

BioLink

Grants for the networking of biobanks established for research purposes: Call for proposals 2019

Guidelines for applications

February 2019

Preamble

BioLink

BioLink is intended for investigators who wish to network their biobanks using IT systems. This harmonisation of the IT systems will result in the sharing of interoperable data so as to address well-defined, scientific questions. BioLink is open to all research domains and responds to the needs for networking IT systems of existing biobanks.

Applications must be based on original, unique and timely scientific questions that critically depend for their investigation on the networking of the biobanks. Applications must also provide information on the selection, development, and implementation of the IT systems. Further, they also must describe how the interoperability of the biobanks will be ensured.

The duration of funding is limited to 24 months. The grants are awarded to support the technical development and the implementation of IT systems (IT material, software, licences), as well as the salaries of technical collaborators employed for the implementation of the IT systems. Costs for the creation, expansion and maintenance of biobanks, as well as research costs associated with the investigation of the scientific questions addressed cannot be covered.

Three million Swiss francs have been allocated to the call in 2019 and are intended for supporting three to five projects.

Letters of intent for participation in the call must be sent to the SNSF by **22 March 2019** to biolink@snf.ch. Applications are to be submitted by **20 May 2019, 17:00**.

These guidelines will lead you through the preparation of your concept and the submission via mySNF (“**New application**” – “**Infrastructure**”). Please refer to the Funding Regulations of the Swiss National Science Foundation and the specific regulations for the Swiss Biobanking Platform.

Please enter all data in English.

Documentation

The documentation on the BioLink call for proposals 2018 comprises:

- the **Guidelines for applications**, as a reference document for persons who wish to apply, and
- the [BioLink Call 2019](#) document"
- the [BioLink Letter of Intent Template](#).

The documents are available on the SNSF website (www.snsf.ch). They may also be downloaded on the electronic platform mySNF (www.mysnf.ch). The guidelines for requesting a grant are based on the [BioLink Call 2019 document](#), the [Funding Regulations of the SNSF](#) and the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#). The guidelines are not legally binding; they do not in any circumstances substitute the mentioned regulations.

Creating the online application

The application must be written in English and the required documents uploaded as a PDF in mySNF. Please include the required data when compiling the documents listed. The SNSF will not ask you to provide any data that is missing at a later stage and will not consider applications that are incomplete.

Structure and content of the application document

NOTE: Please read these guidelines carefully and follow the instructions; please note that applications that do not meet the formal requirements will not be further evaluated

mySNF data or document container

Explanations

Personal data

Responsible applicant

The responsible applicant is the person representing the consortium of applicants vis-à-vis the SNSF and to whom the SNSF will address all correspondence (Art. 12 of the SNSF Funding regulations).

Applicants must meet the criteria of Art. 10 of the SNSF Funding regulations and must have the necessary competences in the field of research covered by the project and in biobanking – as reflected in their CV and list of research output.

Applicants are responsible for the conception and realisation of the project.

Further applicant(s)

Applicants must meet the criteria of Art. 10 of the SNSF Funding regulations and must have the necessary competences in the field of research covered by the project and in biobanking – as reflected in their CV and list of publications.

Applicants are responsible for the conception and realisation of the project.

Applicant's employment

All applicants provide proof of their employment for the duration of the project. They indicate their employment status, their function in their institutions. They name a contact person per applicant who can confirm the information provided (e.g. supervisor, responsible person in the HR department, head of institute). The SNSF reserves the right to verify the accuracy of the information.

Project partner(s)

In contrast to members of a research group (applicants), project partners are researchers who make a partial contribution to the research project without being responsible for it. They are not (salaried) contributors to the project (Article 11 of the Funding Regulations, Article 1.12 of the General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations). In the scope of BioLink, project partners include, for example, persons who participate in the

sharing of data through their contribution to the IT systems, and researchers who make the data held in their biobanks available for responding to the scientific questions without being involved in the design or implementation of the project. As a general rule, costs for project partners should not exceed 20% of the total grant. Their involvement must be duly justified for implementation of the IT systems. Partner costs do not cover the engagement of employees (Article 2.10 of the General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations).

Application data

Basic data I

**Original project title/
Project title in English** Enter original project title in English (max. 255 characters including spaces)

Requested starting date The earliest starting date is 1 September 2019. The latest starting date is 1 December 2019.

Duration (months) The maximum project duration is 24 months.

Research field/Further research fields Indicate the "Main research field" and "Further research fields" according to the scientific questions of the project.

