

August 2023

Guidelines for SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships applications via mySNF

Submission deadline: 1 December 2023 17:00:00 Swiss local time

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1. Important notes

These guidelines provide details and instructions on how to submit an application. Information on this subject can also be found in the [“Call document for SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships 2023”](#).

If you do not yet have a **mySNF user account**, please register early at www.mysnf.ch. During the registration process, please select «Horizon Europe Transitional Measures». Your registration will then be processed by the SNSF. Within a few days, you will receive an e-mail confirming the opening of your user account. We highly recommend **requesting a mySNF user account at an early stage and creating an application in mySNF as soon as possible**. By doing so, you can ensure that you are in a good position to prepare your dossier, including the documents you need to obtain from third parties (e.g. support letter from the supervisor at the host institute, confirmation from the host institute, etc.). Before submitting your application, please **make sure that it is complete** and contains all the necessary documents and information.

To create a new application, please select the option "Create new application" on the mySNF home page by navigating to the relevant funding scheme under **Programmes > Horizon Europe Transitional Measures > SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships**. The data concerning the applicant and the application must be entered in the mySNF entry mask.

A funding proposal is regarded as submitted in due time if received by the SNSF by **17:00:00 Swiss local time** on the submission date.

Please submit your application in time. The submission deadline is not negotiable. We therefore recommend that you submit your application early enough to have some spare time for technical difficulties or overlooked items.

Applications must meet the requirements with regard to, for example, the length of the research plan and the other mandatory data and documents. The SNSF may **decide not to consider applications that do not meet all of the requirements**.

Language of the application: English only. All data and documents (including research plan, CV, etc.) must be entered in English only, irrespective of the language selected in the menu navigation on mySNF.

All necessary information on the submission of applications for an SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship can be found **in mySNF** under the **help texts in the relevant data containers**. Guidelines concerning the most important points are given in the following.

2. Personal and application data (to be filled in online in mySNF)

The section titles below (e.g. “Designated host lab / Institution” etc.) repeat those of the main data containers you can find in the navigation bar of your application created in mySNF.

2.1 Designated host lab / Institution

Applicants must contact the research institution as soon as possible to ask them for a written confirmation.

The host institution must be established in Switzerland as a legal entity (public or private). Higher education institutions or non-commercial research institutions outside the higher education sector that are domiciled in Switzerland and whose basic financing is predominantly Swiss according to Swiss law are eligible. In other words, all publicly funded research institutions in Switzerland are eligible, i.e. universities, university hospitals, universities of applied sciences, universities of teacher education, research centres (e.g. PSI, EMPA, EAWAG) or institutes of postgraduate education (e.g. IDIAP, IHEID).

In principle, the SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship is awarded for a **continuous stay in Switzerland of 12-24 months**.

It is possible, however, to conduct **short research stays at different host institutions** (in Switzerland or abroad) for the **maximum total duration of one third** of the SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship. These additional host institutions (secondments) can either be higher education institutions or institutions operating in applied fields (industry, administration, etc.; intersectoral mobility). During the period spent at another host institution, the grantee remains employed at the (main) host institution in Switzerland. The **mandatory documents** for such a stay include a **letter of invitation** and a **detailed budget** of the costs, which must be included in the limit for the project funds (see 2.7.3 below: “Budget limit for project funds and what may be requested”). Only short stays of at least one month have to be mentioned in the data container. The beginning and end of the stay dates must correspond to the beginning and end of the fellowship dates independent of whether you have already started your work at the host institute or not. If you are planning on doing any secondments, please add them as additional host institutions and provide the specific dates you will spend there. If you will be spending multiple shorter stays at the same secondment institution, add up the total duration of these stays and only put in one start and end date spanning this total duration.

Important note regarding the mobility rule: Applicants **must not** have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) **in Switzerland for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately prior to the submission deadline of 1 December 2023**. The same applies for resubmissions of applications that were rejected under SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships 2021 and SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022.

2.2 Supervisor at the host institute

Please enter details (family name, first name, address, e-mail) of **your supervisor at the host institute in Switzerland**. The details regarding the supervisor must **first** be entered into the corresponding data container. If applicable, a contact person should be added for each other host institute where a short research stay is planned (secondment). Only short stays of at least one month have to be mentioned in the data container.

