



SWISS-UK CLINICAL TRIALS CALL 2025
**SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR PREPARING YOUR
APPLICATION WITH YOUR RESEARCH PARTNER**
09 January 2025

HOUSEKEEPING

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AGENDA

GMT / CET

14:00 / 15:00

Welcome and Introductions

14:05 / 15:05

Background and the benefits of international collaborative trials

14:15 / 15:15

Overview of scope Swiss-UK Clinical Trials Call - opening April 2025

14:35 / 15:35

Support in preparation for the UK-Swiss Clinical Trials Call

- SNSF Scientific Exchanges funding scheme
- NIHR applicant support

14:55 / 15:55

Q&A and concluding remarks

15:15 / 16:15

Close

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

UK

- Inesa Thomsen - Head of International and Open Research Policy, DHSC
- Andrew Farmer - HTA Programme Director, NIHR
- Sarah Puddicombe - Assistant Director Research Programmes, Global Health & International, NIHR
- Issy Reading - Research Support Service, NIHR
- Charlotte Minter - Senior Research Manager NIHR Academy

Switzerland

- Thomas Werder Schläpfer - Head of Operations, SNSF
- Flurina Kuhn - Scientific Officer, International Co-operation, SNSF
- Matt Kimmich - Scientific Officer, International Co-operation, SNSF
- Ngoc Dung Le - Clinical Trials Programme Manager, SNSF

BACKGROUND UK-SWISS CLINICAL TRIALS CALL

SNSF

Thomas Werder Schläpfer - Head of Operations, SNSF

BACKGROUND

- UK is a top partner country in SNSF-funded research
- Strengthening international collaboration is a priority for the SNSF in 2025-2028
- The SNSF has a dedicated funding program: Investigator Initiated Clinical Trials
- The bilateral call enables researchers in Switzerland and the UK to do clinical trials with joint leadership and patient recruitment in both countries. This is crucial for clinical studies which require additional expertise or patient recruitment beyond Switzerland. Examples include clinical studies of rare diseases, conditions with rare subgroups or precision medicine approaches in small populations.

BACKGROUND UK-SWISS CLINICAL TRIALS CALL

DHSC

Inesa Thomsen - Head of International and Open Research Policy,
Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)

BACKGROUND

- International collaboration fuels innovation and helps advance clinical studies aiming to prevent, detect, or treat disease.
- Multi-country clinical trials enable recruitment of a wider and more diverse population, as well as mutual access to expertise and facilities.
- This boosts the effectiveness of the studies and the applicability of the research findings. International trials can accelerate research progress, with the aim of getting effective treatments to patients faster.
- Recognising the importance of international trials as well as the challenges associated with undertaking them, we have committed to supporting new international collaborations and are working to further reduce barriers to the successful delivery of impactful international studies.

AIMS - SWISS-UK TRIALS COLLABORATION

We aim to maximise mutual benefit for Swiss and UK researchers, patients and the public through:

- fostering strong networks between Swiss and UK researchers, enabling knowledge exchange and sharing of best practice and development of effective Swiss-UK research collaborations
- building on the established and successful clinical research funding programmes of SNSF and NIHR
- faster recruitment into key studies through access to a wider population group, enabling quicker generation of evidence and therefore reduced time to impact for patient benefits
- support for early and mid-career capacity strengthening in relation to clinical trials

ESTABLISHING OUR SWISS-UK COLLABORATION

- We are supporting both collaborative research and clinical trials research capacity strengthening and are streamlining our assessment to avoid double jeopardy.
- SNSF and the NIHR are pleased to pre-announce the launch of a joint funding opportunity for innovative **investigator-led randomised control trials and research capacity strengthening** opening on **2 April 2025**.
- We encourage researchers to start building multidisciplinary research teams and to think about preparing for their future proposals now.
- Through this webinar we are encouraging prospective applicants to utilise our available funder support mechanisms within in each jurisdiction.

SWISS-UK INVESTIGATOR LED RANDOMISED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIALS CALL - APRIL 2025

NIHR

Andrew Farmer - HTA Programme Director, NIHR

SWISS-UK INVESTIGATOR LED RANDOMISED CONTROLLED CLINICAL TRIALS CALL - APRIL 2025

- The bilateral call supports **novel collaborative research to undertake randomised controlled trials in areas of unmet clinical need in Switzerland and the UK** that can only be addressed through collaborative cross-country efforts.
- Any area of unmet clinical need in health is welcome within the scope of this call
Unmet needs are serious health conditions with limited satisfactory options for the prevention, diagnosis or treatment to support improved health outcomes.
- The Swiss-based component will be funded through the SNSF, and the UK-based component funded through the NIHR (EME or HTA programmes), where applications align to the call and these programme remits.

