
Guidelines for the lifetime management of research projects (grants)

Croatian-Swiss Research Programme

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This documentation is available on the SNSF's website (www.snsf.ch, enlargement contribution, Croatia). The guidelines are based primarily on the [Funding Regulations](#), [the General Implementation Regulations for the Funding Regulations](#), [the Project Funding Regulations](#) and [the Organisational Regulations of the National Research Council](#) and are not legally binding. Their sole purpose is explanatory and they do not in any circumstances substitute the mentioned formal legal documents or any other provisions applicable to procedures and grants. Depending on the funding scheme, there may be slight deviations from the evaluation procedure as described in the guidelines.

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The ruling

The SNSF forwards the final decisions on applications to the corresponding applicants in the form of a ruling (in accordance with the Federal Act on Administrative Procedure). If your project has been approved, the letter you receive will contain the following information:

- Amount of the funds awarded, split into annual instalments
- Duration of the grant
- If applicable, any conditions that need to be met before the funds are transferred
- Due date of the first scientific report if different from the usual date (acc. To chapter 5).
- If applicable, any further comments/conditions
- Information on the right of appeal

Responsibilities

When approval is given, applications become projects or grants (in financial terms) and applicants become grantees. One person is responsible vis-à-vis the SNSF for each application or grant. In the case of applications with only one applicant, he or she is responsible for the subsequent management of the grant.

In the case of applications with more than one applicant (research group), each applicant accepts personal responsibility for the success of the project. However, only the person designated as the corresponding applicant represents the research group before the SNSF. Such representation is legally binding. He or she becomes the responsible corresponding grantee for the SNSF. The SNSF addresses all communications concerning the grant to this person and all the awarded funds are transferred to this person's institution (in most cases, the grant administration office). The entire grant is administered at this institution, from where funds can be transferred to the institutions of the other grantees. Each grantee is responsible vis-à-vis the SNSF for using the funds received appropriately.

The research group defines the cooperations and legal relationships between its members, particularly with regard to authorship rights, access to data and research results. If a new corresponding grantee is chosen within a research group, the new and the current responsible person must jointly file a corresponding application with the SNSF.

A corresponding grantee is responsible for the following tasks vis-à-vis the SNSF:

- Requesting the release of the allocated funds
- Requesting personnel, changes of personnel and salary adjustments
- Updating the data management plan (DMP)
- Submitting scientific reports and entering output data
- Submitting financial reports
- Informing the SNSF about any changes affecting the grantees (e.g. moves, changes to employment terms)

- For research groups: coordination between the individual members and management of the project
- For research groups: if applicable, transferring funds to the other grantees

Corresponding grantees can delegate some of these tasks to the other applicants or secretariats in mySNF in order to reduce their administration workload (see chapter 10).

Getting started

Start of funding

The project must start no later than 12 months after the date of the approval letter. The starting date must fall on the first day of a month and must not be earlier than the date stated in the ruling. The corresponding grantee informs the SNSF about the starting date when requesting the release of funds via [mySNF](#). The SNSF confirms the release of the grant when the first instalment is transferred.

Release of funds

The corresponding grantee requests the release of the approved funds and the payment of every annual instalment via [mySNF](#). The funds are paid in annual instalments in accordance with the ruling. Prior to the release of funds, you must submit a lay summary in one of the national languages of Switzerland. The lay summary will be published in the SNSF's research database. Your data management plan (DMP) also has to be approved by the administrative offices in order to proceed with the request for the release of funds. If the SNSF requires modifications of your DMP, they are to be integrated and accepted before the request of release of funds. Furthermore, all necessary authorisations (for animal testing, tests on humans, etc.) and a signed copy of the "[Grant Agreement](#) between the Croatian and Swiss Beneficiaries" must have been submitted via mySNF. These documents can be uploaded under "Request for release of funds" under "Other annexes". In addition, any conditions stated in the ruling must be met. If your grant is not administered by an official grant administration office (see Annex 9 of the General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations), it should be administered by the grantee or by another office that assumes this fiduciary role. In such cases the SNSF defines the administration, monitoring and due diligence duties with you in a written agreement.

For the following years, you must request the payment of instalments via [mySNF](#). As a rule, the payment can be requested no earlier than 1 month before the start of the next funding year.

Transferring funds to other grantees

Funds may only be transferred to researchers who are listed as other grantees in the ruling. The Croatian grantee requires two separate bank accounts that are project specific: one for the funds transferred from the Swiss grantee and one for the Funds transferred by the CSF, respectively. The funds which are transferred to the Croatian partner by the Swiss grantee must be transferred solely to the account indicated in the document entitled "Grant Agreement between the Croatian and Swiss Beneficiaries".

Funds transfers to all involved grantees or project partners are exempt from valueadded tax. With regard to value-added tax legislation, it is important that the funds are not requested via an invoice, but exclusively via a payment request. The corresponding grantee needs to make the payment.

