

# Information set Postdoc.Mobility

This information set does not apply to return phases (once back in Switzerland). Return grants are governed by the specific conditions set out in the Postdoc.Mobility regulations and in the General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations.

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## 1 General

This document offers a general overview. Individual cases must be assessed solely on the basis of the statutory provisions. Cantonal registration requirements and the relevant laws shall apply in relation to determining the official place of domicile. A person's domicile has important implications regarding the taxation of the fellowship and the possibility of continuing insurance and social security payments (old-age and survivors' insurance, health insurance etc.) during the fellowship. Information on this is provided by the local residents' registration office, social security payments office or the responsible tax authority.

For Swiss nationals abroad, the [Federal Department of Foreign Affairs \(FDFA\) Helpline](#) is the central point of contact for detailed information for consular matters as well as fiscal and financial issues. Swiss nationals living abroad can also contact the embassy or consulate in the relevant country. In addition, [Swissemigration](#) offers general information and advice. Foreign nationals should contact the relevant representation of their home country.

If the [Postdoc.Mobility regulations](#) do not contain specific provisions, the provisions of the [Funding Regulations](#) and the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#) shall apply. Mobility fellowships do not represent a salary in the sense of Clause 2.6 of the General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations, but are contributions to the living costs in accordance with Article 4 paragraph 2 of the Funding Regulations, which are paid to the recipient's personal account in order to fund a stay abroad.

## 2 AHV/IV/EO (old-age and survivors' insurance, invalidity insurance, loss of income)

According to paragraph 2016 of the Guidelines on Contributions for the Self-Employed and Non-Employed Contributions OASI/DI/IC of the Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO, document available in [French, German and Italian](#)), insured persons who receive benefits from the Swiss National Science Foundation are considered to be students if the contribution granted is **mainly for professional training and continuing education**. If, on the other hand, the grant is primarily awarded as a research contribution, they are not considered as students but as self-employed persons. This is the case, for example, if the recipient is involved in a specific research project that is not related to his or her continuing professional training<sup>1</sup>. According to Article 1 paragraph 1 of the Regulations on the awarding of mobility fellowships to postdocs ("Postdoc.Mobility fellowships"), the fellowships are in principle awarded for scientific **continuing education** abroad. In addition, according to Article 20 paragraph 2, fellowship holders are obliged to pursue the **goal of continuing education**, which is the purpose of the fellowship. As a recipient of a mobility fellowship from the SNSF, you are therefore generally regarded as **student not in gainful employment** under AHV legislation, and you must therefore register at your cantonal compensation office. In conjunction with their municipal branch offices, the compensation offices provide you with information on insurance and AHV/IV/EO contribution requirements. A list of all AHV compensation offices can be found at [www.ahv-iv.ch/en/](http://www.ahv-iv.ch/en/).

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<sup>1</sup> This translation is provided for information purposes only and has no legal force.

Up until 31 December of the year in which they turn 25, students who are not gainfully employed generally only have to pay the minimum contribution (see leaflet “. The annual minimum contribution for anyone not in gainful employment is CHF 503 (as of 2022). As of the 1 January after turning 25, students have to pay contributions depending on their social situation and no longer the minimum contribution (see see [leaflet “Non-employed contributions to OASI, DI and IC”](#)).

Fellowship holders who are temporarily resident abroad (e.g. for study purposes) and therefore are **not** living there with the intention of permanent residency (Article 23 of the Civil Code), do **not** need to register a new place of residence abroad. According to Article 24 of the Civil Code, once acquired, a person’s domicile continues to exist until a new place of residence is acquired. The legal place of residence therefore remains in Switzerland, since the fellowship holders do not normally intend to make a specific location abroad the focus of their life situation in respect of personal, economic, family and working relations, even if they deregister as residents in Switzerland during their temporary stay abroad. All persons who do not have Swiss citizenship must take account of the statutory provisions governing their official place of residence and the validity of their residence permit.

If the official place of residence remains in Switzerland, according to Article 1a paragraph 1 letter a of the Old-age and Survivors’ Insurance Act (OASIA), fellowship holders remain subject to statutory insurance requirements during their temporary study residence abroad and must continue to pay contributions to the cantonal compensation office (exceptions see [leaflet “Non-employed contributions to OASI, DI and IC”](#)).

Fellowship holders who go abroad for the mobility fellowship and who settle there with the intention of permanent residence thereby lose their legal place of residence in Switzerland. This also applies in the case of those fellowship holders who remain abroad following the conclusion of their fellowship (for example due to employment reasons). In this case, students who are not gainfully employed have the option to continue paying their AHV contributions until they turn 30 pursuant to Article 1a paragraph 3 letter b OASIA. They need to submit a membership declaration within 6 months after the start of studies to the Swiss Compensation Office in Geneva. All other persons may in certain circumstances join the voluntary old-age, survivors’ and invalidity insurance scheme (FV), although this depends on whether the newly acquired legal place of domicile is situated within or outside the EU/EFTA.

