

Guidelines for Scholars at Risk applications

The SNSF offers financial support for the placement of scholars at threat through Scholars at Risk (SAR). This document therefore provides guidance on how to complete and submit a SAR application.

1 Eligibility and prerequisites

The SNSF offers financial support for placements of scholars under threat at Swiss universities in the form of Scholars at Risk (SAR) grants.

In general, these can only be submitted on behalf of scholars who:

- **Have not already had an SNSF-funded placement in Switzerland**
- **Are ensured a hosting arrangement** at an institution that is a member of SAR Switzerland (see <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/sections/sar-switzerland>)
- **Have passed the evaluation process of Scholars at Risk** (please note that for a placement at a Swiss university with the financial support of the SNSF, it is the host university that contacts Scholars at Risk on the researcher's behalf to initiate such an evaluation)

An application for financial support of a Scholars at Risk placement **can be submitted either by the Scholars at Risk coordinator or by the academic host** at the institute at which the scholar is placed. If the academic host acts as the main applicant, the SAR coordinator is nonetheless required to be included as co-applicant. In either case, the SAR coordinator needs to be registered on *mySNF* (www.mysnf.ch). **Please note that the scholar in question cannot be included as an applicant or co-applicant**; however, once a grant is approved, the scholar can be added as an employee.

SAR grants cover set amounts. A grant amounts to CHF75'000 for a duration of 12 month and can be extended by CHF25'000 for up to 12 additional months. **The grants are intended to be used by the host institutions to fund either salaries or scholarships.** A scholar's initial travel costs to Switzerland can also be covered by the grant; however, research costs, overheads and similar costs are not eligible. **As a rule, the minimal time for an SNSF-funded placement should be a full year, which may require funds in addition to the SNSF grant.**

Please note that the SNSF generally only funds scholars that have a PhD. Scholars without a PhD can only be supported if the completion of the doctorate is to be expected shortly after the start of the placement or if the scholar has been actively engaged in research as their main professional activity for at least three years, which needs to be demonstrated clearly in the application documents. Also note that scholars supported by a SAR grant cannot be employed on an SNSF-funded project; if they are, their funding has to come from the budget of that project instead.

For the application itself, documentation providing the following information is required:

- A CV of the scholar in question
- An invitation letter from the host institution
- Information on the support that the host institution plans to provide to the scholar (including any terms of the invitation that the host institution and the scholar have agreed upon), and on the planned research or other scholarly activity during the placement

- Information on the financial requirements for the placement, the intended use of the grant or extension, and any additional funding available or being sought to supplement the SNSF grant

2 Submission on *my*SNF

Please contact the SNSF prior to submitting a proposal to check whether funds are still available to cover your application.

The application form for SAR grants is listed on *my*SNF in the category *Science Communication*. While most of the data containers and the information required should be self-explanatory, the following information should resolve any questions or ambiguity.

Responsible applicant / Verantwortliche/r Gesuchsteller/in / Requéant-e responsable

Most of this data container is completed automatically. Under “Correspondence address of application”, select “Address of workplace”. Please note that the responsible applicant must be either the SAR coordinator in question (who will need to have or obtain a *my*SNF account for this purpose) or the researcher hosting the scholar. If the SAR coordinator is not acting as the responsible applicant, they must be added under “Other applicants”.

Other applicants / Weitere Gesuchsteller/innen / Autre-s réquéant-e-s

Additional applicants can be added here if they make sense for the proposal. Please note that any additional applicants also require a *my*SNF account.

Applicants’ employment / Anstellungsverhältnis der Gesuchstellenden / Emploi des personnes réquéantes

Under “Contact person”, specify the head of department or team where the scholar is to be placed.

Basic data I / Grunddaten I / Données de base I

Any title can be entered, though please note that all SNSF grants (including titles) are listed on the [SNSF Data Portal](#), so personal information on the scholars should be omitted. Please also note that the requested starting date entered here must be the first day of the respective month.

Basic data II / Grunddaten II / Données de base II

The summary can be a minimal text. Please note that all SNSF grants (including summaries) are listed on the [SNSF Data Portal](#), so personal information on the scholars should be omitted. As “Financial administration”, the responsible applicant should select the option that refers to their institution; if no financial administration is listed for that particular institution, “Another office” must to be selected instead.

