

Practice-to-Science

Guidelines for submitting a proposal via mySNF

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1. Submission of proposal

1.1 Regulations and relevant documents

The Practice-to-Science Regulations and relevant documents are available on our website in **German, French and English** (see section "Documents"). Alternatively, the documents are also accessible in your Practice-to-Science application on mySNF under "Information/Documents". For any questions contact: pts@snf.ch

1.2 Personal requirements

The personal requirements for applicants, are governed by articles 4 and 5 of the Practice-to-Science Regulations.

Please note that applicants doing or terminating a PhD degree are not eligible.

1.3 Submission deadline

Practice-to-Science is a pilot funding instrument of the SNSF at this stage and there will be a second call in 2021. Proposals have to be submitted electronically via the web platform mySNF (www.mysnf.ch). The application must be submitted **no later than 17:00:00 Swiss local time (i.e. UTC + 1)** on the day of the submission deadline:

Submission deadline: 15 July 2021

Do not wait until the very last moment to submit your application. The deadline is non-negotiable.

1.4 Parallel submissions

Note that a Practice-to-Science application may only be submitted for a duration of support for which no other career grant has been requested, approved or are ongoing. Before preparing an application consult the relevant articles on parallel submissions in the regulations for each funding instruments concerned.

1.5 Create a new application on mySNF

All new users have to register first on mySNF (www.mysnf.ch). Note that it may take several days to process your request for a mySNF account. If you already have a mySNF account, check that the role "grant applicant" is present. In the corresponding step during the registration, make sure to select the correct division and funding instrument (Careers/Practice-to-Science).

1.6 Duration of the grant

Practice-to-Science grants are awarded for a maximum of three years. The minimum duration of funding is one year. If the maximum duration of the grant is not requested, the applicant must give an explanation for the shorter duration in the cover letter.

1.7 Earliest and latest possible starting date for the grant

The earliest and latest possible starting dates are 1 March 2022 and 1 March 2023, respectively. Note that the starting date can still be changed within this time frame after a Practice-to-Science grant has been awarded.

1.8 Revised application/resubmission

In case of a resubmission, upload in the container "Research plan" **a separate document** providing a point-for-point response to the critique raised in the rejection letter and a comment on significant changes or additions in the research plan, if applicable. This statement must **not be longer than 2 pages** (point 10 font size and 1.5 line spacing).

1.9 Budget

Under the Practice-to-Science grants funding scheme, the SNSF awards a maximum of CHF 600'000 for 3 years, i.e. maximum CHF 200'000 per annum (see articles 3 and 8 of the Practice-to-Science Regulations). The grant may be used to cover the grantee's salary for up to 0.5 FTE and/or research funds.

The budget should be as detailed as possible (e.g. separate entries are required for equipment, access costs to infrastructure, consumables, travel, personnel, etc.). Costs for open access publications are not eligible costs under Practice-to-Science grants and must be applied for separately via mySNF (www.snf.ch/oa). Changes in the budget after the submission of the application are not possible.

Research funds may be used to employ personnel (e.g. technician, laboratory assistant, supporting assistant, PhD student, postdoctoral researcher, etc.). Personnel salaries may be different for every institution. The applicant should therefore contact in advance the HR department or the personnel office of the research institution for the corresponding salary standards. For salaries, the fields labelled "Social security contributions (%)" are automatically calculated according to the selected research institution in the container "University or research institution".

Regarding family/child allowance ("Further social security contributions"), they differ in every canton. Therefore, contact in advance the HR department or the personnel office of the research institution.

1.10 Data Management Plan

The proposal must include a [Data Management Plan](#) (DMP) set up according to the requirements issued by the SNSF. The aim of a DMP is to plan the lifecycle of data. It offers a long-term perspective by outlining how data will be generated, collected, documented, shared and preserved. The DMP is an integral part of the grant proposal. The proposal can only be submitted once the DMP has been completed. The [content of the DMP](#) is directly entered in the mySNF submission form. It is not possible to upload a DMP as a separate PDF file. Applicants must enter a DMP that is understandable, suits their project and meets the standards set by their research community. At this stage, the DMP is considered a draft and is excluded from the evaluation process. However, the definitive DMP must be provided by the end of the project at the latest.

