

Project extension due to parenthood – SNSF Guide

Anyone working on an SNSF-funded research project who becomes a parent during this period faces numerous questions. Whom should I contact? What are the regulations governing maternity leave / other parent leave? Can I take unpaid leave as well? Are there additional funding opportunities for parents working in research?

This guide provides information on the steps to take.

Rights and procedures in the event of parenthood

In principle, the local regulations of the employing institution apply to persons working for SNSF-funded projects and to beneficiaries of SNSF-funded projects. If the employing institution (hereafter EI) foresees additional benefits, the SNSF will also cover these additional costs (e.g. 16 weeks instead of 14 for maternity leave).

To help parents understand the steps to follow, the procedures according to the different situations (mother [1], legal father¹ or mother's wife² [2], fellowship recipient [3]) are described below.

1 Procedures for mothers

Applicable for the following researchers:

- Persons employed by SNSF-funded projects (PhD candidates, postdoctoral researchers, other collaborators) (hereafter: mother employee)
- Beneficiaries of career funding grants, except for certain fellowship recipients (see point 3) (hereafter: mother beneficiary)
- Any beneficiary whose salary is financed by the SNSF (hereafter: mother beneficiary)

Ideally, the process starts from the 4th month of pregnancy.

What to do?	Who?	Whom to contact?	How?
Inform her line manager of the pregnancy	Future mother employee or future mother beneficiary	EI	Meeting
Inform the EI's Human Resources department	Future mother employee or future mother beneficiary	EI	In accordance with internal procedure
Meet with her line manager and/or the project leader to plan the next steps (return to work, unpaid leave, etc.)	Future mother employee or future mother beneficiary	EI	Meeting
Inform the SNSF office responsible for the funding scheme about the pregnancy	Research project leader	SNSF	Email
Request a project extension, with mention of maternity leave and any unpaid leave (minimum 2 months).	Research project leader	SNSF	mySNF

¹ At the time of the birth of the child or became the legal father within the following six months.

² She must be considered the other parent under Art. 255a para. 1 of the Swiss Civil Code of 10 December 1907.

What to do?	Who?	Whom to contact?	How?
Requests for extension must be submitted to the SNSF at the earliest six months before the end of the grant. This makes it possible to estimate the resources and duration required for the extension.			
Agreement of the SNSF and corresponding extension of the contract (the difference between the payment of the maternity allowance and the full 4 months will be covered by the SNSF upon request at the time of the final report).	SNSF		Email to the project leader
Income compensation allowance in the event of maternity must be credited to the SNSF grant.	Research project leader	EI	In accordance with internal procedure
After the birth: Send the application form to request an allowance for loss of earnings due to maternity and eventually requesting family allowances.	Mother employee or mother beneficiary	EI	Form to be sent to the HR department
Check eligibility for a Flexibility Grant	Mother employee or mother beneficiary	SNSF	Consult the SNSF web page .

If it is absolutely necessary to ensure the successful continuation of the research work during maternity, paternity or adoption leave, the SNSF may approve the employment of a deputy and bear the corresponding additional costs³.

2 Procedures for the other parent (legal father⁴ or the wife of the mother⁵)

Applicable for the following researchers:

- Persons employed by SNSF-funded projects (PhD candidates, postdoctoral researchers, other collaborators) (hereafter: parent employee)
- Beneficiaries of career funding grants, except for certain fellowship recipients (see point 3) (hereafter: parent beneficiary)
- Any beneficiary whose salary is financed by the SNSF (hereafter: parent beneficiary)

³ This applies to postdoctoral researchers funded by the SNSF, beneficiaries of career funding grants (SNSF Starting Grant, PRIMA, Eccellenza, Ambizione, Postdoc.Mobility return grant) whose salaries are funded by the SNSF, other collaborators whose salaries are funded by the SNSF.

⁴ At the time of the birth of the child or became the legal father within the following six months.

⁵ She must be considered the other parent under art. 255a para. 1 of the Swiss Civil Code of 10 December 1907.

Ideally, the process starts from the 4th month of pregnancy.

