

# National Research Programme Covid-19 (NRP 78)

## Call document

The Federal Council mandated the SNSF on 16 April 2020 to carry out NRP 78.



FONDS NATIONAL SUISSE  
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SWISS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

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## What are National Research Programmes (NRPs)?

Research carried out within National Research Programmes consists of research projects that contribute to the solution of contemporary problems of national importance. Under the provisions of Article 10, paragraph 2, of the Federal Act on Research and Innovation of 14 December 2012 (version of 1 January 2020) the Federal Council selects the topics and foci of research in NRPs and mandates full responsibility for implementing the programmes to the Swiss National Science Foundation.

The Federal Ordinance on the Federal Act on Research and Innovation of 29 November 2013 (version of 1 January 2018, Article 3) describes the NRP funding scheme as follows:

<sup>1</sup> The National Research Programmes (NRPs) of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) are a means of generating and conducting coordinated research projects that pursue a common goal.

<sup>2</sup> Topics of research are generally appropriate for National Research Programmes if:

- a. Swiss research can make a significant contribution to the resolution of the problem;
- b. solutions require research contributions from multiple disciplines;
- c. research on the problem can be expected to produce research results that have practical applications within a five-year period.

<sup>3</sup> In exceptional cases, an NRP may also be used for the targeted creation of additional research potential in Switzerland.

<sup>4</sup> The following criteria are also taken into consideration in setting forth the topics of National Research Programmes:

- a. the programmes can provide the scientific basis for decision-making by the government and administration;
- b. the programmes can be conducted with international collaboration".

## 1. Introduction

Based on national and international expertise and the recommendation of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), the Federal Council launched the National Research Programme NRP 78 "Covid-19" on 16 April 2020. This programme will run for 24 months and has a total budget of CHF 20 million made up of existing funds.

The National Research Council, based on Article 10 paragraph 2 letter c of the Research and Innovation Promotion Act of 14 December 2012 (RIPA, SR 420.1), the mandate received from the National Council on 16 April 2020 and Articles 5 and 48 of the Funding Regulations of the Swiss National Science Foundation on research grants of 27 February 2015<sup>1</sup>, issues the following regulations for the National Research Programme Covid-19.

## 2. Organisation, concerned bodies

The Presiding Board of the National Research Council elects the members of the international panel of experts as well as of the sounding board and the Steering Committee. To expedite the evaluation of proposals, the Organisational Regulations of the National Research Programmes (NRPs) will not apply.

The international panel will assess the proposals and submit them for approval or rejection to the Presiding Board. It will be advised by a sounding board, composed of members of the National Research Council, as well as by representatives of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) and Innosuisse.

The Steering Committee will monitor and advise the projects and contribute to the implementation of the results. The Committee is composed of national and international experts as well as one representative of the FOPH and one representative of Innosuisse.

Task	Body
Mandate	Federal Council, represented by SERI
Formal decisions on proposals and bodies	Presiding Board of the National Research Council
Organisation of evaluation, programme management, support of lifetime management	Programme Management Board at SNSF Office
Providing scientific advice on evaluation process and selection of proposals, checking if projects fall within the programme scope	Sounding Board
Scientific evaluation of the proposals	International Evaluation Panel
Lifetime management NRP 78 "Covid-19"	Steering Committee

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.snf.ch/SiteCollectionDocuments/allg\\_reglement\\_16\\_e.pdf](http://www.snf.ch/SiteCollectionDocuments/allg_reglement_16_e.pdf)

### 3. Knowledge and Technology Transfer (KTT)

The National Research Programmes (NRPs) generate scientific knowledge aimed at solving urgent problems of national importance. In addition to the research projects, public relations work and the exchange of new insights with stakeholders or the transfer of (technological) knowledge are part of the NRP's core mission.

