 2017, the Swiss Smart Factory (SSF) has earned wide acclaim from industry, research and civil society. In the first two years of its existence, it built up its test and demo infrastructure and brought numerous innovation projects to fruition in collaboration with partners.

The Association for the Promotion of the Swiss Smart Factory was established in order to collaboratively develop, refine and operate a state-of-the-art Industry 4.0 demonstration factory that sets new standards for Switzerland. It will bring together key players – large corporations, SMEs, start-ups and research partners. The membership program has met with keen interest and the SSF has already signed up over 50 members from industry and research.

” *The Swiss Smart Factory at SIPBB is a real success story. Companies and researchers are jointly developing Industry 4.0 solutions for the national and international market and driving forward the digitalization of Swiss industry. That is why we are supporting the Swiss Smart Factory.*



“

Virve Resta, project manager



Blue Medical AG

Blue Medical AG (formerly IL-MedTec AG) is a company providing packaging services for the medical devices sector. It develops packaging concepts tailored to its customers' needs. Based in Burgdorf, the company is optimistic about the future: as a result of the new EU Medical Devices Regulation, it is expecting rising demand for its services as sterile packaging in the medical industry becomes an increasingly critical and unavoidable issue.

Blue Medical is planning to expand its value-added chain this year by developing products for the healthcare industry which take account of the increasing cost pressures on hospitals and healthcare facilities while still providing high-quality solutions to increase patient safety.

” Blue Medical AG is providing the right answers at the right time. There are very few market players today who are able to offer solutions that are so strongly focused on the customer and tailored to their needs, while simultaneously anticipating future requirements. The further expansion of its range of services confirms the company's consistent customer focus and will help to further strengthen the MedTech hub in the Canton of Bern.



David Kalensky, project manager

neocredit.ch AG

As the name suggests, neocredit.ch is a new solution in the field of SME financing. The crowdlending platform has been online since the end of 2019 and is specifically designed for SMEs. neocredit.ch offers entrepreneurs rapid, easy and transparent financing for their ideas and projects. Thanks to the rigorous selection of investment projects, investors are offered attractive investment opportunities with a balanced risk profile. Investors can get involved from as little as CHF 100, thereby actively supporting regional development.

neocredit.ch was founded by the insurance company Vaudoise Assurances and credit.fr. The aim is to provide quick and easy financing for Swiss SMEs and to offer investors attractive local investment opportunities.

” The Paris representative of GGBa, the joint agency for promoting the six cantons of Western Switzerland abroad, put BEDA in touch with the people responsible for creating neocredit.ch in Bern.



Jean-Philippe Devaux, project manager



EXAPARTS GmbH

EXAPARTS GmbH specializes in plastic parts manufactured using unsupported processes and is one of the leading service providers in this field in the Swiss market. The technologies it uses, as well as the team's ever-expanding expertise, make it possible to generate highly complex, top quality components within the shortest possible time.

In addition to unprecedented design freedom, the components to be printed are not subject to any manufacturing rules or complex post-processing but are ready for use immediately after printing. Featuring good material properties and long-term stability, they are suitable for both prototypes and series production. EXAPARTS also offers various post-processing customization operations.



“With this project, which is based on new technology that has yet to be accepted by the market as a means to ensure efficient series production, the company is demonstrating both courage and foresight. BEDA hopes that initiatives such as these will be rewarded by a powerful market response.”

Manfred Böhnner, project manager

Design Preis Schweiz Edition 19/20

On November 1, 2019, the best design projects in Switzerland were honored in the market hall in Langenthal. Among the 13 award winners were two Bernese companies: SwissFlax GmbH and Damien Regamey Industrial Design.

From 44 nominations, the international jury awarded prizes to thirteen winners in twelve categories. The common feature of the award-winning designs is that not only do they create added value, but they also provide comprehensive and expedient solutions to problems. The award-winning works also demonstrate the fact that design is a key economic discipline and, as a driver of innovation, plays a key role in successfully managing the transformations that are happening in all areas of our lives.



“The Design Prize Switzerland awards forward-looking designs and is a platform for economically relevant design projects from Switzerland. By supporting the awards, we want to highlight the added value of design as part of the innovation process and promote bold ideas.”

Virve Resta, project manager



simatec AG

simatec AG, an independent, family-owned company, researches, develops, and produces everything to do with fitting, removing and maintaining roller bearings at its headquarters in Wangen an der Aare.

