Solution-oriented Research for Development Programme

Transformation Accelerating Grants (TAGs)

Call Document

09 November 2026

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

Swiss National Science Foundation

Solution-oriented Research for Development Programme

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Background

The Solution-oriented Research for Development (SOR4D) programme is a joint funding instrument between the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) that builds on experiences and lessons learnt in previous joint programmes. The SOR4D programme is being implemented in the “Decade of Action” that is accelerating efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda). Transformations are urgent, new ways of thinking and innovative forms of social practice are necessary. While the rethinking of the role of science, finance and policy alike are fundamental to these efforts, the interaction between science and research, practice and policy is of particular importance.

The overarching goal of the SOR4D programme is to produce better knowledge, solutions and innovation by needs-driven, transdisciplinary research that opens up new ways for advancing sustainable development and reducing poverty in the least developed, low and lower middle-income countries. It will contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by fostering partnerships, co-creation of knowledge and innovation.

The SOR4D programme has three objectives:

- Researchers and development actors will jointly generate in their respective geographical contexts needs-based, solution-oriented knowledge that contributes to sustainable development and poverty reduction in the Global South and East. This includes validation in those contexts.
- Project partnerships and networks will test and disseminate research results with potential for innovation (pilot testing, valorisation). This will include different forms of upscaling.
- Researchers and development actors will enhance their competences (skills and know-how) in conducting solution-oriented transdisciplinary research in partnership for addressing systemic and complex development challenges. This includes sharing their findings with other academics and practitioners.

The SOR4D programme has launched two calls for projects in 2022 and 2023 resulting in the selection of 15 projects.[1]

The SOR4D programme launches the call for "Transformation Accelerating Grants" (TAGs) that allow teams of SOR4D researchers and non-academic stakeholders (e.g. policy makers, the private sector, development practitioners) to make use of the knowledge, tools and technologies developed within their projects through translation and implementation initiatives.

A total budget of maximum CHF 1.65 mio is available for the TAG call.

1 Objectives

Transformation Accelerating Grants focus on innovations and transformative actions with the aim to accelerate transformation towards sustainable development and poverty reduction in countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

TAGs shall accelerate or facilitate transition to scale, utilisation and upscaling of research findings and solutions from a SOR4D project on a local, national or international scale. This includes various activities and forms of testing, prototyping, validating, implementing solution-oriented research results.

TAGs should support implementation and scaling pathways that are grounded in the specific political, institutional, economic, cultural and logistical contexts in which the proposed activities will take place. Applicants are expected to demonstrate that the proposed activities respond to concrete opportunities and constraints identified during the SOR4D project and that they are realistic within the duration and budget of the TAG.

[1] List of SOR4D projects

2 General conditions

2.1 Applicable law

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 regulations of the SNSF apply, in particular the SNSF Funding Regulations and their General Implementation Regulations.

The call document and the relevant provisions, regulations and guidelines for the submission of proposals via the mySNF online portal can be downloaded from the website of the SOR4D programme www.sor4d.ch and the SNSF www.snf.ch.

2.2 Eligibility

Only teams composed of at least one corresponding applicant (researcher) and at least one co-applicant (non-academic actor) are eligible to apply for a TAG. TAG teams do not necessarily need to be the same teams as in the original SOR4D project.

- The corresponding applicant is a researcher based at a Swiss research institution who is/was involved in the respective SOR4D project as corresponding applicant, co-applicant or employee. The corresponding applicant needs to be employed at an eligible Swiss institution for the entire duration of the grant. In line with article 1.13 of the SNSF Implementation regulation, staff members in an SNSF-funded project (e.g. SOR4D) are not eligible as corresponding applicants for a TAG.
- At least one co-applicant is a non-academic person based in the partner country (i.e. working at a government agency, a NGO, a think tank, or in the private sector) and provides substantial conceptual as well as practical input for the implementation of the project in the respective country.
- Further academic and non-academic persons from any eligible partner country (including Switzerland) can be part of the applying team.

A corresponding applicant can submit more than one TAG project.