## 2.1 Acquired domicile is situated outside the EU

Swiss citizens abroad and citizens of the Member States of the EU/EFTA may join the **voluntary old-age, survivors’ and invalidity insurance scheme (FV)** in certain circumstances. In doing so, they can avoid gaps in their insurance contributions in the event of a claim (each missing contribution year leads to a pension reduction).

Access to the FV is only authorized for mobility fellowship holders whose fellowship is carried out in a non-EU/EFTA country and who have been insured under the statutory scheme for an uninterrupted period of at least five years immediately preceding the period of residence abroad.

As an insured person without gainful employment, you pay contributions according to your assets and pension income. The annual minimum contribution for anyone not in gainful employment is CHF 958 (as of 2022). The same applies to a fellowship holder's spouse who is not gainfully employed. However, if an employed spouse pays in at least twice the minimum contribution to the FV, the fellowship holder is exempt from the requirement to make contributions. Nevertheless, in order to benefit from the voluntary insurance scheme FV, the fellowship holder must personally declare membership of the FV, since the insurance benefits of the spouse in employment do not extend to the other partner.

**Important:** Fellowship holders who acquire a new legal place of domicile due to their intention to remain abroad permanently must inform the representative of the Swiss Confederation (embassy, consulate general or consulate) that is responsible for the corresponding territory as soon as possible and submit a special form to declare their membership of the FV. This must be done no more than one year after having left the statutory insurance scheme!

As mentioned above, only Swiss citizens and citizens of a EU/EFTA member state are entitled to take up membership of the FV. We recommend that citizens of other countries find out whether they are able to take out voluntary insurance with the social insurance scheme operated by their home country.

## 2.2 Acquired place of domicile is situated in the EU/EFTA

For fellowship holders residing in EU and EFTA Member States, it is **not possible** to join the FV.

With the entry into force of the treaty with the EU on the freedom of movement of persons, coordination rules have replaced our bilateral social security agreements with the EU Member States: EU and EFTA countries must now also grant Swiss citizens entitlement to a pension on the basis of all periods of insurance completed in Switzerland or in an EU or EFTA country. Thus, each country must provide a partial retirement pension in line with the length of time insured. For example, someone who has paid in contributions for 10 years in Italy and 30 years in Switzerland will receive a partial Italian pension calculated according to Italian law when they reach the Italian age of retirement, and a partial Swiss pension when they reach the retirement age applicable in Switzerland. In many foreign social security systems, people who do not earn a salary are not obligated to contribute. Nevertheless, it is important to clarify whether insurance periods during which no contributions can be paid do not give rise to a right to benefits. In order to avoid any gaps in insurance coverage or contributions at a later date, we recommend that fellowship holders contact their host country's local social security office for information on this matter.

### Further information

The Swiss Compensation Office (SCO) in Geneva is able to answer questions relating to voluntary insurance and coordination rules with the EU Member States.

Schweiz. Ausgleichskasse  
Av. Ed.-Vaucher 18  
Case postale 3100  
1211 Genève 2

Tel.: +41 58 461 91 11

Website: [www.zas.admin.ch/zas/en/home.html](http://www.zas.admin.ch/zas/en/home.html)

In addition, you may approach the staff at the Swiss National Science Foundation for further information.

**This memorandum only provides a general overview. Individual cases shall be assessed solely on the basis of the statutory provisions. The Swiss National Science Foundation rejects any liability for any gaps in contributions that may arise.**

### 3 Pension fund

If a person is leaving the occupational pension fund (BVG), the assets are converted into a vested benefits policy with an insurance company or a vested benefits account with a bank. It should be noted that risk benefits such as a disability pension or surviving dependant's pension are only included in the policy in the case of insurance companies. The Association of Swiss Assistant Doctors and Chief Consultants (VSAO – ASMAC) also offers a form of transitional insurance for its members (restricted to doctors).

### 4 Unemployment insurance

A fellowship does not count as self-employment. The fellowship amount does not include contributions to unemployment insurance (ALV), which is why the necessary ALV contribution period is usually not reached. In addition, it isn't possible to make voluntary contributions to the unemployment insurance during the fellowship.

In certain circumstances, continuing education within the scope of an SNSF fellowship may justify exemption from the contribution duty (Article 14 of the Unemployment Insurance Act [UIA]). On request, the Swiss National Science Foundation is happy to provide written confirmation of the fellowship. However, your entitlement to unemployment benefit is assessed decentrally by the unemployment insurance funds (ALK) based on your registration with the unemployment insurance. Please ask the insurance fund (ALK) in charge (Addresses at [www.arbeit.swiss/secoalv/en/home.html](http://www.arbeit.swiss/secoalv/en/home.html)), your municipality or the regional job centre (RAV) to provide you with the information you need. Important: insured persons who are exempt from the contribution duty are subject to special waiting periods before receiving any unemployment benefits (Article 18 paragraph 2 Unemployment Insurance Act [UIA]). In the case of continuing education (e.g. stay abroad based on an SNSF fellowship), the waiting period is 120 days (Article 6 Unemployment Insurance Ordinance [UIO]).