The NRP 78 Covid-19 will also need to accomplish this mission. To this end, after the selection of NRP projects, the first step will be to define specific knowledge transfer objectives. This step will be taken in close cooperation with the programme's most important stakeholders, i.e. with the Federal Office of Public Health and Innosuisse as well as with the key actors in the health sector and experts in the practical domain. Once the objectives are defined and the main stakeholders taken on board, appropriate measures will be introduced to ensure that results are widely disseminated and rapidly used. Many of these measures will be put out to public tender in the form of mandates.

A maximum of 10% of the total budget will be reserved for knowledge transfer.

KTT will be executed in close collaboration with Innosuisse.

### 4. Scope and modules

On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Covid-19 outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). To this day, the current Covid-19 pandemic still poses significant challenges for public health and the economy. Despite multinational efforts in research and development, our knowledge of the Covid-19-causing coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2 is still limited. There is no established, specific therapy available yet, and off-label testing of existing medicines for Covid-19 is ongoing in randomised clinical trials. Hence, there is an urgent need for biomedical and clinical research to gain a better understanding of this newly identified virus and its future evolution, to understand and contain the spread, address the development of putative subsequent waves of infection, and to develop vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics. Authorities, politicians, health professionals, citizens and public institutions depend on accurate scientific information for evidence-based decisions to protect the public's health and enable the normalisation of public life and the economy.

Mandated by the Federal Council, represented by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), the SNSF is launching the present call for a National Research Programme (NRP) to advance the understanding of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), the clinical management and public health response, the development of vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics. **This new NRP aims to capitalise and build on existing national research competencies, to channel and bundle them into more extensive projects, and to foster multidisciplinary collaborations and exchange of data and results between scientists, health professionals and health authorities.** The goal is to support innovative projects that can achieve results as soon

as possible and to submit appropriate recommendations and solutions to policy-makers, healthcare professionals, and health authorities to combat the current Covid-19 crisis in Switzerland. Due to the urgency of the matter, the timeframe is set to two years. However, we expect that the supported research will generate data that can serve as a guide to further lines of research with the aim of improving the prevention and management of future pandemics.

The NRP 78 Covid-19 focuses on the following specific areas, which are not mutually exclusive. Hence, projects that relate specifically to one of the modules, as well as projects that concern two or more modules, may be submitted.

### **Module 1: Basic aspects of SARS-CoV-2 biology, pathogenicity and immunogenicity**

The newly identified coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2 was responsible for the outbreak of Covid-19 in Wuhan, China last December and the current pandemic across the globe. Our knowledge of the basic biology of the new coronavirus is limited and builds on our experience with SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV, the two coronaviruses that cause the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) respectively. While the genomic similarities between these coronaviruses may indicate pathogenesis through similar mechanisms, several key questions regarding SARS-CoV-2 biology are unclear. For example, it is thought that SARS-CoV-2 originated in bats; however, the zoonotic source of its transmission to humans is unclear. We still have to find out how the virus jumped species boundaries to infect humans, in order to prevent similar occurrences in the future. Besides increasing our basic knowledge of SARS-CoV-2 virology, it is highly relevant to investigate the molecular and cellular mechanisms associated with its pathogenicity and immunogenicity. Understanding the interaction between the virus and the individual's immune response – particularly in comorbid pathologies or patients with disease risk factors – is of primary importance as it strongly influences outcomes. All of this knowledge is crucial to the development of safe and efficacious vaccines and therapies, as well as new technologies for detecting SARS-CoV-2 infections.

Submissions are invited for this research area if the proposed project aims to:

- advance our knowledge in virological, immunological and immunopathological aspects of SARS-CoV-2 infection
- develop pre-clinical animal models that mimic the human progression of Covid-19
- enhance our molecular understanding of viral transmission (person-to-person, as well as inter-species) and pathogenesis
- provide critical biological data for applied and clinical research, and for the development of vaccines, drugs and diagnostics
- advance knowledge of the natural history of SARS-CoV-2 infection to understand correlate(s) of protection or disease severity.

Proposals with high potential for breakthrough research into the basic biology of SARS-CoV-2, with potential implications for the development of vaccines, drugs and diagnostics will be favoured. Proposals may address individual aspects as well as combinations and intersections of different elements. Researchers are encouraged to work in teams to accelerate preclinical experiments and should make use of existing infrastructure, expertise and data wherever possible. There are no restrictions in terms of research methods (quantitative and qualitative or combinations thereof).