2.3 Activities and expected outcomes

TAGs are intended to function as an innovation accelerator space for the implementation and upscaling of previously obtained research results and solutions, not for communication, dissemination and sensibilisation. TAGs are expected to be based on and make use of existing research results and solutions and are not aiming at fostering new scientific discoveries.

TAGs vary in format and scope and will fund a variety of activities that find their relevance in the rationale and goals of the respective project, within the framework of the overall TAG objectives. Applicants should present a clear implementation and/or scaling vision and strategy, and it should be made clear how the activities financed through the TAG contribute to this strategy. TAGs can for example be used for a validation/implementation study, implementation of research-based solutions, a policy dialogue, creation of a spin-off or start-up, cultural initiatives, or other specific activities designed to accelerate research-based transformation in partner countries or on an international scale. TAGs should be used to finance new activities and not activities planned in the initial SOR4D project. Should a specific activity be implemented in Switzerland, this cannot include intervention with a political or lobbyist intention.

Development and scaling pathways that are based in the private sector are encouraged. Any activities that directly serve commercial purposes and commercial interests or any activities from which someone might derive direct pecuniary benefits during the duration of the grant will not be funded.

In line with SOR4D projects, TAGs are need-driven. Hence, TAG proposals need to present a clear implementation and / or scaling pathway. This should include the intended users or beneficiaries, the actors needed for uptake, the relevant institutional or policy entry points, the expected financing strategy or sustainability model beyond the TAG, as well as the main barriers that may limit scaling. Concrete partnerships and institutional anchoring need to be laid out.

2.4 Project length and budget frames

TAG projects have a maximum duration of 12 months. An extension beyond this initial time frame is not possible.

The maximum budget for a 12-months period is CHF 150'000.

TAGs have to start no later than June, 1st 2027.

2.5 Financial conditions

Two financial conditions apply for TAGs:

1. At least 80% of the approved amount must be spent in the ODA recipient partner country/countries.
2. Maximum 20% of the approved amount can be spent for personnel costs.

2.6 Eligible costs

The following costs are eligible in TAGs:

- Personnel costs (limited to a maximum of 20% of the overall grant), such as coordinators or facilitators directly employed by the project.
- Expenses that are directly linked to the activities of the TAG
- Costs for communication and dissemination activities
- Material costs necessary for scaling and implementation: Equipment of enduring value (only partner countries), consumables, travel costs (compulsory emissions offsetting), room and board costs, field expenses. The budget needs to show clearly how such expenses are linked to the project goals.

Salaries of applicants are not eligible.

2.7 Reporting

A results- and solution-oriented report as well as a financial report is due at the end of the project. The financial report has to take into account the financial conditions.

3 Submission and selection procedure

3.1 Online submission on mySNF online portal, mySNF user account

TAGs must be submitted to the SNSF electronically via the mySNF online portal (www.mysnf.ch) by the corresponding applicant. Corresponding applicants need to register as mySNF users before they can submit an application. Corresponding applicants can provide editorial rights to work in the application on the mySNF online portal to co-applicants and collaborators. User accounts obtained in the past remain valid and provide access to all SNSF funding schemes. It is advisable to request new user accounts as early as possible via the mySNF online portal. Validating a new mySNF user account may take up to one week. For technical questions: mySNF support (German/French/English: +41 31 308 22 00; Mon - Fri, 8.30 to 11.30 / 13.30 to 16.30 Swiss time / support portal: https://snsf-ch.atlassian.net/servicedesk/customer/portals).

3.2 Submission of proposals

TAGs must be submitted via the mySNF online portal.

The deadline for the submission of TAGs is 08.01.2027, 17:00 Swiss local time.

In addition to the administrative data that needs to be entered directly in mySNF, the following documents must be uploaded in PDF format:

- **Project plan:** must use the TAG template provided on the mySNF online portal under “Information/documents” (cf. Annex).
- **CVs of each applicant and project partner**. CVs must be prepared according to the SNSF CV format. For non-academic actors use the template provided on the mySNF online portal under “Information/documents” (cf. Annex).
- **Declaration** from the original SOR4D consortium that they support the TAG submission (this is to ensure that original ideas are not being reappropriated)
- **Detailed budget** reflecting the financial conditions
- Updated **Logical framework** of the project highlighting additional outputs and activities achieved through the TAG

3.3 Evaluation criteria

The SNSF checks whether the formal requirements are met before forwarding the proposal for review and evaluation (cf. chapter 2 of the Funding Regulations of the SNSF).