You can gain further information on unemployment benefits from your regional job centre (RAV): [www.arbeit.swiss/secoalv/en/home.html](http://www.arbeit.swiss/secoalv/en/home.html). All brochures, the relevant laws (UIA, UIO, etc.) and the circulars (see in particular AVIG-Praxis B182 ff.) can be accessed via the following links:

- Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO):  
[www.bsv.admin.ch/bsv/en/home.html](http://www.bsv.admin.ch/bsv/en/home.html)
- State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO):  
[www.seco.admin.ch/seco/en/home.html](http://www.seco.admin.ch/seco/en/home.html)

## 5 Taxes

Many cantons consider the fellowships awarded by the SNSF to be taxable income. **The tax treatment of a fellowship is exclusively in the competence of the competent cantonal tax authorities.** If you have any questions, please contact the relevant office directly. The tax authorities examine each individual case, generally on the basis of Circular No. 43 of the [Swiss Federal Tax Administration ESTV](#).

If you need a confirmation of the payments made for your tax declaration, please contact the SNSF directly ([pm@snf.ch](mailto:pm@snf.ch)).

Please note that, pursuant to Article 129 paragraph 1 letter a DBG, the SNSF, as a foundation, is obliged to submit to the tax authorities for each tax period an attestation of the contributions paid to each fellowship holder. On request, the SNSF can issue you with a corresponding confirmation of the payments made within a tax period, as mentioned above.

If a fellowship is taxed, it should be taxed in the year in which you have received one or several instalments, i.e. the year in which you have secured a legal entitlement to a payment, according to Circular No. 43. The SNSF pays the fellowships in a maximum of one instalment per year, at the earliest one month before the definitive start of the fellowship. The legal entitlement never includes more than one instalment at a time. For this reason, fellowships with a duration of, for example, 18-24 months should never be taxed as a whole in the same fiscal year, but rather only one annual instalment at a time. In individual cantons, the entire fellowship instalment amount transferred to the holder is regarded as income earned during the year of payment, even if the instalment covers more than one fiscal year. In other cantons, however, a fellowship lasting for more than a single tax period can be split across different tax periods when calculating the taxable income, even if the fellowship was paid in one instalment. On request, the individual instalments can also be paid per tax period. To this end, you need to enter a corresponding comment when requesting the funds transfer in mySNF (see Chapter 11.3: Payment).

With a few exceptions, no taxes have to be paid in the host country (see agreements between Switzerland and the relevant countries on avoiding double taxation). However, the situation can change very fast and it also depends on the individual fellowship holder's situation. Countries that tax SNSF fellowships include, for example, Denmark and Austria. For detailed information, contact the embassy of the country in question or the relevant tax authorities. Information on international tax matters, e.g. on double taxation treaties, can be obtained from the State Secretariat for International Financial matters SIF (<https://www.sif.admin.ch/sif/en/home.html>). Their website also features comprehensive documentation on fiscal and financial issues. If you need more detailed advice, however, or for specific advisory services on fiscal issues and laws in the host country, you should consult the local authorities or local consulting services (tax experts) that specialise in these matters. The SNSF can provide fellowship holders with a document confirming the fellowship, which they can submit to authorities abroad if needed.

## 6 Health insurance

Fellowship holders are responsible for dealing with all issues relating to health insurance for themselves and any family members.

Most foreign universities require the submission of documentary evidence of appropriate insurance cover.

A distinction can be made according to whether individuals deregister with the Swiss authorities or not. If fellowship holders continue to be *registered* in Switzerland, they will continue to be obliged to pay for health insurance (basic insurance) pursuant to the Swiss Health Insurance Act (KVG) even if they are resident abroad for a relatively long period. Many insurance policies offer the option of suspending any supplementary insurance cover for the period of absence. However, fellowship holders should check in advance whether this supplementary cover can be reactivated again in the future without the need for a risk assessment (medical questionnaire). Given that the costs for seeing a doctor and for hospital stays are very high in some countries, having private unlimited cover is recommended (in the USA, for example, treatment costs can be between three and five times as high as in Switzerland!). All persons who do not have Swiss citizenship must take account of the statutory provisions governing the validity of their residence permit. Only in certain situations during a period abroad is it possible to retain a residence permit and remain registered in Switzerland.<sup>2</sup>

If fellowship holders are obliged to take out health insurance abroad (e.g. in the USA in some cases), they may apply to the cantonal social insurance office for exemption from health insurance fund contributions in Switzerland subject to the following conditions:

The applicant must have confirmation from the foreign health insurance fund that he or she is insured outside the host country, i.e. particularly in Switzerland pursuant to the terms of the Health Insurance Act (KVG). Unless such confirmation is provided, contributions to the Swiss health insurance fund cannot be suspended.

