



The city of innovation

Center for growth in
Eastern Switzerland

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The innovation system of St.Gallen as

an economic region is based on an array of top-echelon educational and research entities. They are enormously important in their function as the medium in which the region's climate of innovation will flourish. The research and educational institutions have formed strong collaborative ties with the business community: The cooperative ventures between University, the cantonal hospital, applied sciences universities, the Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Science and Technology (Empa) the technology park and innovation center there and companies of various sizes have a longstanding tradition in the economic region of St.Gallen – time and again, they have been the birthplace of innovation.

Business associations and platforms such as the Eastern Switzerland Innovation Conference held at FHS St.Gallen promote dialogue and networking. Through cooperative location development and pro-innovation projects the city of St.Gallen helps increase strengthen ties between the academic and business communities. The city and businesses located there have also made investments of their own, such as in public fast-charging stations, which help promote a climate of innovation.

These efforts have paid off, as innovative enterprises located in St.Gallen, situated in the border triangle of Switzerland, Germany and Austria, benefit from being able to draw on a pool of highly skilled labor. Roughly a third of the city of St.Gallen's employees hold a higher technical or vocational diploma or a university/applied sciences university degree.



At a glance

- Competency network for business, research and education
- Support for new entrepreneurs based on a three-pillar principle
- St.Gallen: Capital of innovation
- Pulsating ICT cluster



Innovation and agility are key success factors, especially in the ICT sector, which is one of the most important branches of the economy of the St.Gallen-Lake Constance Region. This is impressively demonstrated by the 2,000 dynamic businesses located within the St.Gallen-Lake Constance ICT cluster, which employ some 15,000 people. Most of these are agile SMEs able to get things moving quickly, which evidences a bold spirit of entrepreneurship and high levels of productivity and innovation – thereby making the region one of the most attractive ICT locations in Switzerland.

The city promotes the area as an innovation and ICT hub through a variety of activities. The initiative «IT St.Gallen rocks!» is an image campaign for the St.Gallen-Lake Constance ICT cluster, now with over 60 members, representing the cluster in promotion of the St.Gallen-Lake Constance area, official cooperation between the cantons of St.Gallen, Thurgau and both Appenzell and in international competition to attract businesses. Startfeld, the Innovation Network in the St.Gallen-Lake Constance region, assists SMEs in all industries that lack the time or resources to invest in innovation in their day-to-day business operations, in arriving at new products and business models as part of an environment of new departures.

The city also takes a proactive approach toward site and area development to ensure the availability of developed spaces which make for an attractive location. The Startfeld Innovation Center located next to the Empa in St.Gallen Lerchenfeld provides a place for start-ups, SMEs, research and funding institutions to meet, bringing individuals active in different areas together to partner in taking on and realizing new development projects. The Startfeld Innovation Center offers suitable infrastructure in the form of offices, laboratories, temporary workplaces and space for events and meetings. A Technology Creativity Center is in planning with a laboratory for schools and knowledge projects, as well as 4,000 sqm of standard laboratory space within the high-tech Empa environment, where start-ups and SMEs can conduct applied research and exchange ideas.

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