

NCCR CALL 6+ (SSH) – WEBINAR

8 July 2026 – Presenters:

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Content

- Presentation: NCCR call 6+ (SSH) (30')
 - NCCR funding scheme
 - Key elements of the call
 - Scientific evaluation by the SNSF
 - Research & higher education policy evaluation by the SERI
- Q&A (30')

NCCR funding scheme

The NCCRs are an important funding instrument of the federal government to strengthen existing fields or establish new ones.

- National networks with a long-term perspective on topics with strategic importance for Swiss research
- Build innovative and sustainable research structures
- Strengthen the coordination among research institutions
- Implementation of strategies for:
 - Collaborative and coherent research programme
 - The five structure-related areas: knowledge & technology transfer, education & training, equal opportunities, communication & outreach, open science

Scope of the 6+ (SSH) call

- Thematically restricted to Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) (discipline classification of mySNF)
- Duration between 8-12 years
- 1 or 2 NCCRs (within the available budget of 20 million)
- Budget between 8 to 20 Mio CHF for phase I
- Within this range, smaller – in terms of consortia size and/or budget – and shorter NCCRs are explicitly welcomed
- The requested funding and overall duration must correspond to the scientific and structural goals described in the NCCR proposal
- Same evaluation criteria for all NCCR proposals independent of their size
- NCCRs of the 6+ (SSH) call must be hosted by at least two home institutions (HI)
- The sum of the cash and in-kind contributions by the HIs is expected to match the requested SNSF funding

Diversity

The SNSF recognises that diversity significantly enhances excellence in research

Gender diversity

- NCCRs should establish an exemplary gender balance within the consortium (including the NCCR leadership)
- Home institutions are expected to support the NCCR applicants in their efforts to establish an exemplary gender balance within the consortium

Institutional diversity

- The NCCR applicants are encouraged to include groups from different types of institutions that can make substantial contributions to proposed research activities

Eligibility of interdisciplinary proposals

Addressing topics of scientific, societal and economic relevance may require interdisciplinary collaboration beyond the SSH disciplines.

For the 6+ (SSH) call the following eligibility requirements are applied:

- The main vision and core scientific contribution must remain within the SSH domain
- The NCCR director must have an SSH background and be active in the SSH domain
- The majority of the team of directors must be active in the SSH domain
- The majority of the PIs of the consortium must be active in the SSH domain

Eligibility criteria for PIs

- Eligibility criteria of the SNSF Project Funding apply:
 - 4 years after PhD or clearly independent position before the 4 years
 - At least 50% FTE contract for the whole duration of the first phase at an eligible institution
 - Exception for researchers on a qualification position (tenure track position)
 - Researchers reaching retirement age within the first phase must have an employment confirmation for the 4 first years
- Researchers from abroad are allowed:
 - Their inclusion must be scientifically justified
 - Up to around 10% of all PIs
 - Their participation is generally limited to one funding period

Eligibility criteria for team of directors

Team of directors

- Composed of NCCR director, co-director(s), deputy director(s), and deputy co-director(s)
- Each home institution must be represented with at least one director or co-director
- Every director and co-director has a deputy

Eligibility criteria for team of directors:

- Eligibility criteria of the SNSF Project Funding apply
- In addition, a permanent position at an eligible home institution is required

Additional requirements for the NCCR director:

- Invests at least 30% FTE to leadership tasks

Requirements home institutions (HIs)

– HIs:

- Support NCCR proposals that are compatible with their long-term strategic planning; should perform a strategic preselection
- Make financial and structural contributions
- The sum of their financial contributions are expected to match the requested SNSF funding
- The financial contribution of the main HI can be lower than the contribution of the other HI(s)
- Commit to releasing the NCCR director of at least 30% FTE from other duties (e.g. teaching or administrative tasks)

– The following institutions are eligible as HI:

- The Federal Institutes of Technology and the research centres of the ETH domain.
- Universities, universities of applied sciences, universities of teacher education and other institutions in the higher education sector that are accredited under the HEdA.
- Research facilities of national importance which receive funding from the Confederation (Art. 15 RIPA).