Main disciplines/Sub-discipline(s) Indicate the main and subdiscipline(s) according to the scientific questions of the project ([List of disciplines](#)).

Basic data II

Summary The summary (in English) should characterise the application; it should refer to the scientific aims, the biobanks involved to solve the scientific aims, the selected IT systems and their implementation, the main expected outcomes of the implementation in terms of data quality, access to data and interoperability of biobanks.

Financial administration Indicate the grant administration office of the responsible applicant's institution.

Use-inspired project Indicate whether your application is use-inspired. Use-inspired applications must be a need for research from a practical point of view; the research results must be transferable to the practical realm – although not directly- and must have the potential to have a broader impact. When you declare the application to be use-inspired, describe in the research plan the broader impact of the planned project, which will be considered in the evaluation of the application.

Indirectly related to other research projects	Indicate ongoing or submitted SNSF applications which are scientifically linked to the present application.
Further requested and running money	All applicants indicate the currently available funds or requested funds to other research funding organisations directly related to the present application, i.e. for answering the scientific questions and for implementing the IT system.
University or research institution	Indicate the research institution at which the planned project will be implemented and specify an institution from the list, to which a copy of the proposal should be sent for an institutional declaration. In case several research institutions are involved, enter the research institution of the applicant responsible for the correspondence with the SNSF.
Requested funding	
Requested positions, salaries and social security contributions	<p>Indicate the technical personnel foreseen for the development and implementation of the IT system, if applicable. Please only use the the category "Technical staff". Indicate the function and level of employment.</p> <p>BioLink is not foreseen to support PhD students or academics with doctoral degree willing to pursue an academic career. Their salaries are not eligible costs.</p> <p>The salary range and guidelines for employees are set in the general document "Salary scales for doctoral students, salary ranges and guidelines for postdocs and other staff members, blanket amounts for social security contributions" (Annexe 12 of the General Implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations).</p>
Requested Funding	<p>Indicate the total requested funds distributed over the two years in the corresponding columns according to your planning. List in the category "Equipment" the material costs related to the IT system's implementation (hardware, software, licenses, storage). List under "Research Funds" all other costs, e.g. training costs for the utilization and maintainance of the IT system, internal co-ordination costs. Costs for salaries and social security contributions are to be reported in the data container "requested positions, salaries and social security contributions".</p> <p>Attention: Costs for establishing, expanding, maintaining biobanks and research costs for investigating the scientific questions are not eligible.</p>
Research requiring authorisation or notification	Declare the authorisation or notification that would be required for performing the scientific part of the application. Copies of the authorisation or notification can be scanned and uploaded in the course of the online submission if available. These documents are no prerequisite for the transfer of the grants.

Annexed documents (upload)

Research and implementation plan

The research and implementation plan must be written in English (font size 10 points/line spacing 1.5). It contains the following 4 sections:

1. Summary (max. 1 page)

The summary should characterize the application; it should refer to the scientific aims, the biobanks involved to solve the scientific aims, the selected IT systems and their implementation, the main expected outcomes of the implementation in terms of data quality, access to data and interoperability of biobanks.

2. Research plan

This part provides the description of the scientific questions to be solved with the proposed network of biobanks. Describe the scientific background, the questions to be solved with which methodological approaches, mention and describe the biobanks involved, describe the relevance and impact of the questions for the field of research and beyond. The added value of networking biobanks for responding to the scientific questions is discussed.

3. Implementation plan

This part provides the description of the IT system and its implementation. Describe the selected IT system and its relevance for the networking of biobanks. Specify the development and how the implementation of the IT system will take place within the 2 years of the project. Indicate milestones. Show how data quality and access to data will be guaranteed on the long-term as well as the interoperability of biobanks and the compatibility of the data/samples will be guaranteed beyond the 2 years of the project.

4. Role of the applicant(s) and project partner(s)

Describe precisely the role of each applicant and project partner involved in the project and how they will collaborate to reach the foreseen goals.

CV and research output list

For each applicant, please upload his/her CV (maximum 2 pages) and the list of publications (last 5 years) in English and as a single PDF file. Please follow the detailed instructions on mySNF.

Quotes

Upload the price quotes (VAT included) for the material related to the technical implementation of the IT system (hardware, software, licences, storage) if applicable. If not available at the time of submission, quotes can be sent later on to the SNSF at the email address biolink@snf.ch.

Cover letter

The cover letter has to be written in English.

Other annexes

Upload additional documents that you would like to bring to the attention of the evaluators. Filenames should be self-explanatory.