## **Module 2: New approaches in Covid-19 epidemiology and disease prevention**

The incidence of the novel coronavirus-induced pneumonia, which was named as Covid-19 by the WHO on 11 February 2020 has increased exponentially since its first appearance and has affected 2'544,792 individuals (confirmed cases); with 175,694 deaths due to Covid-19 globally (source WHO; status 23 April 2020). Most countries, including Switzerland, have implemented major prevention and control measures to reduce person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2. Efficient protection of susceptible individuals, as well as prevention of disease propagation, depend on robust epidemiological data that will help us to understand the rate and changes in Covid-19 infections. This data is also important for assessing the risks and benefits of lockdown measures. Despite major efforts to generate this relevant data, we still lack a clear understanding of the routes of transmission of individuals with both clinical as well as subclinical infections. Other open questions relate to viral adaptations and genomic evolution; and its potential link to the various susceptibility rates among the human population (e.g. gender differences; chronic conditions such as obesity, paediatric versus geriatric populations etc.).

Submissions are invited for this research area if the proposed project aims to:

- undertake new epidemiological investigations (including digital and genetic approaches) to monitor infection and immunity rates and viral transmission routes, including the role of social interaction, aerosols, surfaces and objects
- generate guidelines to acquire high-quality epidemiological data and to harmonise testing strategies across the population and classification criteria (e.g. cause of death)
- develop new strategies and guidelines of infection prevention, population monitoring
- assess the impact of containment and lockdown measures on epidemic control, including to predict putative subsequent waves of infection
- generate data on risk factors for viral susceptibility and prognostic factors for disease progression and severe outcomes in the human population
- investigate health risks and risk perception associated with containment measures (including social and psychological risks) as well as with care for other health issues (i.e. reluctance to seek medical care for life-threatening conditions such as stroke, myocardial infarction, etc.)

Proposals that show clear potential for innovative solutions are favoured. Proposals may address individual aspects of this module as well as combinations between modules; particularly with module 1 at the interface between biology (incl. genetics, genomics) and epidemiology. Researchers are encouraged to work in teams of experts across relevant disciplines to address these multi-dimensional questions (also including healthcare professionals, sociologists, psychologists, geographers and economists). Such teamwork includes the sharing of existing infrastructure, experience and data wherever possible to translate the experimental/epidemiological data into specific and concrete public health measures. There are no restrictions in terms of research methods (quantitative and qualitative or combinations thereof).

### **Module 3: Covid-19 vaccine, drug and diagnostics development**

Neither our national nor any international public health authorities have as yet approved any specific treatments for the severe acute respiratory syndrome caused by coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. Several agents are being used in compassionate protocols based on in vitro activity (against SARS-CoV-2 or related viruses) and based on limited clinical experience. Unfortunately, past and current small trials (see [clinicaltrials.gov](http://clinicaltrials.gov)) with different methodologies have not yet provided any evidence for the clinical efficacy of the anti-viral, anti-microbial (e.g. anti-malaria) or anti-inflammatory drugs (Smith et al. 2020). The WHO and partners, including Switzerland, are organising an international study to compare different treatments to provide evidence for the clinical efficacy of these off-label drugs ('Solidarity trial'; [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)). Even with a positive outcome, there is still an unmet need for safe and effective therapies for Covid-19, for example, for outpatients or treatment of patients with Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS). Moreover, sensitive and robust diagnostic tools (including imaging) should be developed to identify patients during asymptomatic stages to prevent transmission and allow early pharmacological interventions. Also, high-throughput tools and detection methods for (neutralising) anti-SARS-CoV-2 antibodies are needed to assess the rate and strength of immunity to the disease in the population. In spite of the emergence of the first vaccine candidates for Covid-19 (see also [clinicaltrials.gov](http://clinicaltrials.gov)), we urgently need to find more potent and safe vaccines to prevent the disease from spreading further.