If you have to deregister with the Swiss authorities, the health insurance obligation does not apply.

In accordance with the KVG, it is not possible to continue membership of a Swiss health insurance fund during long-term periods of residence abroad. It should be noted that, when returning to Switzerland, only the basic insurance cover can be taken out again without the need for a doctor's certificate. Health checks are required for supplementary insurance cover.

The health insurance funds may but are not obliged to offer products for Swiss citizens who are based abroad. We recommend that you contact your health insurance fund directly to discuss whether you can continue with your current insurance arrangements.

The website of the organisation for Swiss abroad ([www.swisscommunity.org/en](http://www.swisscommunity.org/en)) lists the addresses of those insurance companies that offer international health insurance for Swiss citizens who are working abroad, under Consultation > Living abroad > Social insurance > Health insurance. Not included in this list is [Mediservice VSAO-ASMAC](#) (the services organisation for the Association of Swiss Assistant Doctors and Chief Consultants), which also offers its members (restricted to doctors) this type of health insurance provided that the period of stay abroad does not exceed two years. Further offers are available at [soliswiss.ch/en/](http://soliswiss.ch/en/).

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<sup>2</sup> <https://fedlex.data.admin.ch/filestore/fedlex.data.admin.ch/eli/cc/2007/758/20200401/en/pdf-a/fedlex-data-admin-ch-eli-cc-2007-758-20200401-en-pdf-a.pdf>

Pursuant to the KVG, those returning to Switzerland after a period of absence must take out basic insurance with a Swiss health insurance fund. The international health insurance policies referred to above are generally seamlessly converted into Swiss policies again after the policyholder's return to Switzerland, including any supplementary insurance cover.

Another option is to join a health insurance fund in the host country. It can be helpful to have a copy of the confirmation from the Swiss health insurance fund in the language of the host country. In such cases, however, it is also advisable to retain membership of the Swiss health insurance fund during the first year of the period of stay abroad or to take out travel insurance that includes health cover.

Those who work at a university or institution may also have the option of joining a collective insurance arrangement. Generally, the international office of the university concerned will be able to provide information in this regard. Collective insurance policies often only involve minimum cover and there is often no cover for travel outside the host country. It can therefore be necessary to take out supplementary insurance with a national insurance company.

Please note that coverage by foreign health insurance companies may differ from coverage by a Swiss health insurance company. Therefore, certain benefits, for example also in the case of pregnancy or birth abroad, are not covered in every case.

## 7 Accident insurance (expired since 1 January 2022)

**IMPORTANT:** According to a circular letter from the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA, the AXA collective accident insurance mentioned below (Policy No. 8.477.996) cannot be continued beyond 31 December 2021. As of 1 January 2022, accident insurance will therefore be the responsibility of the fellowship holder, e.g. within the scope of the mandatory health insurance (persons without an employer will need to have their accident risk covered by their mandatory health insurance in Switzerland). Other options might be available in individual cases, e.g. accident insurance directly with the host institution abroad or with an insurer. (Published on 19 May 2021).

As the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) is not an employer for fellowship holders they are *not* covered through the mandatory accident insurance according to the UVG.

A **complete or supplemental accident insurance coverage** is however granted by the SNSF to the fellowship holders through a collective policy concluded with AXA insurance (policy no. 8.477.996).

### **Important information regarding the insurance coverage and the payment of benefits:**

If the insured persons (fellowship holders) stay registered in Switzerland and hold a health insurance, this policy will only provide **complementary** benefits to the health insurance. If there is no health insurance coverage in Switzerland, AXA Winterthur will take over all the UVG benefits mentioned in the policy.



## Benefits and sum insured

### a) If no obligation for a mandatory accident insurance exists

In case of damage AXA will grant the insured benefits. Please note, that you only receive this coverage if you do not longer have your domicile here in Switzerland because you have been deregistered definitively and you neither do have to have a mandatory accident insurance at your new foreign domicile.

### b) If an obligation for a mandatory accident insurance exists

In case of a damage, your health insurance in Switzerland, respectively the foreign mandatory accident insurance, provides benefits first, AXA provides complementary benefits up to the insured benefits. Please note, that you only receive this coverage if you are still registered in Switzerland and hold a legitimate health insurance **which includes accident coverage** or if you have concluded an equivalent accident insurance abroad. Health insurance franchises, deductibles and premiums cannot be supported by AXA.

### Insurance coverage

All fellowship holders of the SNSF are insured from the start of their scholarship and for the complete duration thereof against occupational and non-occupational accidents in Switzerland and abroad. Not included in the insurance are accidents which occur as a result of the following:

- acts of war
- public disturbances of all kinds unless it can be proven that the insured person stood in no way actively on the side of those responsible for the disturbance and was not responsible for any form of agitation
- execution of wilful criminal acts or offences or the attempt thereof
- serving in a foreign army

### Insurance benefits

The sums insured are, in the case of fatality, CHF 500,000.00, disablement CHF 350,000.00 (with 350% accumulation in case of total disability). Costs for treatment of injury for a period of ten (10) years following accident (private ward).

