



SNSF Professorial Fellowships

SNSF/ERC Starting Grant

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RESEARCH SERVICES



UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE

SNSF Professorial Fellowships

Changes at a glance

- New name: SNSF Professorial Fellowships
- Project funds: maximum of CHF 1 million plus grantee's salary
- Status: assistant professor (status until now in PRIMA: at least group leader, or assistant professor depending on the higher education institution)
- Call: 1 November 2022 – 1 February 2023

SNSF Professorial Fellowships

Changes at a glance

- Time window for submitting an application: up to 10 years after defending the doctoral thesis; for researchers doing clinical work: 14 years after the medical degree
- For the first call, the eligibility window will be extended by three months
- Minimum requirement: 3 years of research work after defending the doctoral thesis and connection with Switzerland
- The PRIMA Leadership Programme is open to all female grantees of the SNSF Professorial Fellowships

SNSF Professorial Fellowships

In the end 45 SNSF Professorial Fellowships will be granted in 2023

SNSF Professorial Fellowships

New CV – new format

- Comes into force on 3 October 2022, with project funding scheme
- 1 document
- Integrated into the SNSF portal
- Same CV for all funding schemes – ORCID mandatory

SNSF Professorial Fellowships

Evaluation – careers funding schemes

- Submission of applications and administrative measures
- Evaluation
- Decision
- Communication

Questions on your own individual profile? Contact the Administrative offices of SNSF directly by phone

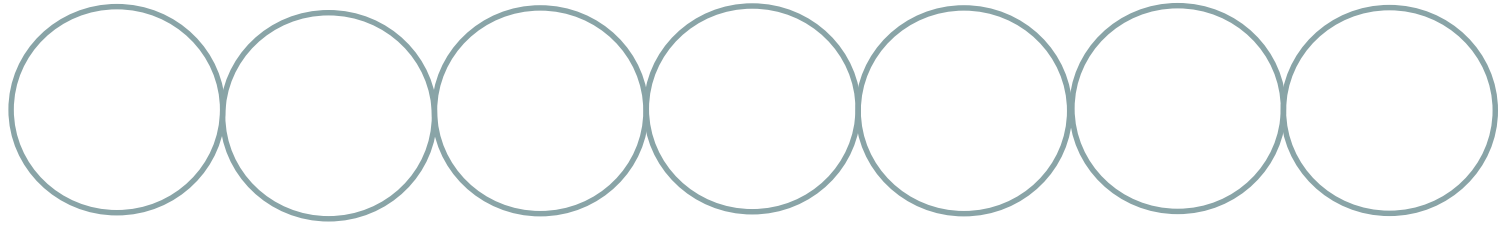
SNSF Professorial Fellowships

Links

- [New CV](#)
- [Evaluation procedures / careers](#)
- [Evaluation system](#)
- [Open Access](#)
- [ChronosHub](#)
- [UNIGE/Open Access](#)

SNSF – miscellaneous news

- Integration of collaborative research into Projects funding
- Sinergia – interdisciplinary projects will be merged into Projects funding – 2nd quarter 2023
- SPARK – new call in 2023 – one year project – double-blind evaluation, highly original, unconventional, high-risk
- New data portal – data.snf.ch



SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Starting Grants 2023

SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Starting Grants

- Open to all research disciplines and topics
- Open to researchers of any nationality
- Aim: lead an independent research project and direct a team of researchers in Switzerland

Call opens: ???

Submission deadline: ??? 17:00 Swiss local time.

Questions on your own individual profile? Contact the Administrative offices of SNSF directly by phone or email

Questions? Write to euresearch@unige.ch

SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Starting Grants

Applicants

- between 2 and 7 (3 *and* 8?) years after their PhD defence (5-12 years after medical degree)
- scientific independence
- impactful research in their field
- several major research outputs, independent of PhD
- significant experience in supporting or supervising less experienced researchers, including advanced-level master students.

SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Starting Grants

Evaluation: main criterion = scientific excellence of project and PI

Any documented career **break** during the last ten years should be clearly explained in the CV.

If applicants hold a **medical degree**, they should have several major research outputs independent of their initial research work as a junior scientist.

Not yet **professor** position? Grantees will become at least assistant professor without tenure-track.

SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Starting Grants

Requested funding - 2022

up to a **maximum of CHF 1.8 million** for a period of **up to 5 years excluding overheads** and adjusted *pro rata temporis* for projects of a shorter duration.

Applicants \neq professors

- full salary including 23% social security contributions, assistant professor
- project funds

Applicants = professors

- project funds only
- NO teaching buy-outs (part of their salary to pay someone else to replace them on teaching assignments).

SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Starting Grants

Evaluation criteria ERC

1. Research Project - Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility

Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project

- To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?
- To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development between or across disciplines)?
- To what extent is the proposed research high risk-high gain (i.e. if successful the payoffs will be very significant, but there is a high risk that the research project does not entirely fulfil its aims)?

Scientific Approach

- To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible bearing in mind the extent that the proposed research is high risk/high gain *[based on the Extended Synopsis at Step 1]*?
- To what extent are the proposed research methodology and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project *[to be assessed at Step 2 based on the research proposal]*?
- To what extent does the proposal involve the development of novel methodology *[to be assessed at Step 2 based on the research proposal]*?
- To what extent are the proposed timescales, resources and PI commitment adequate and properly justified *[to be assessed at Step 2 based on the research proposal]*?