Employment of staff

For the Swiss grantee: any new appointments, staff turnover, salary adjustments or extensions of the funding period are subject to approval by the SNSF. A corresponding request must be placed with the SNSF in advance via "Messages/Requests" in mySNF. You will find the webbased forms on mySNF if you select the project in question and click on the relevant section. Messages/Requests are the responsibility of the corresponding applicant. However, in order to reduce his/her administration workload, they may be delegated to third parties (see chapter 10). For approved projects, employees can be registered online prior to the release of funds. This process can be simplified by copying data directly from the application or from any previous projects.

For the Croatian grantee: the employment relationships must be regulated by the foreign grantees' institution by means of a written contract. The institutions are responsible for compliance with the statutory labour and social insurance provisions of the country in question.

The SNSF specifies binding salary brackets and norms for different staff categories (see Annex 12 of the General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations). In particular, the provisions concerning the engagement of staff pursuant to Clause 7.1 – 7.6 of the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#) must be complied with.

Overhead

On the Croatian side, the overhead costs cannot exceed 5% of the Croatian direct costs. This overhead must be calculated as follows: max. 5% of the costs requested for the Croatian grantee **excluding the overhead costs**. The overhead covers the running costs and maintenance for the administration of the Croatian institution and can either be transferred to the Croatian institution by the Croatian PI or can be kept at the disposal of the PI (depending on the internal rules of the universities and institutes). If the overhead is transferred to the institution, a receipt from the head of the institution for the total amount must be included in the financial reports. A [form](#) is available.

Swiss grantees are not entitled to overhead costs.

Reports

Scientific reports

The Swiss grantee must annually submit a scientific report, which must be compiled in collaboration with the Croatian PI. A [template](#) for this report is available. The report must be uploaded on mySNF. You will receive the corresponding requests automatically in the form of e-mails sent via *mySNF*.

Grantees must start entering output data on SNSF projects (scientific publications, scientific events, knowledge transfer events, collaborations, etc.) no later than 18 months after starting the project. You have to keep these data updated and complete using mySNF even after the conclusion of the project. Only data that are directly linked to the funded project should be entered.

The SNSF uses these output data for the following purposes:

1. The data are entered in the web-based research database p3 (p3.snf.ch), where researchers and the general public can gain information on the research work funded by the SNSF.
2. The data serve as a basis for aggregated and anonymised quantitative analyses, e.g. with regard to the number of publications and patents produced in connection with SNSF projects in the course of a year.

Financial reports

All grantees who have received funds must annually submit a financial report. If possible, the financial report and the corresponding receipts should be submitted in electronic form via [mySNF](#). Such receipts will only be accepted if they are clearly legible on the submitted scan. The Swiss grantee is responsible for the submission. The report is generally compiled by the grant administration office (financial department, fund administration or similar entity) of the Swiss grantee's institution and transmitted to the Swiss grantee for examination via *mySNF*. The specific processes, e.g. for the transmission of receipts, are defined by the grant administration offices of the individual institutions.

The Swiss grantees provide an annual and a final financial report to the SNSF, accounting for the expenses and revenues of the JRP that are financed by Switzerland (86.91%). This includes a financial report from the Croatian grantees, accounting for the expenses and revenues covered by the funds transferred by the Swiss grantee (i.e. financed by Switzerland). Additionally, the Croatian grantee compiles a second report to the CSF, accounting for the costs covered by the Croatian contribution (13.09%).

Hence, for the expenses covered by the Swiss contribution, the Croatian grantee must complete the appropriate [Excel](#) spreadsheet and submit this with the relevant receipts, listed chronologically in the Excel file. A legible receipt must be provided as proof for each expense. If the receipt is in a language other than English, German, French or Italian, a note indicating the expense in question must be added in English. The note may be written by hand directly on the receipt. To confirm the salary payments, please use only the [Salary list](#) and transfer only the total annual (accounting period) salaries

or social security contributions to the Excel list. For salary payments, proof that the employee had received the relevant amount must be provided.

In sum:

Swiss grantee

- Submits a yearly scientific report to the SNSF. This report is shared with the CSF;
- Submits a yearly financial report to the SNSF, including:
 - Swiss expenses covered by the funds of the SNSF;
 - Croatian expenses covered by funds from the SNSF.

The Croatian grantee

- Contributes to the scientific report of the Swiss grantee
- Submits separate yearly financial reports to the SNSF and CSF respectively, including:
 - Expenses covered by the CSF (13.16%) – to be submitted to the CSF
 - Expenses covered by the SNSF (86.84%) – to be submitted to the Swiss grantee

Data Management Plan (DMP)

The approval of the data management plan (DMP) is a condition in order to be able to proceed with the request for the release of funds. Where necessary, the release cannot be requested until the required amendments to the DMP have been accepted by the administrative office.

The DMP remains editable during the entire lifetime of the grant. Its contents can be adapted as the project evolves.

In any case, researchers will be prompted to update their DMP at the end of the grant. This updated version will be assessed together with the final scientific report. The administrative office retains the right to request additional information and/or amendments to the contents of the final DMP.