Brand new technologies are making it possible to simplify complex operations and reduce maintenance expenditure on machines around the globe, resulting in lower costs and high operational reliability. simatec is currently developing the scientific and technical foundations for model-based machine process control, and is planning to equip lubricant dispensers with an innovative sensor and communication system, thus providing a constant flow of information for use in monitoring and servicing the machines.



” The BEDA is delighted to be supporting this project, which will open up a new digital business model (Industry 4.0) for simatec AG. This is a major step forward for the company.

“

Manfred Böhnner, project manager

RebusLabs

Rebus Labs, is an IoT start-up, providing turn key solutions for cold chain, supply chain visibility and regulatory compliance automation for healthcare, food and telecommunications industries, It designs smart devices that connect and combine any type and quantity of sensors with real time connectivity that makes real assets like fridges, coolers or even facilities smart. Smart assets produce information on temperature, usage, electricity usage, maintenance and stock levels that allows customers to have improved quality of service, higher yields, lower losses, capacity release, and workflow automation through predictive analytics and improved business intelligence. Current applications are: cold chain controls in Biopharma to ensure medicinal integrity, track & trace & auto-fulfillment of branded in-store CPG coolers, management of cellular network uptime through base-station backup battery and environmental supervision.



” This innovative project enriches the Bernese start-up scene and is a stellar example of the successful interaction of the various funding programs in the Canton of Bern. We are proud to see how well this company is developing in our canton.

“

Peter Kistler, project manager



EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Genf

Bringing together three industries under one roof, EPHJ-EPMT-SMT Geneva is an international trade fair which takes place annually at the Palexpo exhibition center.

EPHJ brings together the products of the watchmaking and jewelry sectors as well as the trades and companies working upstream and downstream of them. EPMT is aimed at companies in all fields in which microtechnology and nanotechnology are used. SMT brings together experts from the medical device industry and all the trades involved in the medical equipment production chain.

The 800 exhibitors also include more than a hundred Bernese companies. The BEDA sent a delegation to the fair for the first time in 2019, in order to visit all the Bern-based exhibitors and establish their needs.

” *Public relations is an important part of our project managers’ work. We want to be an approachable organization. To achieve this, we talk to companies and directly seek out contacts and exchanges. This trade fair provides a unique opportunity to get a feel for companies’ needs and to thank them for their work.*



“

Sebastian Friess, project manager

Polydec SA

Polydec SA is a global market leader in micro-turned parts. Due to current and upcoming challenges, the company is in the process of adapting its previous strategy, with plans to diversify its product range and adapt its marketing strategy. Due to technological changes in the automotive industry, its previous main sales market and niche product are declining. The company is therefore seeking to establish itself and make progress in other markets, namely electronics, watchmaking, and, especially, medical technology (it gained ISO 13485 certification this year).

The expertise the company has already developed and the machinery which it is continuously renewing are standing this micro-components specialist in good stead. Polydec believes it is able to offer the ideal solutions for every industrial sector that requires precision, quality and responsiveness.

” *Boasting exceptional expertise, the company is throwing itself into a major, innovative, and extremely ambitious diversification project. BEDA welcomes this visionary forward thinking which will guarantee its long-term development.*



“

Etienne Maillefer, project manager



e-peas

The number of networked IoT devices is growing all the time. Consequently, the demand for solutions that extend the battery life of these devices is also on the rise. This is exactly where the Belgian company e-peas comes in. Its products boost the energy harvested and drastically reduce the amount of energy used by the power consuming blocks, allowing manufacturers to significantly extend the life of the batteries used. E-peas' product portfolio comprises photovoltaic, thermoelectric, vibration and RF harvester interface PMICs, microcontrollers, and sensor solutions.

As part of its international expansion, e-peas opened a branch in La Neuveville in the Canton of Bern in September 2019. The bilingual La Neuveville is a stronghold of the Swiss microelectronics industry and the ideal place for this innovative company.



” Thanks to our location suggestions in Biel/Bienne and La Neuveville and our role as intermediary, we managed to convince the company that the Canton of Bern, and La Neuveville in particular, would be the ideal place for e-peas.

“

Jean-Philippe Devaux, project manager

FAIRTIQ AG

Since 2016, buying a ticket for public transport has been made easier than ever thanks to the FAIRTIQ app. Customers can activate this app on boarding a vehicle by swiping right and deactivate it again by swiping left. The app uses the data collected to calculate the route and automatically charges the best available price.