Before applying, please discuss the conditions of the project and how you intend to carry it out with the **supervisor** at the **host institute in Switzerland**. Confirmation by the host institution as well as a commitment letter from the supervisor are required.

2.3 Basic data I: Earliest / latest possible starting date and duration of the grant

The **earliest** and **latest** possible **starting dates** are **1 July 2024** and **1 July 2025**, respectively. Grants always start on the first day of the month.

The duration of the grant is defined in months. SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships are awarded for a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 24 months. It is **not possible to request an extension**.

2.4 Basic data II: Abstract and Financial administration

Please provide a summary of your project. The summary must be written in the language of the research plan, i.e. in English and must not exceed 8,000 characters (incl. spaces). The inclusion of references in the summary is possible but not mandatory.

Indicate the grant administration office in charge of administering the grant application (do not select “None – administrated by grantee”).

2.5 Revised application/resubmission

In case of a resubmission, you must create a new application in mySNF. Please upload in the container “Research plan” a **separate document** providing a **point-for-point response** to the critique raised in the rejection letter and a comment on significant changes or additions in the research plan, if applicable. This statement must be written in the same language as the research plan, i.e. in English and **must not be longer than 2 pages** (minimum point 10 font size and 1.5 line spacing).

IMPORTANT: Resubmission restriction (Article 1.1 SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships Call document): **Applicants whose proposal was rejected under SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022 may only submit a revised application involving the same Swiss host institution if an evaluation score of at least 6.3 was achieved.** Applicants whose proposal was rejected under SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships 2021 can submit a revised application under SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships 2023 involving the same host institution, regardless of the evaluation score. If you submit a new project, please make a brief comment under “Remarks”.

2.6 Link to other SNSF projects and parallel submissions

You must indicate whether your application for an SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship is related to other applications submitted to the SNSF or to grants already financed by the SNSF. For each mentioned project, declare links and possible overlaps with the present proposal.

Parallel submissions: Note that SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship may only be submitted for a duration of support for which **no other career grants of the SNSF have been applied**. The restrictions apply to the entire application procedure. In case of a parallel submission, the proposal will not be considered for evaluation by the SNSF. Parallel applications may be submitted for Postdoc.Mobility if the parallel application is for a return grant.

2.7 Further requested and available funds (not from the SNSF)

You must declare, if applicable, your currently available research funds as well as your submitted grant applications **at other research funding institutions**. (Applications submitted to or funds obtained from the SNSF are not to be mentioned here, but in the specific section “Link to other SNSF projects”).

The SNSF does not consider applications that are already being (fully) financed elsewhere. See also Article 8 paragraph 3 letter e of the [Funding Regulations](#). When awarding a grant, the SNSF may consider any third-party funding already awarded or applied for.

Note that even after you have submitted your application, you must inform the SNSF about any additional funds you obtain or request from other funding bodies while your proposal is being evaluated.

2.8 Requested funding

2.8.1 Salary of the applicant

Holders of an SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship must in principle devote their entire work quota corresponding to a work-time percentage of 100% (1 FTE), to the research funded by the SNSF. The supported researchers generally spend 100% of their work-time on the approved research project. A lower work-time percentage of at least 80% (0.8 FTE) is permissible if the grantee has clinical or care duties, or pursues courses at a higher education institution to further his/her career; this must be justified in a cover letter to be uploaded in the mySNF data container “Other annexes”.

The grant covers project funds and the full salary of the grantee. An SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship is not intended to cover just a share of the salary of the applicant. **Make sure that you add a corresponding entry/expense (applicant’s own salary) in the budget on mySNF**. The average gross salary will be around CHF 105'000 per annum for a work-time quota of 100% (1 FTE). The social security contributions of the employer will be covered as well. If, as applicant, you would like to insert more accurate figures for the salary, please contact early enough in advance the human resources (HR) department or the personnel office at the research institution. Should they not be able to provide you with the necessary details or if obtaining them takes too much time, you can enter the average amount of CHF 105'000 a year. The SNSF and the HR office of the higher education institution where the grant holder is employed will define the precise salary for postdocs in accordance with the salary scales applied by the institution to researchers with comparable qualifications. **Enter all figures of the amounts in full, i.e. do not use abbreviations such as “kCHF”**.

