

# **Guidelines for the Submission of SPIRIT Applications**

## **Abbreviations**

AO: Administrative Offices

SPIRIT: Swiss Programme for International Research Projects by Scientific Investigation Teams

SEC: SPIRIT Evaluation Commission

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## 1. General remarks

These guidelines are based on the Regulations on the Swiss Programme for International Research Projects by Scientific Investigation Teams (SPIRIT Regulations) and on the Organisational Regulations of the Evaluation Commission for the Swiss Programme for International Research Projects by Scientific Investigation Teams (SPIRIT) (SEC Regulations).

The first part of these guidelines provides additional information on the programme's framework and conditions. The second part advises on the application process and reflects the structure of the application in *mySNF*.

## 2. Objectives

SPIRIT grants aim to lower barriers to international cooperation and assist cross-border collaboration. They also enable researchers from all disciplines to conduct collaborative scientific projects with clearly defined goals. For this reason, there are no restrictions with respect to discipline and topics can be chosen freely by the researchers. In addition, SPIRIT grants foster institutional cooperation and aspire to increase scientific capacity in research communities, especially in countries receiving development assistance. Such scientific capacity building can take various forms: these include not only the support and fostering of scientific capacity of persons in partner countries, but also the support and fostering of scientific capacity of researchers in Switzerland, of young researchers in general and of women. Furthermore, the encouragement of gender awareness is also understood as a form of capacity development.

The list of eligible partner countries is established by the Specialised Committee International Cooperation (Specialised Committee) and updated on a regular basis.<sup>1</sup> The partner countries are determined on the basis of the list of official development assistance recipients established by the OECD Development Assistance Committee.<sup>2</sup>

SPIRIT supports fair and equitable research cooperation with partner countries. The Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries ([Kommission für Forschungspartnerschaften mit Entwicklungsländern \(KFPE\)](#)) developed the [Guide for Transboundary Research Partnerships](#) for researchers who plan to engage in equal partnership towards a common goal. Its 11 principles and 7 fundamental questions provide a framework for transboundary and intercultural research in partnership as a continuous process of sound knowledge generation, building mutual trust, mutual learning and shared ownership. SPIRIT applicants are strongly encouraged to adopt the KFPE's principles for their planned project.

An important part of fair and equitable research cooperation is implementing responsible research practices in Switzerland and partner countries. These practices include internationally recognized protections for human subjects and non-exploitation of natural resources, biological materials, data, and

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<sup>1</sup> For the complete list of eligible partner countries, refer to <https://www.snf.ch/spirit> and to point 4.4 of these guidelines.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/> > Topics > ODA eligibility and conditions > DAC List of ODA Recipients

genetic resources. Research practices in partner countries should be held to the same standard for responsible research as research conducted in Switzerland, and benefits should be distributed equally between research partners, research subjects, and communities involved in the research (as applicable). Gender awareness

SPIRIT grants promote gender awareness and equal opportunities. This is manifest in various points, e.g., in the fact that costs for the organisation of conferences and workshops in connection with the SPIRIT project or linked to project-related gender awareness-raising activities can be requested.<sup>3</sup> More decisively, if two or more applications are evaluated as scientifically equivalent during the evaluation process, the SPIRIT Evaluation Commission (SEC) gives priority to applications by female applicants, or to those applications that show better gender awareness.<sup>4</sup> This gender awareness may be reflected on the level of content, e.g., when the dimension of gender is taken into account in the elaboration of the research question, or on the level of the project team, e.g., when the team includes female or gender non-binary team members.

### **2.1. Gender Awareness on the level of the research content**

In order for a proposal to be rated highly on gender awareness, applicants must be mindful of their planned project's potential sex and gender dimension and discuss this plausibly in their project plan. This does not mean that all SPIRIT proposals must include a sex or gender dimension by all means, but SPIRIT requires applicants to reflect on their research's stance on sex and gender and to indicate this reflection in the proposal.

