

Postdoc.Mobility fellowships and return grants: Guidelines to submit a proposal via mySNF

Submission deadline: 1 February 2024

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1 Important remarks

1.1 Evaluation procedure

A detailed description of the evaluation process can be found on the following page:

<https://www.snf.ch/en/6cs2wnfJtcFDL6o/page/evaluation-procedure>

Please note that no interviews will be conducted with applicants for a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship or a return grant. Also note that applications for a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship and for a return grant are all evaluated together and with the same [evaluation form](#). If you apply for a return grant, be aware that the same evaluation criteria as for Postdoc.Mobility fellowships apply, even if the project duration is shorter and the project is not necessarily a new one.

1.2 Submission and deadline

Please submit your application via the platform mySNF: www.mySNF.ch > What would you like to do? > Create a new application > Careers > Postdoc.Mobility respectively Return CH Postdoc.Mobility. The mySNF platform will be opened for submission three months before the respective application deadline. If you do not yet have a mySNF user account, please register at www.mySNF.ch at least one month before the submission deadline so that you can prepare the required information and documents (e.g. the reference letters that have to be requested via a special link) early enough. Your registration will then be processed by the SNSF. Within a few days, you will receive an e-mail confirming the opening of your user account.

Applications for a return grant can only be submitted during an ongoing Postdoc.Mobility fellowship at the official submission deadlines. Exception: if the Postdoc.Mobility fellowship ends on 31 January or 31 July of the same year, a proposal for a return grant can still be submitted on 1 February or 2 August, respectively.

A funding proposal is regarded as submitted in due time if received by the SNSF by **17:00:00 Swiss local time** on the submission date (1 February resp. 2 August). If the submission date falls on a Saturday, a Sunday or a holiday recognised under Swiss federal law, the submission date will be moved forward to 17:00:00 Swiss local time on the next working day.

Please submit your application in time. The submission deadline is not negotiable.

Due to the large number of applications submitted shortly before the deadline, be aware that it might take time to load your documents on mySNF. Upload your documents early enough to submit your application on time.

1.3 Language of the application

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. Special rules apply for political sciences (Clause 1.16 of the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#)).

1.4 Postdoc.Mobility in relation to other funding options offered by the SNSF

A Postdoc.Mobility application may only be submitted for a duration of support for which

- no other financing has been obtained for the planned project from the SNSF or third parties;
- no other career grants of the SNSF have been applied for.

The submission of applications in career and project funding or within the scope of programs of the SNSF is only possible for a duration of support beyond the expiry of the Postdoc.Mobility fellowship or the return grant. (art. 16 of the [Postdoc.Mobility Regulations](#)).

During the evaluation process for a return grant, it is also possible to submit a parallel application for an Ambizione, Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships, and SNSF Starting Grant.

1.5 Resubmission

Applicants, whose application for a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship or a return grant was rejected, may apply at the most once more for a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship resp. a return grant regardless of the subject matter of the project, provided the personal and formal requirements are met (art. 17 of the [Postdoc.Mobility Regulations](#)).

In case of a resubmission, you must create a new application in mySNF (please note the new guidelines regarding the length of the research plan!). Please 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 be written in the same language as the research plan and must **not** be **longer than 2 pages**.

1.6 Follow-up applications

1.6.1 Follow-up applications of a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship or a return phase

It is not possible to submit a follow-up application of an ongoing Postdoc.Mobility fellowship or a return phase. However, the SNSF reserves the right to permit extensions for the reasons set out in Clause 5.4 of the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#).

1.6.2 Follow-up of an Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship

In case of a follow-up of an Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship, you must create a new application in mySNF. The funding period of 36 months abroad comprising mobility fellowships for Early Postdoc.Mobility and Postdoc.Mobility may not be exceeded. You can submit a new project in terms of content or a project that is a continuation of the Early Postdoc Mobility (EPM) fellowship. In any case, the EPM fellowship must be mentioned in the application (in mySNF under “Link to other SNSF projects”) and a comment should be added to specify whether the project is new or a continuation of the EPM project.

Candidates who are Swiss nationals and who are already funded by an Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship may submit a follow-up application (min. 12 months) as long as they fulfill the requirements according to the [Postdoc.Mobility Regulations](#).

Foreign candidates who are already funded by an Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship and who therefore do not hold a Swiss permanent residence or residence permit anymore may submit a follow-up application (min 12 months) as long as they fulfill the requirements according to the [Postdoc.Mobility Regulations](#). The beginning of the Postdoc.Mobility fellowship must start directly after the end of the Early

Postdoc.Mobility fellowship. Exceptions can be considered if the Postdoc.Mobility application is submitted while the Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship is still ongoing (if your Early Postdoc.Mobility ends on 31 January or 31 July of the same year you are allowed to submit a proposal on 1 February or 2 August respectively) and the beginning of the Postdoc.Mobility fellowship starts at the latest 6 months after the end of the Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship.