### Insurance coverage for family members

The above-mentioned conditions apply to the fellowship holder only. For family members a cover for unlimited costs for treatment can be concluded on request (limitation corresponding to the general conditions 12.2006 (B1/3): at most CHF 7 million per person and incident within a maximum period of 10 years). The above presented conditions a) and b) are also valid for this coverage.

### Extension of the insurance cover after the fellowship

All the fellowship holders have the option to extend the duration of the cover on their expense. The maximum duration for such cover prolongations is 1 year. The fellowship holder must pay the supplementary premium. Please submit the prolongation request in due time prior to the end of the fellowship, so that VZ Insurance Services AG, respectively AXA Winterthur can also confirm the insurance coverage prior to the end of the fellowship. A cancelation of the prolongation is no longer possible once the insurance coverage has started and the premiums will have to be paid.

### **Course of action in the case of accident**

#### **In the event of serious accidents causing disability for more than three days:**

##### a) If you are under **complete** insurance coverage

VZ Insurance Services AG in Zurich and the secretariat of the SNSF must be informed immediately. This primary information should include the date and place of accident, the circumstances thereof and the expected consequences. Surname, first name, date of birth and address of fellowship holder are imperative.

##### b) If you are under **supplementary** insurance coverage

Your health insurance respectively the foreign mandatory accident insurance as well as the office of the SNSF have to be informed immediately. For possible supplementary benefits or coverage confirmations for the hospital sojourn in a private ward by AXA, we ask you to contact VZ Insurance Services AG in Zurich.

#### **For minor accidents with no or only limited disability less than three days:**

##### a) If you are under **complete** insurance coverage

VZ Insurance Services AG in Zurich has to be informed. If the accident occurred abroad, medical treatment costs should be paid directly and a copy has to be forwarded to the carrier in order to proof check a reimbursement. If an immediate reimbursement is required, an application should be made directly to the administrative office of the VZ Insurance Services AG in Zurich, which will contact AXA in order to solve this matter as quickly as possible.

##### b) If you are under **supplementary** insurance coverage

Your health insurance respectively the foreign mandatory accident insurance has to be informed. For possible supplementary benefits, reimbursements or coverage confirmations for the hospital sojourn in a private ward by AXA, we ask you to contact VZ Insurance Services AG in Zurich.

### **Important addresses:**

For questions which may arise, please contact either of the following two addresses:

VZ Insurance Services AG  
Department corporate clients  
Gotthardstrasse 6  
8002 Zurich  
Tel. +41 (0)44 207 24 24  
snfaccidents@vzch.com

Swiss National Science Foundation  
Division of Careers  
Wildhainweg 3  
3001 Bern  
Tel. +41 (0)31 308 22 22  
pm@snf.ch

**IMPORTANT:** According to a circular letter from the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA, **the AXA collective accident insurance mentioned above (Policy No. 8.477.996) cannot be continued beyond 31 December 2021.** (Published on 19 May 2021).

## 8 Maternity and paternity leave, adoption leave

According to the Postdoc.Mobility regulations, grantees who become mothers in the course of the mobility fellowship are entitled to paid maternity leave of four months. Grantees who become fathers in the course of the fellowship can apply for one month's paid paternity leave (valid from 1 November 2020).

If the mother of the child has less than four months maternity leave due to work or training or is unable to look after the child for health reasons, beneficiaries who can prove that they are looking after the child can apply for a maximum of four months' paid paternity leave. In such cases, the cumulative duration of maternity and paternity leave may not exceed four months.

Grantees who assume responsibility for fostering and bringing up small children with a view to adoption at a later stage may apply for a maximum of two months' paid adoption leave.

In all cases, paternity or adoption leave must be taken within six months after the child's birth or after the child has been taken in for subsequent adoption and during the ongoing fellowship period. In justified and exceptional cases, grantees can apply for unpaid maternity, paternity or adoption leave. The SNSF will decide whether to approve the application.

Grantees who give birth in the first nine months after the end of their fellowship may apply for supplementary funding due to maternity. The SNSF grants them supplementary funding corresponding to the monthly fellowship amount for a maximum of four months. Supplementary funding is conditional on the fellowship holders providing proof that they are interrupting their research work due to maternity. In addition, they must not be entitled to any remuneration or any insurance benefits during the four months following birth. In the event that the total amount of such entitlements is **lower** than the supplementary funding, the SNSF shall pay the difference between the two. Any entitlement to such supplementary funding is forfeited with the resumption of work.

Becoming a parent: see also the [guidelines](#) of the SNSF.

