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Regulations on Scientific Exchanges; Grants for scientific exchanges

of 29 April 2026

The Research Council,

based on Articles 9 and 48 of the Funding Regulations of the Swiss National Science Foundation of 27 February 2015,¹ as well as on Article 6 paragraph 2 letter k of the Organisational Regulations of the Research Council of the Swiss National Science Foundation of 24 April 2024²,

issues the following Regulations:

1 General

Article 1 Objectives and principles

¹ The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) awards grants for international scientific exchanges (SE grants) to researchers in Switzerland.

² SE grants are awarded on the basis of a predefined budget; the SNSF is under no obligation to award a grant to any person.

³ SE grants enable researchers in Switzerland to set up and strengthen international networks. They help to increase the competitiveness of Swiss research and its problem-solving capacities and enable researchers from all disciplines to add to their knowledge and contacts.

⁴ The SE grants offered by the SNSF support scientific exchanges within the scope of scientific events of a maximum of five days such as meetings/conferences/workshops, including online or hybrid events, or research visits of a maximum of six months in Switzerland or abroad.

⁵ SE grants are intended to cover travel expenses and room and board costs of participants in events and guests on a research visit as part of a scientific exchange, as well as rental costs for equipment and support required for online/hybrid events.

⁶ Insofar as the activities comprising the scientific exchanges are related to a research project financed under another SNSF funding scheme, they are not eligible for SE grants.

¹ [Funding Regulations of 27.2.2015.](#)

² [Organisational Regulations of the Research Council of 24.04.2024.](#)

Article 2 Applicable law

Subject to any specific provisions in these Regulations, the provisions of the Funding Regulations and the General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations apply.³

Article 3 Types of grant and amount

¹ SE grants can be requested for scientific events or research visits in all disciplines in accordance with the following provisions.

² The minimum amount that may be requested in an application is CHF 2,500, the maximum CHF 25,000. The SNSF does not consider applications for amounts outside this range. The maximum amounts for children are not included in this total.

Article 4 Scientific events

¹ Meetings, conferences, workshops or similar events organised by the applicant are regarded as scientific events if they meet the following requirements:

² The scientific event

- a. takes place in Switzerland, subject to paragraph 7, in a scientific context;
- b. facilitates direct exchanges between qualified scientists from different countries and institutions;
- c. addresses clearly defined scientific questions and goals; and
- d. enhances the integration of researchers from Switzerland into networks.

³ The topic of the event must be related to the research questions the applicant is working on.

⁴ Events mainly dedicated to training or teaching are not eligible.

⁵ The SNSF does not award SE grants for events with more than 500 participants (excluding online participants).

⁶ Events of a recurring nature may be supported only once every three years.

⁷ By way of exception, an event may take place abroad if it is demonstrated that it cannot be organised in Switzerland. Applicants may request a preliminary assessment from the SNSF Administrative Offices before submitting their application.

Article 5 Research visits

¹ Research visits are visits by the applicant at an institution abroad or visits by a guest from abroad at the applicant's institution.

² The research visits

- a. must be devoted to scientific cooperation and exchanges in the subject area of the research questions addressed by the applicant and must be deemed likely to add value to their research;
- b. must include a concrete plan for joint scientific/research activities of the applicant and the guest or a responsible person at the host institution;

³ [General Implementation Regulations for the Funding Regulations of 9.12.2015.](#)

- c. must last between one month and six months;
- d. may take place anywhere in the world.

³ The guest or the responsible partner at the host institution must be scientifically qualified to carry out the planned joint activities. At the host institution or the applicant's institution, access to the infrastructure must be guaranteed and other requirements for a promising collaboration must be met.

⁴ An application seeking to extend a research stay abroad that has already begun at the time the application is submitted is not eligible.

2 Personal and formal requirements

Article 6 Personal requirements

¹ Researchers from all academic disciplines who meet the general requirements for applicants pursuant to the Funding Regulations and the Implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations are eligible to submit applications for SE grants.

² In particular, the applicants must be employed in Switzerland according to the provisions issued by the SNSF. Their work-time percentage may lie under 50%, but not below 20%, and the position must last for at least six months after the end of the SE event or visit or at least until the scientific event takes place.

³ Applicants for research visits must hold a doctorate. For applicants without a doctorate, three years of research work as their main source of income since doing their higher education degree will generally be regarded as equivalent to a doctorate. The equivalence requirement also applies to applicants who have completed their studies (state examination or equivalent degree with or without dissertation) in human, dental or veterinary medicine. Applications for scientific events may also be submitted by doctoral students.

⁴ The SNSF does not consider applications for a research stay during which the applicant for the research stay or the person invited for the research stay is in the process of an education leading to a university degree.