SWISS-UK CLINICAL TRIALS CALL APRIL 2025 - SCOPE (1)

- Researchers from Switzerland and the UK with a novel research collaboration can apply for funding for **randomised controlled trials in areas of unmet clinical need**
- Funding will support robustly designed clinical studies that test the efficacy or clinical and cost effectiveness of interventions (Phase 2b or Phase 3):
 - Studies can focus on any intervention used to diagnose, prevent or treat disease
 - There must be sufficient evidence from earlier clinical studies in humans that the proposed intervention(s) might work
 - Applications must be not for profit / non-commercial by nature
 - Studies must be multicentre and collaborative
 - Studies are encouraged to include recruitment from historically underserved populations in geographies with high disease burden

SWISS-UK CLINICAL TRIALS CALL APRIL 2025 - SCOPE (2)

- **Public and patient involvement and research inclusion** must be strongly embedded throughout the research lifecycle, with justification of how these considerations and approaches meet the call scope and funder requirements.
- Applicants should describe how they will help build research capacity and expertise of **early and mid career researchers (EMCRs)** through experience and training in the conduct and leadership of clinical trials, by offering funded and competitively awarded EMCR development posts and tailored support packages (e.g including knowledge and skills exchange visits) within the project.
- Expertise and trial recruitment must be spread across Switzerland and the UK (minimum of 20% recruitment per country) with additional costs for one country leading on support for the trial coordination function.
- Lead applicants must demonstrate an appropriate level of experience and independence to be able to lead the proposed multicentre clinical trial project, without the need for mentoring support. For this funding opportunity, lead applicants will be expected to oversee/lead the academic EMCR career and leadership development and clinical trials capacity strengthening activities outlined in the project.

SWISS-UK CLARIFICATION OF ROLE DEFINITIONS

Role	SNSF	NIHR
Investigator (corresponding applicant) with overall responsibility for the design, conduct and reporting of a study.	Corresponding applicant (& other applicants)	Lead (UK) / Joint Lead (Swiss) Joint Lead is listed as a Co-applicant on NIHR application
Team roles with responsibility for day to day management and delivery of the project.	Project partner	Co-applicants , a Joint Lead (UK) supporting the UK lead or Public Co-applicant
Other partners or collaborators with supporting roles	Project partner	Other partners/Collaborators providing a supporting role - nature and type of activities will need to be described

SWISS-UK CLINICAL TRIALS - APRIL 2025

OUT OF SCOPE

The following are out of scope for this funding opportunity:

- Active or existing investigator-led randomised controlled trials, or clinical study protocols, that have already been submitted and/or approved for funding
- Early clinical studies which aim to establish proof of concept (including phase 1 and early phase 2a trials), studies with safety endpoints, observational studies, non-randomised and uncontrolled, preclinical studies, and studies involving animals
- Studies which are solely for the purposes of licensing
- Applications without a collaboration between Swiss-UK lead investigators

SWISS-UK CLINICAL TRIALS - APRIL 2025

FUNDING AVAILABLE

- Joint funding of **8.8 million CHF / £8 million GBP** for up to **5 years**.
- SNSF and NIHR will fund up to **three** high-quality, collaborative Swiss-UK clinical studies.
- Each funder will fund the research activities based in their country.
- This collaboration will build and benefit from the work of the [Access Consortium](#) to align regulatory requirements for therapeutics, of which both the UK and Switzerland regulatory agencies are members.

SWISS-UK CLINICAL TRIALS - APRIL 2025

OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applications will need to demonstrate a collaboration between a Swiss and a UK lead investigator and how they meet the following criteria:

- Relevance of proposed research
- Research quality and excellence
- Quality and relevance of the research capacity development proposal
- Knowledge mobilisation, dissemination and impact
- Working with people and communities
- Research Inclusion
- Strength of the research team
- Value for money

PREPARATION FOR 2025 SWISS-UK CLINICAL TRIALS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

SNSF's Scientific Exchanges funding scheme

Matt Kimmich, Scientific Officer, SNSF

NIHR applicant support

Sarah Puddicombe, Assistant Director Research Programmes,
Global Health and International, NIHR

USING THE SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES TO DEVELOP SWISS -UK COLLABORATIONS

The SNSF's Scientific Exchanges (SE) funding scheme offers two formats that can be used to launch and foster collaborations **between Swiss researchers and researchers in any other country.**

The overall rules of the Scientific Exchanges need to be adhered to for activities in the context of the joint NIHR/SNSF call.

WHAT IS THE SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES FUNDING SCHEME?