Considering which role gender and sex<sup>5</sup> play for a study may add important dimensions to one's research, while neglecting to ask how gender and sex may be pertinent may lead to biased results and missed opportunities. The interaction of gender and sex with certain research topics may be central to the overall research question, or it may be evident only for certain parts of the research, or it may not be immediately discernible. Challenging first impressions and common biases regarding the significance of gender and sex for certain kinds of research can lead to unexpected insights and extraordinary discovery.

At the same time, it is possible that some research does not lend itself to the inclusion of questions on gender and sex. However, this does not imply that researchers should not deliberate how gender and sex may be relevant for their research, even if in the end they conclude that this is not the case. In order for the gender awareness criterion in SPIRIT to be positively assessed, researchers need not necessarily ask questions of gender and sex, but much rather show that they have gone through a reflective process, even if the conclusion is that there is no significant relevance.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. art. 10 par. 1d of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. art. 13 par. 3 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>5</sup> Sex commonly denotes biological differences between people with different reproductive organs or germ cells. Gender refers to the different social roles performed by and expected from people according to their assumed sex. SPIRIT employs an understanding of sex and gender as inherently linked: While biology in itself can be important to consider, it is essential to also understand biology as shaped by social roles. Social roles shape, for example, access to socio-economic resources, education, ways of using one's body, nutrition patterns and exposures to stress and harmful chemicals, all of which influence biology and health. Cf. e.g., Stanford Gendered Innovations: <https://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/case-studies-science.html>.

## 2.2. Gender Awareness on the level of the research team

The same is true for the composition of research teams. Applicants must show that they have taken all the possible and necessary steps to arrive at a gender-balanced team and to support women as well as other people affected by gender inequality or gender oppression (such as trans, intersex, and gender non-binary persons) in their academic work and careers. The SNSF invites women and other people affected by gender inequality or gender oppression in particular to apply. Regardless of the applicant team's composition, its gender balance should be justified, and the guiding principles behind its configuration should be evident in the application.

For the expanded team, a gender-sensitive recruitment plan is recommended. The project plan should explain the measures by which bias in recruitment processes is counteracted. The project plans should also include an evidence-based mentoring plan with a description of the ways in which support to female researchers in the development of their career is provided, particularly if they are junior researchers. This applies especially but not exclusively to research fields dominated by men. Institutions of higher education often have equality offices that can provide support, if needed.

## 2.3. Language

Project plans must employ gender-neutral language wherever possible. Unless the subject matter requires gender-specific text, non-discriminatory and gender-inclusive language must be the default, e.g. by using gender-neutral plural pronouns (*they, them* etc.), passive voice (where appropriate), or any other strategy of gender-inclusive language. In a similar vein, stereotypical depiction must also be avoided.

# 3. Collaborating with SPIRIT partner countries

Research collaboration across borders entails certain challenges. This is especially true with international partnerships where there is an inequality of economic resources or research capacities, or where local communities may lack access to the same standard of basic needs such as health care or housing. The specific circumstances of the chosen partner countries must be taken into consideration, as well as the dynamics of international collaboration. Responsible research requires equitable and fair partnerships. Transparent, accountable co-governance is especially important in such collaborations and require that a common understanding of ownership, access, benefit, and consent is co-constructed. Applicants must pay attention to avoiding potentially exploitative dynamics and practices, both with respect to all research partners and to any research subjects and communities that contribute to a project. It is essential that communities especially in the partner countries are not used as a resource without deriving some benefit from the research results.

Special consideration must be made for research on human subjects. Such research should outline how the rights of participants will be protected in the study design and dissemination of the research. Especially in the case of vulnerable or marginalised groups, it is important that SPIRIT projects avoid coercion, exploitation, and harm. This can be demonstrated not only through discussion of informed consent and basic protections for human subjects, but also by including relevant local communities as collaborators in the research process, as well as the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of the

research. International policy documents such as The Declaration of Helsinki, International Ethical Guidelines for Health-related Research Involving Humans, and the Nagoya Protocol can serve as guidelines for responsible, equitable research and ensuring that research benefits the researchers, countries, communities, and people participating in the research. While not all projects will require the same degree of consideration of these aspects, all proposals should reflect best practices for responsible research in their field and fair and equitable cooperation with partner countries.

