

SNSF Starting Grants 2027

Call Document

The SNSF Starting Grants are the SNSF's highest level of career funding. The objective of the SNSF Starting Grants is to lead their project and a team of researchers in Switzerland. Upon completion of the grant, a successful applicant should be a research leader who can contribute substantially to their research field. This document describes the rules and procedures for compiling and submitting a proposal to the SNSF Starting Grants Call 2027. The scheme is open for all research disciplines and topics.

Key features of the SNSF Starting Grants Call 2027

- **Call deadline: 4 May 2027 at 17:00:00 CET** (cf. [section 5.4](#) for a detailed call timeline).
- Applicants must fulfil all three personal requirements: 1) Eligibility Window, 2) Career Stage, and 3) Swiss-link by the call deadline (cf. [section 1.2](#) for details and clarifications).
- Applicants may apply twice to the SNSF Starting Grants instrument regardless of the subject matter of the project and previous ranking.
- Parallel submissions to other SNSF instruments (e.g. SNSF project funding) with overlapping funding periods to the requested SNSF Starting Grant are not permitted. Exceptions are one-off calls such as proposals within National Research Programmes or NCCRs.
- Applicants who submit a proposal under the current Ambizione call 2026 are not permitted to submit a proposal under the SNSF Starting Grants call 2027.
- Applicants may in parallel apply for other non-SNSF grants, in particular the ERC Starting Grants, with the same or a different project. However, if during the SNSF evaluation another substantial R3-level career grant proposal is approved for funding, applicants must decide whether to accept the funding offer or to continue with the evaluation of their SNSF Starting Grants proposal (cf. [section 1.3](#) for clarifications).
- Applicants may request their own salary (if needed) as well as project funds of max CHF 1 Mio. for a max duration of 5 years (cf. [section 3](#) for details on the budget).

Proposals to the StG Call 2027 must be submitted via the SNSF Portal (portal.snf.ch)

- The proposal is submitted in one submission step (cf. [section 4](#)) including the mandatory confirmation letter of the higher education institution or research institution (cf. [section 1.5](#)).
- Proposals are evaluated in two phases, as detailed in [section 5.1](#), according to the criteria defined in [section 5.2](#).
- Proposals will be funded in order of priority based on their rank and the available funding.
- An additional budget is earmarked to fund additional excellent female applicants.

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Preamble

All grant proposals must be in line with the regulations outlined in this call document. In addition, and if no specific provision is formulated in the present call, the other regulations of the SNSF apply, in particular the Funding Regulations¹ and their General Implementation Regulations².

1 Applicant

1.1 Objective and targeted career level

Objective: The SNSF Starting Grants enable researchers to lead and manage their project and a team of researchers in Switzerland. Upon completion of the grant, a successful applicant will be a researcher who is recognised as leading their research field by their peers.

Targeted career level: Applicants are ready to transition to the established researcher career stage (stage R3) or may be at the beginning of this career stage, where they are expected to be able to independently, develop their own research, attract funding, and lead a research group. In particular, they are expected to demonstrate significant research achievements since the PhD phase, including original research outputs that have undergone a recognised quality assurance procedure. If the relevant degree for the eligibility window ([Section 1.2](#)) is the medical degree, they are expected to demonstrate these achievements after the research activities associated with the medical training.

Applicants for an SNSF Starting Grant:

- can design, plan and undertake a research project without being supervised and have completed relevant training to acquire these skills;
- have established a broad network with other researchers in their research field;
- have acquired experience in mentoring or supporting less experienced researchers (who may or may not have been employed under their supervision), in academic or extra-academic settings.

The qualifications of the applicants are assessed according to the evaluation criteria (cf. [section 5.2.2](#)).

The SNSF does not consider funding proposals that fail to meet the personal and formal requirements set out in the present call document and in the Funding Regulations (art. 10–19)³.

1.2 Personal requirements

Applicants have a PhD degree, or a medical degree, or a qualification that is equivalent to a PhD. In addition, they must fulfil three criteria: (1) Eligibility Window, (2) Career Stage, and (3) Swiss-link. **All personal requirements must be met or be fulfilled by the call deadline on 4 May 2027.**

In case of uncertainty as to whether you meet all three personal requirements, or for eligibility extensions, you may contact the SNSF Administrative Office at stg@snf.ch. If you clearly fulfil all three personal requirements, the SNSF Administrative Office must not confirm your eligibility beforehand.