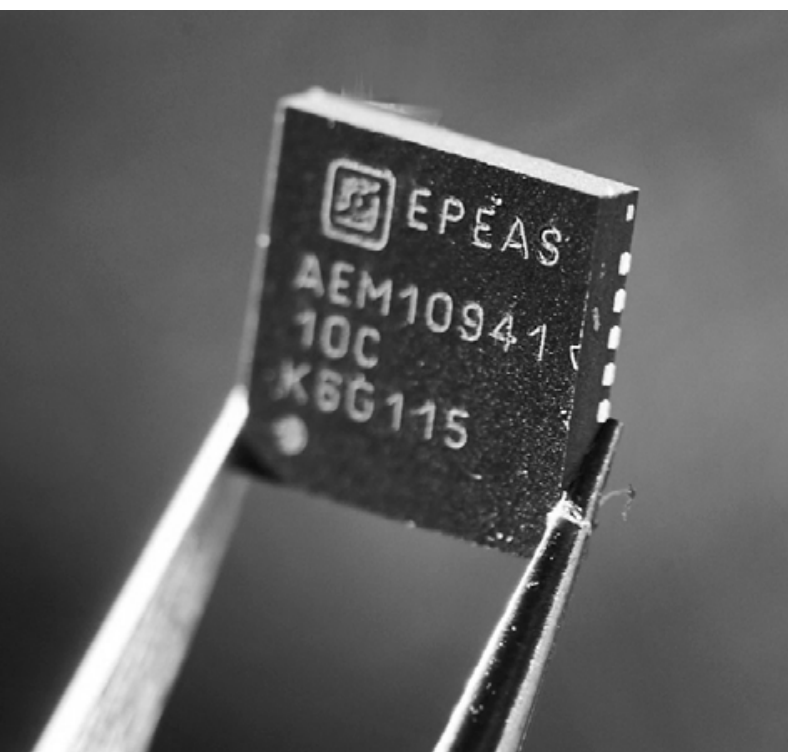
FAIRTIQ is one of the pioneers of automatic ticketing and is an international market leader in this field. The technology has recently been integrated into the Swiss Railways' Mobile app. The focus is on constantly developing the app to include functions such as employee mobility solutions, as well as on international expansion. Currently, the FAIRTIQ app can already be used in several cities and regions outside Switzerland (in Germany and Austria).



” The BEDA is helping FAIRTIQ AG to break into the German market. As an innovative company, FAIRTIQ is a perfect fit for the Canton of Bern.

“

Stefan Jans, project manager



Swiss m4m Center

In 2019, a technology transfer center with pilot production facilities was established in Bettlach in the Canton of Solothurn. These can be used by both research and industry in order to successfully transfer new technologies to the industrial setting. The aim of the center is to promote Switzerland as a location for innovation. Further centers are envisaged and are at the planning stage.

The main focus of the Swiss m4m Center is certified additive manufacturing. This makes it particularly attractive to the medical technology sector, which is seeing strong demand for individual solutions such as implants. Located at the heart of the Swiss medical technology industry, the center not only involves the Cantons of Bern and Solothurn but also numerous partners from research, hospitals and the private sector.



” *The launch of the Swiss m4m Center is a cross-cantonal success story that will be of particular benefit to the MedTech companies in the southern Jura, Bern, Biel/Bienne and Solothurn metropolitan area. A partnership with the SIPBB is being planned.*

“

Sebastian Friess, project manager

Balluff AG

The German company Balluff is a leading provider of industrial automation, offering a comprehensive portfolio of high-quality sensors and system- and customer-specific solutions. Balluff has offices all over the world, including in Bellmund near Biel/Bienne.

Together with a regional partner, Balluff has now launched an innovation project in Bellmund. The aim is to extend or double the spatial range of its sensors and to significantly improve their accuracy compared with existing conventional sensors. In doing so, Balluff wants to secure its position as a world leader in sensor technology.



” *The Canton of Bern is proud that the global technology group is looking to create, test and fully develop its new innovative product readiness in Bellmund near Biel/Bienne. The environment in the Canton of Bern, where technological innovation is actively promoted, and in particular the SIPBB Swiss Smart Factory digitalization platform, are key factors in Balluff's successful innovations.*

“

Manfred Böhnner, project manager



Collweb GmbH

COLLWEB is a web-based platform for managing collections and trading in art, vehicles, watches and real estate.