The fields labelled “Social security contributions (%)” are automatically calculated according to the selected research institution in the container “University or research institution”.

Family/child allowances (“Further social security contributions”) differ from canton to canton. Therefore, please contact in advance the HR department or the personnel office of the research institution.

The SNSF normally recognises the local salary rates as the upper limit, but reserves the right to reduce salaries which lie above the national average. If the approved research funding is exceeded due to the high cost of living, this will be compensated later by the SNSF.

For researchers doing clinical work, the salary share dedicated to research (at least 80%) is covered by the SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship. The salary share for the work quota dedicated to clinical work (up to 20%) must be covered by the research institution.

2.8.2 Social security charges

This concerns the local employer's contributions in percentage terms, without social security contributions such as child or family allowances. Check this percentage against the current guidelines for the use of funds (Annex 12 of the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#)). Note: the system does not accept commas, therefore please use a full stop (e.g. 12.5).

University of Basel	14%
University of Bern	15%
EPFL	16%
ETHZ	16%
EAWAG, EMPA, PSI, WSL	16%
University of Fribourg	19%
University of Geneva (incl. IHEID)	23%
University of Lausanne (incl. CHUV)	16%
University of Lugano	14%
University of Lucerne	16%
University of Neuchâtel	23%
University of St. Gallen	14%
University of Zurich	15%
Other institutions, normally	16%

2.8.3 Budget limit for project funds and what may be requested

The budget limit for **project funds** is max. **CHF 24'000 for 2 years**, i.e. an average of max. CHF 12'000 per annum. If the duration of the SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship is less than 2 years, the maximum amount must be proportionately smaller. For an SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship, the salary of the applicant is not included in this maximum amount. In the data container "Requested funding" on mySNF, **project funds** include all the listed expenses, except the entry "The applicants' own salaries"; the total of these listed expenses must not exceed CHF 24'000 for a two-year grant. The budget should be as detailed as possible (e.g. separate entries are required for research costs that are directly linked to the implementation of the project, as well as for training and networking contributions).

Costs for **open access publications** are not eligible costs under SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships and must be applied for separately via mySNF ([Open Access to Publications](#)). Changes to the budget after the submission of the application are not possible.

It is possible to conduct **short research stays** at **different host institutions** (in Switzerland or abroad) with the SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship (secondments). These additional host institutions can either be higher education institutions or institutions operating in applied fields (industry, administration, etc.; intersectoral mobility). The **total duration of such stays may not exceed one third** of the SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship. The mandatory documents for such a stay include a letter of invitation and a detailed budget of the **costs** which must be **included in the limit for the project funds** (max. CHF 24'000 for 2 years).

Any requests for coverage of research costs at a later stage will not be considered. Costs will only be covered if they are explicitly designated as eligible costs in mySNF (data container “Requested funding”). Requests to cover costs that are ineligible will not be granted.

Indirect costs must not be specified. The SNSF will calculate an **overhead** and pay it directly to the host institution where the grant holder is employed.

2.9 Data Management Plan (DMP)

A Data Management Plan (DMP) is requested for approved grants according to the requirements issued by the SNSF. Funds can only be released once the DMP has been submitted. Missing or inaccurate statements in the DMP need to be added/reviced at the latest before the release of the payment of the second instalment. A definitive and updated version of the DMP must be provided by the end of the project grant. For more details on the DMP format requirements and procedure see:

[Data Management Plan \(DMP\) - Guidelines for researchers.](#)

Please note that costs for Open Research Data (ORD) must be taken into account at the time of submission of the application. They cannot be covered by a supplementary grant.

2.10 Research requiring authorisation or notification

Scientists who intend to conduct research requiring authorisations or notifications in their project must declare this directly in mySNF. Copies of the authorisation or notification can be scanned and uploaded during the online submission.

Please note that grants can only be paid out if all the necessary authorisations and notifications are available. We recommend therefore that researchers apply for these documents to the relevant authorities in parallel to the submission or evaluation.