¹ [Funding Regulations of the Swiss National Science Foundation on research grants](#) (PDF)

² [SNSF General Implementation of the Funding Regulations](#) (PDF)

³ [Funding Regulations of the Swiss National Science Foundation on research grants](#) (PDF)

1) Eligibility window:

After their PhD defence:

- They have at least 2 years of research experience with an average work-time percentage of at least 0.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) in an academic or extra-academic environment.
- They submit their proposal no more than 8 years after the date of their PhD defence.

After their medical degree (state examination or equivalent):

- They have done at least 3 years of clinical work and have at least 2 years of research experience with an average work-time percentage of at least 0.8 FTE in an academic or extra-academic environment.
- They submit their proposal no more than 12 years after obtaining their medical degree.

After a qualification equivalent to a PhD, defined as 3 years of research activity with an average work-time percentage of at least 0.8 FTE after obtaining the higher education degree:

- They have at least 2 years of research experience with an average work-time percentage of at least 0.8 FTE in an academic or extra-academic environment.
- They submit their proposal no more than 8 years after obtaining a qualification equivalent to a PhD.

The relevant period to determine the fit within the window of eligibility is the time elapsed between the (oral) defence of the relevant degree and the call deadline on 4 May 2027.

Eligibility extensions: The window of eligibility may be extended if one or more of the reasons set out in Clause 1.11 of the General Implementation Regulations⁴ apply. Any extension of the eligibility window must be approved by the SNSF Administrative Office. Requests for an extension of the eligibility window, accompanied by the relevant supporting documents, must be submitted by email to stg@snf.ch.

2) Career stage:

Applicants have reached the targeted career stage R3, as laid out in [section 1.1](#). The SNSF does not consider applications in case applicants clearly do not have the scientific qualifications, background, and experience required.

Applicants are not eligible to apply if, at the time of application they have already achieved the objective of the SNSF Starting Grants. The objective is achieved if either of the following situations is met:

- a) At the time of the application deadline, the applicant is already leading their own independent research group of 2–3 people (typically more than 2.0 FTE).
- b) The applicant already holds a position that allows them to lead their own research group (or has a binding agreement to such a position) and has already received (or been awarded) significant funding from their research institution, from the SNSF, or from any other third-party funding source.

The above stated situations and conditions are considered as benchmarks for evaluating the career stage of applicants; in case of uncertainty, eligibility must be clarified via stg@snf.ch before submission.

⁴ [SNSF General Implementation of the Funding Regulations](#) (PDF)

3) Swiss-link:

Applicants must (a) have been employed in a research position for the equivalent of at least two years with an average work-time percentage of at least 80% (0.8 FTE)⁵ at a Swiss research institution in the higher education sector in Switzerland, or (b) have Swiss nationality, or (c) hold a degree from a Swiss higher education institution (Master's, PhD, MD/FMH, or equivalent).

Note that the research position must be at a Swiss higher education or research institution in Switzerland. International organisations located in Switzerland, e.g., CERN, do not count as Swiss-link if there is no additional affiliation to a Swiss higher education institution (cf. [Submission requirements](#)).

1.3 Multiple applications and duplicate funding

- Support for research projects already funded by the SNSF, the applicants' research institution or any third-party source is excluded (cf. Funding Regulations, art. 17⁶).
- Applicants must provide information on available and requested funding from the SNSF or any other third-party funding source (cf. [section 3.1](#) and [section 4.1](#)).
- SNSF Starting Grants applicants and grantees have the duty to inform the SNSF of any third-party funding obtained immediately.
- SNSF Starting Grant applicants may in parallel apply for other R3-level career grants, in particular the ERC Starting Grant, with the same or a different project. If during the evaluation of the SNSF Starting Grant proposal another R3-level career grant is approved, applicants must inform the SNSF immediately and will be given a short deadline to make a binding decision between accepting the other grant offer and continuing with the evaluation of their SNSF Starting Grants application. If no response is received within this deadline, it is assumed that the recipient has chosen the other grant offer and the evaluation of the SNSF application will be terminated.
- During the evaluation process, applicants may not have other SNSF applications under evaluation with overlapping funding periods (e.g., SNSF Project Funding) with the requested SNSF Starting Grant with the exception of NRPs, NCCRs or other one-off funding calls.
- Applicants who submit a proposal under the current Ambizione call 2026 are not permitted to submit a proposal under the SNSF Starting Grants call 2027.
- Ambizione grantees may apply for an SNSF Starting Grant 12 months after starting their Ambizione grant at the earliest.