For all applicants with an Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship: if there is an interruption between the end of the Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship and the start of the requested Postdoc.Mobility fellowship, please clearly state in your application under "Link to other SNSF projects" whether you are funded or not during this time and where you are staying during this interruption.

1.7 Decision

Please note that the decisions are communicated in a letter approx. 5 months after the submission deadlines of 1 February and 2 August (mid-June resp. mid-December).

1.8 Decision of non-consideration

Please note: Applications must meet the requirements with regard to, for example, the length of the research plan and the other mandatory data. The SNSF may decide not to consider applications that do not meet all of the requirements.

2 Personal and application data (to be filled in online in mySNF)

2.1 Designated host lab / Institution

The research stay funded under the Postdoc.Mobility fellowship must be conducted at a non-commercial research institution (host institution) abroad.

The place of research must not be the same as the place of education¹ or dissertation and must not be located in the applicant's home country; in exceptional cases a research stay in the applicant's home country (Switzerland excluded) may be approved for scientific reasons.

In principle, the Postdoc.Mobility fellowship is awarded for a continuous stay. However, the fellowship may be split into stays of at least four months each. Moreover, it is permissible to conduct the stay at different host institutions or to conduct part of it in Switzerland. The stay in Switzerland may not exceed one third of the total duration of the fellowship.

It is permissible to spend parts of the Postdoc.Mobility fellowship at institutions operating in the practical field (industry, administration, etc; intersectoral mobility) abroad or in Switzerland. The total duration of such stays may not exceed one quarter of the Postdoc.Mobility fellowship.

Recipients of a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship or a return grant must in principle devote their entire work time (100% work time percentage) to the research project funded by the SNSF. Applicants who are able to show that they meet the requirements defined in article 6 paragraph 1 letter 2 of the [Postdoc.Mobility Regulations](#) may request a worktime percentage below 100%, but at least 80%.

¹ Higher education institution where an academic degree was awarded.

2.2 References

Please indicate **two reference persons** (more than two will not be accepted). There are no restrictions regarding the choice of reference persons, but they cannot be family members of the applicant. In case of a follow-up of an Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship, it is also possible that the host professor writes a reference letter.

The reference persons write the reference letters according to the following criteria:

- They are confidential and therefore cannot be viewed by the applicant.
 - They have to be written in English (in Social Sciences and Humanities letters in French and German will also be accepted).
 - They must not exceed 2 pages (a min. of point 10 font size and min. 1.5 line spacing).
 - They must bear the official letter head and an original signature (no digital signature from a certification service provider) of the reference person.
 - The reference person must comment on the applicant for a Postdoc.Mobility scholarship by answering the following questions specifically and in detail
1. Since when and in what context have you known the applicant?
 2. How do you rate the previous **academic performance**?
 3. How do you rate her/his **scientific competences**?
 4. How do you rate her/his previous **mobility**? Mobility should be considered in a general way, for example institutional, international, sectoral, disciplinary and intellectual mobility, depending on the situation of the person concerned.

You need to request the reference letters via mySNF by using the following link: [Reference letters](#) (link becomes active as soon as you have created an application in mySNF).

Once you have received the reference letters, you must upload them to the "Reference letters" container before 1 February or 2 August (**17:00:00 Swiss local time**). Please specify if any of your reference persons has advised you on how to draft the research plan.

Please request the reference letters at an early stage so that you are able to submit your full application in good time. In no circumstances will the SNSF accept a delay in submission because the references are not yet available.

Additional reference letters attached as a PDF in the container "Other annexes" will not be taken into account and will be deleted.

2.3 Basic data I

2.3.1 Requested starting date

Deadline of 1 February 2024

Earliest start on 1 August 2024, latest start on 1 July 2025.

Deadline of 2 August 2024

Earliest start on 1 February 2025, latest start on 1 January 2026.

Fellowship: The earliest possible start of the fellowship is 6 months after the submission deadlines of 1 February and 2 August. The Postdoc.Mobility fellowship must be started no later than twelve months after the date of the ruling. Fellowships always start on the first day of the month.

If you are already at the host institution with an Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship, the earliest possible start date is 1 July 2024 resp. 1 January 2025.