1.11 External peer-reviewing

A list of potential external reviewers is not required. The applicant is entitled to submit together with the funding proposal a list with the names and addresses of persons who are not to be asked for an external review (exclusion list). The SNSF may abide by this list if the applicant provides a valid reason for the requested exclusion and if a sufficient number of other experts are available.

1.12 Career plan

No form or template is provided by the SNSF. The career plan must **not exceed one page** (a minimum of **point 10 font size** and **1.5 line spacing**). The past career achievements should be described briefly, while more emphasis should be put on the medium and long-term career goals.

1.13 Choice of research institution

All publicly funded universities of applied sciences and universities of teacher education in Switzerland are eligible. Applicants must carefully motivate their choice of the research institution in the cover letter. The evaluation committee will assess this choice based on the rationale provided.

1.14 Written confirmation of the research institution

Applicants must contact as soon as possible the research institution to ask for the written confirmation of the research institution. The written confirmation of the research institution consists of two separate letters:

1. Detailed confirmation of the research institution signed by the head of the institute/department. This letter refers to the obligations which are stated in the Practice-to-Science Regulations, in particular article 7.
2. General confirmation of the vice rectorate for research (or equivalent).

The directorate of the institute/department must forward the detailed confirmation of the research institution (point 1) to the vice-rectorate for research in order to receive the general confirmation (point 2). Then, the directorate of the institute/department must send both confirmations to the applicant for a timely submission of the application.

Both confirmations must follow the text template provided by the SNSF and be written on paper using the official letterhead of the research institution. They must be added to the application and will only be regarded as complete if all the points relevant to the application are addressed. The text template is available in German, French and English (see section "Documents").

If the engagement of a PhD student is envisaged for the project, the confirmation of the research institution **must include a commitment to guarantee the due completion of the thesis** (i.e. salary) at the end of the grant or if the grant is prematurely interrupted. In addition, **a confirmation signed by a professor at a university/EPFL/ETHZ who agrees to act as official supervisor of the PhD student must be also uploaded** with the detailed and general written confirmations from the research institution.

1.15 Support letters

According to the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#) signed by the SNSF, applications are evaluated based on the quality of past and ongoing research activities, not on the opinion of mentors, supervisors or collaborators. Consequently, the submission of support letters is not authorized, unless the letters provides a proof of support for the realization of the project. All other support letters, either uploaded on mySNF or forwarded to the SNSF, will be discarded.

1.16 Evaluation procedure

The evaluation procedure takes place in two phases. In phase 1, the evaluation committee of the SNSF makes an initial selection based on the documents submitted. Only applications selected for

phase 2 are peer-reviewed. All candidates selected for phase 2 are usually invited to an interview to present their research project and career plan.

Applicants will receive the decision (invitation for an interview/rejection) by the end of October 2021. The interviews are held in January 2022. These candidates will be informed about the final decision around the end of February 2022. Dates are subject to changes without notice.

The SNSF subjects all applications for a Practice-to-Science grant to a stringent scientific evaluation procedure and rates them based on pre-defined criteria at its due discretion. Based on assessments by referees and co-referees and the comparison and discussion of applications by the evaluation body, a small share of applications may emerge that are of equal quality and equally worthy of funding. As no further differentiation is possible, decisions for this group of applications will be reached by drawing lots according to Article 23 paragraph 5 of the [Organisational Regulations of the National Research Council](#). Applicants affected by this procedure are informed accordingly in the decision letter. The letter includes a justification for applicants who are excluded as a result of the procedure.

2. Instructions for CV, major scientific achievements, statement of practical experience and research output list

2.1 General remarks

As mentioned above, the SNSF has signed the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), which recommends funders to be explicit about the criteria used in evaluating the scientific productivity of applicants. The scientific quality, value and impact of the entire research output is taken into consideration (including datasets, software, and prototypes) in addition to research publications. In this context, the scientific content of a paper is much more important than publication metrics or the name of the journal in which it was published. Furthermore, during its evaluation procedure, the SNSF takes into account the scientific discipline, academic age and personal situation (e.g. career breaks, child care duties).