⁵ Examples of how to calculate time-based criteria can be found in the FAQs on the [SNSF Starting Grants website](#).

⁶ [Funding Regulations of the Swiss National Science Foundation on research grants](#) (PDF)

1.4 Repeated submissions

Applicants whose proposal for an SNSF Starting Grant was rejected after evaluation may apply only once more for an SNSF Starting Grant, regardless of the subject matter of the project and previous ranking. The applicants can submit a revised version of the same project or a new project.

- Each proposal is evaluated independently of any previous submission.
- Application procedures discontinued due to a violation of scientific integrity rules by the applicant are considered a rejection.

1.5 Employing host institution

The higher education institution or research institution must be established in Switzerland as legal entity (public or private) under Swiss law and sign the confirmation letter (template provided on the SNSF Portal and the [SNSF Starting Grants website](#)). The confirmation letter must be signed by the vice-rectorate of research or equivalent of the employing host institution.

At the time of submitting the proposal, the applicant does not need to be employed by the higher education institution or research institution they have chosen as their host institution; however, the host institution must employ the applicant at least for the project's duration.

Higher education institutions that offer professorial positions and titles must offer a position at least at the level of assistant professor for the duration of the grant. Research institutions that do not offer professorial positions and titles, must offer a position involving independent project and management responsibility ("group leader position") for the entire duration of the grant. For the applicant's own salary and project budget see [section 3](#).

The employing host institution guarantees to:

- provide the grantee and the research team with the appropriate institutional conditions, including suitable working space, to carry out the project successfully;
- ensure appropriate professional integration of the grantee;
- warrant access rights to infrastructures, equipment, and other services and resources necessary for conducting the research project;
- ensure independence in managing the project and the funds, as well as leading the team. This includes the grantees' authority in publishing the results of the funded project.

The employing host institution also guarantees the completion of the doctoral thesis (including necessary funding) of the PhD positions requested in the proposal, either upon the expiration of the grant or if the project is prematurely terminated, which may include relocating abroad (cf. [section 6.4](#)).

The present call is eligible for overhead contributions as defined in the relevant SNSF regulations.⁷

⁷ [Regulations on overhead contributions](#) (PDF)

1.6 Work-time percentage and time commitment

The expected work-time percentage and time commitment to the SNSF Starting Grant project is described here. The rules on when the salary of an applicant can or cannot be covered by the SNSF Starting Grant are described in detail in [section 3.2](#). Before applying, applicants are requested to discuss the conditions and procedure for conducting the project with their employing higher education institution or research institution which must provide a confirmation letter (template provided on the SNSF Portal and on the SNSF Starting Grants website).

Applicants that already have a guaranteed and paid position of at least assistant professor at a higher education or at least group leader at a research institution in Switzerland for the entire duration of the proposed SNSF Starting Grant and therefore do not request their salary in the application, need to be employed at least 0.5 FTE and spend at least 0.5 FTE on the project funded by the SNSF Starting grant.

For applicants that do request their salary (either in full or for part of the project) the following specifications apply:

- Applicants employed at a university of applied sciences or of teacher education must be employed at least 0.8 FTE and spend at least 70% of their working time on the project funded by this grant. The remaining time can be used for activities expected for the development of an academic career (e.g. teaching, professional development).
- Clinician scientists must be employed at least 0.5 FTE as a researcher and spend at least 0.5 FTE on the project funded by this grant and the rest mainly on clinical work. The salary related to the clinical work is not covered by the SNSF Starting Grant.
- In all other cases, the applicants must be employed at least 0.8 FTE and spend at least 80% of their working time on the project funded by this grant and the rest mainly on activities expected for the development of an academic career (e.g. teaching, professional development).

If an applicant secures significant SNSF funding, such as project funding, or third-party funding, such as an ERC grant or similar, they may request a reduction of their time commitment to the project but respecting that the time spent on the SNSF grant is at least 0.5 FTE.

Note: Any work-time percentage reduction for approved grants must be requested from the SNSF Administrative Offices and will be approved on a case-by-case basis (cf. [section 6.1](#)).

2 Formal requirements, research ethics and integrity

2.1 Legal basis

The general provisions of the SNSF (Funding Regulations⁸ and the General Implementation Regulations for the Funding Regulations⁹) apply to the SNSF Starting Grants and the corresponding funding procedures. This call document is issued by the Academic Board of the Research Council.