Submissions are encouraged for this research area if the proposed project aims to:

- advance the development of novel SARS-CoV-2 vaccines
- test and validate information-driven (e.g. artificial-intelligence-based chemical library screens and drug repurposing) therapeutics in preclinical settings
- develop innovative novel diagnostics for the fast, robust and sensitive screening of SARS-CoV-2 infections in asymptomatic as well as symptomatic carriers, and to understand SARS-CoV-2 natural and vaccine-induced immune responses
- develop and validate innovative anti-SARS-CoV-2 antibodies screening methods and tools to assess the number of asymptomatic patients and susceptibility rates in the population, as well as to assess the duration of immunity after infection.



Proposals that show clear potential for innovative solutions are favoured. Proposals may address individual aspects as well as combinations and intersections thereof. Researchers are encouraged to work in teams across disciplines (basic research in biology, virology, immunology to drug and diagnostics development). Researchers should make use of existing infrastructure, experience and data wherever possible to advance preclinical findings into clinical practice as quickly as possible. There are no restrictions in terms of research methods (quantitative and qualitative or combinations thereof).

#### **Module 4: Clinical Covid-19 research and therapeutic interventions**

Due to the current lack of vaccines and established therapies for Covid-19, public health containment and clinical countermeasures are vital for patient care and management of the spread of this novel pulmonary syndrome. Although clinical guidelines are rapidly emerging, the novelty of the disease, as well as overload of information and scarcely sourced data, can create difficulties for public health authorities and clinicians to contain and manage the disease. Multiple measures and parameters need optimization and harmonization in clinical practice. This includes the need for evidence-based medicine to evaluate the frequency of critical symptoms and to create a stratification system of the most important epidemiological risk factors for Covid-19. Moreover, there is a need for clarification of the criteria regarding discharge from hospital and discontinuation of self-quarantine. There is also a lack of clinical evidence in favour of or against usage of certain drugs (including nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) (e.g. ibuprofen); immunomodulatory (e.g. interferon therapy), or corticosteroids usage in Covid-19 patients). The repurposing and off-label use of approved medications in patients across the entire age and symptom spectrum need to be evaluated in multicenter randomised clinical trials. Such scientific and clinical data will be necessary to provide the most appropriate recommendations and guidance for the clinical management of Covid-19.

Submissions are invited for this research area if the proposed project aims to:

- identify and validate correlate(s) or surrogate marker(s) of disease protection
- study risk factors for severe disease, and protective factors for mild or asymptomatic infections
- test potential anti-Covid-19 therapies (including drug repurposing) in investigational and pragmatic clinical trials
- advance clinical characterisation and management of Covid-19 patients in intensive as well as palliative care; provide recommendations on ethical questions of decision making in acute situations of medical resource scarcity
- provide recommendations and guidelines for decision-makers, authorities regarding the efficient use of available data to estimate the required capacity in hospitals and emergency services and the economic consequences.

Proposals that show clear potential for innovative solutions are favoured. Proposals may address individual aspects as well as combinations and intersections thereof. Researchers are encouraged to use approaches that bridge the gap in knowledge between basic sciences and clinical sciences. Researchers should make use of existing infrastructure, experience and data wherever possible to advance preclinical findings into clinical practice as quickly as possible. There are no restrictions in terms of research methods (quantitative and qualitative or combinations thereof). For testing of potential anti-Covid-19 therapies, multicentre randomised clinical trials are favoured.

### **Additional information on the modules**

If necessary and useful for meeting the requirements of the modules, applicants can include knowledge and know-how from other research fields.

The programme strives for close coordination with international special initiatives or measures on Covid-19 with a view to elaborating appropriate measures in Switzerland. To this end, applicants must explicitly state whether they are using any international networks in fields relevant to the programme or any results from global research efforts (leverage effect).

