

Highlights 2015

A selection of events that shaped the year at the SNSF.



15 January

Energy research

In view of the energy policy challenges facing Switzerland, the SNSF has launched two **National Research Programmes (NRPs)** exploring both the scientific and technical as well as the socio-economic aspects of an energy turnaround. Coordinated energy research is a cornerstone of Energy Strategy 2050: it supports the substantial reduction of energy consumption, promotes new technologies, explores the social context and boosts research and industry in Switzerland.

20 January

Eastern Europe

Shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the SNSF and the SDC began supporting scientists in Eastern Europe by funding **research partnerships**. Twenty-five years later, Switzerland and its partner countries are still reaping the benefits. At a workshop on 20 January 2015 at the Kursaal in Bern, participants take stock and picture what lies ahead.



19 March

Smart materials

Targeted drug delivery and new electronic components: for five years, the **National Research Programme “Smart Materials” (NRP 62)** explored the potential of a new generation of materials that react to their environment. The NRP held its final conference in March. For the first time, the SNSF officially collaborated with the Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI) to support researchers wishing to develop their lab results into applications.

11–13 May

20 years in Brussels

SwissCore is the Swiss information and liaison office for European research, innovation and education in Brussels. Since 1995, it has provided high-quality information, liaised between Europe and Switzerland in the fields of research, innovation and education and promoted the Swiss knowledge institutions at European level. On 12 May 2015, SwissCore holds its **Annual Event 2015**. The 20th anniversary starts with a symposium on the Swiss contribution to a “Europe of knowledge” and is followed by a reception with a dinner to which about 120 representatives of European and national institutions are invited.

28 May

New urban quality

The **National Research Programme “New Urban Quality” (NRP 65)** presents its results at a press conference. If urban sprawl is to be stopped, the use of developed areas needs to be intensified. The results of NRP 65 open the path to urbanise suburban areas.

January/
March

May

23 September

MHV prize

Every year, the SNSF awards around 35 Marie Heim-Vögtlin grants. They support excellent young women researchers who resume their academic careers after a break due to family commitments. The **two winners** of the MHV prize 2015 have made a highly successful comeback. Over a period of two years, **Anna Nele Meckler** continued her postdoctoral studies in paleo-oceanography at the Institute of Geology at ETH Zurich. **Armelle Corpet** conducted experimental cancer research at the Gynaecology department of University Hospital Zurich.



“Thanks to the grant, I am back at the forefront: I was able to publish several articles about completed work in renowned journals and expanded my expertise in a high-end technology.”

Anna Nele Meckler

September

1 October

Over 500 million francs

For the first time, researchers request more than CHF 500 million in a **project funding** call: for 1 October 2015, they submit a total of 1,152 project proposals to the SNSF requesting overall funding of CHF 524 million. The above figures show that the demand for project grants is for the second time in succession substantially higher than in the previous year. This upward trend in application numbers and requested funds is expected to continue.

21 October

Focus on academic careers

At their **Séance de Réflexion**, the members of the National Research Council revisit a topic that they discussed three years ago at the anniversary event of the SNSF: Young researchers: what do they need most? On the second day, the members of the Council focus on academic careers and young researchers. Various academic systems at European and American higher education institutions are presented and discussed in view of the career prospects they afford young researchers. At a round table moderated by Caspar Hirschi, obstacles for young researchers and support measures are discussed.



October



24 November

National Latsis Prize

The National Latsis Prize 2015 is awarded to biologist **Richard Benton**, professor at the Center for Integrative Genomics at the University of Lausanne, for his work on the fruit fly's sense of smell. The biologist is investigating the chemical signals that control the behaviour of insects. The prize is awarded annually by the Swiss National Science Foundation on behalf of the Geneva-based Latsis Foundation. Worth CHF 100,000, the prize honours outstanding researchers under the age of 40 working in Switzerland.



→ Video

November