2.2 User account

If applicants do not already have a SNSF Portal user account, they will need to open a new account: [Create an SNSF Portal user account](#). They should register their new account at least one month before the deadline. Their SNSF Portal account will remain in place for future submissions or the lifetime management of approved projects.

2.3 Ethics and Integrity

Research activities and methods that have ethical implications or may raise questions requiring sound ethical assessment must be declared on the SNSF Portal under *Declarations*. Hence, applicants must take note of the Swiss laws and ethical standards¹⁰ including those of the SNSF and the employing host institution. Furthermore, the rules of scientific integrity must be respected¹¹.

2.4 Open access and open research data

Under the SNSF Starting Grants, grantees must ensure open access to all peer-reviewed scientific publications of their results as set out in the SNSF Funding Regulations and the General Implementation Regulations for the Funding Regulations.

For the SNSF Starting Grants, grantees must submit a data management plan (DMP) to ask for the release of funds for approved projects. Missing or inaccurate statements in the DMP need to be added/revised at the latest before the release of the payment of the second instalment.

The SNSF also expects that data generated or collected during the project are made publicly accessible in data repositories provided there are no legal, ethical, copyright or other issues, as set out in the SNSF Funding Regulations and the SNSF Open Research Data (ORD) Policy.¹² The repositories must comply with the FAIR data principles. Note that costs for ORD must be considered at the time of submission of the application.

⁸ [Funding Regulations of the Swiss National Science Foundation on research grants](#) (PDF)

⁹ [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#) (PDF)

¹⁰ [Federal Act on the Promotion of Research and Innovation](#)

¹¹ [Regulations on scientific misconduct](#) (PDF)

¹² Further information: [Open Research Data](#)

3 Requested funding

For applicants who need to finance their own salary, the grant will cover this salary in addition to the project funds. For applicants with guaranteed salaries, the grant will cover the project funds only. SNSF Starting Grants are awarded up to a maximum of 5 years. The maximum budget is reduced pro rata temporis for projects of a shorter duration.

Requested funding must be linked to the aims of the project for its entire duration. It must be well justified, proportionate to the needs of the project and estimated as accurately as possible.

Applicants enter the requested funding using whole CHF integers in the SNSF Portal section *Budget*. All costs must be indicated in annual allotments. For the list of eligible costs, see art. 2 of the General Implementation Regulations for the Funding Regulations¹³.

The evaluation panels will assess the requested project funds, the amount of which may be reduced for ineligible, unjustified or disproportionate costs, see art. 2.2 of the General Implementation Regulations for the Funding Regulations¹³.

3.1 Project funds

The maximal budget for project funds is CHF 1 million.

Project staff (cf. General Implementation Regulations for the Funding Regulations, art. 7¹⁴ and annex 12¹⁵): applicants indicate the salaries (social security contributions included automatically) for applicant's research team (doctoral students, postdocs, other employees). When requesting positions, they refer to the employing institution's salary rates and social contributions. Size, composition and role of the team members must be indicated.

Further costs must be classified in the correct expense category on the SNSF Portal¹⁶ (e.g., Travel, conferences and workshops; Equipment and material of enduring value; Cost for granting access to research data; Infrastructure use, data procurement, expandable items and other material costs, etc.). All available resources for the realization of the project must be declared.

For the costs for equipment, applicants include a short technical description together with a justification of its necessity. The costs for equipment may exceed the maximum of CHF 100'000.- specified in art. 2.8 of the General Implementation Regulations for the Funding Regulations¹⁷, provided that the maximum budget of CHF 1 million for the project funds is not exceeded.

Note: Any funding received or requested from the applicants' employing or future host institution, the SNSF or any other third-party source must be declared under the SNSF Portal section *Relations*.

¹³ [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#) (PDF)

¹⁴ [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#) (PDF)

¹⁵ [Annex 12: Salary ranges, guidelines for employees in SNSF-funded projects](#) (PDF)

¹⁶ Further information: [Guidelines "How do I enter the budget in the SNSF Portal?"](#)

¹⁷ Decision of the Presiding Board of the National Research Council July 5, 2023

3.2 The applicants' own salaries

If an applicant already holds a position for the duration of the grant that meets the SNSF Starting Grant requirements for conducting an independent project with management responsibilities (e.g. group leader or university professor; see also [section 1.5](#)), the applicant's salary *cannot* be covered by the grant.

