

**BASEL**  
AREA+

**Annual report**  
**2020**

**It is our mission to establish  
the Basel Area as the  
Swiss business and innovation  
hub of the future.**

# “The coronavirus has hastened the advance of digitization – for us as well”

## 2020 was shaped by the coronavirus pandemic. How has this impacted the Basel Area?

Christof Klöpper: The crisis has hit business throughout Switzerland very hard. This goes not only for the hospitality sector and tourism, but also for other sectors, such as the export-dependent watch industry. Overall, the Basel Area got through the year well compared with other regions in Switzerland.

Domenico Scala: The Basel Area is shaped by an advantageous economic structure. With Novartis and Roche we have two global corporations that pay out several hundred million each month in salaries. Compared with other economic regions, we're still in good shape. The life sciences, which form a strong cluster here, are one of the winners.

## With the coronavirus, working from home has become normal. What has the impact of this been on the economic cluster of the Basel Area?

Klöpper: Our strong life sciences cluster will also remain important in the future. There are functions that cannot be replaced with video conferences. But it's true: every cluster is under increased competitive pressure when a large proportion of the workforce can decide for themselves where their desk should be.

Scala: The smooth transition to working from home contributed to the resilience of the economic region in the crisis. The idea that soon every company will switch entirely to home working seems too dramatic to my mind. I'm convinced that a strong cluster like the Basel Area will also continue to be important.



Christof Klöpper, CEO Basel Area Business & Innovation

## How has the Basel Area Business & Innovation organization coped with the challenges of Covid-19?

Klöpper: What was important for us was to maintain our services and protect the team. We succeeded in both. The coronavirus has hastened the advance of digitization – for us as well. We quickly digitized a great many processes and services. Coaching sessions now take place via video conference, and events are held online. Many

meetings are shorter and more efficient, distances are eliminated. But at the same time, the human component suffers – and with it an important element of communication.

Scala: Despite the coronavirus we had an outstanding year: almost as many companies moved to the Basel Area as in the previous year, and the number of startups in the region is also high. We organized the biggest event in the history of our organization with 850 participants. Basel Area Business & Innovation functioned well, and large projects could be implemented as planned. The board is very satisfied with both the team and management.



Domenico Scala, Chairman of the board Basel Area Business & Innovation

## Which projects defined the year 2020?

Klöpper: The construction work for the innovation campus of Herzog & de Meuron in Allschwil started. We were the first external organization to open an office at the Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area on the Novartis Campus. And we also positioned ourselves more clearly and relaunched our brand identity. Another crucial development was that Basel-Landschaft and Basel-Stadt secured the further financing of BaseLaunch.

## What do you expect in 2021?

Scala: The economic starting position of the region is better than is sometimes reported. A lot of people have work and an income. The tax reforms in Baselland, Basel-Stadt and Jura will also do their part in helping to make sure we remain an attractive business location: our three funding cantons are introducing a patent box or have already done this and are lowering the profit tax rate for companies.

Klöpper: We've noticed that foreign companies are tending to take a wait-and-see approach at present. They want to experience it personally before they expand here. If fewer companies come to the Basel Area, investments will also decline. 2020 was a record year for startups, which did not surprise me. A crisis combined at the same time with an attractive, stable environment leads to more startups. I expect the same effect in 2021.

→ Read the full interview

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[www.baselarea.swiss/JB2020](http://www.baselarea.swiss/JB2020)  
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## What we achieved

We get companies excited about the Basel Area, support startups in founding their business and further reinforce what is already an outstanding network – with success.

**27**   
**Companies settled here**

of which

**19**



**were in the life sciences sector**



### Countries of origin

<b>5</b>	<b>China</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Japan</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Switzerland</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Czech Republic</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Hungary</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Netherlands</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Poland</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>India</b>		

**418**



**Planned jobs within the next 3 to 5 years**

Company estimates



**669** 

**Consultations for clients seeking to settle here, startups and founders**

**82** 

**Startups supported**

**164** 

**Planned jobs within the next 3 to 5 years**

*Company estimates*

**70** 

**Events,  
online and offline**

**5619** 

**Participants**

**26 567** 

**Number of people in the network**

## Stable number of companies settling here and more startups

In 2020, Basel Area Business & Innovation completely digitized the process of relocation and settling in. We replaced fairs, roadshows and partnering events with online conferences and webinars. Instead of presenting the region and important contact partners to visitors in person, we arranged online meetings.

In this way, we succeeded in building trust in our global customer relations. The top-flight companies to which we successfully sold the merits of the Basel Area will bring know-how, jobs and tax revenues to the region. The biggest response to our sales pitch was in the life sciences: newcomers to the Basel Area, for example, are Yokogawa from Japan and the Chinese company Hengrui. Moderna expanded from its headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and opened its first branch outside North America in Basel. This life sciences company is using the new site to drive the production of its coronavirus vaccine.

