



International cooperation through SNSF-NSERC synergies¹

Alliance International Catalyst grants – Scientific Exchanges

NSERC Alliance International Catalyst grants

Alliance International Catalyst grants provide up to \$25,000 (CAD) for one year to support Canadian academic researchers in initiating new international research collaborations in the Natural Sciences and Engineering disciplines. These grants allow Canadian researchers to identify and initiate the first stages of a collaboration with the intent of supporting exploratory research activities and scientific exchanges for Canadian personnel. Canadian researchers must be eligible to receive NSERC funds, be affiliated with a Canadian university and hold an active NSERC peer-reviewed grant.

For researchers working in the area of quantum science, NSERC launched a separate [Alliance International Quantum grants call](#) to provide funding for Canada-based researchers initiating collaborations with international partners in the following areas of quantum technologies: quantum algorithms/encryption, quantum communications, quantum computing, quantum materials, and quantum sensing.

SNSF Scientific Exchanges

With grants for Scientific Exchanges, the SNSF intends to create conditions for initiating international cooperation. The Scientific Exchanges program offers the opportunity to start research collaborations with short stays from and to any country in any discipline. Grants for Scientific Exchanges fund research visits by researchers from Switzerland to Canada or by researchers from Canada to Switzerland for a period of one to six months. The visit must be devoted to scientific cooperation and exchanges in the subject area of the research questions addressed by the Swiss-based applicant and must be deemed likely to add value to their research. Researchers applying for SNSF Scientific Exchanges grants need to demonstrate that they have access to the Swiss and Canadian infrastructure they need. They also need to fulfil requirements such as scientific expertise, qualification, relevance and originality of the scientific goals and the mutual scientific benefits. Travel expenses and room and board cost are covered by the SNSF grant in Canada or in Switzerland. The maximum amount for a stay is CHF 25'000. The Swiss visitor or host does not need to be a grant holder of an SNSF grant, but they need to be eligible at the SNSF according to the SNSF funding regulations. They need to have a PhD and a position at a higher education institution in Switzerland.

The SNSF's Scientific Exchanges can be used in combination with the NSERC's Alliance International Catalyst grants. As an example, an academic researcher from Canada can team up with an academic peer based in Switzerland to initiate an Alliance International Catalyst grant. With a Scientific Exchange grant, a researcher from Switzerland can visit their peer in Canada during a stay in Canada for one to six months while the Catalyst grant is ongoing. The new collaboration is intended to continue beyond the duration of the SNSF's Scientific Exchange and the Catalyst grant.

Project Partner – Alliance International Collaboration grants

Project Partner role in SNSF's funding schemes

The project partner role is supported in most SNSF funding schemes. Project partners are researchers who contribute to a research project through cooperation without being responsible for the project.

¹ We use NSERC terms to refer to NSERC funding opportunities and SNSF terms to refer to SNSF funding opportunities

They must be designated as such in the application. The Canadian researcher and the full contribution to the project (aimed to conduct with SNSF and NSERC funding) needs to be described in the SNSF proposal. The eligible costs of project partners are the same as those for main applicants. Project partners can receive up to 20% of the grant.

NSERC Alliance International Collaboration grants

Alliance International Collaboration grants allow Canadian academic researchers to participate in international academic projects and leverage the best international expertise in the Natural Sciences and Engineering disciplines to help address research challenges of impact and benefit for Canada. International academic collaborators are expected to have already secured funding from their own national funding agency for the collaborative project and identified the Canadian academic researcher(s) and described their role and contribution to the project in their proposal. This proposal must have been peer-reviewed. The eligible Canadian researchers participating in the international project can then apply for a NSERC Collaboration grant to cover the costs of their participation in the project. Collaboration grants provide up to \$100,000 (CAD) per year for up to three years. Please refer to the NSERC program literature for detailed information and requirements.

A Canadian researcher involved as project partner in a project granted by the SNSF may apply to NSERC for an Alliance International Collaboration grant if the Swiss award/grant is equal to or greater to the amount requested by the Canadian researcher. Canadian researchers who are part of a SNSF proposal should ensure that they fulfil all NSERC Alliance International Collaboration guidelines (formal and thematic) before the SNSF bid is submitted. The combined financial support from the SNSF and NSERC provides attractive funding and allows for deep collaborations between Canadian and Swiss researchers.

SNSF and NSERC guidelines

To be eligible as an International Collaborator on an NSERC Alliance International grant, the researcher from Switzerland must be from an accredited degree-granting post-secondary institution. Applied sciences institutions that grant bachelors' degrees meet this requirement. Please note that scientists at government laboratories or public or private research institutes that do not grant degrees do not meet this requirement. The researcher's primary affiliation (and place of employment) must be with an eligible institution. Researchers applying for NSERC funding must adhere to NSERC policies and those applying for SNSF funding to SNSF guidelines. For more information about NSERC and SNSF policies and guidelines, please see the links below.

SNSF:

[Scientific Exchanges overview](#)

[Scientific Exchanges regulations](#)

[Scientific Exchanges guidelines](#)

[Project funding overview](#)

[Project funding regulations](#)

NSERC:

[Alliance International website \(Alliance International Catalyst and Alliance International Collaboration grants\)](#)

[Alliance International Quantum grants](#)

[Funding regulations](#)

[Application instructions](#)