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### **References and resources:**

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- Elsevier: Responding to Covid-19 – Novel Coronavirus information Center <https://www.elsevier.com/connect/coronavirus-information-center>
- Dae-Gyun Ahn, Hye-Jin Shin, Mi-Hwa Kim, Sunhee Lee, Hae-Soo Kim, Jinjong Myoung, Bum-Tae Kim, Seong-Jun Kim. Current Status of Epidemiology, Diagnosis, Therapeutics, and Vaccines for Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19). *J. Microbiol. Biotechnol*, 2020, 30(3):313-324.
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## 5. Regulations

### 5.1. Law, duration, amount

#### **Article 1      Applicable law**

<sup>1</sup> Applications must be in line with the regulations outlined in this call document. In addition and if no specific provision is formulated in the present call, the other regulations of the SNSF apply, in particular, the Funding Regulations<sup>2</sup> and their General Implementation Regulations<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Grants awarded under this call are eligible for overhead contributions as defined in the relevant SNSF regulations<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Projects conducted for direct commercial purposes are not funded.

#### **Article 2      Duration and amount**

<sup>1</sup> Grants are awarded for a maximum duration of 24 months. The SNSF does not consider applications that request a longer duration. It is not possible to extend the duration of the grant.

<sup>2</sup> The total amount allocated to NRP 78 “Covid-19” is 20 million Swiss francs.

<sup>3</sup> The funding awarded typically ranges from a minimum of 300,000 to 2 million Swiss francs. The SNSF may approve larger grants if the planned research requires costly methods and approaches that justify the need for a higher budget.

### 5.2. Requirements for applicants and applications

#### **Article 3      Personal requirements for applicants**

<sup>1</sup> Natural persons are eligible to submit applications if they meet the eligibility requirements for the submission of applications pursuant to Arts. 4 and 5 of the Project Funding Regulations<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> A maximum of four applicants may submit an application.

<sup>3</sup> If several applicants make a joint submission, the requirements pursuant to Art. 12 of the Funding Regulations have to be met. One applicant may be based outside Switzerland if his/her expertise is essential and generates significant added value, up to two if the overall number of applicants is four. The applicants must designate one person to represent all applicants vis-à-vis the SNSF (corresponding applicant) pursuant to Art. 12 of the Funding Regulations. The corresponding applicant must be based in Switzerland, i.e. fulfil the requirement for applicants in accordance with Art. 10 of

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<sup>2</sup> Regulations of the Swiss National Science Foundation on research grants

<sup>3</sup> General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations

<sup>4</sup> Regulations on overhead contributions

<sup>5</sup> Regulations on project funding

the Funding Regulations. Applicants based abroad have to meet the eligibility requirements *mutatis mutandis*.

<sup>4</sup> Applicants in countries or regions having signed a Lead Agency agreement with the SNSF are eligible to submit an application together with Swiss applicants based on the Lead Agency procedure. These include Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, Poland, Slovenia, Czech Republic and South Tyrol.

#### **Article 4 Applications and grants in relation to other funding schemes**

<sup>1</sup> At the time of submission or during an ongoing project of the present call, applicants may also receive grants for research on other topics under any other SNSF funding scheme.

<sup>2</sup> It is permissible to submit the same research proposal or a research proposal with overlapping content to other national or international funders, for example, to other Corona research initiatives. In such cases, the submission to other funding agencies must be declared in the application or reported as soon as the proposal is submitted to the other agency.

<sup>3</sup> It is permissible to accept funds for the same research from different sources. In the event of approved projects receiving full or partial funding from other sources, the SNSF may adjust its grant to avoid double funding. Proposals for projects fully funded by third parties are not considered.

<sup>4</sup> If applicable, successful applications to the SNSF “Special Call on Coronaviruses” which fit into the scope of this NRP may be submitted in an adapted and appropriate form under the NRP 78 Covid-19 call, even if the project has already started. If the application is successful in the NRP call, the remaining funds from the “Special Call on Coronaviruses” will be retracted by the SNSF and the project stopped.

<sup>5</sup> Re-submissions of unsuccessful applications to the SNSF’s “Special Call on Coronaviruses” are only considered if the re-submitted application is a significantly modified version of the rejected application.