TAG proposals will be reviewed and evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Proposal presents potential for application and upscaling and has a clear scale-up strategy
2. Proposal presents adequate participation of relevant stakeholders including end-users
3. Proposal addresses a relevant need and proposes systemic solutions
4. Proposal has a clear activity plan and potential for long-term impact
5. Proposal demonstrates awareness for gender, intersectionality and social inclusion and how it will be ensured throughout the implementation process.

3.4 Evaluation and selection

TAG proposals are evaluated by the SOR4D TAG Review Panel. Two referees will independently evaluate each TAG proposal. The proposals are then discussed in an evaluation meeting with the entire review panel. The range of awardable marks according to the Unified Evaluation Procedure of the SNSF ranges from 1 (low quality) to 9 (high quality).

The Review Panel submits funding recommendations to the Programme Committee Thematic and Solution-Oriented Research of the SNSF Research Council.

3.5 Timeline

09.11.2026	Publication of TAG call
08.01.2027, 17:00 CET	Deadline for submissions
End of January 2027	Evaluation meeting
End of February 2027	Funding Decisions Research Council

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Annex A:
Transformation Accelerating Grants – Template for proposals

The proposal must fulfil the following formal criteria:

- *The proposal must be submitted in English using this template*
- *The proposal must **not exceed 10 pages**, including cover page, tables, illustrations and the list of references. A minimum of point 10 font size and 1.5 line spacing must be used.*
- *The proposal **must not contain any annexed documents**.*

Responsible applicant Name, First name	…
Co-applicant(s) Name, First name	…
Project title	…

1. Results of the SOR4D/R4D project

Describe the main scientific results and innovations developed so far through the SOR4D project and the potential challenges and opportunities identified.

2. Objectives and intended outputs

Specify the objectives that you aim to achieve during the lifetime of the TAG and how the TAG builds on the existing SOR4D project. Specify the tangible intended outputs in terms of transformation for sustainable development; describe the intended outcomes for beneficiaries, taking into account gender and intersectionality. (TAGs should develop additional activities and not those already planned in the original SOR4D project)

3. Activity plan and sustainability of project

Describe planned activities and provide a detailed schedule of the work to be carried out. Describe your long-term vision of the project and your strategy for ensuring long-term sustainability, including a financing strategy and affordability rationale. You must also include a risk analysis.

4. Intervention and scaling strategy

Describe how the (local) intervention is imbedded in an ongoing development/research activity or is part of an overall strategy. Identify contextual conditions that enable or constrain implementation and scaling, and explain how the TAG will address or navigate key scaling barriers.

5. Methodology and stakeholder involvement

Explain your methodological approach and how you make use of the respective competences and added value of different stakeholders needed to achieve the planned transformation. Mention specific partnerships and institutional anchoring where appropriate.

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Annex B:
Transformation Accelerating Grants – Non-academic actor CV

This serves as a template of the CV for the SOR4D non-academic actors. Fill in the fields highlighted in grey. You may add or remove milestones in education and employment. The maximum length of the CV should not exceed two pages.

First Name Family Name
Current position(s): Role XY

Education

Degree	Organisation	Duration
Degree XY	Organisation XY	MM.YYYY - MM.YYYY n year(s) n month(s)
Degree XY	Organisation XY	MM.YYYY - MM.YYYY n year(s) n month(s)

Employment

Role	Organisation	Duration
Role XY	Organisation XY	MM.YYYY - MM.YYYY n year(s) n month(s)
Role XY	Organisation XY	MM.YYYY - MM.YYYY n year(s) n month(s)
Role XY	Organisation XY	MM.YYYY - MM.YYYY n year(s) n month(s)

In the form of a narrative CV, explain in the following section "major achievements" your specific expertise relevant to the project. The information provided is part of the evaluation of the expertise of the project team.

Major achievements

The length of the text is limited to one A4 page. Please provide at least one and maximally three major achievements.