An applicant's own salary (either in full or for part of the project) *can* be covered by the SNSF Starting Grant in the following situations:

- the applicant does not yet hold a position that meets the SNSF Starting Grant requirements
- the applicant holds a secured position that does not meet the SNSF Starting Grant requirements regarding title, independence, management responsibility and time commitment. This situation applies, for example, to positions with a strong focus on teaching (e.g. lecturers at universities of applied sciences).
- the applicant holds a position that does not cover the entire duration of the SNSF Starting Grant, e.g. a tenure-track position. In the case of a tenure-track position, applicants may apply for their own salary for the remaining duration after the end of the tenure-track position. The SNSF will then cover the salary for this part of the grant in case tenure is not granted.

If the grantee obtains to a paid position during the grant, the remaining salary contributions must be returned to the SNSF and cannot be converted into project funds.

For higher education institutions that offer assistant professorships, the SNSF covers a salary at the level of a local assistant professor for the requested duration of the project. For research institutions that do not offer assistant professor positions and titles, the SNSF will pay a position involving independent project and management responsibility ("group leader position") for the requested duration of the grant.

Applicants indicate whether they request their salary (in full or for part of the project), including social security contributions of the employer. To determine the salary level, they contact the HR department of the employing host institution. If this information is not available on time, they may enter CHF 150'000.- per year (excluding social contributions). The exact salary must be confirmed by the employing host institution at the latest for approved grants.

4 Proposal and documents

All proposals must be submitted via the SNSF Portal. The following chapters and paragraphs supplement the information available on the SNSF portal.

General: All documents and information must be submitted in English. For documents, the font must be Times New Roman, Arial or similar with a font size of at least 10, line spacing 1.5, and margins of 2 cm on all sides. Condensed fonts are not allowed. Documents must be submitted in PDF format.

4.1 Section: Proposal

Contributors: people who help to enter the proposal may be added as contributors. Note that contributors have full access to your proposal and can edit all data. Therefore, researchers with whom you are collaborating on the proposed research project should not be listed as contributors but should only be listed in the *Collaboration* section under *Research plan* (cf. [section 4.4](#)).

Title and duration: the data entered under *Duration* is used to automatically set certain parameters in the *Research* section, such as under *Teams* and *Budget*.

Relations: applicants are required to declare all ongoing grants from any source as well as all submitted grant proposals. Specific conditions may apply to submitted grant proposals (cf. [section 1.3](#)).

4.2 Section: Research

4.2.1 Team

Applicant: Applicants compile their CV on the SNSF Portal (cf. [Your curriculum vitae – all about the CV format](#)). At the time of submission, the information in the personal profile is assigned to the proposal and stored in their current state as a snapshot. For applicants, the complete profile including academic age and major achievements is stored as a CV.

The standardized CV is used to evaluate the general research qualification of the applicant, taking into account their research discipline and the net academic age of the applicants. The CV can be accessed by the referees and external peer-reviewers. The *Major achievements* serve as a general description of your most important scientific contributions to date. However, the *Major achievements* will also be used to assess the qualifications of the applicant to execute the proposed project (cf. [section 5.2.2](#)).

The SNSF has signed the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#). The scientific quality, value and impact of the major achievements identified in the CV are taken into consideration (including datasets, software, prototypes) in addition to research publications. In this context, the research content of an output is much more important than publication metrics or the name of the journal in which it was published.

Project team: requested personnel must be entered under *Applicant* and are then automatically added to the *Budget* and count towards the project funds limits (cf. [section 3.1](#)).

Host institution: chose your host institution (cf. [section 1.6](#)) from the menu and upload the confirmation letter signed by the vice-rector of research (or similar).

Salary information: indicated if you request your own salary (cf. [section 3.2](#))

Diploma: at least a copy of your official PhD diploma or medical degree certificate must be uploaded as PDF. Make sure, that it indicates the date of your oral defense/examination or add a separate document confirming the date. If the documents are not in one of the official Swiss languages or English, a certified translation must be provided.

4.2.2 Summary

The SNSF uses the information provided in the *Summary* section on the SNSF Portal to allocate your proposal to an evaluation panel. The *Summary* section is also used to find suitable peer reviewers in evaluation phase 2, and the *Summary of the research* is made available to peer reviewers when they are approached for a peer review.

Summary of the research: The summary should present the main objectives of the project and how these may exceed the state of the art. It should also contain a brief overview of the research approach, utilized methods and implementation of the research. Note: It is not recommended to use “buzz words” that are not a critical part of the project.