Return grant: The research period in Switzerland financed by a return grant generally represents a seamless continuation of the completed Postdoc.Mobility fellowship, **starting immediately upon the fellowship holder's return from abroad**. Exceptions may be considered if the fellow continues research at the host institute abroad for a limited time after the end of the fellowship. In this case, the return grant must be started no later than 12 months after the end of the fellowship. An exception is also possible if there is a gap between the end of the fellowship and the earliest possible start date for the return grant fixed by the SNSF (see above under 2.3.1). In this case, the return grant must start on the earliest possible date according to these guidelines (2.3.1). If the return period does not start immediately upon the end of the fellowship, please clearly state in your application under "Link to other SNSF projects" whether you are funded or not during this time and where you are staying during this interruption.

2.3.2 Requested duration

The duration of the fellowship is defined in months. Postdoc.Mobility fellowships are awarded in principle for 24 months. The minimum duration is 12 months. If you already hold an Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship, please note that the total duration of 36 months abroad comprising Early Postdoc.Mobility and Postdoc.Mobility fellowships may not be exceeded.

A return grant is awarded for a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 12 months. It is **not possible to request an extension of the return phase**.

2.4 Available or requested funds

The SNSF does not grant any award for research projects that are already being funded by the SNSF or third parties (art. 8.3e of the [Funding Regulations](#)). **If you already have corresponding funds at your disposal to cover the living costs during the project, respectively during the expected duration of the fellowship or the return grant, (salary or a separate stipend), it is in general not possible to supplement these funds by an SNSF mobility fellowship.** If you have requested or obtained additional funds (salary, fellowship, funds to cover congress costs, research costs, tuition fees etc.), please give detailed information and if possible upload under "Authorisation third party funding" a copy of the decisions. Note that even after you have submitted your application, you must inform the SNSF in case you obtain or request additional funds from other funding bodies while your proposal is being evaluated. Third party funds that exceed CHF 15,000.- per year will be deducted from any granted fellowship monies. However, if the third party funding exceeds 2/3 of the corresponding SNSF fellowship amount (basic amount excluding travel expenses and research funds), it is not possible to combine this with a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship or a return grant. **In case of questions, please clarify the situation with the SNSF Administrative Offices (pm@snf.ch).**

Please also inform the SNSF immediately during the evaluation process if you take up another position or receive other funding and therefore wish to withdraw your application.

2.5 Requested funding - Fellowship

2.5.1 Fellowship basic grant

The fellowship (basic amount) makes a contribution towards the living costs of fellowship holders. The amount of the fellowship is based on the cost of living in the host country and is calculated automatically on the basis of the information provided in mySNF (Requested funding). You will find an updated list of fellowship rates in the document "[Fellowship and travel allowance rates](#)" in mySNF under "Information/documents" or at www.snsf.ch > Funding > Find funding scheme > Careers > Postdoc.Mobility > Documents. The requested basic amount is subsequently checked by the SNSF and adjusted if necessary based on the submitted application. **IMPORTANT:** Please note that some universities have minimum funding requirements. Please make sure that you inform yourself early enough. The fellowship rates defined by the SNSF are binding for the year of approval. If the host institution increases the financial requirements, the SNSF will not be able to adjust the fellowship accordingly. In such a case, the SNSF expects the host institution to cover any financial gap. Third-party fundings which cover such a financial gap will not be counted as third-party funding according to section 2.4 but must be mentioned in the application nevertheless.

2.5.2 Child allowance

Fellows with children they are obliged to support are entitled to a child allowance of CHF 12,000 per child and per year. Child allowances contributed by third parties are deducted.

2.5.3 Research funds

Research funds cover research costs and conference costs. Please indicate as precisely as possible the funds you will need for the entire duration of the fellowship and how you intend to use the money. The maximum amount awarded for research funds (conference costs and research costs) is CHF 5,000 per year. **IMPORTANT:** Contributions towards research costs (conference costs and research costs) need to be requested in the Postdoc.Mobility application. The conditions are defined in the guidelines. **Any requests for coverage of conference costs and research costs at a later stage will not be considered.** Costs will only be covered if they are explicitly designated as eligible costs in the guidelines and the [Information set "Postdoc.Mobility"](#) (chapter 11.2). Requests to cover costs that are ineligible will not be granted. More information regarding eligible costs can be found in chapter 11.2 of the [Information set "Postdoc.Mobility"](#) at www.snsf.ch/ > Postdoc.Mobility > Documents.

a) Research costs

The following costs are eligible: Costs that are unavoidable for completion of the research project: library fees, photocopies in libraries or archives, transcription costs of interviews, documentation (e.g., access to data, microfilm), expendable items, computing time and cloud computing. Travel costs connected to field studies or visits to archives as well as costs for overnight stays (hotels up to three-star category) and meals (if not included in the price of the room) may be claimed in full or according to SNSF flat rates ([Information set "Postdoc.Mobility"](#), chapter 11.2).