Objects are recorded and managed on this platform free of charge. In addition to integrating existing collections from other applications, COLLWEB provides an integrated interface to make collections fully or partially visible in other systems such as websites, external archives, or third-party software. People wishing to sell, lend or hire out objects can upgrade for a fixed price without having to pay commission.

State-of-the-art data encryption options and a special login procedure guarantee security.

” This project covers some highly topical and relevant issues. The platform is technically highly sophisticated and demonstrates that this start-up has exceptional IT expertise. We were also very impressed by its high customer focus. The approach of integrating all market players also speaks volumes for the start-up.



“

David Kalensky, project manager

SMTP Technology & Co Ltd

Founded in 2011, SMTP Technology & Co., Ltd. is a Chinese high-tech company specializing in the development of ultrasound technology for medical devices. With the products in its XD series, which cut through solid tissue only, leaving soft tissue intact, the company has set new standards in the world of ultrasound surgical instruments.

In China, SMTP already supplies more than 150 leading hospitals. It has also had a presence in the European market since 2018. In order to effectively service and expand its European customer base, the company recently founded SMTP Technology Switzerland AG in Bern. Some of the decisive factors were the immediate proximity of the University hospital Inselspital and the support it receives in Bern as a foreign company.

” During various evaluation visits, the BEDA introduced potential partners from academia and commerce to the investors and established contacts for them.



“

Isabelle Berthold, project manager



SMTP
Ultrasonic Osteotome Specialist



GreenWins Sàrl

Awareness of sustainability has permeated right through society, but there is still plenty of scope to further optimize our behavior and actions in this field. GreenWins GmbH wants to help. For this internationally active company, the circular economy is the only way to shape a sustainable society. Its solution is smart recycling totems which collect a range of recyclable materials such as cans, plastic bottles, batteries, and mobile phones.

Integrated digital technologies and automation tools make the totems smart and improve user experience by offering rewards for disposing of items responsibly. One example is the smart reverse vending machine for reusable cups which refunds deposits using a cashless system. GreenWins wants to engender a positive dynamic and make recycling fun and rewarding.



” In line with current concerns, there is no doubt that this start-up will be able to encourage consumers to change their habits for the benefit of the environment. Being aware of green technologies, BEDA is delighted about the success that will come GreenWins’ way.

“

Etienne Maillefer, project manager

The Lab Hotel

The Thun College of Hotel Management is making itself fit for the future. A hotel and serviced apartments that are currently being created in its existing buildings are due for completion this year. The Lab Hotel will have 50 hotel rooms and 13 serviced apartments which are mainly designed for longer stays. A modern restaurant, a coffee bar, and co-working spaces geared towards working and training will complete the picture.

The latest technologies, materials, and concepts will be systematically tested in The Lab Hotel and in the gastronomy laboratory. The students will help to run the hotel. Ideas on sustainability, sleeping, digitalization, community, and new service quality will be tested in the hotel in partnership with industry partners from the hotel and catering sectors.



” The subject of digitalization in the hotel business is multifaceted and wide-ranging. We are also very keen to promote digital transformation in our sector in the context of the New Regional Policy. For us, it is particularly promising when this starts at the training stage, as is the case at the College of Hotel Management.

“

Daniel Wüthrich, project manager



Emmentaler Schaukäserei

The Emmentaler Show Dairy officially launched its new «King's Way» tour, in the presence of Federal Councilor Johann Schneider-Ammann. Visitors are guided through ten rooms and follow the route of Emmentaler AOP cheese from grass to milk right up to production. The historical background of the global brand Emmentaler AOP is also showcased. In the final room – the tasting room – the interactive educational trail merges with real cheese production, providing insights into the cheese cellar and cheesemaking.

Costing approximately CHF 2.5 million, this project has created a modern, educational, and at the same time highly entertaining tour for young and old alike, which has won accolades from both regional tourist organizations and the cheese industry.

” Approximately 300,000 visitors a year will now have the opportunity to learn about the origins and production of Emmental cheese, both digitally and conventionally. The new experience tour is an important part of the new look of the Emmental Show Dairy following its successful restructuring. We are delighted that the long-term future of the show dairy has been secured.



“

Martin Tritten, project manager

Upskilling 4.0

The Upskilling 4.0 project, which was launched by the Biel Seeland Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with Swissmechanic Training AG, was presented at an input event in 2019.