What to do?	Who?	Whom to contact?	How?
Organise a meeting with their line manager and/or the project leader to plan other parent leave (return to work, unpaid leave, etc.)	Future parent employee or parent beneficiary	EI	Meeting
Income compensation allowance in the event of maternity or other parent must be credited to the SNSF grant.	Research project leader	EI	Application to be sent to the central HR department
If the other parent wishes to take unpaid leave, a request for extension of the project with mention of parental leave may be submitted. Such requests will only be considered for a minimum of two months' leave. No additional amount will be granted for the extension. Requests for extensions must be submitted to the SNSF no earlier than six months before the end of the grant. This makes it possible to estimate the resources and duration required for the extension.	Research project leader	SNSF	mySNF
Agreement of the SNSF and corresponding extension of the contract	SNSF		Email to the project leader
After the birth: Send the application form to request an allowance for the other parent (father or mother's wife) and eventually requesting family allowances	Parent employee or parent beneficiary	EI	Form to be sent to the central HR department
Check eligibility for a Flexibility Grant	Parent employee or parent beneficiary	SNSF	Consult the SNSF web page

If it is absolutely necessary to ensure the successful continuation of the research work during maternity, paternity or adoption leave, the SNSF may approve the employment of a deputy and bear the corresponding additional costs⁶.

⁶ This applies to postdoctoral researchers funded by the SNSF, beneficiaries of career funding grants (SNSF Starting Grant, PRIMA, Eccellenza, Ambizione, Postdoc.Mobility return grant) whose salaries are funded by the SNSF, other collaborators whose salaries are funded by the SNSF.

3 Procedures for fellowship recipients

In the case of Postdoc.Mobility return grants, the provisions for recipients of career funding apply (see Procedures for mothers and Procedures for the other parent above).

In the case of Postdoc.Mobility fellowships, as the SNSF is not the employer of the grantees, the latter do not have an employment contract during the period of the fellowship. Fellowship recipients are obliged to inform the SNSF in writing of any facts that could alter or influence the conditions of the fellowship. This includes personal changes such as the birth of a child. Fellowship recipients must also inform their host professors abroad.

Fellowship recipients who give birth during the period of the mobility grant are entitled to a maximum of four months of paid maternity leave if there is an effective interruption in their research activity. Fellowship recipients who become parents (legal father⁷ or mother's wife⁸) during the period of the mobility grant are entitled to one month of paid other parent leave (irrespective of care responsibilities), provided that their research activity is interrupted. The other parent leave must be taken during the first six months following the birth of the child. If the mother takes fewer than four months of maternity leave because she is working or taking a course, or if she is unable to care for the child for health reasons, longer paid other parent leave may also be granted. In this case, however, the combined period of maternity leave and 'other parent' leave must not exceed four months. In exceptional cases, fellowship recipients may also apply for unpaid other parent leave.

Fellowship recipients who give birth to a child during the nine months immediately following the end of their fellowship may apply for additional maternity funding. The SNSF will provide additional funding for a maximum of four months, equivalent to the monthly amount of the grant. The granting of this additional funding is subject to the presentation of proof that the beneficiary is not entitled to a salary or insurance benefits during the four months following the birth. If such entitlements exist, but the total of these entitlements is less than the SNSF's supplementary funding grant, the SNSF will make up the difference. Entitlement to additional funding lapses as soon as the researcher resumes paid work.

In addition, fellowship recipients with dependent children receive a fixed child allowance from the SNSF. Child allowances granted by third parties are deducted from this amount.

Ideally, the process starts from the 4th month of pregnancy.

What to do?	Who?	Whom to contact?	How?
Inform the host professor abroad of the pregnancy or parenthood and define mutual expectations (length of leave, etc.).	Future parent recipient of a mobility fellowship	EI	Meeting / email

⁷ At the time of the birth of the child or became the legal father within the following six months.

⁸ She must be considered the other parent under art. 255a para. 1 of the Swiss Civil Code of 10 December 1907.

What to do?	Who?	Whom to contact?	How?
<p>As soon as the child is born: Inform the SNSF of the birth.</p> <p>Application to extend the fellowship (including maternity or parental leave and any unpaid leave). The grantee submits the necessary information, including a scanned copy of the birth certificate and confirmation from the host institution in the case of paid other parent leave.</p> <p>If the conditions are met, an application for a loss of earnings allowance is submitted.</p>	Future parent recipient of a mobility fellowship	SNSF	Email
If income compensation allowance in the event of maternity or other parent is received, it must be credited to the SNSF grant.	Parent recipient of a mobility fellowship	EI	Request to be sent to the central HR department
Agreement of the SNSF and corresponding extension of the fellowship.	SNSF		Email
Child allowances: allowances of CHF 12,000 per child per year are paid. Child allowances paid by third parties will be deducted from this amount. If one of the parents receives child allowance from a third party, the fellowship holder must declare this. In this case, the SNSF will only pay the difference between the sum of CHF 1,000 per month and the monthly amount paid by the third party or parties.	Parent recipient of a mobility fellowship	SNSF	Contact the SNSF Careers section by email

4 Questions

If you have additional questions, please call or email Grant Management. Information regarding adoption and pregnancy-related sick leave is also available upon request.