#### **Article 5 Submission of applications**

<sup>1</sup> Applications must be submitted via the electronic platform *mySNF* under the funding scheme “Research Programme 78 Covid-19” by 5 p.m. Swiss local time on 25 May 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Applications must be in English and must include the following information and documents:

- a. administrative information, budget and CV/research output lists as per the requirements set out in *mySNF*;
- b. a project description consisting of a project summary (maximum of 1 page) and a project plan (up to 10 pages for projects under CHF 1 million or for 1-2 applicants, and up to 15 pages for projects between CHF 1 and 2 million or with 3-4 applicants).

<sup>3</sup> The project description, according to paragraph 2 letter b, must comprise the following elements:

1. project summary;
2. Project plan addressing the following points:
  - 2.1. state of research in the field;
  - 2.2. relation of the proposed project to ongoing research, international initiatives and national and international collaborations;
  - 2.3. the project's specific aims, theoretical background and hypothesis, approach and objectives, methods, milestones, expected results and potential risks;
  - 2.4. alignment of the proposed research project to the call priority areas;
  - 2.5. potential impact of the research, *i.e.* rapid implementation, enabling early and valuable outcomes.

## **Article 6      Eligible costs**

<sup>1</sup> The following costs are covered by the grant:

- a. the salaries of scientific and technical staff of the research project according to the salary ranges and rates prescribed by the SNSF. Doctoral students' salaries may be charged to the Research Programme 78 Covid-19 projects if progress with their PhD is not jeopardised and full funding of their PhD beyond the grant is guaranteed;
- b. material costs that are directly linked to the research work, particularly material of enduring value, expendable items, field expenses, travel costs or third-party charges, the costs of computing time and gaining access to data as well as costs for granting access to data (Open Research Data);
- c. direct costs incurred through the use of research infrastructures (including high-security labs) in relation to the research work (*i.e.* no general costs for acquisition, maintenance and amortisation);
- d. costs for national and international cooperation and networking activities carried out in connection with the funded research.

<sup>2</sup> For applicants from abroad, the norms of the relevant country are applied *mutatis mutandis*, with the SNSF's maximum rates generally serving as an upper limit.

<sup>3</sup> The SNSF awards global budgets. Transfers between the individual cost categories during the funding period are permissible.

## **5.3. Evaluation**

### **Article 7      Assessment criteria**

Grants are awarded based on the following criteria:

- a. Compliance with the scope and modules of the programme (chapter 4 above);
- b. Scientific quality of the proposed research project;
- c. Qualification and experience of the applicant(s);
- d. Potential for practical application and implementation of results;

## **Article 8 Evaluation process**

<sup>1</sup> Each applicant/proposal that meets the personal and formal requirements is evaluated by an international panel of experts. Generally, each proposal is independently assessed by two members of an international expert pool. All experts provide the panel with a written assessment. The panel rates the applications and makes a funding proposal.

<sup>2</sup> Based on the recommendations of the international panel, the Presiding Board of the National Research Council makes a funding decision.

<sup>3</sup> A sounding board composed of delegates of the National Research Council and representatives of the Federal Office of Public Health and Innosuisse observe the evaluation process and offer advice. They have no voting rights.

## **Article 9 Decisions**

<sup>1</sup> Funding is decided by the Presiding Board of the Research Council.

<sup>2</sup> Decisions are communicated to the applicants in the form of a ruling.

<sup>3</sup> Applicants are informed about the evaluation through receipt of a positive or negative ruling.

<sup>4</sup> Applicants excluded as a result of the procedure described in Article 11-paragraph 1 are informed accordingly in the event of an unfavourable ruling.

## **Article 10 Right of appeal**

Applicants have the right to appeal against rulings issued by the SNSF.

## **Article 11 Non-consideration**

<sup>1</sup> The SNSF does not consider applications from applicants who do not meet all of the requirements. If one applicant does not meet the eligibility requirements, the application is generally not considered for any of the applicants, unless it is easily possible to evaluate the application without considering the ineligible person.