2.2 Instructions for the CV, the major scientific achievements and the statement of practical experience

The CV, major scientific achievements, and statement of practical experience must be assembled in one document and be written in the same language as the research plan.

The CV must not exceed 3 pages (**minimum font size 10 points, choice of line spacing is free**) and must be structured as follows. It is important that all dates at least include month and year. Additional points can be added, if relevant:

1. Personal information, including the researcher ID (e.g. OrcID, ResearcherID, Google Scholar ID).
2. Education: Mention the day of your PhD defence viva voce and the name of the PhD advisor/s.
3. Employment history including current position/s.
4. Institutional/professional responsibilities.
5. Approved research projects.
6. Supervision of junior researchers at graduate and postgraduate level (summary information, the names of the junior researchers should be indicated).
7. Teaching activities (summary information).
8. Memberships in panels, boards, etc., and individual scientific reviewing activities.
9. Active memberships in scientific societies, fellowships in renowned academies.

10. Organisation of conferences.
11. Prizes, awards, fellowships.
12. Career breaks (provide justification).

In the section "Major scientific achievements" (maximum 1 page to be attached to the CV; **minimum font size 10 points**) the applicant describes his/her most important scientific achievements. Describe for each achievement the applicant's specific contribution and the overall impact of the work.

The section "Statement of practical experience" should be maximum 2 pages long (**minimum font size 10 points**) to be attached to the CV. The applicant must list all his practical experiences. For each listed practical experience, the applicant must provide **its dates (month/year; start and end), its worktime percentage, its duration (years and months) relative to a full time position (100%), its description, and its relationship to the proposed Practice-to-Science project. Please mention at the end of your statement the total duration of all your practical experiences relative to a full time position (100% or 1 full-time equivalent).**

The SNSF considers the practical nature of the experience and defines a practical experience as an experience during which the applicant has no related research output (publications, book chapters, conferences...). In particular, PhD (ongoing or completed) and postdoctoral positions (with the exception of postdoctoral positions in the industry where the purpose is to acquire practical experience) cannot be considered as practical experiences.

2.3 Instructions for the research output list

The research output list is used in the evaluation process to assess the scientific productivity, the scientific quality, the scientific independence and qualification of an applicant with regard to the proposed project and his/her ability to successfully conduct and document a research project.

The applicant's name in the list of authors and the publication year must be clearly visible (e.g. boldfaced or underlined). Give the full reference and do not use "et al." to shorten the list of authors, unless the research project was conducted by a large international collaboration with more than 50 authors and a direct link to the full publication is given. Do not add journal-based metrics such as the journal impact factor. If applicable, provide a direct internet link for each publication.

Under points 1-4 only "published", "in press" or "accepted" publications can be listed ("submitted" or "forthcoming" publications cannot be included). All entries in every section should be numbered. **Important: Do not change the order of authors, in particular for publications with shared first authorship.** Ensure that all required categories below are listed and indicate "none" in case of absence of items in a given category. The research output list should be structured as follows (if applicable):

1. Publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals
2. Peer-reviewed books/monographs
3. Peer-reviewed conference proceedings
4. Contributions to books
5. Patents and licenses
6. Oral contributions to conferences (talk or poster)
7. Outreach activities (e.g. public engagement in science, technology and knowledge transfer activities, scientific art performances, etc.)
8. General contributions to science (e.g. spokesperson for experiments, leader of expeditions, founder of networks and training programmes, etc.)

9. Other artefacts with documented use (e.g. maps, methods, prototype demos, software, databases, design, contributions to big data collaborations, etc.)
10. Preprints (e.g. arXiv, bioRxiv, EarthArXiv, etc.).
11. If a manuscript/monography is not accessible via a repository for preprints, specify the journal/publisher where it has been submitted and upload the proof of submission, as well as the file in the container "Other annexes".