These aspects can be addressed in a SPIRIT proposal wherever they most apply. Typically, this will be in the research plan in one or several of the following sections: 2.3. Detailed outline of planned research, 2.4. Collaboration, work division, schedule, milestones and visits, 2.5. Relevance and impact. They will be assessed as part of the evaluation, in connection with any applicable criteria (e.g. suitability of the methodology, feasibility, capacity building, or gender awareness).

## 4. Submitting an application

### 4.1. mySNF user account

Applications must be submitted to the SNSF electronically, on *mySNF* ([mysnf.ch](https://mysnf.ch)), which requires a user account. We recommend planning in sufficient time for the request of a new *mySNF* account and the elaboration of an application. Validating a new *mySNF* user account may take up to one week. For technical questions: *mySNF* support (German/French/English: +41 31 308 22 00; E-mail: [mysnf.support@snf.ch](mailto:mysnf.support@snf.ch). Mon - Fri, 8.30 to 11.30 / 13.30 to 16.30 Swiss time).

### 4.2. Creating a new application

To create an application, the option 'Create a new application' in the *mySNF* user account must be chosen. Next, under 'Programmes', the applicants select 'SPIRIT' and continue. The application now appears under 'Applications and Projects', alongside other applications and projects created by the responsible applicant.

### 4.3. Language

All information must be provided in English. By doing so, applicants ensure that international reviewers will be able to assess the application adequately. Unless the subject matter requires gender-specific text, non-discriminatory and gender-inclusive language must be the default. There are various strategies that applicants writing a project plan may turn to: They may use plural pronouns (*they*, *their*, *them* can be used as singular and gender-neutral pronouns), pairing (mentioning of several pronouns), alternation of feminine and masculine forms throughout the text (this is often done in newspapers), passive voice, or any other strategy of gender-inclusive language. The use of masculine pronouns and nouns to denote a group that encompasses both genders is not acceptable. In a similar vein, stereotypical depiction must also be avoided, e.g., avoid *Jane and Joe both work full-time; he helps her with the housework*, but prefer instead *Jane and Joe both work full-time; they share the housework*. Many institutions offer guidelines on the use of gender-neutral language.

#### **4.4. Submission deadline**

The submission deadline is 2 November, at 17:00 Swiss local time.<sup>6</sup> Applicants are welcome to submit their applications before this deadline.

#### **4.5. Resubmissions**

Applicants whose applications have been rejected are excluded from applying for SPIRIT contributions for four months from the date of the ruling. This applies to each individual applicant of an application, including co-applicants.<sup>7</sup>

Resubmissions of applications are possible. A rejected application may be revised and resubmitted no more than twice. The SNSF will not consider a resubmitted application if it has not been substantially changed from the rejected version.

If a SPIRIT application is a revised version of a rejected SPIRIT application, upload a separate document containing a point-for-point response to the critique raised in the rejection letter. This statement must not exceed three pages. It must be uploaded as a separate document in the section “Project plan”, it must be in English and the file must be named “revision\_notes\_[name of applicant].pdf”. Significant changes/additions in the project plan must be pointed out, if applicable.

#### **4.6. Non-consideration**

If an application does not meet the requirements for the project plan and/or is manifestly inadequate, it will not be considered.<sup>8</sup> An application that has been rejected can be revised and re-submitted at the most twice.<sup>9</sup>

## **5. Evaluation**

### **5.1. SPIRIT Evaluation Commission**

SPIRIT applications are evaluated by the SPIRIT Evaluation Commission (SEC). The SEC is composed of international experts in numerous research fields. The composition of the SEC can be viewed online: [www.snf.ch](http://www.snf.ch) > The SNSF > Research Council and evaluation bodies > Members of the evaluation bodies.

The Gender Equality Experts are full members of the SEC. They ensure that the actions of the SEC are guided by gender awareness and gender equality policy. In particular, they alert the SEC to gender issues, bring attention to the gender aspects of the application documents and pay attention to the equal treatment of the applicants.