Disciplines: The selection of disciplines must be relevant to the research proposal. To ensure that the proposal is evaluated by the most qualified evaluators possible, select rather disciplines at the lower hierarchical level than the more general, overarching categories: [Overview and further information on the classification of research disciplines](#). Note: It is not recommended to choose every discipline the research proposal might touch. Certain aspects might be better covered by keywords.

Keywords: The chosen keywords should be precise and meaningful to further specify the topic. They might also describe a certain method (e.g. “MRI”) or work subjects (e.g. “patients”). Note: It is not recommended to give generic or very broad keywords (e.g. “Immunology”).

4.2.3 Research plan

Research objectives: The *Research objectives* section should provide a general overview of the project objectives, while the research plan should describe them in greater detail. In *Research objectives*, measurable targets should be presented in terms of outcomes and outputs; in the research plan, they should be firmly grounded in the scientific content, for example through hypotheses, theoretical foundations and a focus on generating scientific knowledge.

Research plan: all research plans must meet the [Requirements for the research plan](#) and follow the described general structuring (the structure within the sections is up to the applicants).

In addition to the general requirements listed above, the following conditions, requirements, and rules apply to all research plans submitted to the SNSF Starting Grants and must be complied with:

- **All research plans must be submitted in English no matter the discipline.**
- The research plan must not exceed 15 pages (A4 paper size) and 60,000 characters (including spaces, font size 10, line spacing 1.5). This includes the cover page and table of contents (both not mandatory), as well as footnotes, figures, text on figures, captions, formulae, tables, etc.
- Your research plan must be legible also in printed form, so that tables, charts, or other important details do not need to be enlarged: If parts of the research plan are not clearly legible, they cannot be assessed.

- The research plan and the bibliography must be uploaded separately in their final versions as a single PDF file (not write-protected) and must not contain any attachments (this includes links to personal websites or websites with additional information about the project).
- The bibliography must not contain any additional information to the research.
- No modifications to the research plan are permitted after submission.

The SNSF does not consider proposals that do not meet the formal requirements for the research plan and/or are clearly inadequate (cf. Funding Regulations¹⁸, art. 22).

Collaborations: list all national and international collaborations relevant to the project. For collaborations with institutions or groups, add the full names of the main collaborators. Collaborators on the proposed research project should not be entered as *Contributors* (cf. section 4).

For each entry, choose the correct type of collaboration (e.g., exchanges on the project, publication, research infrastructures, exchange of personnel, industry/business collaboration etc). Use the textbox to describe the collaboration and why it is required for the proposed research project.

Collaboration letters are no longer required and cannot be uploaded in the proposal or submitted elsewhere. Applicants must confirm in the *Collaboration* section that they have discussed the planned collaborations in detail with their collaborators and that they have the full support for the planned work, use of infrastructure, exchange of personnel or similar. If further discussion of the collaborations is necessary, this must be included in the research plan.

Use-inspired: indicate if your project is [Use-inspired research](#) and describe the broader impact.

3R principles: indicate if your research project focuses on the [3Rs principle](#)¹⁹.

4.2.4 Budget

The *Budget* contains a detailed list of all project funds (cf. [section 3.1](#)). Instructions on the budget are available here: [Guidelines “How do I enter the budget in the SNSF Portal?”](#)

Note: The applicants' own salary (cf. [section 3.2](#)) and salaries for staff members must be entered in the section *Team* in the respective containers (cf. [section 4.2.1](#))

4.2.5 Declarations

All questions under *Declarations* must be answered truthfully. The information provided by the applicant is used to request further authorization or approval by a cantonal or institutional ethics committee as part of the funding conditions of approved grants if necessary.

¹⁸ [Funding Regulations of the Swiss National Science Foundation on research grants](#) (PDF)

¹⁹ [Principles and Practices concerning Research Using Animals](#) (PDF)

4.3 Section: Submission

Exclusions: applicants may exclude researchers from peer reviewing their proposals. The SNSF will abide by this list if applicants provide a valid and justified reason for the requested exclusion and other experts are available.

Submission: The proposal must be submitted via the SNSF Portal no later than 17:00:00 CET (Swiss local time) on the submission date (Tuesday, 4 May 2027).

Make sure that you have entered all requested information and uploaded all mandatory documents according to the requirements stated in this document or in the respective sections in the SNSF Portal before the submission deadline. Otherwise, your proposal may not be considered.