⁵ Employees whose salaries are fully or partially paid by a SNSF grant may submit an application for a scientific event, subject to the limitations set out in Article 1, paragraph 6.

⁶ A guest who is invited by the applicant based in Switzerland to conduct a research visit or the responsible partner at the host institution:

- a. must also meet *mutatis mutandis* the requirements set out under paragraph 3;
- b. must carry out a scientific research activity abroad;
- c. must be clearly affiliated, for the entire duration of the stay, with a research institution or an organisation based abroad that carries out recognised research activities;
- d. may not carry out any research activity as an employee of an institution based in Switzerland.

Article 7 Formal requirements

¹ Applications for SE grants must be submitted to the SNSF electronically in accordance with the guidelines published on the SNSF website.

² Subject to the limitations on applications set out in Article 11, applications must be submitted between four and twelve months before the start of the scientific event or the research stay.

³ All formal requirements for the submission of applications also apply, in particular the Funding Regulations of the SNSF and its Implementation Regulations.

3 Applications and eligible costs

Article 8 Applications

Applications for SE grants must be submitted in accordance with the requirements issued by the SNSF and must contain all the necessary information and documents. They are to be submitted by the applicant based in Switzerland organising the event or, in the case of a research visit, by the applicant based in Switzerland acting as host or guest.

Article 9 Eligible costs: scientific events

¹ Travel expenses and room and board costs incurred by participants from abroad are covered by the grant, provided they make a contribution (talk, poster, moderation, supervision of workshop, etc.) that adds scientific value to the event.

² The SNSF defines maximum amounts for travel costs based on the country and/or travel distance, as well as maximum amounts for the stay in Switzerland. It also defines a maximum amount to be included in the application, where necessary, if participants travel with children requiring childcare. Reimbursement is governed by Article 15, paragraph 4.

³ Equipment and infrastructure rental as well as support required for online/hybrid events can be covered by the grant up to the maximum budget allowed.

⁴ The maximum budget allowed per half-day is CHF 2,500.

Article 10 Eligible costs: research visits

¹ The eligible costs are:

- a. travel expenses and room and board costs of the applicant if they have applied for a research visit abroad; or
- b. travel expenses and room and board costs of the guest invited by the applicant.

² The SNSF defines maximum amounts for travel costs based on the country and/or distance, as well as maximum amounts for stays in Switzerland or abroad. It also defines a maximum amount to be included in the application, where necessary, if the applicant or the invited person travels with children requiring childcare. Reimbursement is governed by Article 15, paragraph 4.

4 Number of applications

Article 11 Number of applications: limitation

¹ The SNSF will only consider one SE application per applicant per calendar year.

² An application that has previously been evaluated and rejected by the SNSF may not be resubmitted by another applicant.

³ If an application that is subject to these limitations is submitted, it will not be considered by the SNSF.

5 Assessment criteria and procedure

Article 12 Assessment criteria

¹ Applications that meet the personal and formal requirements are examined and evaluated.

² The following assessment criteria are applied:

- a. expertise and scientific qualifications of the participants for whom grants are being requested and the qualifications of the applicant with regard to organising and staging the event;
- b. relevance and originality of the scientific goals set for the exchange, particularly the scientific quality of the event or the research visit;
- c. mutual scientific benefits for those involved; and
- d. feasibility of the project.

Article 13 Evaluation and decisions

¹ The Research Council delegates the task of evaluating SE grants and taking a funding decision to an evaluation body of the Administrative Offices of the SNSF.

² As a general rule, this body formally notifies its decisions no later than four months after submission of the applications.

6 Grants and grant administration

Article 14 Grants

¹ SE grants are awarded and administered in accordance with the provisions in force at the SNSF, in particular in accordance with the SNSF Funding Regulations and their Implementation Regulations.

² Any intended changes to the research work, its duration or the conditions for its implementation must be reported to and approved by the SNSF in advance.

Article 15 Reporting, receipts and reimbursements

¹ Grantees must send the SNSF a short scientific report no later than six weeks after the event or after the end of the research visit (expiry of grant).

² The duty to provide output data will remain in place after submission of the final report and will end three years after the expiry of the grant.

³ The financial report must be submitted within the period specified in paragraph 1. The corresponding receipts as well as a statement listing the actual costs must be submitted to the SNSF.

⁴ Where the grant has not been fully used, beneficiaries are required to reimburse the remaining balance. However, surpluses of less than CHF 50 are not subject to reimbursement.

7 Entry into force and repeal of existing regulations

Article 16 Transitional provisions

These Regulations are applicable to the funding arrangements initiated prior to their entry into force on 1 January 2027. However, if rights assigned to grantees on approval of funding are not in accordance with the new Regulations, such rights will nonetheless remain in force.

Article 17 Entry into force

These Regulations enter into force on 1 January 2027.