

## Practice-to-Science

### Guidelines for submitting a proposal via mySNF

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## 1. Submission of proposal

### 1.1 Regulations and relevant documents

The Practice-to-Science Regulations and relevant documents are available on our website in **German, French and English** (see section "Documents"). Alternatively, the documents are also accessible in your Practice-to-Science application on mySNF under "Information/Documents". For any questions contact: [pts@snf.ch](mailto:pts@snf.ch)

### 1.2 Personal requirements

The personal requirements for applicants, are governed by articles 4 and 5 of the Practice-to-Science Regulations.

*Please note that applicants doing or terminating a PhD degree are not eligible.*

### 1.3 Submission deadline

Practice-to-Science is a pilot funding instrument of the SNSF at this stage and there will be a third call in 2023. Proposals have to be submitted electronically via the web platform mySNF ([www.mysnf.ch](http://www.mysnf.ch)). The application must be submitted **no later than 17:00:00 Swiss local time (i.e. UTC + 1)** on the day of the submission deadline:

**Submission deadline: 3 October 2023**

***Do not wait until the very last moment to submit your application. The deadline is non-negotiable.***

### 1.4 Parallel submissions

Note that a Practice-to-Science application may only be submitted for a duration of support for which no other career grant has been requested, approved or are ongoing. Before preparing an application consult the relevant articles on parallel submissions in the regulations for each funding instruments concerned.

### 1.5 Create a new application on mySNF

All new users have to register first on mySNF ([www.mysnf.ch](http://www.mysnf.ch)). Note that it may take several days to process your request for a mySNF account. If you already have a mySNF account, check that the role "grant applicant" is present.

### 1.6 Duration of the grant

Practice-to-Science grants are awarded for a maximum of three years. The minimum duration of funding is one year. If the maximum duration of the grant is not requested, the applicant must give an explanation for the shorter duration in the cover letter.

### 1.7 Earliest and latest possible starting date for the grant

The earliest and latest possible starting dates are 1 July 2024 and 1 July 2025, respectively. Note that the starting date can still be changed within this time frame after a Practice-to-Science grant has been awarded.

## **1.8 Revised application/resubmission**

In case of a resubmission, upload in the container "Research plan" **a separate document** providing a point-for-point response to the critique raised in the rejection letter and a comment on significant changes or additions in the research plan, if applicable. This statement must **not exceed two pages (minimum font size 10 and line spacing 1.5)**.

## **1.9 Budget**

Under the Practice-to-Science grants funding scheme, the SNSF awards a maximum of CHF 600'000 for 3 years, i.e., maximum CHF 200'000 per annum (see articles 3 and 8 of the Practice-to-Science Regulations). The grant may be used to cover the grantee's salary for up to 0.5 FTE and/or research funds.

The budget should be as detailed as possible (e.g., separate entries are required for equipment, access costs to infrastructure, consumables, travel, personnel, etc.). Costs for open access publications are not eligible costs under Practice-to-Science grants and must be applied for separately via mySNF ([www.snf.ch/oa](http://www.snf.ch/oa)). Changes in the budget after the submission of the application are not possible.

Research funds may be used to employ personnel (e.g., technician, laboratory assistant, supporting assistant, PhD student, postdoctoral researcher, etc.). Personnel salaries may be different for every institution. The applicant should therefore contact in advance the HR department or the personnel office of the research institution for the corresponding salary standards. For salaries, the fields labelled "Social security contributions (%)" are automatically calculated according to the selected research institution in the container "University or research institution".

Regarding family/child allowance ("Further social security contributions"), they differ in every canton. Therefore, contact in advance the HR department or the personnel office of the research institution.

## **1.10 External peer-reviewing**

A list of potential external reviewers is not required. The applicant is entitled to submit together with the funding proposal a list with the names and addresses of persons who are not to be asked for an external review (exclusion list). The SNSF may abide by this list if the applicant provides a valid reason for the requested exclusion and if a sufficient number of other experts are available.

## **1.11 Choice of research institution**

All publicly funded universities of applied sciences and universities of teacher education in Switzerland are eligible. Applicants must carefully motivate their choice of the research institution in the cover letter. The evaluation committee will assess this choice based on the rationale provided.

## **1.12 Written confirmation of the research institution**

Applicants must contact as soon as possible the research institution to ask for the written confirmation of the research institution. The written confirmation of the research institution consists of two separate letters:

1. Detailed confirmation of the research institution signed by the head of the institute/department. This letter refers to the obligations which are stated in the Practice-to-Science Regulations, in particular article 7.

## 2. General confirmation of the vice rectorate for research (or equivalent).

The directorate of the institute/department must forward the detailed confirmation of the research institution (point 1) to the vice-rectorate for research in order to receive the general confirmation (point 2). Then, the directorate of the institute/department must send both confirmations to the applicant for a timely submission of the application.