The interest shown in Asia for the Basel location is continuously growing: in 2018 four companies from this continent expanded into the Basel Area; in 2020 Basel Area Business & Innovation helped nine Asian firms to settle in the region. In total, the number of companies settling here, at 27, remained stable at a high level (in 2019 the figure was 30) despite the coronavirus.

### New opportunities, new partnerships

COVID-19 has hastened developments in all areas: an international audience is now the norm – this is a good prerequisite for promoting innovation. We quickly made adept use of technological resources to address the changes in our market brought about by the coronavirus, adapted our processes and took advantage of the new opportunities to support 82 startups – 20 more than in the previous year.

We promoted innovation in 2020 with gratifying success: the three initiatives *DayOne*, *BaseLaunch* and *i4Challenge* grew both quantitatively and qualitatively. *DayOne* fosters innovation in the healthcare sector and organized the first *Health Hack* in Basel with 120 participants. 850 attended the digital *DayOne Conference*. From more than 100 teams that competed in the third round of the *DayOne Accelerator*, six were chosen. They benefited from coaching and workshops.

Basel Area Business & Innovation also started a project with the Hôpital du Jura in Delémont, the University Hospital Basel and the Haute-Ecole Arc. Together we aim to develop an application to support cancer patients in their therapy. Further projects will follow in the course of this four-year partnership.

In the case of *BaseLaunch*, the focus is on innovations in the therapeutic area. Thanks to strong partnerships with companies and the continuous support of our funding cantons, we have managed to double the financial support for companies in our portfolio. The figures speak for themselves: since 2018, *BaseLaunch* alumni

Tsuneji Sawai  
Managing Director, Yokogawa



“Yokogawa Innovation Switzerland is located at the European center of the biotechnology and life sciences industry. It is the ideal location from which to promote Yokogawa’s bioeconomy business through research and development and partnerships.”

The Japanese conglomerate Yokogawa has established an innovation center at the Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area in Allschwil. Here they want to focus on innovation in the field of biotechnology.

have secured more than CHF 200 million in financing rounds.

The *i4Challenge* was held for the third time. In addition to the category of SMEs and startups, we created a new category called “New Ideas”. Twelve firms and projects won the *i4Challenge*.

The coronavirus crisis posed major challenges especially for manufacturing companies. We responded to this with the innovative strategic toolbox. This consulting tool is designed to help companies develop innovative solutions in spite of the economic crisis.

Basel Area Business & Innovation organized 70 events, 49 of them together with partners – mostly online. These events attracted 5619 participants. By comparison, 106 events were held in 2019 with

5804 participants. This showed that participants quickly embraced the shift from events to online formats and that we reached more people with fewer events. We are convinced that new hybrid event formats will also be important in the future.

### Focus on the region

Basel Area Business & Innovation also rolled out its new positioning in 2020. This includes a new brand identity, clearer positioning of the organization and the region as well as new websites to promote the economic region and innovation and also for our initiatives and accelerators. To market the location successfully, it is essential to increase the visibility of the economic region of Basel.

**Larisa Aragon**  
Patient-Champion, WhachaCallitMed



**“The DayOne Accelerator Bootcamp has provided us with the right tools and connections to move forward. What I value most is the open and constructive discussion with other entrepreneurs and the focus on putting patients front and center in all we do every day.”**

Larisa Aragon participated as a patient champion with the WhachaCallitMed team as one of the winning projects of the *DayOne Health Hack 2020*. They competed against more than 100 startups to be accepted in the *DayOne Accelerator*.

**Michael van der Laan**  
MD, Head of Clinical Development, Hengrui



**“The Basel Area was the logical choice for Hengrui Medicine to open our European headquarters, with the existing biomedical research ecosystem and experienced talent available.”**

Hengrui is a Chinese life sciences company. They set up a Swiss subsidiary to advance their innovative drugs, including cancer treatments. Hengrui has more than 25,000 employees worldwide and ranks as one of the top 30 life sciences companies of the world.

Accordingly, we created a new logo for the organization with the slogan “Basel Area – More to discover”, which places the region center stage. This logo may and should be used also by our funding cantons as well as other affiliated organizations, firms and partners.

In 2021, Basel Area Business & Innovation will continue to work on digitizing processes to enable excellent customer experiences and the efficient use of resources. This also includes cooperation with the cantons. We want to combine our forces even better so that shared tasks are implemented more efficiently. In particular, the support for startups needs to be coordinated even more closely with the supporting cantons.



Gwenael Hannema  
F&E InnoSpina



“We are happy to be part of the Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area, site Jura. Knowing other startup ecosystems, I am impressed with the value we receive here. The offerings from the cantons and from Basel Area Business & Innovation are super interesting.”

The company researches and develops innovative solutions to minimize the neurological risk of spinal surgery.

For the Basel Area, startups are an indispensable driver of innovation. To offer them the best support, we need to raise awareness of the existing offerings – both our own and those of our partners – and publicize inspiring role models in the startup scene. We plan to achieve this objective with the newly launched *Basel Area Business & Innovation Podcast*.