## 9 Military service

Fellowship holders who are subject to registration requirements, who are resident abroad for an interrupted period of more than 12 months and who also deregister with their local authority under civil law must apply for leave for residence abroad (dispensation from military service). The “Application for leave for residence abroad” form is available from the head of section or at the district command. The application should be submitted to the district command as early as possible and generally two months prior to leaving Switzerland. Leave for residence abroad will be granted in cases where the individuals concerned have fulfilled the military duties applicable to them by the time of their departure from Switzerland (military service, shooting duty, military service exemption tax etc.). The precise details, particularly with regard to registration obligations in Switzerland and abroad and the return of personal equipment, are handled by the responsible district command.

## 10 Tips and useful links - networking and encouragement to return

The fellowship holders of the SNSF who go abroad in order to enhance their scientific skills represent Switzerland's potential for producing highly qualified, young researchers for the future. The list below is meant to help them build up a network abroad and facilitate their return to Switzerland.

**FDFA - Living abroad:** [www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/living-abroad.html](http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/living-abroad.html)

Various information dossiers and guidebooks.

**FDFA helpline:** [www.eda.admin.ch](http://www.eda.admin.ch)

As the central point of contact for Swiss nationals living abroad, the EDA helpline answers questions about consular services, taxes and money matters.

**SNSF World Network:** [www.linkedin.com/groups/SNSF-World-Network](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/SNSF-World-Network)

The English-speaking network enables the ever-growing number of SNSF-funded researchers to establish and extend their networks. Only past and present grantees of the SNSF (responsible applicants and co-applicants) are accepted.

**Organisation of the Swiss abroad ASO:** [www.swisscommunity.org/en](http://www.swisscommunity.org/en)

**State Secretariat for International Finance SIF:** [www.sif.admin.ch/sif/en/home.html](http://www.sif.admin.ch/sif/en/home.html)

A range of information on tax matters (double taxation agreements, FATCA, etc.) is provided on the SIF website.

**Brochure “Leaving Switzerland”** [www.ahv-iv.ch/en/Leaflets-forms/Leaflets/International](http://www.ahv-iv.ch/en/Leaflets-forms/Leaflets/International)

The brochure “Leaving Switzerland and moving to an EU or EFTA member state” is aimed at Swiss nationals and citizens of an EU or EFTA member state who intend to leave Switzerland in order to live or work in an EU or EFTA member state (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).

**Auswandern – Neustart im Ausland:** [shop.beobachter.ch/buchshop/alltag-und-freizeit/auswandern-Neustart-im-Ausland](http://shop.beobachter.ch/buchshop/alltag-und-freizeit/auswandern-Neustart-im-Ausland)

We recommend the book "Auswandern – Neustart im Ausland" from the series "Beobachter Ratgeber" (can be ordered via the Internet).

**swissnex: Switzerland's Knowledge Network:** [www.swissnex.org](http://www.swissnex.org)

swissnex promotes scientific exchanges between Switzerland and other countries. Branches are located in different partner countries to implement federal policies on bilateral cooperation in the areas of education, research and innovation. The Swissnex network is managed by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) within the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research and is supported by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). Its branches act in cooperation with the higher education institutions, businesses, interest groups and private sponsors.

**ETH get hired:** [www.eth-gethired.ch/en/](http://www.eth-gethired.ch/en/)

The electronic job platform of the assistants' and doctoral students' associations at ETH Zurich and EPF Lausanne.

**Euraxess in Switzerland:** [www.euraxess.ch](http://www.euraxess.ch)

The Euraxess network plays an important role in removing obstacles to researchers' mobility by providing key information including immigration, funding opportunities, social security and pensions. On a Europe-wide job portal for research positions, vacancies and CVs can be posted free of charge.

**myScience:** [www.myscience.ch/en](http://www.myscience.ch/en)

The Swiss Portal for Research and Innovation. It is aimed at researchers (doctoral students, postdocs, professors, researchers in private laboratories) students and anyone interested in science in Switzerland and abroad.

**Gebert Rütli Stiftung:** [www.grstiftung.ch/en.html](http://www.grstiftung.ch/en.html)

The purpose of the foundation is to promote Switzerland as a place to live and do business. The foundation finances effective training programmes and research projects at the Swiss higher education institutions.

The **Swiss National Science Foundation** encourages fellowship holders **to return to Switzerland:**

**Postdoc.Mobility return grants:** [www.snsf.ch](http://www.snsf.ch) > Funding > Careers > Postdoc.Mobility: within the scope of Postdoc.Mobility fellowships, the option of requesting a grant for a period of research of 3 to 12 months at a research institution in Switzerland.

**Ambizione:** [www.snsf.ch](http://www.snsf.ch) > Funding > Careers > Ambizione: Is aimed at young researchers who wish to conduct, manage and lead an independent project at a Swiss higher education institution.

**PRIMA:** [www.snsf.ch](http://www.snsf.ch) > Funding > Careers > PRIMA: PRIMA grants are aimed at excellent female researchers from Switzerland and abroad who aspire to a professorship in Switzerland. PRIMA grantees have their own research project at a Swiss higher education institution. They work independently and have a team of their own.