Examples for structural contributions

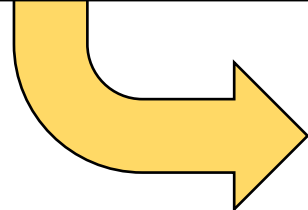
- Creating and extending research and service units, such as new research centres, national institutes, interfaculty structures, or research networks
 - Re-orienting existing or creating new (assistant) professorships within the NCCR's research domain
 - Defining foci in education and research for the NCCR (e.g. course at undergraduate level or PhD programmes)
 - Improving research infrastructures (e.g. databases)
- Home institutions are requested to develop their structural commitments in close collaboration with all relevant stakeholders (e.g. faculties or departments) in order to ensure their feasibility



NCCR selection procedure

Phase 1 - SNSF Scientific Evaluation

- Call launched by SNSF
- 1st evaluation – outline proposals
- 2nd evaluation – full proposals
- Shortlist



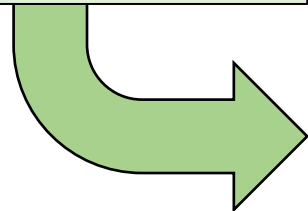
Phase 2 - SERI Research & Higher Education Policy Evaluation

- Consultation KoorRF-A
- Consultation Innosuisse
- Consultation SERI intern

Bilateral meetings with home institutions (rector's offices)

Consultation with presidents of SWR & SNSF Research Council

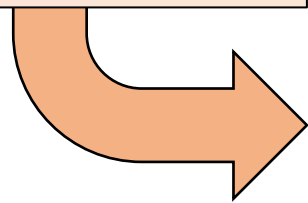
SERI recommendation



Legally regulated, multi-stage selection procedure (RIPO und O-RIPA-EAER)

Phase 3 - EAER Political Decision

Decision by Head of Department based on SERI recommendation



Phase 4 - SNSF Launch

Scientific evaluation: outline proposal stage

- Declarations of intent – **deadline 1 September 2026:**
 - No documents required, no evaluation
 - Main purpose: adequate preparation of subsequent evaluation steps
- Outline proposal – **deadline 20 October 2026:**
 - External peer review; at least 3 reviews per proposal
 - Evaluation in 1 or 2 SSH panels – depending on the number of submitted proposals
 - Panels are established based on the topics, disciplines and keywords provided by the applicants
 - Outcome = detailed feedback on scientific evaluation; recommendation whether to submit a full proposal
 - No formal decision is made at this stage

Scientific evaluation: full proposal stage

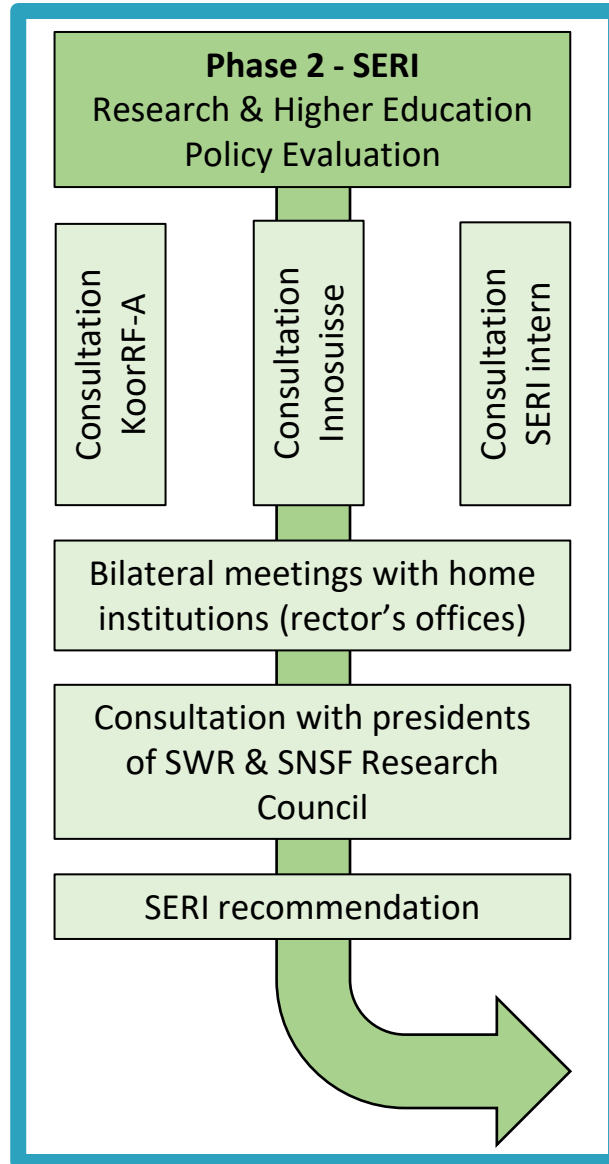
- Declaration of intent to submit a full proposal – **deadline 31 March 2027**
 - Continued support by the HIs is required
- Full proposal – **deadline 20 May 2027**
 - External peer review; at least 5 reviews per proposal
 - 2-page rebuttal letter (applicants can comment on external reviews)
 - Evaluation in 1-2 SSH panels – depending on the number of submitted proposals
 - Panels are established based on the topics, disciplines and keywords provided by the applicants
 - Interviews with the NCCR directors
 - SNSF submits a shortlist of proposals recommended for funding to the SERI
 - Communication of the evaluation results and formal rejection of proposals not shortlisted

