

H4 process for project holders

The aim of H4 is to enable the holders of innovative healthcare projects to get a concrete support to make their project move forward according to its development stage.

Who can apply?

Any innovative project holder in healthcare can apply at H4:

- The “**holder**” can be an individual, or any organization from associations to companies.
- An “**innovative project**” can range from an idea to the complete model of development and marketing of a new product or service.

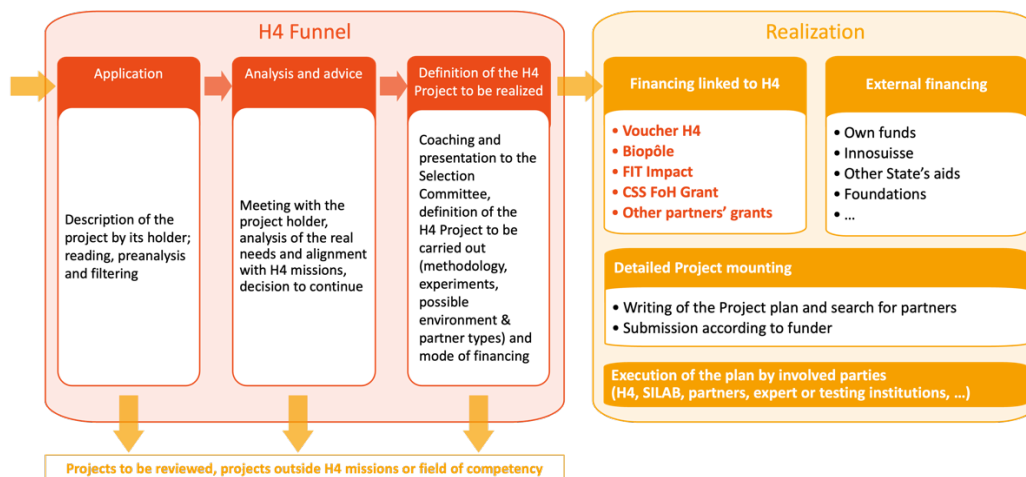
It makes sense to request H4 helps when the project holder needs:

- **Easy access** to users, healthcare institutions, caregivers, and patients.
- **Specific knowledge** of the healthcare environment and innovation processes adapted to this environment (“human” and “health” aspect of H4).

In a Lean approach, H4 support is ultimately intended to iteratively promote the development of adequate and sustainable solutions for the healthcare domain.

Overall process

The following diagram illustrates the request handling process in three phases from application to project execution – with possible process exits along the way. The request handling process and the resulting advice, documents, analyzes, and possible project definition are performed **free of charge** by H4.



Application

Any project holder can **submit a request** for H4 support. The handling of a request is as follows:

- The holder describes his/her demand and needs through a **structured form** found on h4vd.ch site.
- The request is **pre-analyzed**: its match with H4 missions and competencies is evaluated.
- The result of this pre-analysis is **communicated** to the holder: the response contains the justified decision to go further in the process or not; in any case, it informs the holder about the best next step that should be taken.

Analysis and advice

H4 further analyzes and discusses with the project holder his/her real needs in terms of hands-on experimentations and tasks that can help the project to go forward. H4 takes into account different facets of the project that impact its chances of success like:

- The **market need**, including healthcare professionals, caregivers, patients, healthcare institutions, ...
- The **level of the holder's knowledge** of the market and healthcare domain.
- The **feasibility of the project**, considering the holder skills, the complexity of the project, the potential partnering, the readiness of the target market (e.g. healthcare institutions), the needs in medical certification or IP protection, ...
- The **potential business** model and the go-to-market strategy.

The analysis produces a advice and may result in the redefinition of the practical help that H4 can offer to the project holder.

During this phase, H4 can also refuse to go further if the analysis reveals that it is not the right structure with the necessary skills and resources for the expected support. In this case, H4 will nevertheless endeavor to offer a solution to go further with partners.

Codefinition of the H4 Project to be realized after audition

Upon agreement, the holder is invited to present the project and request to a **Selection Committee**. This group of experts includes special guests who have expertise in the specific area of the project. H4 helps the holder to prepare for the audition.

The presentation lasts 15 minutes and 45 minutes of discussion and feedback follow. The committee provides feedback and sometimes accompaniment proposals to the holder.

If it is accepted, the **H4 Project** to be realized to support the initial project is finalized. Based on previous analyses, it goes on by:

- Identification of the unknowns and **critical hypotheses** impacting the potential success of the project.

- Determination of the **gap** between the current state of the project and the next targeted stage.
- Definition of the **most appropriate experimentations** to fill this gap and remove the unknowns.
- Reflection on the best **mode of financing** for this project.

Funding of the project by a H4 Voucher

In some cases, H4 may decide to fund the realization of the H4 Project via a “**H4 Voucher**”. The grant depends on the maturity of the project, the complexity of the hands-on experimentations and the necessary partners.

The amount of a Voucher is set according to the needs of the H4 Project. It typically varies between CHF 2,000 and CHF 10,000. In the case of a private company, a part of the Voucher amount must be paid by the company itself, according to its size.

The Voucher amount may come from the State of Vaud through the H4 budget, or from a H4 partner who supports the holder’s project through another program, like Biopôle, CSS Future of Health grant, or FIT Impact. In the last cases, the process may be slightly different: the audition by one selection committee of these programs may replace the hearing by H4 committee.

Funding of the project by other sources

H4 also analyzes the possibilities of funding the project from external sources. The resulting H4 Projects can then take the form of totally external entities: Innosuisse projects, grant applications to foundations, ...

On the basis of the previous analysis and advice, the holder with the help of H4 can finalize the project by submitting it to the competent authority according to the procedures required by the chosen financing method. An illustrative case will be that of an Innosuisse check where the project leader is a company and where an academic institution plays the role of partner. The partner may turn out to be SILAB, who runs H4, but this choice is independent of the H4 process.

H4 value

The **initial project analysis** is the first value added by the H4. The holder will be able to use the results as he/she wishes and to direct his actions to successfully bring the project to a next stage. This phase is often decisive for holders without having to go through the other stages.

Deeper **analysis with H4 Project finalization** is the second added value of process. The holder will have the necessary basis to launch a productive and decisive experimentation phase with selected partners.

Obtaining a **H4 Voucher** will allow the holder to move forward without immediate need for other project submission.

Partnerships with other programs mutually facilitate the entry of the project into H4 as well as into these other programs.

Clarifications

H4 will also strive to help holders who are caregivers, by putting them in touch with people (developers, engineers, designers, managers, etc.) and organizations (schools, laboratories, companies, etc.) capable of completing their project with their technical and business expertise.

If a project does not need "hands-on" experimentation, the H4 can nevertheless, in the analysis phase, advise on an optimal approach in the construction of the next stage, for example via connections or technological and patent studies.

It is required that healthcare institutions do not submit their ideas via H4 but rather contact the La Source Innovation Laboratory (SILAB). Indeed, when it comes to internal, bottom-up and intrapreneurial innovation, the mechanisms to be implemented are specific, and it is not H4 mission to directly and financially support the initiatives of healthcare institutions.

H4 also doesn't support:

- Purely academic, research, and teaching projects (check with SILAB).
- Trade and commercial promotion activities