The following costs are ineligible and will not be covered: Matriculation fees, proofreading, translations, language courses and continuing education, books, subscriptions to journals, stationery, memberships, postage, e-mail, internet and phone charges, photocopies at the host institution, offline storage or media (such as Dropbox, Google Drive, hard disks, memory sticks, ...), material of enduring value (e.g. laptops, printers, digital cameras, standard equipment such as centrifuges, microscopes, etc.), health insurance premiums, overhead contributions and fees connected to visa applications. In addition, publication costs are not covered by the SNSF mobility fellowships. SNSF contributions to the

cost of fully open access publications can be applied for via the OA platform (mySNF). For more detailed information, please visit the [SNSF's new open access website](#).

b) Conference costs

Please indicate whether you intend to take part in congresses during the Postdoc.Mobility fellowship and enter the envisaged budget for these activities for the entire funding period. Conference costs can be used for registration fees at the conference, outward and return journey, accommodation and meals. The attendance of courses and workshops that are not directly linked to the funded research project (e.g. courses for personal career development) is not covered.

2.5.4 Participation on travel expenses

The SNSF awards fellowship holders a travel allowance according to zones for one return journey to the place of research. Family members (spouse/partner, children you are obliged to support) can receive an allowance if they live with the fellowship holder for a minimum of 6 months during his/her stay abroad. In the case of follow-up applications for Early Postdoc.Mobility, a travel allowance is only granted in the event of a change of location. For applicants who are already on site at the time of the application, travel allowance will only be granted for the return journey to Switzerland. You will find an updated list of travel allowance flat rates in the document "[Fellowship and travel allowance rates](#)" in mySNF under "Information/documents" or at www.snsf.ch > Funding > Find funding scheme > Careers > Postdoc.Mobility > Documents. Please enter your travel costs and those of the people accompanying you for the zone(s) relevant to the chosen location(s) of your stay in the first column and add a short description. All other travel expenses, e.g. for visiting a conference, a laboratory or for a field work, must be entered under "Research funds".

2.6 Requested funding – Return grant

Important: Applications for return grants may only be submitted in compliance with the official submission deadlines while a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship is still ongoing.

2.6.1 Salary of the applicant

Holders of a Postdoc.Mobility return grant must in principle devote their entire work-time corresponding to a work-time percentage of 100% to the research funded by the SNSF. Regarding the salary, the SNSF grants CHF 110,000. — (incl. social security contributions) resp. CHF 95,000.- (without social security contributions) for 12 months for a full-time equivalent. The SNSF and the Human Resources office of the higher education institution where the grant holder is employed will define the exact salary.

The SNSF normally recognizes the local salary norms as the upper limit, but reserves the right to reduce salaries, which lie above the national average. Do not indicate predictable but not yet effective costs of living allowances. If the approved research funding is exceeded due to cost of living allowances, this will be compensated later by the SNSF.

2.6.2 Social security charges

This concerns the local percentage of employer's contributions without possible social security contributions such as child- or family allowance. Check this percentage against the current guidelines for the utilisation of funds (Appendix 12 of the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#)). Note: the system does not accept commas, therefore please use a full stop (e.g. 12.5).

University of Basel	14 %
University of Bern	15 %
EPFL	16 %
ETHZ	16 %
EAWAG, EMPA, PSI, WSL	16 %
University of Fribourg	19 %
University of Geneva (incl. IHEID)	23 %
University of Lausanne (incl. CHUV)	16 %
University of Lugano	14 %
University of Luzern	16 %
University of Neuchâtel	23 %
University of St. Gallen	14 %
University of Zürich	15 %
Other Institutions, normally	16 %

2.6.3 Research funds

A maximum of 5,000. - annually can be allowed for the research funds (research costs and conference cost) that are directly linked to the completion of the project. Please list your financial requirements and the intended use for the entire time-span of your return phase as detailed and concrete as possible.

IMPORTANT: Contributions towards research costs (conference costs and research costs) need to be requested in the application for a return grant. The conditions are defined in the guidelines. **Any requests for coverage of conference costs and research costs at a later stage will not be considered.** Costs will only be covered if they are explicitly designated as eligible costs in the guidelines and the [Information set "Postdoc.Mobility"](#) (chapter 11.2). Requests to cover costs that are ineligible will not be granted. More information regarding eligible costs can be found in chapter 11.2 of the [Information set "Postdoc.Mobility"](#) at www.snsf.ch > Funding > Find funding scheme > Careers > Postdoc.Mobility > Documents.

a) Research costs

The following costs are eligible: Costs that are unavoidable for completion of the research project: library fees, photocopies in libraries or archives, transcription costs of interviews, documentation (e.g. access to data, microfilm), expendable items, computing time and cloud computing (excluding general costs for the maintenance and servicing of infrastructure). Travel costs connected to field studies or visits to archives as well as costs for overnight stays (hotels up to three-star category) and meals (if not included in the price of the room) may be claimed in full or according to SNSF flat rates ([Information set "Postdoc.Mobility"](#), chapter 11.2).