### Attractive all-round package

Since 2019, Basel Area Business & Innovation has been responsible for the operation of the Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area. This innovation park, with its sites in Allschwil, Basel, Novartis Campus and Jura, is seen as an attractive offering both by companies looking to settle in the region and by founders. In particular, companies from the healthtech sector with considerable growth potential are drawn to innovation parks in which they find a supportive community and useful support opportunities.

→ Read the full text

[www.baselarea.swiss/JB2020](http://www.baselarea.swiss/JB2020)

## These events shaped the Basel Area

Top-flight companies settling here, successful financing rounds and other fantastic developments shaped events in the Basel Area in 2020. The following are some of the highlights.

### January

- Novartis opens its campus. The first partner is Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area.



### February

- Roche begins the construction of a new research center in Basel, which is scheduled to open in 2023.
- Novartis and Roche are ranked among the world's most innovative companies in the Derwent Top 100 Global Innovators 2020 report.

### March

- In light of the coronavirus pandemic, the cantons of Baselland, Basel-Stadt and Jura approve urgent measures for the economy, supplementing the federal government's aid package.
- The Basel-based Botnar Research Centre for Child Health places CHF 15 million at the disposal of its partners for research on Covid-19.

### April

- Basel is the most popular location for headquarters in Switzerland, as reported by fDi Intelligence, a specialist division of the Financial Times.



- Basel Area Business & Innovation launches its new look complete with a regionally focused logo: “Basel Area – More to Discover”.

## May

- The Jura-based plant engineer Humard presents a robot that cleans and disinfects rooms with UV light.
- The Allschwil-based pharmaceutical company Idorsia receives USD 45 million from Neurocine Biosciences for a licence option on a medicine for epilepsy.

## June

- The Muttensz-based biotech firm Tolremo Therapeutics receives CHF 4.7 million in a Series A financing round. The company develops cancer therapies that are able to prevent drug resistance.
- The canton of Basel-Stadt is Switzerland's export champion.

## July

- The Japanese company Yokogawa establishes a subsidiary at the Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area in Allschwil.
- Interpharma reports that two-thirds of Switzerland's value added in the pharmaceutical sector is generated in the Basel Area. This makes the location Switzerland's leading pharma region and the most productive life sciences location in the world.

## August

- Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area opens its new site on the Novartis campus.
- Moderna opens a site in Basel in order to drive the production of its vaccine against the coronavirus outside the US.



## September

- The biotech company Monte Rosa Therapeutics in Basel receives USD 96 million in a Series B financing round.
- Chinese life sciences company Hengrui Medicine establishes a subsidiary in Basel.

## October

- The Allschwil company Polyphor receives up to USD 18 million from the global consortium Carb-X for the development of antibiotics.
- Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area Jura site celebrates its first anniversary.



- The companies supported by *BaseLaunch* have generated more than CHF 200 million in financing rounds since 2018.

## November

- Synendos Therapeutics, a *BaseLaunch* alumnus, receives CHF 20 million in a Series A financing round.
- More than 850 people take part in the 5<sup>th</sup> *DayOne Conference* online.

## December

- Basel Area Business & Innovation starts a technology project with the Hôpital du Jura.
- Twelve companies and projects win the third *i4Challenge*.



- Six teams are selected for the *DayOne Accelerator*.
- We launch the *Basel Area Business & Innovation Podcast*.

## Our organization



Saskia Cecchi



Karin Crisanto



Christof Klöpper



Frank Kumli



Julia Meyer



Franz Waibel

As at end of December 2020, the number of staff employed by Basel Area Business & Innovation and Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area stood at 36. Further external partners are brought in to work on specific assignments.

Basel Area Business & Innovation runs Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area, which has sites in Allschwil, on the Novartis Campus and in Basel and also a Jura site in Courroux.

Management team:

**Christof Klöpper**, CEO

**Saskia Cecchi**, Head of Shared Services

**Karin Crisanto**, Head of Innovation Space and Infrastructure

**Frank Kumli**, Head of Innovation and Entrepreneurship

**Julia Meyer**, Head of Marketing and Communications

**Franz Waibel**, Head of International Markets and Business Affairs

# We thank our sponsors and partners

Our work would not be possible without the support of our funding organizations, sponsors and partners. We thank all our supporters for the good cooperation in this challenging year.

## Funding organizations

Canton of Basel-Landschaft  
Canton of Basel-Stadt  
Canton of Jura  
The New Regional Policy of the Federal Government (NRP)  
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)

## Partners

Business Parc Reinach  
Business Park Laufental & Thierstein  
Campus Industrie 4.0  
Chambre de commerce et d'industrie du Jura (CCIJ)  
CSEM Centre Suisse d'Electronique et de Microtechnique SA  
Deutsch-französisch-schweizerische Oberrheinkonferenz  
digitalswitzerland  
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