4.4 Receipt and verification at the SNSF

4.4.1 Administrative verification

The Administrative Offices of the SNSF check whether the submitted proposal meet the formal and personal requirements and whether you and the designated research institutions are eligible. Eligible proposals will be scientifically evaluated. Proposals may be considered not eligible even after the evaluation process has started. The current status of your proposal, e.g. “submitted”, “in evaluation”, etc, is always visible and displayed in the SNSF Portal.

The Administrative Offices of the SNSF may check whether the proposal respects scientific integrity rules (cf. Regulations on scientific misconduct²⁰).

4.4.2 Contacts between applicants and the SNSF

Address queries to the SNSF Administrative Offices by phone +41 (0)31 308 22 22 or by sending an email to stg@snf.ch. The Office may contact applicants to clarify issues related to the proposal.

During and after the submission deadline, applicants are obliged to:

- provide any information requested by the SNSF,
- cooperate in clarifying issues,
- provide information about all relevant changes and developments related to their proposal.

The SNSF cannot give applicants any information on the evaluation of their proposals while the evaluation is in progress and until the decision is communicated in writing.

For the SNSF, the interaction between applicants and members of evaluation panels regarding proposals is not compatible with academic best practice.

²⁰ [Regulations on scientific misconduct](#) (PDF)

5 Evaluation and communication

The evaluation of the submitted proposals is based on the principle of competition. Thematic panels will evaluate the proposals in a two-phase procedure. The proposals are evaluated based on the submitted information and documents for phase 1 and additionally by external peer reviews and interviews for phase 2.

5.1 Evaluation procedure

The evaluation procedure follows the principles that guide the SNSF's evaluation practices:

- Individual voting: every panel member casts an independent rating.
- Clear separation between scientific evaluation and funding decision.
- Random selection: funding decisions on proposals of similar scientific quality around the funding line may be reached by drawing lots²¹.

Further information: [Evaluation procedure – this is how we select](#)

For the SNSF Starting Grants, the selection procedure comprises two phases:

5.1.1 Phase 1 evaluation procedure

The proposals are evaluated in thematic evaluation panels. The evaluation panels are published on the SNSF website after the submission deadline and applicants are informed in which evaluation panel their proposal will be evaluated.

The allocation of proposals to evaluation panels is based on the information provided in the *Summary* section (cf. [section 4.2](#)). Note that occasionally panel members from other evaluation panels may help to evaluate some proposals, e.g., for interdisciplinary proposals.

Before the evaluation phase 1 meeting, at least two panel members independently evaluate each proposal as referees and submit a structured recommendation. (cf. [section 5.2](#)). During the evaluation phase 1 meeting, the referees present to the panel the proposals assigned to them and justify their recommendations. Subsequently, the panel members discuss the proposal in terms of the identified strengths and weaknesses and based on the evaluation criteria. If your proposal clearly has many weaknesses, the evaluation panel may preselect it for rejection. In such cases the proposal is not discussed in detail (cf. Organisation regulations, art. 19.4)²¹.

Proposals not selected for phase 2 will be rejected by a decision letter (cf. [section 5.3](#)).

5.1.2 Phase 2 evaluation procedure

Proposals selected for phase 2 are peer reviewed. External peer reviewers are researchers who do not participate in the panel meetings and who submit their structured reviews prior to the evaluation panel meeting phase 2. Applicants are entitled to submit a list of researchers not to be asked for an external peer review in the SNSF Portal section *Exclusions* (cf. [section 4.3](#))

²¹ [Organisational Regulations of the Research Council of the Swiss National Science Foundation](#) (PDF), art. 19, para. 6

The submitted peer reviews are checked by the SNSF Administrative Offices for formal conformity and by the referees from the evaluation panels for their usefulness for the proposal evaluation. The same referees then revise their evaluation recommendations from phase 1 on the basis of the peer reviews and submit an own updated recommendation.

The evaluation meeting phase 2 includes an interview with the applicants. During the interview, applicants present their research project and answer the questions from the evaluation panel members. After each interview, panel members discuss and rate the proposal. Based on the individual ratings of the panel members, a ranking list is compiled using Bayesian ranking and forwarded to the Programme Committee Careers, which will decide, within the limits of the available budget, on the proposals to be funded. A random selection may be applied if the ratings of the proposals at the threshold are not clearly distinguishable in the Bayesian ranking list. Proposals that are not funded will be rejected by a decision letter (cf. [section 5.3](#)).

5.2 Evaluation criteria

The following criteria are considered during the evaluation procedure. They focus on the scientific quality of the research project and the qualification of the applicant. The same criteria are applied during both evaluation phases:

5.2.1 *Scientific quality of the research project*

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project:

- To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?
- To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g., novel concepts and approaches or development between or across disciplines)?