The aim of this project is to provide further training for people who have a basic qualification in the MEM (mechanical, electrical and metal) industry and whose skills are no longer fully in line with the current requirements of the industry.

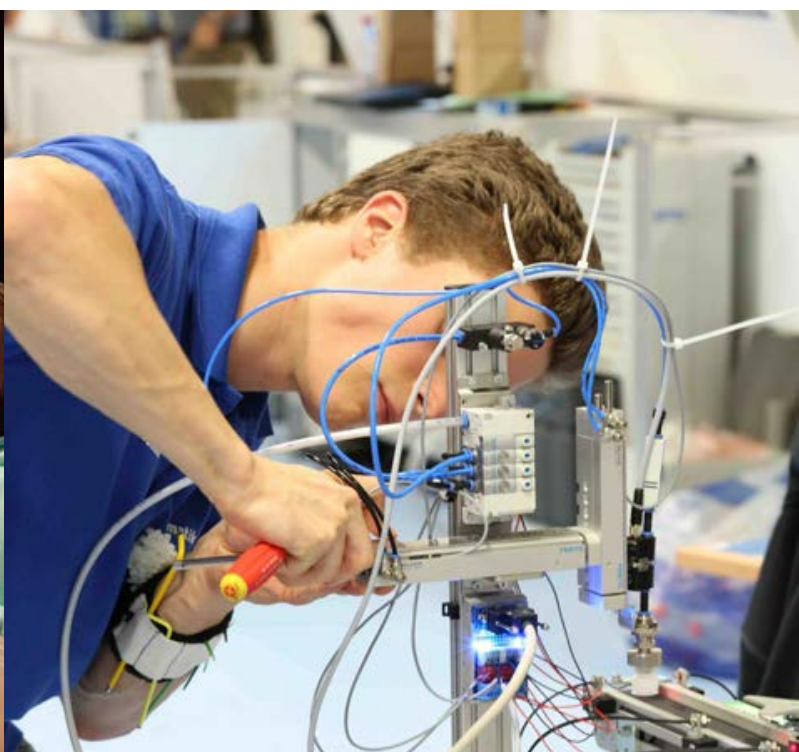
The aim of the new basic and follow-on training opportunities in mechanics is to counteract the shortage of skilled workers, to increase competitiveness, and to safeguard jobs.

” What managers fear most as a consequence of the shortage of skilled workers, according to studies, is the loss of their companies' innovation strength. We believe the solution is firstly to retrain and upskill, and secondly to recruit new personnel. This is the first project to tackle this problem in the Biel/Bienne region, which is particularly affected by this issue.



“

Daniel Wüthrich, project manager



Fête des Vignerons

This festival in Vevey, the only one of its kind in the world, pays homage to vinicultural traditions, celebrating them with spectacular shows and awards for winegrowers and vineyard hands. First organized by the Confrérie des Vignerons in 1797, this festival still takes place once per generation, i.e. every 20 to 25 years. In 2019, the festival attracted more than one million visitors.

In 2019, the Swiss cantons organized official cantonal guest days for the first time. The Canton of Bern took the opportunity to present its diverse cultural and gastronomic offerings under the title «*L'ours en fête*» [Bear at the Festival]. Visitors got to taste the wines of the best Bernese winegrowers and sample culinary specialties such as *Graswürmleni*, a pastry fried in oil and reminiscent of a caterpillar, against a backdrop of enchanting musical performances.



” Our objective was to showcase winegrowing and related products from the Canton of Bern in Vevey. We were particularly keen to promote personalities and stories from our canton. The guest cantonal day was a resounding success.

“

Alexandra Fries, project manager

Reportagenfestival

For the first time in the German-speaking world, an international festival making the work of media professionals accessible to the public took place in Bern in 2019. Reporters from all over the world provided insights into the «stories behind the story» at 52 free events, ranging from workshops to panel discussions.

The centerpiece of the festival was the presentation of the True Story Award, the first global award for reporters.

The inaugural festival in 2019 attracted a lot of media attention and received a great deal of positive feedback from the public.



” Standing out from the crowd with excellent events is a winning formula for a high-quality tourism sector in the federal capital.