### **5.2. Procedure**

Following an initial eligibility check, all applications undergo peer review. The SEC evaluates the applications and issues a recommendation for funding. The Specialized Committee and the Presiding Board

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. art. 8 and 14 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. art. 9 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. art. 14 and 22 of the Funding Regulations.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. art. 9 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

of the National Research Council approve the decisions. The AO communicate the decisions by way of rejection letter or approval (ruling).<sup>10</sup>

### 5.3. Evaluation criteria

The scientific evaluation is conducted according to the following criteria:

- Scientific relevance
- Originality of the aims and objectives
- Appropriateness of the methodology and feasibility
- Track record and expertise of the researchers
- Complementarity of the research partners
- Contribution to increasing scientific capacities in the relevant research field
- Contribution towards raising gender awareness and promoting equal opportunities<sup>11</sup>

Under the term “increasing scientific capacities”, the SNSF not only subsumes the support and fostering of scientific capacity of persons in partner countries, but also the support and fostering of scientific capacity of researchers in Switzerland, of young researchers in general and of women. Furthermore, the encouragement of gender awareness is also understood as a form of capacity development.

If two or more applications are found to be equivalent with regard to their scientific merit, the SNSF will give priority to applications by female applicants, or to those applications that show better gender awareness.<sup>12</sup>

### 5.4. Evaluation time span

Generally, the process from submission of the application to reception of the ruling (i.e., rejection or approval) takes approximately seven months. Applicants usually receive their ruling end of May.

## 6. Eligibility

### 6.1. Scientific investigation team

All applicants must be based either in Switzerland or in an eligible partner country, with at least one applicant being based in Switzerland and at least one in a partner country. Further applicants may be added, but all of them must conduct research either in a partner country or in Switzerland. The total of applicants may not exceed four persons.<sup>13</sup> It is possible to have more than one applicant from the same partner country.

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. art. 14 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. art. 13 par. 1-2 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. art. 13 par. 3 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. art. 7 of the SPIRIT Regulations.



## 6.2. Partner countries

The Specialized Committee establishes the list of partner countries.<sup>14</sup> Member countries of the European Union, countries associated to the Research and Innovation Framework Programme of the European Union, and countries who are involved in a bilateral call initiative with the SNSF are not eligible as partner countries and persons conducting research in these countries may not submit an application for a SPIRIT grant.<sup>15</sup> The list of eligible partner countries is published on the SNF website and regularly updated.

## 6.3. Applicants in Switzerland

Each applicant is personally responsible for the project and must meet the eligibility requirements for the submission of applications.<sup>16</sup> If any applicant does not meet the eligibility requirements, the application will not be considered.<sup>17</sup>

The applicants must designate one person in Switzerland as the responsible applicant, i.e., the representative of all applicants vis-à-vis the SNSF.<sup>18</sup>

Each applicant (i.e., the responsible applicant and the other applicant(s) in Switzerland and in the partner countries) may only hold one SPIRIT grant at a time. Hence, if a person already holds a running SPIRIT grant, they may not submit an application for an additional one, unless the running grant's planned end date precedes the planned starting date of the submitted application. Furthermore, SPIRIT grants may not have overlapping funding periods with Ambizione grants.

## 6.4. Applicants in partner countries

Each applicant is personally responsible for the project and must meet the eligibility requirements for the submission of applications *mutatis mutandis*. If one applicant does not meet the eligibility requirements, the application will not be considered.

Each applicant (i.e., responsible applicant or other applicant, in Switzerland or in the partner countries) may only hold one SPIRIT grant at a time. Hence, if a person already holds a running SPIRIT grant, they may not submit an application for an additional one, unless the running grant's planned end date precedes the planned starting date of the submitted application.