The following costs are ineligible and will not be covered: Proofreading, translations, language courses and continuing education, books, subscriptions to journals, stationery, memberships, postage, e-mail, internet and phone charges, photocopies at the host institution, offline storage or media (such as Dropbox, Google Drive, hard disks, memory sticks, ...), material of enduring value (e.g. laptops, printers, digital cameras, standard equipment such as centrifuges, microscopes, etc.), health insurance premiums, overhead contributions and fees connected to visa applications. In addition, publication

costs are not covered by the SNSF mobility fellowships. SNSF contributions to the cost of fully open access publications can be applied for via the OA platform (mySNF). For detailed information, please refer to the SNSF's open access website.

b) Conference costs

Please indicate whether you intend to take part in congresses during the return grant and enter the envisaged budget for these activities for the entire funding period. Conference costs can be used for registration fees at the conference, outward and return journey, accommodation and meals. The attendance of courses and workshops that are not directly linked to the funded research project (e.g. courses for personal career development) is not covered.

2.7 Research requiring authorisation or notification

If researchers apply for a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship to conduct a project abroad requiring authorisations and/or notifications, they must commit to acquainting themselves with Swiss laws and ethical guidelines that are relevant to the proposed project and to follow them to the best of their knowledge and ability. Furthermore, they commit to transmitting written confirmation from the host institution concerning compliance with all legal provisions and ethical guidelines in the relevant country (see information concerning the upload document "Confirmation host institution").

For return grants, please refer to the information in mySNF.

2.8 Diplomas / certificates / extension eligibility window

Indicate the academic qualification attained.

- Dr./PhD -> PhD (scientific doctorate)
- MD -> Dr. med (medical doctorate)
- State examination -> federal diploma

Applications may be submitted by researchers no later than three years after completing their doctorate (PhD, MD-PhD) or an equivalent qualification*. The date of the examination, respectively the defence of the doctoral thesis is the relevant date (the public defence is with few exceptions held on a different day than the exam and this date therefore not valid here).

Applicants who have completed their medical exam (without MD-PhD) with a doctorate (MD) may submit an application no later than eight years after the state examination. Applicants in medicine without an MD-PhD additionally have to present 3 years of clinical work after their state examination at the date of submission deadline (an FMH diploma is an advantage).

* at least three years of research work since obtaining the higher education degree, see article 6 of the [Postdoc.Mobility Regulations](#).

Doctoral studies for attainment of an MD-PhD degree cannot be funded under a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship.

It is permissible to exceed the time window if one or more of the reasons set out in Clause 1.11 paragraph 2 of the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#) apply. **The reasons for extending the time window must be explained in the application.**

These regulations concerning the calculations of the eligibility window do **not** apply to fellowship holders with an ongoing Postdoc.Mobility fellowship who are applying for a return grant.

Please make sure not to mention/use the date the certificate was issued in your CV and in the corresponding mask in this data container. The eligibility period is calculated on the basis of the submission deadline for Postdoc.Mobility applications (1 February and 2 August).

2.9 General remarks on the project

If your partner also submits an application for a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship or if she/he is a grant holder of a mobility grant (Early Postdoc.Mobility, Postdoc.Mobility), please enter his or her surname and first name in this container (for the calculation of the travel expenses).

3 Annexed documents (PDF format required, max. 10 MB per container)

3.1 Research plan

A. General remarks

The research plan provides the basis for scientific evaluation, particularly of the quality of the proposed research project, i.e. its scientific relevance, topicality, originality, feasibility, and the suitability of its methods. Together with the CV and the applicant's track record, the research plan also serves as a basis for assessing the researcher's scientific qualifications, particularly his/her expertise with regard to the project.

The SNSF's requirements with regard to the form and content of the research plan help to ensure the comparability of applications. This is an important prerequisite for a comparative evaluation based on the principle of competition and for the equal treatment of all applicants.

The research plan must consist of 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: <http://www.snsf.ch/> > Research > Fresh impetus for research > 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. Special rules apply for political sciences (Clause 1.16 of the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#)).

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

B. Structure of the research plan

The research plan **must not exceed 8 pages and 30,000 characters (with spaces)²**; this includes:

- the title
- the summary
- footnotes
- illustrations
- formulae
- tables
- a possible table of contents
- but not the bibliography.

The research plan must not contain any annexed documents.

A minimum of point 10 font size (e.g. Times New Roman, **condensed fonts not allowed**) and **1.5 line spacing** must be used.

