Building Bridges
Complete the funding portfolio

Without implementation partners

- Research projects
  - Discovery
  - Proof of Concept

With implementation partners

- Innovation projects
- Startup coaching, training, support

Research & Development

- (Fundamental) research
- Application Development

BRIDGE

Swiss National Science Foundation

BRIDGE

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizzer

Innosuisse – Swiss Innovation Agency

July 2023
**BRIDGE governance**

**Overall responsibility**
SNSF Presiding Board, Innosuisse Board of Directors

**Program-specific functions**
- Steering Committee
- Evaluation Panels

**Advisory function**
Stakeholder Group

**Administrative support**
BRIDGE Office (supported by SNSF & Innosuisse)

* SNSF Presiding Board of the National Research Council
** Innosuisse Board of Directors
Goal of the program

« Turn scientific results into economic or societal innovation »

BRIDGE...

- ... fosters the economic and social potential of scientific research,
- ... supports projects in the critical precompetitive phase that have a clear vision of potential application,
- ... facilitates cooperation between Universities, ETHs, research institutes, and Universities of Applied Sciences, Universities of teacher education.
Two lines of funding

Proof of Concept
- Scientific results developed into a product or an application
- Young researchers on their way to entrepreneurship or willing to implement their research findings with an economic or social partner
- Open to all types of innovation

Discovery
- Interaction between basic and applied research to realize the innovation potential of scientific results
- Importance of the societal and economic impact
- Projects may cover any type of innovation or research field
Proof of Concept
Eligibility criteria for the applicants

▪ Early stage of career (bachelor’s or master’s degree, doctoral students, postdoctoral researchers)
▪ Support by a Swiss research institution
▪ Applicants dedicate their full time to the project

Requirements for the project

▪ Based on the applicants’ own research results or on research results they have substantially contributed to
▪ The underlying science has been peer-reviewed or documented by publications or another record of achievement (e.g., bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral thesis, scientific publication, patent, thesis presentation)
▪ Projects may cover any type of innovation or research field
Proof of Concept

Details of the funding scheme

- Up to 4 calls per year
- Projects are submitted by a single applicant

Eligible costs

- Budget of project: max. 130’000 CHF per year
- 100% of applicant’s salary (calculated based on the current rates at the host institution)
- Costs directly related to the realisation of the project

Duration

12 months (extension of up to 6 additional months exceptionally possible)

Overhead

max. 15% overhead paid to the host institution
Proof of Concept

Details of the funding scheme

Evaluation criteria
- Expected **economical or societal impact** for the envisioned innovation, product or service
- **Feasibility of project** and the **implementation scenario**
- Appropriate level of innovation-based, entrepreneurial and managerial **competences of the applicant**, and **motivation to implement**

Evaluation procedure
- Evaluated by the Proof of Concept Evaluation Panel
- Two levels:  
  - evaluation of submitted documents (project)  
  - interview of the applicant
- Decision within 3 months
According to:
- The quality of the proposal
- The interview
- The available budget
Proof of Concept Application

A good application is…

Concrete
- Clear base of research/scientific results exists
- Market and/or societal interest exist; product, application or service has been defined
- Access to the market and/or implementation partners has been described

Clear
- Innovative content is clearly indicated
- Project plan is comprehensible
- Tasks are clearly defined and meaningful
- Milestones are reasonably set and goals are quantitatively described

Consistent
- Project planning and financial planning are consistent
- Timetable and resource allocation are realistic
Proof of Concept Application

Dos and Don’ts

Dos
- Provide answer to the problem (start from the end)
- Follow the structure of the template (leave nothing out)
- Know and follow the evaluation criteria (self-evaluation)
- Start early (necessary documents and signatures, proofreading)

Don’ts
- Focus only on the scientific part
- Neglect “impact” and “implementation”
- Hope for exceptions to the rules
- Imply too much
**Proof of Concept Application**

*If you are not successful*

**Important**
- Carefully read the decision letter
- If you have questions, ask the BRIDGE Office to clarify

**Can you improve your application?**
- If rejected, you can apply a second time for the same project, provided you still meet all the formal requirements
- List and explain the changes made to the former version of the project
Proof of Concept Support
Proof of Concept

Additional support

Assisted patent searches
An assisted patent search for research and innovation can be requested while you are preparing a BRIDGE application.

Support for women
BRIDGE supports career development and network building for the next generation of female researchers through the SNSF’s Gender Equality Grants.

Support for PhDs and postdocs working on the project
BRIDGE provides SNSF’s Flexibility Grants to help researchers better balance their childcare responsibilities with their scientific work and academic careers.
Proof of Concept

Additional support

BRIDGE Coaching
A coaching limited to 10h is offered to all BRIDGE fellows

Innosuisse support
- BRIDGE fellows can take part in the Innosuisse Start-up Training programme, from Module 2 onwards
- Through the Innosuisse Start-up Coaching programme, start-ups can attend specialist international trade fairs either as visitors or exhibitors
BRIDGE Status 2017-2023
Proof of Concept Current Status
Submitted and accepted projects

- 2017-2020: 4 calls per year
- 2021: 3 calls
- 2022: 5 calls

Yearly submitted and accepted proposals and average success rates:

- Submitted:
  - 2017: 226 projects, 17% (25% success rate)
  - 2018: 109 projects, 28% (25% success rate)
  - 2019: 131 projects, 22% (25% success rate)
  - 2020: 146 projects, 22% (25% success rate)
  - 2021: 129 projects, 22% (25% success rate)
  - 2022: 149 projects, 29% (25% success rate)
  - 2023: 202 projects, 17% (21% success rate)