If you have received any authorisations or notifications, please upload them to the document container “Official certificates”.

2.11 Diplomas / certificates / extension eligibility window

At the time of submission deadline, applicants must hold a **doctoral degree (PhD)** to be eligible as **postdoctoral researchers**. A medical doctor degree will be accepted only when it corresponds to a doctoral degree (PhD, MD-PhD) or if the researcher has demonstrably been appointed to a position that requires doctoral equivalency (e.g. professorship appointment thanks to a Staatsexamen or equivalent exam). Medical doctor degrees corresponding to basic medical training (e.g. MD, see also Annex V of Directive 2005/36/EC) will not be accepted as a doctoral degree.

Applicants who have defended their doctoral thesis before the submission deadline of 1 December 2023 but have not yet formally been awarded the doctoral degree will also be considered postdoctoral researchers and eligible. An official document signed by the supervisor or the head of institute confirming that they have successfully passed the doctoral exam is required.

Researchers whose final thesis defence is *after* the call deadline will be automatically declared ineligible for this call.

Doctoral studies for obtainment of an MD-PhD degree cannot be funded under the SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships call.

At the time of submission deadline, applications must be submitted **within 8 years** after obtainment of the doctoral degree (PhD) – or, for applicants with a medical doctor degree, the relevant degree (MD-PhD) or equivalency. The relevant date is that of the examination or thesis defence (the public defence, if applicable, is with few exceptions held on a different day than the exam and this date is therefore not valid here).

It is permissible to exceed the time window if one or more of the reasons set out in Clause 1.11 para. 2 of the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#) apply. **The reasons for extending the time window must be set out in the application. Further information can be found on mySNF.** If necessary, you can enclose the request giving reasons with “Other annexes” as a separate document.

Please make sure not to use the date the certificate was issued but rather the date of the oral examination in your CV and in the corresponding mask in this data container. The eligibility period is calculated on the basis of the submission deadline for an SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship and the date of the oral examination of your PhD/ MD-PhD.

Applicants **must not** have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) **in Switzerland for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately prior to the submission deadline of 1 December 2023.**

3. Annexed documents (PDF format required, max. 10 MB per container)

The section titles below (e.g. “Research plan” etc.) reflect those of the main document containers you will find in the navigation bar of the application you created in mySNF.

All documents must be written in **English**. The font must be Times New Roman, Arial or similar with a size of at least 11, single line spacing and margins of 1.5 cm on the side(s) and 1.5 cm at the bottom. The documents must be submitted in PDF format and must be included in the application on mySNF in the corresponding data containers.

3.1 Research plan

The research plan must be written in accordance with the rules of good scientific practice and sources must be cited correctly.

The research plan must consist of original text that has been 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 as well as when describing standard methods. The quoted texts must be clearly designated as such (quotation marks or appropriate wording) and a verifiable source must be mentioned nearby and in the bibliography. The SNSF uses a special software to compare texts and analyses suspected cases of plagiarism. A number of universities have made such programs available to their students and employees. We recommend that you contact your institution for further information. On this subject: [Dossier on Scientific Integrity](#).

The **research plan must not exceed 10 pages (including references) and must strictly follow the formatting rules** (see template, section: “Instructions for drafting of the research plan”). **The template in mySNF must be used:** [Template for research plan](#). **Please note that the research plan cannot be updated after the submission deadline.**

The research plan must not contain any annexed documents (e.g., the bibliography must be an integral part of the research plan and will be counted towards the page limit).

Please note: Applications must meet all formal requirements (structure, number of pages, etc.). The SNSF does not consider applications that do not meet the requirements for the research plan and/or are manifestly inadequate.

Revised application/resubmission

If this application is a revised version of a rejected application, please upload in the container "Research plan" a **separate document** providing a **point-for-point response** to the critique raised in the rejection letter and a comment on significant changes or additions in the research plan, if applicable. This statement must be written in the same language as the research plan, i.e. in English and **must not be longer than 2 pages** (minimum point 10 font size and 1.5 line spacing).