Please note: Applications must meet all formal requirements (number of pages, characters, etc.). The SNSF does not consider applications that do not meet all of the requirements and/or are manifestly inadequate.

The research plan needs to be structured as follows:

Research plan	
1. Summary of the research plan	<p>Give a summary of the entire research plan. The summary must be structured as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Background: Present the background, past studies, and the rationale of the project 2. Aims: list the overall objectives and specific aims 3. Methods: Mention the methods to be used, including details such as the number of samples or subjects etc. 4. Results: Briefly discuss the expected results 5. Impact: Describe their impact for the field <p>The summary (max. 1 page) must be written in the language of the research plan. You may use the same summary text as in the administrative parts (basic data II) of your application, but it can absolutely not exceed 1 page in length. The summary is included in the maximum number of pages (8) and characters (30,000 incl. spaces).</p>
2. Research project	

² Page and character limits must always be respected:

30,000 characters on 8 pages is within the limit

30,000 (or less) characters on **more than 8 pages** is **NOT** within the limit and will **result in a decision of non-consideration**

More than 30,000 characters on less than 8 pages is **NOT** within the limit and will **result in a decision of non-consideration**

2.1. Current state of research in the field	<p>Describe your project in the context of the current state of knowledge in your field. Make reference to the most important publications, particularly by other authors.</p> <p>Please describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Which previous insights provided the starting point and basis for the planned studies; – In which areas research is needed, and why; – Which important, relevant research projects are currently underway in Switzerland and abroad.
2.2. Current state of own research and professional competences for the project	<p>Mobility fellowship:</p> <p>For a new project, please 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.</p> <p>For a follow-up project (follow-up of an Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship), please report on the work conducted within the scope of the previous project and the results obtained.</p> <p>Please also describe your further professional competences that are relevant for the implementation of the project (e.g. further methods, languages, IT skills, etc.).</p> <p>Together with the CV this information serves as a basis for assessing your scientific qualifications, particularly your expertise with regard to the project.</p> <hr/> <p>Return grant:</p> <p>The aim of a return phase fellowship is to enable the applicant to complete the project conducted abroad in Switzerland or to launch a new project here.</p> <p>For a follow-up project (follow-up of a Postdoc.Mobility fellowship), please report on the work conducted within the scope of the previous project and the results obtained.</p> <p>If your planned return phase project is a completely new project, please 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.</p> <p>Please also describe your further professional competences that are relevant for the implementation of the project (e.g. further methods, languages, IT skills, etc.).</p> <p>Together with the CV this information serves as a basis for assessing your scientific qualifications, particularly your expertise with regard to the project.</p>
2.3. Detailed research plan	<p>Based on the information provided under 2.1 and 2.2, please 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Describe the studies or experiments needed and/or envisaged to reach the set goals. Assess the risks involved and propose alternatives if necessary; – Characterize existing sources and datasets and describe the data collection strategy and possible alternative strategies; – Describe the methods by which the research goals are to be reached and methods that first have to be developed.

	Your description should be as detailed as necessary to enable an expert to assess whether your methodology is appropriate and your project feasible.
2.4. Schedule and milestones	Please compile a schedule that includes the main tasks (milestones) (e.g. table, Gantt chart, etc.).
2.5. Relevance and impact of the research	Please describe the scientific relevance and expected impacts of your project for the discipline and for science as a whole (research and education/teaching). Please mention the form in which you wish to publish your research results (articles in scientific journals, monographs, conference proceedings, etc.). If applicable, please indicate whether and to what extent the proposed project will have a broader impact (outside of the scientific community) and what this impact will be.
2.6. Relevance for personal career development	Briefly explain how this Postdoc.Mobility fellowship would allow you to develop further your profile as a researcher as compared with your research achievements and training to date.
3. Bibliography	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 use of "et al" is authorized if the names of the authors are mentioned in the body text of the research plan. The bibliography is not included in the maximum number of pages (8) and characters with spaces (30,000) count.

C. Revised application (resubmission)

If this application is a revised version of a rejected application, please **upload in addition to the research plan, but in a separate document, 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 be written in the same language as the research plan and must **not be longer than 2 pages**. Please upload a point-for-point response even if you completely changed the content of your research project.

3.2 CV and major achievements

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, 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. Within the scope of this evaluation, the scientific discipline, the academic age and the personal situation (incl. career breaks, care duties, etc.) of the applicants will be considered.

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 and major achievements" in mySNF.

For applications for a Postdoc.Mobility grant or for a return grant, the following information in particular is mandatory in the CV:

- Date of defence of your doctoral thesis (PhD), university/place and **supervisor**.
- Applicants with medical training: Date of state examination (or equivalent degree) and date of doctorate in medicine (MD), university/place and **supervisor**.
- Other degrees (e.g., MSc, BA etc.): Date, university/place and **supervisor** (if applicable).
- Previous employment(s) and current position(s) with **name of supervisor**.
- In case you did not have a supervisor for a specific degree or employment, please write N/A.