**Eccellenza:** [www.snsf.ch](http://www.snsf.ch) > Funding > Careers > Eccellenza: They enable young researchers with several years of research experience to take a significant step in their academic career. Grant holders can set up their own team and conduct a research project at a Swiss higher education institution.

## 11 Use of funds

Please note that you are subject to the "[Funding Regulations](#)", the "[Regulations on the awarding of mobility fellowships to postdocs](#)" as well as the "[General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#)" of the SNSF.

### 11.1 Start

Mobility fellowships always start on the first day of the month. Fellowship holders are requested to submit the request for release of funds online. The mobility fellowship must start no later than twelve months after the date of the ruling. Where there is good cause, a request to postpone the start of the fellowship for up to twelve months may be approved.

### 11.2 Amount of the fellowship

The amount is set by the National Research Council.

**Fellowship (basic amount):** the basic fellowship varies depending on the host country. In addition, a child allowance is awarded.

**Travel costs:** the SNSF assumes a share of the travel costs for the outward and return journey. This also applies to family members (spouse, children), provided that they stay at the fellowship holder's place of work for at least six months.

**Child allowance:** fellows with children are entitled to a child allowance of CHF 12,000 per child and per year. Child allowances contributed by third parties are deducted.

**Research funds:** The maximum amount awarded for research funds (conference costs and research costs) is CHF 5,000 per year (4,000 for fellowships awarded in 2021). **IMPORTANT:** Contributions towards research costs (conference costs and research costs) need to be requested in the Postdoc.Mobility application. The conditions are defined in the guidelines. **Any requests for coverage of conference costs and research costs at a later stage will not be considered.** Costs will only be covered if they are explicitly designated as eligible costs in the guidelines and the Information set "Postdoc.Mobility" Requests to cover costs that are ineligible will not be granted. Please also take note of the information and conditions in official award letter (Verfügung/Décision).

In the financial report, you need to show proof of all your spending for research costs and conference costs, (matriculation fees only for fellowships approved before 31.12.2020) and gender equality grant. Please keep all relevant copies and receipts (see point 11.4).

#### a) Research costs

**The following costs are eligible:**

Costs that are unavoidable for completion of the research project: library fees, photocopies in libraries or archives, documentation (e.g. access to data, microfilm), expendable items, computing time and cloud computing. Travel costs connected to field studies or visits to archives as well as costs for over-night stays (hotels up to three-star category) and meals (if not included in the price of the room) can be claimed at the effective amount or according to the following flat rates of the SNSF:

Daily flat rate for cities with more than 0.5 million inhabitants (incl. main meals and breakfast)	max. CHF 160
Daily flat rates for other areas (incl. main meals and breakfast)	max. CHF 120
Flat rates for main meals	max. CHF 25
Flat rate for breakfast	max. CHF 10

All trips must be by public transport. Car expenses may be charged if the use of a private car saves a substantial amount of time and money. A maximum of 0.60 CHF may be claimed per kilometre travelled by car.

**The following costs are ineligible and will not be covered:**

Matriculation fees (with exceptions for fellowships approved before 31.12.2020), proofreading, translations, language courses and continuing education, books, subscriptions to journals, stationery, memberships, postage, e-mail, internet and phone charges, photocopies at the host institution, offline storage or media (such as Dropbox, Google Drive, hard disks, memory sticks, ...), material of enduring value (e.g. laptops, printers, digital cameras, standard equipment such as centrifuges, microscopes, etc.), health insurance premiums, overhead contributions and fees connected to visa applications. In addition, publication costs are not covered by the SNSF mobility fellowships. SNSF contributions to the cost of fully open access publications can be applied for via the OA platform (mySNF). For more detailed information, please visit the [SNSF's new open access website](#).

**b) Conference costs**

Conference costs include conference registration fees, outward and return journey, room and board. They can be claimed at the effective amount or according to the flat rates mentioned under research costs.

As a rule, the SNSF does not pay for attending conferences that take place after the end of the mobility fellowship. Exceptions are possible (up to two months after the end of the fellowship); please contact the SNSF if you have any questions.

The attendance of courses and workshops that are not directly linked to the funded research project (e.g. courses for personal career development) is not covered.

**Gender equality grant:** female holders of SNSF fellowships are entitled to a gender equality grant for career development measures. A maximum of CHF 1,000 may be requested and used for this purpose per year (see [Guidelines](#)). Career development measures may include mentoring, coaching, career

building courses and workshops, network meetings, networking events, etc. The gender equality grant may not be used to cover childcare costs. Applications for gender equality grants must be submitted to the Administrative Offices of the SNSF ([pm@snf.ch](mailto:pm@snf.ch)) 2 months before the end of the fellowship at the latest.

The budget items listed in the rulings of the Swiss National Science Foundation or when funds are subsequently released and the corresponding amounts are binding on the fellowship holder. Any shifts of amounts from one budget item to another generally require the prior written approval of the SNSF.