Requested funding / Finanzieller Bedarf / Besoin financier

The amount available for a SAR grant is CHF75'000. This is generally used to provide a one-year salary or a fellowship for the scholar, though part of the amount can also be used to cover the costs of an initial journey to Switzerland. Applicants are asked to add a budget item of the type “Salary for further

employees” for the aforementioned amount. To ensure that the application correctly lists an amount of CHF75'000, social security contributions should be listed as 0%, for which applicants need to tick the box labelled “Enter social security benefits in per cent (overwrite calculated figures)”. (In practice, a scholar’s salary must obviously include the regular contributions according to the employer’s regulations, but the SNSF does not contribute towards these in addition to the CHF75'000.)

Details on how the grant is intended to be used and on existing or prospective additional funding should be uploaded as a separate document in the data container “Further documents for scientific events or research visits”.

CV and publication list / Lebenslauf und Publikationsliste / CV et liste de publications

The CV of the scholar should be uploaded here.

Further documents / Weitere Dokumente / Autres documents

The documents listed in section 1 above should be uploaded to this data container.

Once an application has been submitted, it will be verified by the SNSF. If any information is missing or if there are any issues with the application, the SNSF will contact the responsible applicant. Applications are usually processed within 2-4 weeks. The SNSF will send a decision letter to the main applicant and inform SAR Switzerland of the remaining funds.

3 Grant administration and monitoring

3.1 Release of funds

Once a proposal is granted, the main applicant can submit the request for the release of funds via *mySNF*. In general, the start of a grant can be moved by up to one year after the date stated in the decision letter.

When requesting the release of funds, please complete the section “Financial planning” in accordance with the originally requested funding, adding a comment to reflect if the grant sum of CHF75'000 does not fully cover the scholar’s salary or scholarship.

3.2 Adding the scholar as a staff member

The scholar should be added to the grant as a staff member. This is done under “Messages/requests”, where a request of the type “Employment of a staff member” needs to be made. Other than the information entered earlier to reflect the grant sum of CHF75'000, the information provided under “Data on employment of new person” should reflect the concrete details of the scholar’s employment (provided that they are employed by the host institution).

3.3 Extending the grant

3.3.1 *Supplementary grant*

For each Scholars at Risk grant, a sum of CHF25'000 will be earmarked for the following year. This is intended for a one-time extension, which can be requested towards the end of the original 12-month grant period. These extensions are available in the menu on the left-hand side of the project under *Supplementary Grants / Zusatzbeiträge / Subsidies complémentaires*.

Once you are editing the request for a supplementary grant, make an entry in the section "Requested positions, salaries and social security contributions" under "Further staff". List the "Occupation as a percentage covered by the SNSF per year (%)" as 100% and the "Gross salary covered by the SNSF (CHF)" as 25000. The other numbers can be left at 0. As with the original grant, this allows for the exact sum to be requested, which may not correspond to the salary or scholarship foreseen for the scholar.

Under "Other annexes", please upload a document detailing how the additional CHF25'000 are to be used to extend the placement of the scholar. This document should also include information on any additional funds foreseen to extend the placement.

3.3.2 *Extension of funding period*

In parallel to the request for a supplementary grant of CHF25'000, applicants need to request an extension of the funding period for up to an additional year. A document detailing the use of the original grant of CHF75'000 must be uploaded as part of the request (under *Enclosures / Beilagen / Annexes*). If the original grant was not fully used up during the first year, the remainder should be listed under *Details of extension / Angaben zur Verlängerung / Indications sur la prolongation*, and this remainder can be used for the extension period together with the additional amount of CHF25'000.

3.4 Financial report

A financial report must be submitted no later than six weeks after the end of a grant. It must include documentation regarding the use of the grant, e.g. relevant salary documents, provided that the scholar was employed on a contract, and (if applicable) receipts for travel costs for the initial journey to Switzerland. The template for the financial report is available under the following link: [Template for the financial report](#).

Should a placement end early or the grant is not fully used up otherwise, the SNSF has the right to request a partial reimbursement. Please contact the SNSF (scientific.exchanges@snf.ch) in such cases.

3.5 Scientific report

A short scientific report (max. 5 pages) must be submitted no later than six weeks after the exchange; the template can be downloaded [here](#). This report must include:

- The timeframe of the exchange;
- The name of the funded researcher;
- A brief summary of the research and other academic activities conducted during the placement;

- Partnership aspects, including added value of the collaboration and further planned collaborations.

Output data is also considered part of the scientific report and can be entered on *mySNF*.

Please note that SNSF grantees are in principle required to publish the results of their research in Open Access publications (according to art. 47 of the [Funding Regulations](#)).

4 Contact

If you have any questions concerning SNSF support of scholars at threat through Scholars at Risk or the application process, please contact:

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