

Annex 6: Research time for clinicians

(Clause 2.20 General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations); version of 18.9.2023

6.1 Principles

The Swiss National Science Foundation aims to ensure that active clinicians can devote 30% of their working time (30% of a full-time equivalent) to their SNSF-funded research projects, during which they are released from their clinical duties. The SNSF and the employer shall each assume half of the salary costs attributable to the protected research time.

6.2 Personal requirements

Persons may submit a request for a grant for protected research time for clinicians (hereinafter “protected research time”) if they:

- a. meet the personal requirements for applicants as stipulated in Article 10 of the Funding Regulations and Articles 4 and 5 of the Project Funding Regulations;
- b. are doing clinical work at an eligible Swiss hospital as defined by the Research and Innovation Promotion Act (RIPA);
- c. are the applicant of a research project to be evaluated by the Biology and Medicine division;
- d. have never received a grant for protected research time;
- e. do not already hold a structural position with budget responsibility at a hospital or an academic tenured position.

6.3 Objective requirements

The application for a PRTC grant must be submitted at the same time as the project application by e-mail to project.ls@snf.ch. However, the following documents need to be submitted only if a project is approved:¹

- a. a detailed description of the applicant’s role in the underlying research project;
- b. a written and binding agreement between the applicant and their employer, which is signed by both parties and which confirms the start, duration and breakdown of the protected research time and the corresponding release from clinical tasks; the protected research time may vary between 10 and 50%, but must correspond on average to 30% across the entire duration of the project;
- c. an itemised list of the salary costs incurred (incl. social security contributions) and their apportionment to the SNSF and the employer respectively.

¹ Amendment of 18 September 2023, in force with immediate effect.

6.4 Submission of applications and deadlines

¹ The application for a PRTC grant must be submitted at the same time as the project application by e-mail to project.ls@snf.ch.² The costs for protected research time must not be entered in the project budget.³

² A grant for protected research time may last for the entire duration of the underlying project grant; it starts at the earliest concurrently with the transfer of the project grant and ends at the latest with the conclusion or discontinuation of the project. An extension is not possible.

6.5 Eligible costs

¹ The cantonal rates for the relevant function level serve as a basis for calculating the salary costs for research time, incl. locally applicable employer contributions towards social security.⁴ Any salary components deriving from private practice or other sources are not eligible and must be borne by the employer in full.

² A maximum gross salary of CHF 150,000 (plus employer contributions according to the rates recognised by the SNSF) may not be exceeded. Any additional salary costs shall be borne by the employer in full.

³ Unused grants for protected research time must be refunded to the SNSF and may not be put to any other use.

6.6 Scientific evaluation

¹ Applicants for a grant for protected research time must make a substantial personal contribution to the project that corresponds to at least 30% of a full-time equivalent.

² Decisions on applications for grants for protected research time are taken together with the main funding decision with regard to the underlying research project.

6.7 Duty to inform and scientific reporting

Any changes to the agreement mentioned in Clause 6.3 of this Annex must be submitted to the SNSF for approval.

6.8 Transitional provisions

The initiative for protected research time for clinicians will cease in 2024.^{5 6}

² Amendment of 18 September 2023, in force with immediate effect.

³ Amendment of 20 July 2017, in force with immediate effect.

⁴ The relevant basis for the calculation of the "Protected Research Time for Clinicians" grants is the gross salary at the time of the award. Any subsequent salary adjustments shall be borne by the employer. (Explanation of practice as of 1.3.2021)

⁵ Changed based on the decision of the Presiding Board of the National Research Council of 24 August 2021, in force with immediate effect.

⁶ Amendment of 18 September 2023, in force with immediate effect.