Both confirmations must follow the text template provided by the SNSF and be written on paper using the official letterhead of the research institution. They must be added to the application and will only be regarded as complete if all the points relevant to the application are addressed. The text template is available in German, French and English (see section "Documents").

**If the engagement of a PhD student is envisaged for the project**, the confirmation of the research institution **must include a commitment to guarantee the due completion of the thesis** (i.e., salary) at the end of the grant or if the grant is prematurely interrupted. In addition, **a confirmation signed by a professor at a university/EPFL/ETHZ who agrees to act as official supervisor of the PhD student must be also uploaded** with the detailed and general written confirmations from the research institution.

### 1.13 Support letters

According to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) signed by the SNSF, applications are evaluated based on the quality of past and ongoing research activities. Following this principle, the SNSF does not rely on third party opinions. To allow the evaluation of the feasibility of the project, each collaborator may write a letter of collaboration which limits itself to a statement of the collaboration and refrains from highlighting the qualifications of the applicant or the merits of the project. Letters of collaboration are uploaded under "Other annexes". Support letters highlighting the qualifications of the applicant and/or the merits of the project, which are uploaded in the application or forwarded to the SNSF by mail/email, will be discarded.

### 1.14 Evaluation procedure

The evaluation procedure takes place in two phases. In phase 1, the evaluation committee of the SNSF makes an initial selection based on the documents submitted. Only applications selected for phase 2 are peer-reviewed. All candidates selected for phase 2 are usually invited to an interview to present their research project and career plan.

Applicants will receive the decision (invitation for an interview/rejection) by the end of January 2024. The interviews are held in April 2024. These candidates will be informed about the final decision around June 2024. **Dates are subject to changes without notice.**

The SNSF subjects all applications for a Practice-to-Science grant to a stringent scientific evaluation procedure and rates them based on pre-defined criteria at its due discretion. Based on assessments by referees and co-referees and the comparison and discussion of applications by the evaluation body, a small share of applications may emerge that are of equal quality and equally worthy of funding. As no further differentiation is possible, decisions for this group of applications will be reached by drawing lots according to Article 23 paragraph 5 of the [Organisational Regulations of the National Research Council](#). Applicants affected by this procedure are informed accordingly in the decision letter. The letter includes a justification for applicants who are excluded as a result of the procedure.

## 2. Instructions for the CV and major achievements, career plan, and statement of practical experience

### 2.1 General remarks

As mentioned above, the SNSF has signed the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#), which recommends funders to be explicit about the criteria used in evaluating the scientific productivity of applicants. The scientific quality, value and impact of the entire research output is taken into consideration (including datasets, software, and prototypes) in addition to research publications. In this context, the scientific content of a paper is much more important than publication metrics or the name of the journal in which it was published. Furthermore, during its evaluation procedure, the SNSF takes into account the scientific discipline, academic age and personal situation (e.g., career breaks, childcare duties).

### 2.2 CV and major achievements

In order to comply with the DORA principles, the SNSF defined a new structure for the CV and requests a standardised set of information from all applicants. **Specifically, applicants will have to compile their CV according to a new template on the SNSF Portal and subsequently upload a PDF in the data container "CV, career plan and statement of practical experience".**

For more details on the new CV format and a sample CV, see: [Your curriculum vitae – all about the CV format](#).

The portal can be accessed under: [portal.snf.ch](http://portal.snf.ch).

This information is intended for evaluators to specifically assess the scientific quality and relevance of the research output. The CV must be written in the language of the research plan. The documents are sent out for peer-reviewing and will be accessible for your research institution. **Please note that the CV cannot be updated after the submission of your application.**

### 2.3 Career plan

The document "Career plan" must not exceed one page (**minimum font size 10 and line spacing 1.5**) and can be written either in the language of the research plan or in English. The PDF file is to be uploaded in the data container "CV, career plan and statement of practical experience". No form or template is provided by the SNSF. The career plan is evaluated with regards to a precise representation of the further career steps as well as the significance of the project for the scientific activities after the end of the grant.

### 2.4 Statement of practical experiences and achievements

The document "Statement of practical experiences and achievements" must not exceed two pages (**minimum font size 10 and spacing 1.5**) and can be written either in the language of the research plan or in English. The PDF file is to be uploaded in the data container "CV, career plan and statement of practical experience".

The applicant must list all his/her practical experiences and achievements. For each listed practical experience/achievement, the applicant must provide **its dates (month/year; start and end), its worktime percentage, its duration (years and months) relative to a full-time position (100%), its description, and its relationship to the proposed Practice-to-Science project. Please mention at the end of your statement the total duration of all your practical experiences relative to a full-time position (100% or 1 full-time equivalent).**

The SNSF considers the practical nature of the experience and defines a practical experience as an experience during which the applicant has no related research output (e.g. publications, book chapters, conferences...). In particular, PhD (ongoing or completed) and postdoctoral positions (with the exception of postdoctoral positions in the industry where the purpose is to acquire practical experience) cannot be considered as practical experiences.