## 6.5. Applicants' employment

All applicants must be able to provide proof of a min. 50% employment for the entire duration of the planned project. This information is used in the grant evaluation process to assess the applicants' eligibility for submitting an application. For each applicant, one contact person must be named who can

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<sup>14</sup> The partner countries are determined on the basis of the list of official development assistance recipients established by the OECD Development Assistance Committee. The DAC List of ODA Recipients shows all countries and territories eligible to receive official development assistance (ODA). These consist of all low and middle income countries based on gross national income (GNI) per capita as published by the World Bank, with the exception of G8 members, EU members, and countries with a firm date for entry into the EU. The list also includes all of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as defined by the United Nations (UN). The list is adapted approximately every other year. The current DAC List of ODA recipients is available here: <http://www.oecd.org/> > Departments > Development Co-operation Directorate > Development finance statistics > DAC List of ODA Recipients.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. art. 4 and 7 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>16</sup> The requirements set out in art. 5 of the SPIRIT Regulations, art. 10 of the Funding Regulations and in art. 1.1 of the General Implementation Regulations for the Funding Regulations.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. art. 5 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. art. 7 par. 3, as well as art. 15, 16 and 17 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

confirm the information provided (for example supervisor, responsible person in the HR department, etc.). The SNSF reserves the right to contact this person in order to verify the information provided.

### 6.6. Project partners and subcontractors

Project partners are researchers who make a partial contribution to the research project without assuming responsibility for the project as a whole. They may be based in Switzerland and the partner countries, but they can also be based in any other country. Project partners may not refer to the support received from the SNSF as a grant they have themselves acquired.

Project partners are allowed if their contribution is necessary for carrying out the planned research project and does not serve any commercial purposes. In particular, researchers at higher education institutions, public institutions and non-profit organisations may be accepted. Project partners from commercially oriented institutions may also be accepted, provided they do not receive any financial benefits based on their contribution or participation.<sup>19</sup>

Their contribution, such as services, analyses, etc., may be included in the project costs. The costs assigned to project partners and subcontractors (i.e. specific services from external providers that are necessary for the project) should generally correspond to no more than 20% of the overall grant. Services provided by project partners may include the following as eligible costs:

- Designing databases or websites (e.g., in digital humanities)
- Data preparation and analysis
- Recruiting patients
- Curating biobanks
- Elaborating legal reviews
- Salaries for staff members of the project partners; these costs must be included in the budget under the category “Salaries” and assigned to the respective project partners. **Please note:** The project partners’ own salaries cannot be requested.

## 7. Application

### 7.1. Budget

The maximum amount that can be requested for one SPIRIT grant is CHF 500'000, the minimum amount is CHF 50'000. The amount requested should be proportionate to the running time of the project.<sup>20</sup> Applicants must provide a plausible explanation if proportionality cannot be warranted.

At least 30% of the approved amount must be spent in Switzerland. At least 30% of the approved amount must be spent in the partner countries, regardless of their number.<sup>21</sup> The remaining 40% can be distributed according to project needs.

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. art. 11 of the Funding Regulations and 1.12 of the General Implementation Regulations.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. art. 3 par. 2 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. art. 3 par. 3 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

The following costs are eligible:

- Salaries of scientific and technical staff in the SPIRIT grant within the scope of the salary ranges and rates prescribed by the SNSF. Employees in partner countries may ask for salaries that correspond to the local standards of their country. Furthermore, salaries requested for employees in partner countries must be gross salaries incl. social security contributions (if applicable in the foreign country) and may not contain tuition fees.
- Material costs directly linked to the research work, namely material of enduring value, expendable items, field expenses, travel expenses, third-party charges, costs of computing time and data as well as costs of providing open access to research data
- Direct costs incurred through the use of research infrastructure linked to the research work
- Costs for organising conferences and workshops in connection with the SPIRIT grant or linked to project-related gender awareness raising activities
- Costs for national and international cooperation and networking activities relating to the SPIRIT grant.<sup>22</sup>

As of 1 April 2018, costs for open access publications are no longer regarded as eligible costs under SNSF grants and must be applied for separately via *mySNF*. The SNSF will consider applications for coverage of book processing charges (BPCs) as of 1 April 2018 and applications for coverage of article processing charges (APCs) and book chapter processing charges (BCPCs) as of 1 October 2018. Publication costs for articles and book chapters published as of 1 April 2018 will be refunded as of 1 October 2018. For further information: [www.snf.ch/oa](http://www.snf.ch/oa).