IMPORTANT: Resubmission restriction (Article 1.1 SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships Call document): **Applicants whose proposal was rejected under SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships 2022 may only submit a revised application involving the same Swiss host institution if an evaluation score of at least 6.3 was achieved.**

3.2 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, the academic age and the personal situation (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 the data container “CV and major achievements” in mySNF.

For applications for a SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships grant, the following information in particular is mandatory in the CV:

- **Date of defence** of your doctoral thesis (PhD), university/place and **supervisor**.
- Applicants with medical training: Date of state examination (or equivalent degree) and date of doctorate in medicine (MD), university/place and **supervisor**.
- Other degrees (e.g., MSc, BA etc.): Date, university/place and **supervisor** (if applicable).
- Previous employment(s) and current position(s) with name of **supervisor**.

For more details on the new CV format see: [Your curriculum vitae – all about the CV format](#)

The portal can be accessed under 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 document is sent out for scientific evaluation. **Please note that the CV and the major achievements cannot be updated after the submission of your application.**

3.3 Copy of diplomas

You have to upload copies of your most important degrees as PDF documents.

Please upload a copy of your doctorate (PhD) and master's degree (or licentiate) incl. grades in the mySNF data container “Copy diplomas”. Medical researchers must additionally upload a copy of the state examination (or equivalent degree). A medical doctor degree will be accepted only if it corresponds to a doctoral degree (PhD, MD-PhD) or if the researcher has demonstrably been appointed to a position that requires doctoral equivalency (e.g. professorship appointment thanks to a Staatsexamen or equivalent exam). Medical doctor degrees corresponding to basic medical training (e.g. MD, see also Annex V of Directive 2005/36/EC) will not be accepted as a doctoral degree.

If the doctoral or state examination certificate does not bear the date of the thesis defence or the exam, please include a document certifying the date.

If you do not have the official certificate at the time of submission, please include an official document confirming that you have successfully defended your doctoral thesis or passed your doctoral exam and indicating the date. This official document must be uploaded to the data container “Copy diplomas”. **Researchers whose final thesis defence is after the call deadline will be automatically declared ineligible for this call.**

3.4 Confirmation from the host institute

Please enclose a confirmation from your host institution(s) (see above section 2.1). No form or template is provided by the SNSF. The confirmation letter(s) must bear the official letterhead of the host institution and an original signature (a digital signature is permissible) of the head of the host institute/department (no e-mail). The confirmation must state clearly that the necessary infrastructure is available for the duration of the grant. The start and end dates of the grant must be stated.

Important: Please contact the host institute(s) as early as possible to obtain the required confirmation(s).

Reminder regarding your host institution in Switzerland and the mobility rule (see above section 2.1): As applicant, you must not have resided or carried out your main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Switzerland for more than 12 months in the 36 months immediately prior to the submission deadline of 1 December 2023.

3.5 Support letter from the supervisor

Applicants must provide a written and binding commitment letter from the **host supervisor** at the Swiss host institute confirming his/her **willingness to mentor and support the applicant** (see above section 2.2). Furthermore, the SNSF strongly encourages the host supervisor to comment on the following aspects: How is the research project supported scientifically? How is the applicant’s scientific independence ensured and promoted? How is the continuous intellectual development and continuing education of the applicant facilitated? No template is provided by the SNSF. The letter of the supervisor must bear the official letterhead of the host institution and an original signature (a digital signature is permissible; no e-mail). **Applications that do not include such statements by the submission deadline will not be evaluated.**

Important: Please contact your supervisor at the host institute in Switzerland as early as possible to obtain the required letter.

3.6 Other annexes

You have the possibility to attach other documents relevant to the application in PDF format. This concerns, in particular, any requests for exceptions to be granted in accordance with Clause 1.11 of the [General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations](#) (reasons for requesting an extension of the eligibility window). In addition, documents providing a justification for a lower work time percentage or documents providing information concerning the fulfillment of the mobility rule can be attached in this section.

Please note that all publications attached as PDFs in the container “Other annexes” as well as any reference letters and annexes to the research plan will not be taken into account and will be deleted. Only letters from collaboration partners underpinning the feasibility of the project, if applicable, are accepted in this data container.