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

The portal can be accessed under 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 document is sent out for scientific evaluation. **Please note that the CV cannot be updated after the submission of your application.**

3.3 Statement of mobility

Mobility is recognised as a necessary factor for a successful scientific or academic career. In order to assess the applicant's past and planned mobility concept, a statement of mobility is required.

The concept of academic mobility encompasses five dimensions, taking into account alternative career paths:

- **Institutional:** collaborations with or move to an institution that provides the infrastructure and expertise beneficial to your career as a researcher. Show the added value to your career trajectory so far and to the proposed research.
- **International:** describe the lasting effects of a stay abroad (including several short-term stays over a certain time period), international collaborations and your involvement in international networks.
- **Sectorial:** experience in the private sector or other areas that offer practical experience valuable for the proposed research, particularly in applied research and according to the career goal in this area.
- **Disciplinary:** move across research fields different from your core discipline.
- **Intellectual:** sharing of your knowledge beyond academia (e.g. science communicator, contributions to the standing of science in society, translation into practice).

Please use [this form](#), comment (in the language of the research plan) on each of these dimensions where applicable, and consider the following points:

- Address all dimensions prospectively and retrospectively.
- Your statement can, but does not have to contain information for all dimensions.
- To guarantee fair and equal treatment, a statement will be required by all candidates.

Only use Adobe Acrobat Reader/Adobe Acrobat to open, edit and save the form, or to print the document and save your input in a new pdf file.

The applicant's mobility will be assessed based on the statement of mobility provided. The mobility performed by the end of the grant will be assessed regarding the aim of the respective funding scheme. The statement of mobility will be rated on the background of the research plan, the CV, and the choice of the research institution.

3.4 Copy diplomas

Application for a mobility fellowship: At the time of the submission deadline, the applicants must have a doctorate (PhD, MD-PhD) or must have completed their education in human, dental, veterinary, social or preventive medicine with a doctorate (MD) or must complete their doctorate within the following nine months. Applicants without a doctorate (PhD or MD) are also eligible if they have conducted research work for at least three years after their higher education degree, which may be deemed to be equivalent to a doctorate.

Please upload

- A copy of your doctorate (PhD and/or MD) with grades (if applicable)
- A copy master's degree (resp. licentiate) with grades.
- Medical researchers additionally upload a copy of the **state examination** (or equivalent degree).
- If the doctoral or state examination certificate does not bear the date of the thesis defence or the exam, please include a document certifying the date.
- If you do not have the certificate at the time of submission, please include an official document confirming that you have successfully defended your thesis or passed your exam and showing the date.
- If the defence has not yet taken place at the time of submission, please include a document confirming that you are eligible to take the doctoral exam or defend your doctoral thesis, or a corresponding confirmation from your supervisor. Please note that you must have completed your doctorate within nine months of the submission deadline; the exam or the thesis defence must have been successfully completed by the time you start the fellowship.

Application for a return grant: not applicable.

3.5 Confirmation host institution

Please enclose a confirmation from each host institution with the application. No form or template is provided by the SNSF, but the letters must be written according to the following criteria:

- The confirmation letters must bear the official letter head of the host institution and an original signature (please do not use a digital signature from a certification service provider) of the head of the institution or host professor (no e-mail).
- **The start and end dates of the fellowship resp. the return phase must be mentioned.**
- The confirmation has to state clearly that the necessary infrastructure is available for the duration of the research stay.
- If you submit a proposal for a project requiring authorisations or notifications, the letter must confirm compliance with the legal provisions and ethical guidelines of the relevant country and host institution. If the letter cannot provide such confirmation by the time the fellowship application is submitted, a second letter from the host institute indicating that

the authorisations have been obtained must be provided by the time the funds are released at the latest. In any case, the fellowship can only be released for payment once the SNSF is in possession of such confirmation from the host institute.

- **The author of the confirmation comments on the following evaluation criteria:**
 - How is the research project supported scientifically?
 - How is the applicant's scientific independence ensured and promoted?
 - How is the continuous intellectual development and continuing education of the applicant facilitated?

With regard to the host institution, the following assessment criteria are applied:

- Suitability and added value of the research institution in supporting the research project scientifically and ensuring and promoting the independence of the applicant, as well as facilitating his/her continual intellectual development and continuing education.
- The coherence of mobility measures in the case of fellowship stays split into two parts or more
- Additionally, for the approval of a return grant: value added by the research period immediately after the applicant's return from abroad to a scientific or academic career in Switzerland

The confirmation of the host institution as well as your justification in the section "Choice of research institution" in the document "Statement of mobility" serve the evaluators to assess these criteria.

