

# Swiss Entrepreneurship Branding

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## WHAT IS GEN SWITZERLAND AND WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

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The Global Entrepreneurship Network (GEN) is a year-round platform of programs and initiatives aimed at creating one global entrepreneurial ecosystem. GEN helps people in 173 countries unleash their ideas and turn them into promising new ventures—creating jobs, accelerating innovation and strengthening economic stability around the world. By applying new knowledge and innovations, GEN Switzerland supports the aim of GEN Global to help advance human welfare by propelling entrepreneurs in order to improve the country's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

GEN Switzerland held a highly successful kick-off session in January of 2018 with over 85 people to brainstorm where we could have the most impact in our country. We received clear direction in that session to look at the overall branding of Switzerland in the global entrepreneurship space. In other words, define the compelling and relevant space Switzerland should occupy when people, inside or outside of the country, think about our country with regard to entrepreneurship.

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## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

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Having a strong, authentic and differentiated Swiss entrepreneurial brand will enable all of us working in this space to then consistently communicate what we stand for in the Swiss start-up ecosystem. This provides the following benefits:

- Helps Switzerland to attract investors, start-ups and top talent to our country
- Inspires Swiss-based people to consider entering the start-up world
- Supports the long-term economic success of Switzerland
- Supports and builds the overall Swiss country brand

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## BRANDING PROJECT - THREE PHASES

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### *Phase 1:*

#### In-depth SWOT analysis of our current situation

- Gather a diverse group of people together with a broad range of knowledge and experience in entrepreneurial, corporate, academic and government roles
- Have a brainstorming session to define a SWOT for Switzerland in the global start-up world

### *Phase 2:*

#### Define the Values and Brand Attributes for the Swiss entrepreneurial ecosystem

- Define our most compelling strengths and corresponding Unique Selling Points (USPs)
- Define the Values for Switzerland (fundamental to the country) and Brand Attributes (emotional and functional) which authentically represent and differentiate us

### *Phase 3:*

#### Define the Brand Image and a "one sentence summary" to finish the Brand House

- Further define the brand by translating it into concrete and tangible impressions we want to make in people's minds, both in the country and externally
- Summarise our brand direction in one sentence

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## STRENGTHS

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- World-class academic institutions and research centers
- Investor Pool: high level of wealthy individuals and families. In principle, should be lots of investment money available
- Highly skilled & diverse labor (e.g. multilingual, many nationalities & backgrounds)
- Image of "Swissness" to project abroad: high quality, reliability, add value & craftsmanship
- Support of businesses and start-ups, easy to create a company
- Stable political & economic environment, direct democracy
- Stable legal system
- Low corruption
- World-class infrastructure
- For centuries, Switzerland has been the example of the core principles of "open, transparent and inclusive" and should have an advantage over competitors in becoming the natural capital of new technologies like blockchain

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## WEAKNESSES

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- Higher salary expectations
- Limited domestic distribution channels and markets
- Not perceived as a «cool» country or place to work (e.g. can be considered boring, not attractive lifestyle for young people)
- High cost of living
- There are no safety nets for entrepreneurs if their business fails (e.g. No access to unemployment benefit)
- Swiss banks are not startup-friendly (in terms of granting credit or allowing much debt)
- Depending upon the Canton: uncertain or unfavorable taxation for startup and employee stock option.
- Immigration policies: need to open up/increase number of non-EU contingent (e.g. from 8,500/year (B + L Permits) to at least 10,000/new permits year)

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## OPPORTUNITIES

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- Programs to encourage and invest in young talent (e.g. already at the primary and secondary school level)
- Programs to attract & support female entrepreneurs
- Open up immigration, increase flexibility:
  - top talent from 3rd tier countries
  - international students who study here and want to stay
- Build one Swiss "start-up factory" which has support from the government, corporations & academia
- Give Swiss investors easy access to ICOs (Initial Coin Offerings)
- Setup programs to educate the potential investment community on the benefits of investing in startups (e.g. target family offices)
- Open up the regulatory framework. Lower barriers of entry to funds, resources, research. Also international resources.
- Increase media coverage of our many positive stories of entrepreneurs and successful businesses
- Encourage international developer conferences