The SNSF supports the following two formats of Scientific Exchanges:

- Research visits
(1-6 months)
- Scientific events (conferences, workshops and similar events)
(1-5 days)

APPLICATION PROCESS AND ASSESSMENT

- Applications must be submitted between 4-18 months before the beginning of the visit/event
- The evaluation takes up to 3 months
- SE applications are assessed by two scientific officers at the SNSF, who conduct a 'plausibility check'
- Applications must be written for a generalist audience



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SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

Format and eligibility criteria

- Events organised in Switzerland (justified exceptions possible), convening researchers from Switzerland and abroad
- Duration: 1-5 days
- Purpose: exchange and development of knowledge and ideas
→ Developing a proposal for another call cannot be the only objective; the SE must provide an added value regardless of whether a follow-up proposal is successful or not
- Applicants must have a position at a Swiss research institution; early-career researchers who do not have a PhD can also apply
- Funded participants must add to the content of, and derive a scientific benefit from, the event
- Only participants from abroad can be supported (unless an event is exceptionally supported outside Switzerland)



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SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

Eligible costs

Grant maximum defined by the duration of an event (CHF2'500 per half-day):

- ✓ Travel costs for funded participants
- ✓ Accommodation and meals for funded participants; up to CHF200 per overnight stay
- ✓ Costs for online/hybrid events (equipment and support)
- ✓ Support for participants with childcare duties (travel costs and childcare allowance); this does not count towards the grant maximum mentioned above

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

Assessment

For the plausibility check, the following criteria are checked:

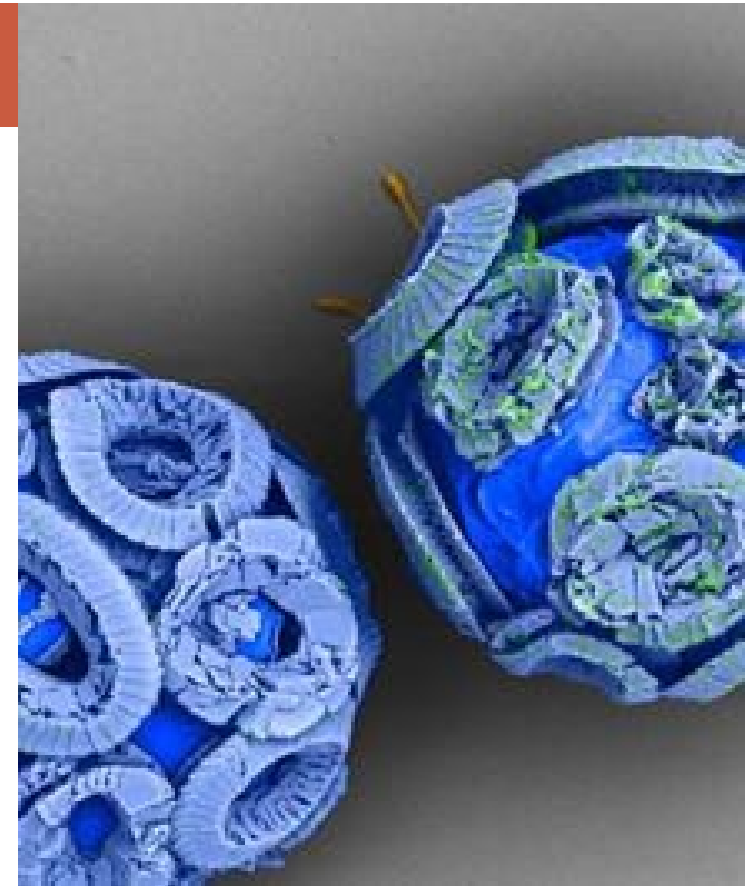
- Expertise and scientific qualification of the funded participants
- Relevance and originality of the exchange
- Mutual scientific benefits/added value
- Feasibility

→ All of this is checked against the aims, format and overall rationale of the event

RESEARCH VISITS

Format and eligibility criteria

- Visits by the Swiss applicant to a host abroad, or by a guest from abroad to Switzerland
→ Multiple guests are not allowed
- Purpose: joint research activities, mainly in project format
- Duration: 1-6 months
- Applicants must have a PhD (or equivalent) and a position at a Swiss research institution for at least six months beyond the end of the visit
- Both guest and host must derive a scientific benefit from the visit



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RESEARCH VISITS

Eligible costs

- ✓ Travel costs for one round trip
- ✓ Monthly flat rate of CHF 3'000 for living expenses
- ✓ Support for participants with childcare duties (travel costs and childcare allowance)
- × Not included: research costs, salaries

RESEARCH VISITS

Assessment

Same criteria as for the events: expertise, relevance, added value, feasibility

Examples of questions that we ask:

- Is the visit dedicated to collaborative research?
- Do both host and guest derive a scientific benefit from the visit?
- Is the planned research reasonably self-contained, does it have a purpose in and of itself?