- Funded:
  - 2017: 53 funded projects, 25% (25% success rate)
  - 2021: 36 funded projects, 6% (75% success rate)
  - 2022: 48 funded projects, 10% (75% success rate)
  - 2023: 48 funded projects, 21% (75% success rate)

(Overall average success rate: 23.1%)
Proof of Concept Current Status

Disciplines (calls 2017-2023)
Proof of Concept financed projects 2017-2020

16 calls
612 applications
121 projects approved

Total budget approved: 15.2 mioCHF
Average grant/project: 126 kCHF
88 start-ups out of 121 BRIDGE Proof of Concept projects (16 calls 2017-2020)

Source: Zefix – Central Business Name Index
BRIDGE Next Calls
Submission Deadlines
Deadline always 17:00 Swiss local time

Proof of Concept

- 27th call: 4 September 2023
- Special call: 4 September 2023
- 28th call: 4 December 2023

Interviews

- 9 or 10 November 2023
- 9 or 10 November 2023
- February 2024

Check our website: www.bridge.ch
Requirements for applicants

Eligibility windows

- **Bachelor**
  - Diploma: 4 years
  - Submission Deadline

- **Master**
  - Diploma: 4 years
  - Submission Deadline

- **PhD student**
  - Diploma: 6 months
  - PhD defense: 4 years
  - Submission Deadline

- **Postdoc**
  - PhD defense: 4 years
  - Submission Deadline

Special call: 04.09.2023

Regular call: July 2023
Proof of Concept Current Status
Submitted/funded projects by career state 2017-2023

Success rates
- Postdoc: 21%
- PhD Student: 22%
- Master: 21%
- Bachelor: 18%
Proof of Concept Special call 2022

Submitted (■), invited (▲) and accepted (▼) projects

Institutions

Career state

Innovation areas
Proof of Concept Proposal
Proof of Concept

How to apply?

www.bridge.ch

- Proof of Concept
- Section Documents:
  - Regulations
  - Checklist
  - Template for project description

https://www.mysnf.ch/newuser.aspx

- Section Registration if you are a new user
Proof of Concept

How to apply?

- Creation of the mySNF account at least one week before the deadline
- Take the time to prepare all the requested documents and information:
  - Commitment letter from the future host institute (*template*)
  - Reference Letter
  - Your CV => SNSF Portal
  - CV of the Head of the host research group
  - Project description (*template*)
  - IP overview (*template*)
  - Etc. (cf. checklist and mySNF)

Overview of the ownership of existing Intellectual Property rights to research results

- Potential for a patent application?
- Patent search already performed?
- Patent already filed?
- Any other IP rights?
- Owner/agreement on the IP?

Assisted patent searches

An assisted patent search for research and innovation can be requested while you are preparing a BRIDGE application.
Proof of Concept

Project Description

1. Summary

2. Project Description

2.1 Research background
2.2 Innovation potential and market review
2.3 Description of the project and Implementation strategy
2.4 Project plan, milestones and deliverables
2.5 Commitment to a sustainable development

Bibliography
2.1 Research background
2.2 Innovation potential and market review

- In what way is your idea innovative?
- What is the expected impact of your idea on the market or society?
- How can your innovation offer the economy a competitive advantage and/or benefit society? What is its potential “unique selling proposition”?
- If applicable, what is your strategy in terms of intellectual property?
- What are the possible societal or market outcomes?
2.3 Implementation strategy

- How do you intend to achieve the proof of concept?
- How do you plan to bring your idea to the market and/or society and/or to implementation partners?
- What are the main challenges expected to face regarding implementation strategy and partners?
- If you are planning to found a start-up company, how advanced are your plans in this respect?
2.4 Project plan

- What needs to be done during the project to achieve your goals?
- What challenges are expected? How do you plan to respond to them?
- Milestones and deliverables
- Are the presented measures feasible and realistic within the timeframe of the funding period?
- What will be your future role?

2.5 Commitment to a sustainable development
BRIDGE Office Team

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BRIDGE Steering Committee 2023

Innosuisse
chair Nicoletta Casanova (FEMTOprint | Engineering)
Dave Brown (Angel Investor and Mentor | ICT) (chair EP PoC)

SNSF
Bernd Gotsmann (IBM Research | Engineering)
Mirjam Christ-Crain (Uni Basel | Life Sciences)

external
Mariana Christen Jakob (seif | Social Innovation)
Götz Schlotterbeck (FHNW | Chemistry)
Penny Schiffer (Raized.AI | Entrepreneurship)

advisory function
Jakob Rhyner (Uni Bonn | Sustainability / Physics) (chair EP Discovery)
# Proof of Concept Evaluation Panel 2023

## Life Sciences
- **Karl-Heinz Krause**  
  University Geneva
- **Anja Harmeier**  
  Pureos Bioventures
- **Greta Guarda**  
  USI
- **Regine Eibl-Schindler**  
  ZHAW

## Social Sciences
- **Urs Bucher**  
  Kalaïdos
- **Paola Ghillani**  
  Paola Ghillani & Friends
- **Lesley Spiegel**  
  DIZH

* *ad hoc member*

## Engineering
- **James Miners**  
  Fongit
- **Teodoro Laino**  
  IBM Research
- **Daniele Inaudi**  
  Smartec / Roctest
- **Anna Valente**  
  SUPSI

## Micro-/Nanotechnologies
- **Christofer Hierold**  
  ETHZ
- **Alex Dommann**  
  UniBE
- **Samantha Paoletti**  
  CSEM

## ICT
- **Dave Brown**  
  loganbrown
- **Lisa Falco**  
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