Scientific approach:

- To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible bearing in mind the groundbreaking nature and ambition of the proposed research?
- To what extent are the proposed research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project?
- To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate and properly justified?

5.2.2 *Qualification of the applicant*

Intellectual capacity and creativity:

- To what extent has the applicant demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
- To what extent does the applicant provide evidence of creative and original thinking?
- To what extent does the applicant have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

5.3 Outcome and communication of decisions

After phase 1, all applicants are pre-informed about the outcome via email. Applicants not selected for phase 2 receive a decision letter with the scientific reasons underlying the evaluation and the anonymized assessments of the referees. Applicants who advance to phase 2 are informed about the date and time of their interview via email.

Applicants rejected in phase 2 receive a decision letter with the scientific reasons underlying the evaluation and the anonymized assessments of the referees and the peer reviewers.

Proposals are funded in order of priority based on their rank and the available funding. Highly ranked but rejected proposals may be placed on a Funding Reserve List (FRL) and may be offered funding if a grant should be withdrawn after approval. Applicants that are selected for the FRL are informed about the FRL process via mail and in the decision letter.

The decision letter may be appealed against before the Federal Administrative Court.²²

5.4 Timeline of the SNSF Starting Grants Call 2027

- Call opens: 1 February 2027
- Call deadline: 4 May 2027 at 17:00:00 (Swiss local time / CET)

- Evaluation Phase 1: May 2027 until October 2027
- Communication on the outcome of Phase 1: end of October 2027
- Dispatch of official decision letters for Phase 1: November 2027

- Evaluation Phase 2: October 2027 until February 2028
 - SSH Interviews: 27–28 January 2028
 - MINT Interviews: 10–11 February 2028
 - LS Interviews: 3–4 February 2028
- Communication on the outcome of Phase 2: end of March 2028
- Dispatch of decision letters Phase 2: April 2028

- Earliest possible starting date of grant: 1 May 2028
- Latest possible starting date of grant: 1 May 2029

The timeline is subject to change; check the [SNSF Starting Grants website](#) for updates.

²² [Appeals against SNSF funding decisions](#) (PDF)

6 Lifetime management

Lifetime management refers to the management and administration of funded projects from project start to project completion: [Lifetime management of projects \(grants\)](#). Grantees are obliged to notify the SNSF in writing without delay of any circumstances that affects the grant (cf. Funding regulations, art. 39).

For requests concerning lifetime management, contact the SNSF Administrative Offices via stg@snf.ch.

6.1 Reduction in work-time percentage or time commitment

Any reduction in work-time percentage or time commitment must be requested and the SNSF decides based on the feasibility of the funded SNSF Starting Grant project. The SNSF must be informed as early as possible in order to decide on an amendment or the revocation of the grant.

The work-time percentage must comply with [section 1.6](#). A reduction of the time commitment to the SNSF Starting Grant project is only possible in the event of successful acquisition of additional significant SNSF or third-party funding. The minimum time commitment to the project must always be 0.5 FTE.

6.2 Obtaining a paid academic position during the grant

For SNSF Starting Grants covering the grantee's own salary:

Grantees who obtain a paid academic position that allows leading their research project and a team of researchers, must inform the SNSF.

- If grantees obtain a position in Switzerland (with an employment with a work-time percentage of at least 50%) (0.5 FTE)) the grant may be transferred to the new host institution, provided that the feasibility and success of the project are guaranteed. The project funds will continue to cover the SNSF Starting Grant project. The remaining amount of the grantee's salary must be reimbursed to the SNSF.
- If grantees obtain a position abroad, "[Money follows Researcher](#)" (MfR) can be requested. The MfR process is aimed at researchers who move abroad and would like their current SNSF funding to continue. In principle, a continuation of the project is possible in any country. MfR is approved on a case-by-case basis on request of the grant recipient.

6.3 Transfer of the grant

A grant can be transferred to another Swiss higher education or research institution, provided that the feasibility and success of the project are guaranteed. Both host institutions must agree to the transfer.

6.4 Premature termination of the grant

Should SNSF Starting Grantees have to terminate their grant prematurely (e.g. obtaining a position on the extra-academic sector or outside of Switzerland), they must inform the SNSF without delay. In such cases, the SNSF terminates the grant. The remaining budget of the grant must be refunded to the SNSF.