



Horizon Europe and related programmes and initiatives: GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION BY RESEARCHERS IN SWITZERLAND

Information updated on 4 March 2021

Situation in Switzerland

On 16 December 2020, the Swiss Parliament adopted the funding dispatch for the 2021–2027 Horizon package. This secures funding for Switzerland's association to Horizon Europe and participation in the Euratom programme, Digital Europe Programme and the ITER infrastructure (known collectively as the Horizon package). The Swiss negotiating mandate has also been approved; all preparatory steps have thus been completed on the Swiss side.

Owing to the European Union's (EU) roadmap for the formal adoption of the programmes, negotiations with future associated countries have not yet begun, and all association agreements will be concluded after the start of the programme. According to current information from the European Commission (EC), as was the case for previous generations of programmes, agreements for Horizon Europe and its related programmes and initiatives will be activated retroactively, both for participation in collaborative projects and for individual projects. This is also the case for Switzerland.

Project submissions from participants in Switzerland

For this reason, researchers in Switzerland must submit their project proposals in all calls as participants from an associated country. It is important that participants from Switzerland indicate their full eligible research budget in the project submission form in order to receive their funding from the EC budget, otherwise they may not be able to receive funding, either from the European Commission or from the federal government. Under the Swiss federal decree on the funding of the Horizon package, it is possible for the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) to fund researchers in Switzerland directly when they participate in collaborative projects, but this will only be the case if Switzerland participates in the Horizon package as a third country. If it participates as an associated country, the funds will be paid directly by the EC; proposals must therefore be addressed to the European Commission. The fallback position (SERI funds the Swiss project partner if there is no association) remains in place if the funds are applied for as described above.

Regarding European Research Council grants (ERC), applicants established in Horizon 2020 associated countries (e.g. Switzerland) are eligible to submit project proposals. The retroactive activation of the association agreement is also applied here. However, it must be in force at the time of the signature of the grant agreement for the project to be eligible for EU funding. If an association agreement cannot be concluded in time, SERI will consider a national funding solution (based on the funding dispatch) for projects accepted by the ERC.

Ongoing Horizon 2020 projects

Projects already receiving funding under Horizon 2020 will not be affected by the upcoming negotiations on the Horizon package. Funds are guaranteed from the same funding source for the entire duration of the project.

Overview

In view of the planned retroactive association of all associated countries, participants from Switzerland must submit proposals in all Horizon Europe calls and related programmes and initiatives as participants from an associated country. In order to receive funding, they must submit proposals to the European Commission.

Swiss participants in collaborative projects can secure funding regardless of Switzerland's association status.

If questions or difficulties arise during the funding application process, researchers are advised to contact Euresearch or SERI.

Contact

For questions about submitting research proposals:
Euresearch, Tel. +41 31 380 60 00, info@euresearch.ch

For questions about federal measures:
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