A FEW LAST POINTS...

Overlap

- Scientific Exchanges can be applied for and run in parallel to other SNSF funding, but scientific overlaps must be avoided

Events & visits

- Scientific events and research visits can be applied for and run in parallel to each other...
- ... but no more than one application of the same type (event or visit) can be funded per individual per year, i.e. there must be at least 12 months between the end of one exchange and the start of a new one of the same type

Management

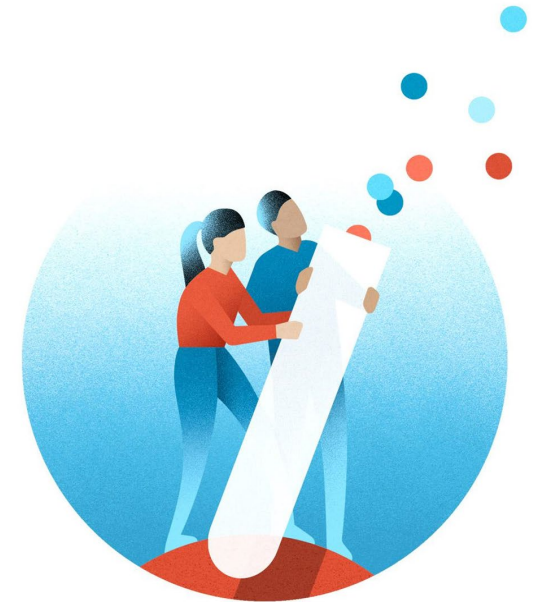
- Once granted, Scientific Exchanges can be postponed, if there are no substantial changes to the content
- Participant changes to events are generally possible

Any questions?

Check out our website: **Scientific Exchanges**

You can contact the Scientific Exchanges team at

scientific.exchanges@snf.ch



NIHR SUPPORT FOR APPLICANTS (1)

Research Support Service

- The [NIHR Research Support Service \(RSS\)](#) provides free and confidential support for researchers to apply for funding and develop and deliver clinical and applied health and care research.
- The experts in the RSS can help you to formulate your idea into a research question. Available to applicants based in England, or with a project partner based in England.

Research support for applicants from Devolved Administrations in the UK

- Scotland may access NHS Scotland Innovation Hubs and/or NHS [Research Scotland](#)
- Northern Ireland may access [The Northern Ireland Clinical Research Network](#)
- Wales may access [Health and Care Research Wales](#)

NIHR SUPPORT FOR APPLICANTS (2)

Study Support Service

- The [Study Support Service](#) helps researchers and the life sciences industry plan and deliver high quality research to time and target. It supports researchers across England in the NHS and the wider health and social care environment.
- We provide this service for all studies eligible for support on the [Research Delivery Network \(RDN\) Portfolio](#), regardless of location, study type, study size, therapy or research area.

Other Clinical Trials Support

- [UK Clinical Research Collaboration Registered Clinical trial units network](#)
For more information contact UKCRC Registered CTU Network

OVERVIEW

Scientific Exchange (SE) and NIHR support

For Swiss leads to support collaborations and for collaborative teams to access NIHR support via the UK leads

Timing: Available at any time

Clinical trial applications (two-stage application process)

Opportunity opens for submissions:

- **02 April 2025 13:00 UK / 14:00 Switzerland**

Deadline for outline submissions:

- **09 September 2025 13:00 UK / 14:00 Switzerland**

Deadline for full submission (shortlisted outlines invited to full submission):

- **04 December 2025 13:00 UK / 14:00 Switzerland**

Q&A

- Andrew Farmer** - HTA Programme Director, NIHR
- Sarah Puddicombe** - Assistant Director Research Programmes,
Global Health & International, NIHR
- Issy Reading** - Research Support Service, NIHR
- Charlotte Minter** - Senior Research Manager NIHR Academy
- Matt Kimmich** - Scientific Officer, International Co-operation, SNSF
- Flurina Kuhn** - Scientific Officer, International Co-operation, SNSF
- Ngoc Dung Le** - IICT, SNSF

ANY QUESTIONS

- Recording and slides will be made available shortly
- FAQs will be posted on our websites

For more information:

[Scientific Exchanges](#) Email: scientific.exchanges@snf.ch

[Swiss UK investigator-led randomised controlled clinical trials in areas of unmet clinical need](#)

Email: Internationalapplications@nihr.ac.uk

GOOD LUCK!