The final version of the DMP will be made available on the SNSF's P3 database. This will increase the visibility and impact of the research outcomes by making it easier for other researchers to access and reuse the datasets

Budget items

The main budget items listed in SNSF rulings and letters of approval or in subsequently approved budgets and the corresponding amounts are binding on grantees. In principle, transfers of amounts from one budget item to another must be approved in writing by the SNSF in advance. However, possible savings in one of the budget categories may be transferred to cover higher costs in another category as far as no explicit terms or conditions set by the SNSF and the CSF may conflict with such transfers. In general such transfers shall, however, not exceed 10% of the total allocation to each

partner by each funding institution. For transfers above this limit, written permission shall be obtained from the SNSF and/or the CSF. Please note that the initial budget allocation between the Swiss and the Croatian grantees cannot be changed.

The JRP grants are not subject to VAT or other taxes and charges. However, research expenses are not excluded from VAT. Therefore, all costs budgeted in a JRP (e.g. equipment, consumables, etc.) will be charged to the programme, VAT included, unless the research institution (e.g. universities, public research organisations, etc.) is able to recover the VAT.

In general, as regards the costs covered by the grant (eligible costs), please refer to Clauses 2.5 - 2.23 of the General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations. In principle, the SNSF grant only covers project-specific costs.

Currency exchange rate

With regard to exchange rates: the actual conversion rates (rates of the day) of the transfers/payments are to be applied, in accordance with the transfer/payment receipts of the bank etc. The conversion from local currency to CHF in the financial report ("Summary calculation pivot in local currency" in the Excel sheet for foreign partners) as at the end of the reporting period must be done using the rate on the final day of the reporting period. The aim of this conversion is solely to provide an overview in CHF as at the end of the report year. The partner abroad must in any case continue its accounting in the local currency, and the balance at the end of each report year must be carried over to the next report (Excel list) and shown there.

Any currency differences that may result from the annual conversion in Swiss francs must only be offset based on the actual final balance in the foreign currency.

If the above-mentioned points are not mentioned in the submitted report, the SNSF reserves the right to return the entire report for revision.

Extensions

You can place a request with the SNSF for the cost-neutral extension of a grant or project. This extension can last in general up to 6 months at most. This may be necessary if the project has been delayed for unforeseeable reasons and money could therefore not be spent. Such a cost-neutral extension must be applied for in electronic form via mySNF (Messages/Requests). For research groups, such extensions are only approved for the entire grant. In order to ensure that the extension will indeed be cost-neutral, we need the actual envisaged balance on the original end-date of the grant (incl. any additional personnel costs) as well as a budget for the extension period.

Please note that no further additional personnel costs may be requested in the event of a cost-neutral extension of the grant. This is because, at the regular expiry date of the grant, there were still sufficient funds to absorb all additional costs incurred due to higher rates for doctoral students or higher social security contributions. For this

reason, any debit balance at the end of the cost-neutral extension period shall be borne by the grantee.

Repayment of remaining amounts

Upon expiry of the grant, you need to repay any unused funds no later than 30 days after compiling the final financial report, unless the funds in question amount to less than CHF 50. The amount is to be repaid to the following account of the SNSF: PC 30-3767-5 Schweizerischer Nationalfonds, 3012 Bern; the corresponding grant number must be mentioned. As concerns research groups, unused funds have to be paid back to the corresponding grantee. Once an overview of all project contributions is available, he or she is responsible for any repayments to the SNSF.

The remaining balance of the Swiss contribution (86.91%) must be reimbursed to the SNSF and the remaining balance of the Croatian contribution (13.09%) to the CSF.

Additional costs and personnel expenses

If the costs incurred within the scope of an approved project exceed the funds approved, as a rule the difference is debited to the grantee.

Working with *mySNF* - especially for project partners (other applicants) and secretariats

Almost all of the mentioned processes can be carried out electronically in mySNF without physical signature. The responsibility for this lies with the corresponding grantees. You may, however, authorise third parties (e.g. other grantees, secretariats) to assist you in managing the projects. This is only possible if these persons are registered mySNF users and have their own access to mySNF. The authorised persons may complete the online forms for the following processes, and the corresponding grantees must, in a final step, transmit the data to the SNSF from their own user account:

- Requesting the release of the allocated funds
- Submitting scientific reports
- Submitting financial reports (only relevant if main grant is not administered by a grant administration office)

The corresponding grantees can delegate the following processes entirely to third parties, who can fill in the online forms and transmit them to the SNSF - the corresponding grantee always receives an e-mail confirmation of the transmission:

- Requesting personnel, changes of personnel, salary adjustments and cost-neutral
- extensions (Messages/Requests)
- Entering output data
- Entering the lay summary
- Request for payment of an instalment

Furthermore, the corresponding grantees can specify in mySNF that copies of all automated correspondence (e.g. the request to compile a scientific report) be sent to the authorised persons by e-mail.

You will find all settings with regard to the authorisation of third parties in your mySNF account in the main navigation bar on the left under "Manage authorisations".