“

Martin Tritten, project manager



Funded projects based on the Economic Development Act (WFG)

Number of projects, promised contributions, planned jobs and investments

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of funded projects	58	39	49	37	47	47	48	44	50	60
Promised contributions in million CHF	3.66	2.40	3.48	2.24	3.16	2.45	2.30	1.81	2.77	4.18
Planned jobs ¹	1340	1110	740	350	1500	1030	610	610	670	1130
Planned investments in million CHF ¹	622	208	392	88	1122	390	85	256	191	226

¹ According to information provided by the companies.

Funded projects by type

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Expansion projects by Bernese companies	39	24	28	23	30	19	27	19	23	32
Start-ups	6	2	5	6	6	13	11	10	15	13
Relocations	13	13	16	8	11	15	10	15	12	15
Including Innosuisse projects ²	12	8	10	14	4	7	10	6	5	10
Evaluation visits for relocation purposes ³	61	69	69	68	61	59	61	50	54	52

² Innosuisse is the Swiss innovation promotion agency. The Canton supports companies that are industrial partners of an Innosuisse project.

³ The Economic Development Agency offers evaluation visits for companies interested in relocating to the Canton of Bern in order to help them find a suitable location.

Funded projects by activity/sector

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Design/Luxury goods	5	5	3	1	0	0	1	1	3	1
Services (incl. finance/administration)	1	3	2	0	4	2	2	2	2	1
Energy and environment technology	3	2	5	7	2	7	4	3	4	3
IT and communication technology	8	6	17	3	6	7	10	5	10	14
Medical technology	12	6	5	13	9	8	10	9	7	8
Precision industry	22	13	14	12	21	18	16	23	19	22
Others	7	4	3	1	5	5	5	1	5	11

Regional distribution of projects⁴

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Bern Mittelland	15	16	21	9	14	10	15	8	13	16
Bernese Jura	5	6	8	5	12	9	8	5	9	12
Bernese Oberland	8	3	4	3	3	2	2	8	7	4
Biel-Seeland	18	7	9	12	12	21	16	16	12	17
Emmental-Oberaargau	12	7	7	8	6	5	7	7	9	11

⁴ The Economic Development Agency provides its services throughout the Canton. It is not possible to control regional distribution.

Advisory services⁵ based on the WFG and the NRP

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Advisory services for start-ups	333	353	307	330	208	324	336	200	151	188
Advisory services for SMEs	158	141	113	108	135	106	94	31	85	106

⁵ Provided by be-advanced AG (before 2017 innoBE and BaseCamp4Hightech) and CEP Coaching Berner Jura.

Projects funded under the New Regional Policy (NRP)⁶

Number of projects, promised contributions, planned jobs and investments

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of funded projects	43	28	33	34	28	40	29	47	31	38
Promised contributions and loans in million CHF ⁷	6	3	3	6	3	2	4	15	3	13
Jobs ⁸	290	120	300	390	560	210	140	400	350	415
Planned investments in million CHF ⁸	48	47	35	81	44	62	52	241	26	79

⁶As From 2008 (Investment Aid Act).

⁷These contributions also include the regional management.

⁸According to the project sponsor's statements.

Regional distribution of the projects⁹

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Bern Mittelland	10	2	12	4	5	8
Bernese Jura	2	4	2	8	2	5
Bernese Oberland	2	19	9	24	16	17
Biel-Seeland	7	2	3	6	4	3
Emmental-Oberaargau	7	7	3	5	4	5

⁹The Economic Development Agency provides its services throughout the Canton. It is not possible to control regional distribution. Due to a change of system in the controlling software at the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO, it is only possible to show the data as of 2014.

Projects funded under the Tourism Development Act (TEG)

Number of projects and promised contributions

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of funded projects	7	21	14	13	13	15	17	21	19	17
Promised contributions in million CHF ¹⁰	5.0	5.3	5.6	9.7	10.1	9.4	5.5	4.3	1.2	4.4

¹⁰Including annual contributions for market development.

Regional distribution of projects¹¹

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Bern Mittelland	0	7	4	7	7	7
Bernese Jura	0	0	2	1	1	0
Bernese Oberland	11	5	6	8	6	5
Biel-Seeland	2	2	4	5	5	3
Emmental-Oberaargau	0	1	1	0	0	2

¹¹The Economic Development Agency provides its services throughout the Canton. It is not possible to control regional distribution. Due to a change of system in the controlling software at the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO, it is only possible to show the data as of 2014.

Projects funded under the Innovation Promotion Act (IFG)

Number of projects¹²

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of new projects funded	2	1	1	1

¹²Effective as of 2016.



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