**Please note:** The salaries for main and co-applicants in Switzerland and abroad are not included in the eligible costs and cannot be requested.<sup>23</sup>

Swiss applicants and co-applicants cannot request overhead costs for their institutions.<sup>24</sup> Neither can overhead costs be requested for project partners in Switzerland and abroad. However, overhead costs (for indirect costs) can be requested for co-applicants abroad. These costs must be listed individually in the budget, as the respective cost types (equipment, salaries, collaboration costs, research costs). The SNSF reserves the right to cut any or all of these costs if they are not in reasonable proportion to the overall budget. Such costs may include:

- Purchase of equipment (hardware/software, office materials, laboratory instruments, etc.)
- Rental costs (for a limited period) for rooms and facilities required to conduct the planned research and experiments
- Infrastructure costs
- Salary costs for administrative project staff and/or project management staff (these costs must be entered as salaries in the budget)

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. art. 10 of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. art. 10 par. 2a of the SPIRIT Regulations.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. art. 10 par. 2b of the SPIRIT Regulations.

## 7.2. Data management plan DMP

For funded applications, grantees receive an invitation to submit their DMP on the *mySNF* platform. The DMP has to be written in the same language as the research plan. Submitting a DMP is a condition for the release of funds.

The aim of a DMP is to plan the life cycle of data. It offers a long-term perspective by outlining how data will be generated, collected, documented, shared and preserved. The SNSF provides a template to help researchers complete their data management plan. Each project's DMP will refer to discipline specific standards and practices and thus its content may be different. Detailed guidelines are available [here](#).

## 7.3. Project plan

The project plan is used in the evaluation process to assess the scientific quality of the research project and the scientific qualifications of the applicants.

### 7.3.1. Language

The project plan must be written in English. It must employ gender-neutral language wherever possible. Unless the subject matter requires gender-specific text, gender-inclusive and non-discriminatory language must be the default. There are various strategies that applicants writing a project plan may turn to: They may use plural pronouns (*they, their, them* can be used as singular and gender-neutral pronouns), pairing (mentioning of several pronouns), alternation of feminine and masculine forms throughout the text (this is often done in newspapers), passive voice, or any other strategy of gender-inclusive language. The use of masculine pronouns and nouns to denote a group that encompasses both genders is not acceptable. In a similar vein, stereotypical depiction must also be avoided, e.g., avoid *Jane and Joe both work full-time; he helps her with the housework*, but prefer instead *Jane and Joe both work full-time; they share the housework*. Many institutions offer guidelines on the use of gender-neutral language.

### 7.3.2. Good scientific practice

The project plan must be written in accordance with the rules of good scientific practice and all sources must be cited correctly. It must consist of original text written by the applicants themselves. A limited amount of text (or other material, graphs, etc.) by third parties or text published by the applicants themselves is permissible in the sections concerning the state of research and the state of their own research as well as when describing standard methods, provided that the quoted texts are clearly designated as such (quotation marks or appropriate wording) and that a verifiable source is mentioned nearby and in the bibliography.<sup>25</sup> The SNSF uses software to compare texts and it analyses suspected cases of plagiarism. A number of universities have made such programs available to their students and employees. The SNSF recommends that applicants contact their institution for further information.

Note that all applicants take responsibility for the correctness of their contributions. If the project plan is not written in accordance with the rules of good scientific practice all applicants are accountable and the project may not be considered. Reference is made to internationally recognized standards on scientific integrity.

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Regulations on scientific misconduct.

Applicants are also advised to consider the SNSF dossier on [scientific integrity](#); and article 15 of the [Funding Regulations](#) on research integrity and good scientific practice.