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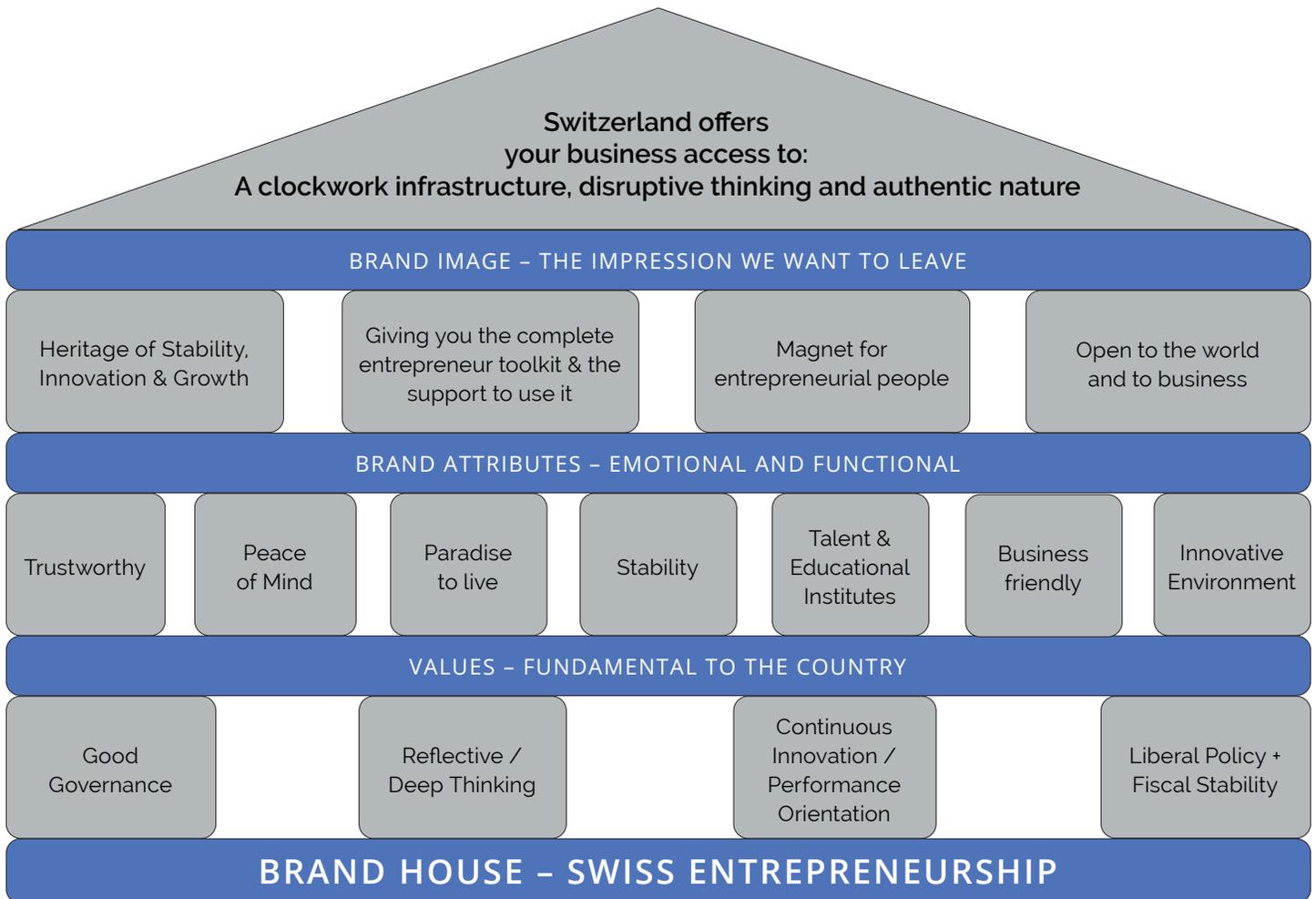
## THREATS

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- Becoming irrelevant globally if we become too isolated
- Lack of confidence in our own abilities: allowing other players like the USA and Germany to heavily influence our ecosystem instead of building our own capabilities
- Complacency attitude:
  - Lack of time pressure, waiting too long to launch ideas
  - Country is currently successful, do not think to invest now to insure future success and economic development
- Cultural attitudes:
  - A startup is not considered a career unless it succeeds
  - Over emphasis on perfection – again causes delays in launching ideas
  - Conservative – fear of failure, fear of risk taking
- Tighter immigration laws
- Strong Swiss Franc
- Could have policy towards isolationism or more limited access to the EU
- Could have more protectionism policies
- Loss of status as a tax haven
- Could have limited access to international capital markets



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THANK YOU!

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The GEN Switzerland organisation is very grateful to the dozens of people who have participated directly in our sessions, provided input or reviewed our documents. We had a range of entrepreneurs, government employees, federal parliamentarians, corporate executives, academics, students, consultants and journalists who generously gave their time and feedback to help us put together this document.

We are especially pleased with the cooperation we received from representatives of the following organisations:



Präsenz Schweiz  
Présence Suisse  
Presenza Svizzera  
Preschientscha Svizra



GGB<sup>a</sup>  
Invest  
Western  
Switzerland



Unterstützt vom  
Kanton Zug

 **SWITZERLAND  
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enabling new business

VON RUNDSTEDT



SWITZERLAND



CircularSociety®  
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Project work conducted by:

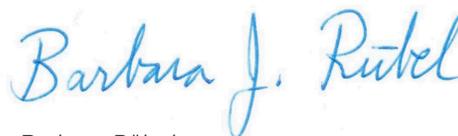


It is our wish that this document be shared widely in the Swiss entrepreneur ecosystem and, most importantly, used to establish a consistent, authentic and meaningful brand for Swiss Entrepreneurship both inside our country and globally. We would, of course, appreciate acknowledgement of the GEN Switzerland organisation if you use the material.

Best regards,



Carsten Sudhoff  
President, GEN Switzerland



Barbara Rübel  
Board Member, GEN Switzerland