Scientific evaluation – important elements

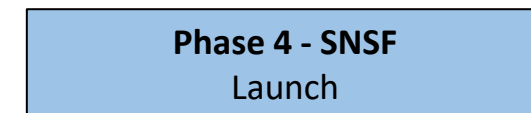
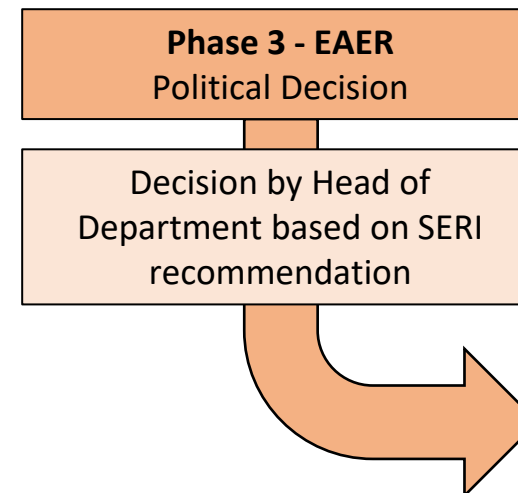
- Scientific excellence and potential of the NCCR to form an internationally leading consortium in the field
- Justification for the need of an NCCR to achieve the envisioned objectives
- Added value of the NCCR compared to the sum of the individual projects
- Strategy to integrate the individual disciplines and PIs into a coherent and synergistic proposal
- Establishment of innovative research structures and their long-term sustainability: Applicants should have a first vision about their potential legacy



NCCR selection procedure



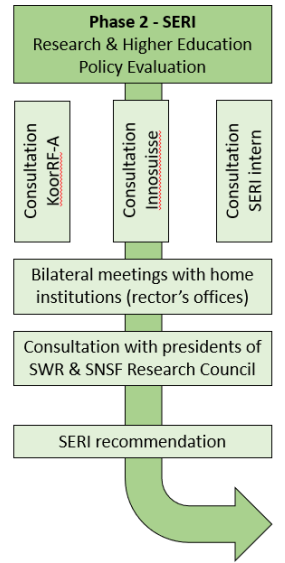
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Evaluation by SERI

- Starting point: Shortlist of SNSF
- Basic evaluation in accordance with the legal criteria from a higher education and research policy perspective
- Consultations to clarify the findings of the research and higher education policy evaluation
 - External consultations
 - Interdepartmental Coordination Committee for Federal Policy Research
 - Innosuisse
 - Consultation / bilateral meetings with the rectorates regarding prioritisation and commitment
 - Consultation with presidents of Swiss Science Council (SSC) and SNSF Research Council about the final proposal
- Overall assessment taking into account the results of the consultations and SNSF evaluation
- Recommendation to the Head of EAER





Evaluation by SERI

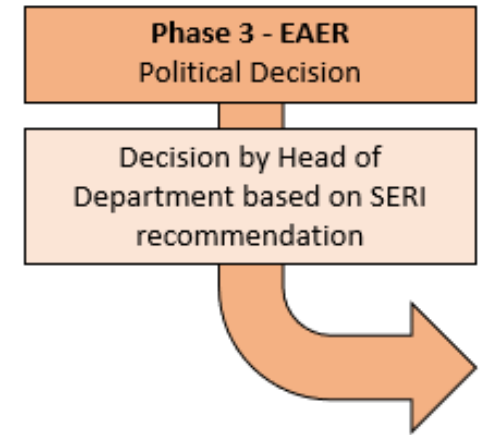
Shortlisted NCCR proposals are reviewed based on the following higher education and research policy criteria (Art. 8 O-RIPA-EAER):

- a. Included in home institutions' strategic planning;
- b. Higher education institutions share tasks and coordinate;
- c. Regional and national distribution of competence centres considered in accordance with NCCR programme aims;
- d. Aligned with federal research policy aims;
- e. Embedded in international science cooperation and Switzerland's cooperation activities at institutional level.



Decision by EAER

- Recommendation by SERI
- Decision by the Head of Department EAER to be expected by end of 2027
- Notification of the decision to the applicants
- Press release
- Launch of the NCCR - responsibility for the support lies with the SNSF



Questions?

These slides will be shared on the NCCR page of the SNSF website

For additional or very specific questions contact nccr@snf.ch