<sup>2</sup> The SNSF also rules not to consider the application if the submitted documentation is incomplete or erroneous or if the necessary evidence is not provided or does not meet the specified requirements. The SNSF may grant a limited time window to correct minor administrative errors and may subsequently consider the application if the deadline for correction is met. However, the project description may not be changed after the submission deadline.

<sup>3</sup> Non-consideration decisions are communicated to the applicants in the form of a ruling.

## 5.4 Administration and reporting

### Article 12 Grant administration

<sup>1</sup> Grants are awarded and administered based on the regulations of the present call and the other provisions of the SNSF that are applicable to the grant.

<sup>2</sup> The projects must start between 1 August and 31 October 2020.

### Article 13 Reporting

<sup>1</sup> The corresponding grantee must submit an annual financial report.

<sup>2</sup> As is usual for an NRP, a host of KTT activities will be launched. They will address technological innovations (technology developments, KTT), which will be applied to the relevant market segments and integrated into value chains within these segments. In this way, scientific insights gained in the programme will be put into practice as quickly as possible (according to the KTT concept). Researchers can play an active part in these activities. A KTT concept (see also paragraph 3 on page 5) will be presented in autumn 2020.

<sup>3</sup> During or at least at the end of the programme, recommendations for clinicians and the health authorities will be compiled and made public.

<sup>4</sup> Throughout the programme, interim results will need to be made available. Researchers may engage in close collaboration with practitioners and health authorities, as well as participate in scientific symposia organised by the SNSF. Transfer knowledge and technology aspects will be discussed. The symposium is open to the public, and the results will be summarised in a report for public dissemination. Presenting their results at the symposium is mandatory for grantees.

<sup>5</sup> The obligation to document output data during the project and afterwards ends three years after completion of the project.

<sup>6</sup> The SNSF is entitled to demand the correction of incorrect and the completion of incomplete reports.

### Article 14 Special obligations regarding publication and accessibility of research results

Due to the unprecedented healthcare emergency the world is facing, researchers are asked to make the results and data of their projects immediately available, mentioning explicitly the support received from the SNSF. The following open access requirements of the SNSF apply:

- a. Manuscripts need to be deposited in open access preprint repositories (*e.g.* bioRxiv.org for life sciences), in order to make findings immediately available to the scientific community.
- b. All scientific publications must be openly accessible without exception. The embargo periods regulated in the SNSF's Open Access Policy do not apply.
- c. Researchers share the data underlying a publication on publicly accessible repositories, at the latest when the relevant scientific work is published.

- d. By the end of the grant, all research data collected under the grant must publicly accessible, while respecting ethical and confidentiality constraints.
- e. Applicants whose projects are approved must draw up a data management plan (DMP) according to the requirements issued by the SNSF. At the time of submission, DMP data may still be incomplete.
- f. The publication of research data must be in line with the SNSF's open research data policy and the FAIR DATA Principles<sup>6</sup>.
- g. The NRP 78 Covid-19 will not establish new infrastructures for the exchange of medical data. Wherever possible and reasonable, all data exchanges should be effected via existing infrastructures such as the Swiss Personalized Health Network (SPHN).

## 6. Entry into force

### **Article 15      Entry into force**

These Regulations enter into force on 30 April 2020. The call will be open and published on the SNSF website by this date.

## 7. Contacts

For questions regarding the submission of full proposals, please contact Stéphanie Wyss: [stephanie.wyss@snf.ch](mailto:stephanie.wyss@snf.ch) or 031 308 22 22.

For questions concerning salaries and eligible costs, please contact Roman Sollberger: [roman.sollberger@snf.ch](mailto:roman.sollberger@snf.ch) or 031 308 22 22.

A hotline has been set up to provide technical assistance for mySNF and electronic submission::

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mySNF website: [www.mysnf.ch](http://www.mysnf.ch)

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<sup>6</sup> The FAIR principles stand for Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (Wilkinson, M. D. *et al.* The FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship. *Sci. Data* 3:160018 doi: 10.1038/sdata.2016.18 [2016])



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