### **7.3.3. Format, structure and content**

A SPIRIT project plan comprises parts 1-3 and must be structured as described below. It may not exceed 20 pages and 80'000 characters (including spaces), including summary (*maximum 1 page*), table of contents, illustrations, footnotes, formulae and tables, if applicable, but excluding the bibliography. A minimum font size of 10 points and 1.5 line spacing must be used. Annexes are not accepted.

#### 1. Summary (*maximum 1 page*)

Present the background and rationale of the project, list its overall objectives and specific aims, mention the methods to be used, and discuss the expected results and their impact for the field.

#### 2. Research plan

##### 2.1. Current state of research in the field

Describe your project in the context of the current state of knowledge in your field. Make reference to the most important publications, particularly by other authors. Describe which previous insights provided the starting point and the basis for the planned studies, in which areas research is needed, and why. Explain which relevant research projects are currently underway in Switzerland and abroad.

##### 2.2. Current state of your own research and partnership aspect

Describe the work done by the different applicants in the relevant research field or in related fields and indicate the relevant publications. Explain how the different applicants complement each other for the proposed research project. Describe past collaborations between the applicants, if applicable. Together with the CV, this information serves as a basis for assessing your scientific qualifications, particularly your expertise with regard to the project.

##### 2.3. Detailed outline of planned research

Based on the information provided under 2.1. and 2.2., please specify the approach you will take and the concrete objectives that you aim to achieve in the period of funding. Describe the envisaged studies or experiments. Assess the risks involved and propose alternatives if necessary. Characterise existing sources and datasets and describe the data collection strategy and possible alternative strategies. Explain the role of each member of the research team (incl. applicants, employees, project partners and collaborations). Mention transdisciplinary elements, if applicable. (The description should be as detailed as is necessary to enable external experts and the SEC to assess whether the methodology is appropriate and the project feasible.)

##### 2.4. Collaboration, work division, schedule, milestones and visits

Outline the most important milestones and indicate how you plan to divide the work among the different partners. List the planned visits between applicants in Switzerland and applicants in the partner countries. Elaborate on visiting scientist(s), hosting scientist(s), purpose and duration of visit.

##### 2.5. Relevance and impact

Describe the expected impact of your project for the discipline(s) and for science as a whole (research and education/teaching). Mention the form in which you wish to publish your research results (articles in scientific journals, monographs, conference proceedings, etc.).

#### 3. Bibliography (*does not count towards the limit of the research plan of 20 pages and 80'000 characters with spaces*)

Record all the sources referred to in the research plan. Give the full reference and provide a complete author list.

#### **7.3.4. CV and major achievements**

The SNSF defined a new format for the CV and requests a standardised set of information from all applicants. Additional information can be found under [portal.snf.ch](https://portal.snf.ch) and in the corresponding mySNF data container "CV and major achievements". Please also refer to [Your curriculum vitae](#) and the [Guidelines for CV and major achievements](#).

The SNSF has signed the "San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)", which recommends funders to be explicit about the criteria used in evaluating the scientific productivity of applicants. The scientific quality, value and impact of the entire research output is taken into consideration (including datasets, software, prototypes) in addition to research publications. In this context, the scientific content of a paper is much more important than publication metrics or the name of the journal in which it was published. Within the scope of this evaluation, the scientific discipline and the academic age (incl. career breaks, care duties, etc.) of the applicants will be considered.

In order to comply with the DORA principles, the SNSF defined a new structure for the CV and requests a standardised set of information from all applicants. Specifically, applicants will have to compile their CV according to a new template on the SNSF Portal and subsequently upload a PDF in mySNF in the data container "CV and major achievements". For more details on the new CV format see: [CV format](#). The portal can be accessed under: [portal.snf.ch](https://portal.snf.ch). This information is intended for evaluators to specifically assess the scientific quality and relevance of the research output. The CV must be written in the language of the research plan. The documents are sent out for peer-reviewing and will be accessible for your research institution.

## **8. Further information**

For more information, refer to [www.snf.ch](https://www.snf.ch) or write to [spirit@snf.ch](mailto:spirit@snf.ch).