### 11.3 Payment

The funds awarded with the fellowship are transferred in annual instalments to an account held by the fellowship holder in Switzerland. In exceptional cases if the fellowship holder cannot open or keep a Swiss bank account, it is possible, on the request of the fellowship holder and with a corresponding explanation, to transfer the fellowship amount in Swiss francs to a bank account of the fellowship holder abroad in the country of the research stay. Any bank transfer fees shall be charged to the account holder. Furthermore it is possible that the bank of the account holder withdraws exchange rate costs. In that case, the SNSF has no influence, it is a risk taken by the grantee.

The SNSF transfers the first payment once it has received the request for release of funds submitted via *mySNF*. The payment is generally made one month before the start of the fellowship, however at the earliest one month before the starting date. In general, the grants are transferred in annual instalments. On request, the individual instalments can also be paid per tax period. If you prefer this option, please enter a corresponding remark in the request for release of funds in *mySNF*. Any additional funding is generally transferred together with the annual instalment partially or in full. All further instalments have to be requested in writing, via *mySNF*.

The SNSF requires three weeks for the payment process. For this reason, we recommend that you consider this when filling in the request for release of funds / instalment and that you submit the request early enough.

Fellowship holders who deregister in Switzerland may encounter problems when it comes to maintaining an account in Switzerland. If you have any questions in this regard, please contact the Administrative Offices of the SNSF. We would also like to bring your attention to a [Report of the Swiss Federal Council](#) on this topic and to the homepage of the [Organisation of the Swiss Abroad](#) (particularly for Swiss abroad).

### 11.4 Reporting

At the end of the fellowship, the fellowship holders are reminded via e-mail to submit a scientific final report. For Postdoc.Mobility fellowships awarded before 2019, an interim report is additionally required after one year. The scientific and general reporting is effected via the form available on *mySNF*. The report must be submitted within six weeks after the end of the reporting period via *mySNF*. On submission of the scientific report, the output data will need to be updated. The SNSF will publish the output data submitted by you in its [SNSF Data Portal](#). This is in response to demands from political authorities and from the public for the output data of publicly funded research work to be more visible. In addition, the output data and the scientific reports may serve as a basis for evaluating follow-up projects.



A financial interim or final report needs to be submitted if a grant towards "consumables and research costs", "conference costs" and/or "matriculation fees" or a gender equality grant (only women researchers) was awarded. **The grant towards living costs and flat-rate for travel costs need not be accounted for.** The financial report is likewise requested via *mySNF* and must be submitted via *mySNF* within six weeks after the end of the reporting period.

**Please note:** All spending has to be verifiable. Therefore all relevant receipts need to be kept and enclosed with the report. Copies of account statements are accepted if they show what the amount was used for. If the financial interim or final report is submitted without receipts, the expenses will not be covered by the SNSF. In such cases, amounts that have already been paid will need to be reimbursed to the SNSF. Once the final financial report has been checked, the SNSF will ask the fellowship holders to reimburse all credit balances of CHF 50 or more.

### **11.5 Commitment by the fellowship holders**

In accepting the mobility fellowship, the beneficiaries undertake to devote themselves to scientific training and research as envisaged in the project. All changes (e.g. place of work, work plan, etc.) must be approved by the Swiss National Science Foundation in advance. Any breach of this duty will result in the withdrawal and repayment of the fellowships.

The fellowship holder shall inform the Swiss National Science Foundation about the birth of a child and shall provide an official document to certify the same (in order to calculate child allowances and travel expenses).

Additional work (e.g. teaching duties) during the period of the fellowship may only be accepted if approved by the SNSF. Income from additional work may be deducted from the fellowship amount.

The fellowship holder undertakes to inform the SNSF without delay about any received or prospective third-party funds, salaries or fellowships of his/her partner (net amount received). Such funds will generally be offset against the fellowship amount and may be deducted from it.

Fellowship holders are obliged to make available to the public during and after completion of the research project appropriate information on the research projects funded by the SNSF and on the research results, whereby the support obtained from the SNSF is to be mentioned.

## **12 SNSF Data Portal: lay summary**

The responsible grantees must provide the SNSF with a written summary of the planned research that is understandable for non-experts (lay summary). They must also provide thematic keywords to be used on the SNSF Data Portal.

The grantees are responsible for the content of the lay summary and for the keywords. The information must comply with the conditions laid down in the funding decision and must be compiled according to SNSF standards published on the SNSF website. The SNSF reserves the right to edit lay summaries and keywords.

**The lay summary and keywords must be submitted via mySNF after receiving the funding decision and, at the latest, when submitting the request to release the grant.**

The lay summary will be published in the SNSF Data Portal once the grant has been released.

The lay summary and keywords may be edited on *mySNF* while the research project is running. This is mandatory if significant changes to the research plan occur.

Once the research has been completed, grantees are required to update the lay summary with the research results. This update is a mandatory requirement for the approval of the final report.

See *point 8.3 of the* [“General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations”](#).