The place of research must not be the same as the place of education or dissertation and must not be located in the applicant's home country; in exceptional cases, a research stay in the applicant's home country (Switzerland excluded) may be approved for scientific reasons.

You should clarify as early as possible whether a stay at the host institution is subject to any conditions. For example, some host institutions abroad ask fellowship holders to contribute a sum of money towards the institution's overhead. The SNSF does not cover any overhead costs incurred at host institutions abroad, however. The host institution may also ask for funds to cover the research costs. The SNSF can contribute a maximum of CHF 5,000 per year towards research costs if certain requirements are met. Fellowship holders who bring their own financial contribution for covering living costs should generally receive adequate support from their host institution; this support should encompass, among other things, infrastructure as well as any consumables. In this context, please take note of the [Information set "Postdoc.Mobility"](#), item 11.2 at www.snsf.ch > Funding > Find funding scheme > Careers > Postdoc.Mobility > Documents. **Please also clarify your status at the host institution.**

Some host institutes, especially in France, demand that fellowship holders be officially employed at the institution and that the SNSF directly transfers the fellowship to the host institution. In such cases, it is possible that a large portion of the fellowship is spent on taxes and on social security contributions. The amount that ought to be available to the fellowship holders to cover their living costs is therefore reduced. Another solution, which may enable to keep the fellowship's amount unchanged, would be that the beneficiary of the fellowship considers with the host institution the possibilities of signing a "hosting agreement for volunteer researchers" ("convention d'accueil pour chercheur/chercheuse bénévole", similar status as for Researchers Emeritus). In some cases, it can be useful to obtain the status of visiting researcher. Usually a proof of a sufficient accident, illness and

civil responsibility insurance coverage needs to be provided. Please take note that generally the SNSF cannot sign any agreements and cannot be considered as a home institution or an employer.

Some host institutes, **especially in the USA**, also require minimum rates for their researchers, which may depend on the academic age after the PhD. Please clarify this with the responsible offices at the host institute as early as possible. The fellowship rates defined by the SNSF are binding for the year of approval. **If the host institution increases the financial requirements, the SNSF will not be able to adjust the fellowship accordingly.** In such a case, the SNSF expects the host institution to cover any financial gap.

3.6 Family register, children's birth certificates

If you have children that you are obliged to support, please upload the family register or the birth certificate(s).

3.7 Swiss passport or residence permit

If you are not a Swiss citizen,

- please enclose your Swiss cross-border commuter, residence, or permanent residence permit
- the permit should either be valid at the submission deadline (1 February or 2 August) or should have expired no more than 6 months before the submission deadline.
- you must at the time of the submission deadline additionally provide evidence of at least two years of activity at a research institution in Switzerland.
- if you are married to or living in a registered partnership with a Swiss, no permit is required. However, all other conditions must be met.
- if you are abroad with an ongoing Doc.Mobility or Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship, no permit is required. However, all other conditions must be met.
- for applications for a return grant: no permit is required.

	Permit (B/C/L/G) is valid or has been expired for a maximum of 6 months	Permit (B/C/L/G) has been expired for more than 6 months
At the date of the submission deadline: You are resident in Switzerland with a permit B/C/L You are employed in Switzerland with a permit G	You can submit an application, if you meet all other formal and personal requirements.	You <u>cannot</u> submit an application, unless you have applied to the competent authority for an extension. In this case, please upload the corresponding confirmation and/or a certificate of residence (Wohnsitzbestätigung / attestation de domicile) and/or a copy of your contract.
At the date of the submission deadline: You are abroad (without an ongoing Early Postdoc.Mobility/Doc.Mobility)	You can submit an application if your permit has expired for a maximum of 6 months. In general, the permit expires on notice of departure abroad. On request, a permanent residence permit (C) may remain valid for a further four years. If you are already abroad, but your permanent residence permit (C) remains valid	You <u>cannot</u> submit an application.

	(Aufrechterhaltung der Niederlassungsbewilligung / autorisation d'absence dans le cadre du permis de séjour C), please upload a copy of the document certifying its continued validity. The permit G is only valid if you are employed in Switzerland.	
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If you are Swiss citizen,

- please upload a copy of the valid Swiss passport or the valid Swiss identity card.

3.8 Other annexes

You have the possibility to attach other documents relevant to the application in PDF format. This concerns, in particular, any **requests for exceptions** to be granted in accordance with the [Postdoc.Mobility Regulations](#) (art. 5 and 6). The requests for exceptions must be written in the same language as the research plan. **Please note that all publications attached as a PDF in the container "Other annexes", additional reference letter and annexes to the research plan will not be taken into account and will be deleted.**