### 3. Instructions for the research plan

#### 3.1 General remarks

The research plan must consist of an original text that has been written by the applicant himself/herself. A limited amount of text (or other material, graphs, etc.) by third parties or text published by the applicant himself/herself is permissible in the sections concerning the state of research (2.1) and the state of his/her personal research (2.2) as well as when describing standard methods. The quoted texts must be clearly designated as such (quotation marks or appropriate wording) and a verifiable source must be mentioned nearby and in the bibliography. The SNSF uses a special software to compare texts and analyse suspected cases of plagiarism. A number of universities have made such programs available to their students and employees. We recommend that you contact your institution for further information. For more details see the SNSF dossier on scientific integrity:

[www.snsf.ch](http://www.snsf.ch) > The SNSF > Research policies > Scientific integrity

In mathematics, natural and engineering sciences, biology, medicine, psychology, economics and political sciences, applications have to be submitted in English. In all other research areas, applications can be submitted in one of the official Swiss languages (preferably in German or French; for Italian, please contact the administrative office of SNSF first). An English translation must be enclosed if requested by the SNSF. Special rules apply for political sciences. Researchers will still be able to submit proposals in an official Swiss language should this be justified for scientific reasons, particularly if working in a specific language is appropriate to the nature of the research topic.

The SNSF does not consider applications that do not meet the requirements for the research plan, the formal requirements for applications (article 14 of the [Funding Regulations](#)) and the requirements for research integrity and good scientific practice (article 15 of the [Funding Regulations](#)).

#### 3.2 Structure of the research plan

The research plan must **not exceed 10 pages** (A4 paper size, **minimum font size 10 and line spacing 1.5, no condensed fonts allowed**) and **40'000 characters (with spaces)**. This includes the title or title page, possible table of contents, summary, footnotes (explanatory notes or comments at the bottom of a page), illustrations, formulae, tables, but not the bibliography (list of sources/references at the end of the document). The research plan should not contain any annexed documents and must be uploaded as a single PDF file. The research plan needs to be structured as follows:

<b>Research Plan</b>	
<b>1. Summary (maximum 1 page)</b>	Present the background and rationale of the project, list its overall objectives and specific aims, mention the methods to be used, and briefly discuss the expected results and their impact for the field.
<b>2. Proposed Research</b>	
<b>2.1 Current state of research in the field</b>	Describe your project in the context of the current state of knowledge in your field. Refer to the most important publications, particularly by other authors. Describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- which previous insights provided the starting point and basis for the planned studies;</li> <li>- in which areas research is needed, and why;</li> <li>- which important and relevant research projects are currently underway in Switzerland and abroad.</li> </ul>
<b>2.2 Current state of personal research</b>	Present the research work you have already undertaken in the relevant field or in related fields, describe the results obtained so far as well as the relevance of these preliminary undertakings for your project.
<b>2.3 Detailed research plan</b>	Based on the information provided under 2.1 and 2.2, specify the approach you are taking and the concrete objectives that you aim to achieve in the period of funding. The following points should be addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- describe the studies or experiments needed and/or envisaged to reach the set goals. Assess the risks involved and propose alternatives if necessary;</li> <li>- characterise existing sources and datasets and describe the data collection strategy and possible alternative strategies;</li> <li>- methods by which the research goals are to be reached (applicant and collaborations) and methods that first have to be developed;</li> <li>- explain the role and the planned work of each member of the research team (incl. applicant, personnel, and collaborations).</li> </ul> <p>Your description should be as detailed as necessary to enable an expert to assess whether your methodology is appropriate and your project feasible. Refer to the work described here in the budget you submit via mySNF.</p>
<b>2.4 Schedule and milestones</b>	Compile a schedule that includes the most important milestones (e.g., table, Gantt chart, etc.). This plan should also indicate the main tasks with which the persons funded by the SNSF/involved in the project are to be entrusted.
<b>2.5 Relevance and impact</b>	Describe the scientific relevance and expected impacts of your project for the discipline and for science as a whole (research, education/teaching and society). Mention the form in which you wish to publish your research results (articles in scientific journals, monographs, conference proceedings, etc.) Indicate whether and to what extent the proposed project will have a broader impact and what this impact will be.
<b>3. Bibliography</b>	List the sources of all concluded and/or ongoing work referred to in the research plan. Give the full reference, especially the title, source, and full author list. Do not use "et al." to shorten the author list. (Exception: the author list can be shortened if a publication involves large international consortia with over 50 authors. In this case, a link to the complete reference has to be included). The bibliography is not included in the maximum number of pages (10) and characters (40'000) count.

15.03.2023