3. Instructions for the research plan

3.1 General remarks

The research plan must consist of an original text that has been written by the applicant himself/herself. A limited amount of text (or other material, graphs, etc.) by third parties or text published by the applicant himself/herself is permissible in the sections concerning the state of research (2.1) and the state of his/her personal research (2.2) as well as when describing standard methods. The quoted texts must be clearly designated as such (quotation marks or appropriate wording) and a verifiable source must be mentioned nearby and in the bibliography. The SNSF uses a special software to compare texts and analyse suspected cases of plagiarism. A number of universities have made such programs available to their students and employees. We recommend that you contact your institution for further information. For more details see the SNSF dossier on scientific integrity:

www.snsf.ch > The SNSF > Research policies > Scientific integrity

In mathematics, natural and engineering sciences, biology, medicine, psychology, economics and political sciences, applications have to be submitted in English. In all other research areas, applications can be submitted in one of the official Swiss languages (preferably in German or French; for Italian please contact the administrative office of SNSF first). An English translation must be enclosed if requested by the SNSF. Special rules apply for political sciences. Researchers will still be able to submit proposals in an official Swiss language should this be justified for scientific reasons, particularly if working in a specific language is appropriate to the nature of the research topic.

The SNSF does not consider applications that do not meet the requirements for the research plan, the formal requirements for applications (article 14 of the [Funding Regulations](#)) and the requirements for research integrity and good scientific practice (article 15 of the [Funding Regulations](#)).

3.2 Structure of the research plan

The research plan must **not exceed 10 pages** (A4 paper size) and **40'000 characters (with spaces)**. This includes the title or title page, possible table of contents, summary, footnotes (explanatory notes or comments at the bottom of a page), illustrations, formulae, tables, but not the bibliography (list of sources/references at the end of the document). A minimum of **point 10 font size** (e.g. Times New Roman; condensed fonts not allowed) and **1.5 line spacing** must be used. The research plan should not contain any annexed documents and must be uploaded as a single file. The research plan needs to be structured as follows:

Research Plan	
1. Summary (maximum 1 page)	Present the background and rationale of the project, list its overall objectives and specific aims, mention the methods to be used, and briefly discuss the expected results and their impact for the field.
2. Proposed Research	
2.1 Current state of research in the field	Describe your project in the context of the current state of knowledge in your field. Make reference to the most important publications, particularly by other authors. Describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - which previous insights provided the starting point and basis for the planned studies; - in which areas research is needed, and why; - which important and relevant research projects are currently underway in Switzerland and abroad.
2.2 Current state of personal research	Present the research work you have already undertaken in the relevant field or in related fields, describe the results obtained so far as well as the relevance of these preliminary undertakings for your project.
2.3 Detailed research plan	Based on the information provided under 2.1 and 2.2, specify the approach you are taking and the concrete objectives that you aim to achieve in the period of funding. The following points should be addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describe the studies or experiments needed and/or envisaged to reach the set goals. Assess the risks involved and propose alternatives if necessary; - characterise existing sources and datasets and describe the data collection strategy and possible alternative strategies; - methods by which the research goals are to be reached (applicant and collaborations) and methods that first have to be developed; - explain the role and the planned work of each member of the research team (incl. applicant, personnel and collaborations). <p>Your description should be as detailed as necessary to enable an expert to assess whether your methodology is appropriate and your project feasible. Refer to the work described here in the budget you submit via mySNF.</p>
2.4 Schedule and milestones	Compile a schedule that includes the most important milestones (e.g. table, Gantt chart, etc.). This plan should also indicate the main tasks with which the persons funded by the SNSF/involved in the project are to be entrusted.
2.5 Relevance and impact	Describe the scientific relevance and expected impacts of your project for the discipline and for science as a whole (research, education/teaching and society). Mention the form in which you wish to publish your research results (articles in scientific journals, monographs, conference proceedings, etc.) Indicate whether and to what extent the proposed project will have a broader impact and what this impact will be.
3. Bibliography	List the sources of all concluded and/or ongoing work referred to in the research plan. Give the full reference, especially the title, source and full author list. Do not use "et al." to shorten the author list. (Exception: the author list can be shortened if a publication involves large international consortia with over 50 authors. In this case, a link to the complete reference has to be included). The bibliography is not included in the maximum number of pages (10) and characters (40'000) count.

01.04.2021