2. Principal Investigator - Intellectual capacity and creativity

- To what extent has the PI demonstrated the ability to conduct ground-breaking research?
- To what extent does the PI provide evidence of creative independent thinking?
- To what extent does the PI have the required scientific expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project?

SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Starting Grants

Evaluation criteria SNSF

6.3.1 Scientific quality of the research project

Groundbreaking nature and potential impact of the research project (scientific relevance, originality, topicality):

- The extent to which the proposed research addresses important unsolved scientific questions and technical challenges.
- The extent to which the objectives are ambitious, moving the field beyond the current state of the art (*e.g.* novel concepts and approaches).
- The extent to which the proposed research is innovative.

Scientific approach (approach and methodology):

- The extent to which the outlined scientific approach is innovative and high-risk/high-gain nature of the project.
- The extent to which the proposed research is feasible.
- The extent to which the proposal involves a multidisciplinary approach.
- The extent to which the proposed team is adequate and properly justified.

6.3.2 Qualification of the applicant

Intellectual capacity and creativity, career development and mobility of the applicant:

- the applicant's scientific achievements up to the point of submission:
 - scientific quality and independence of achievements to date and their impact in the research field;
 - achievements to date in relation to the net academic age;
 - ability, based on achievements to date, to carry out the project.
- the applicant's career development as well as retrospective and prospective mobility based on the submitted statement; in particular, the applicant's overall mobility by the end of the project is assessed in view of the goals of the scheme and the applicant's career goal.
- scientific independence of the applicant at the chosen research institution.
- suitability and added value of the research institution in supporting the research project scientifically and in ensuring and promoting the independence of the applicant, as well as facilitating her/his continual intellectual development and continuing higher education.

SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Starting Grants

Evaluation criteria in a nutshell

ERC - Project

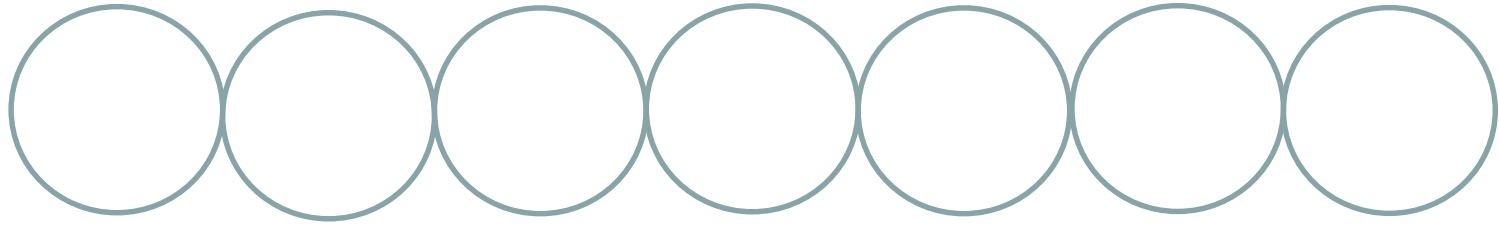
Important challenges addressed
Ground-breaking
Ambitious
Beyond state of the art
Innovative (concept, method)
High-risk high-gain
Feasibility
Adequate method
Novel method
Adequate WP, timescale

ERC - PI

Ability to conduct ground-breaking research
Creative, independent thinking
Expertise to execute

SNSF - PI

Impact in research field
Achievements -> net academic age
Retrospective and prospective mobility
Scientific independence at HI
Suitability and added value of HI -> project



Preparing a successful proposal

Career instruments

Preparing a successful proposal

- ☐ No continuation of previous project
- ☐ Write to non experts
- ☐ Have ERC spirit in your proposal
- ☐ Do not take for granted
- ☐ Make panel members curious about what you are doing
- ☐ Structure – use titles and subtitles, graphs and tables
- ☐ Research question, hypothesis and motivation should appear on 1st page
- ☐ Check proposal against evaluation criteria
- ☐ Use keywords (innovative, groundbreaking, etc.)
- ☐ State deliverables (not only publications!)
- ☐ Ambitious but focused
- ☐ Plan B – contingency plan – risk assessment
- ☐ Importance of extended synopsis
- ☐ Benefits for society (taxpayers' money)
- ☐ All documents must be in English

What evaluators of ERC Starting Grants say on proposals

- ❑ “This is a high-risk proposal whose potential benefits are **not justified** sufficiently **persuasively**.”
- ❑ “Overarching aim is ambitious and risky but **not much justification** given other than that the project is **feasible**.”
- ❑ “It is **not clear** whether the proposed work will provide **substantial advancement** to our **knowledge**.”
- ❑ “The project has a **very descriptive character**, without addressing any specific hypotheses. It is **difficult** to **predict** how significant and ground-breaking the project results may be.”
- ❑ “The proposal appears to be rather **not feasible** as it addresses **too many challenges** and **lacks a clear focus**.”
- ❑ “Just **repeating** several times that this **approach** is **new** in the field is **not sufficient**. It should be spelled out what is innovative: in what respect does the current project advance in the field and how?”
- ❑ “There are **no contingency plans** and critical assessment of **risks associated** with the proposed research.”

What evaluators of ERC Starting Grants say on PI profile

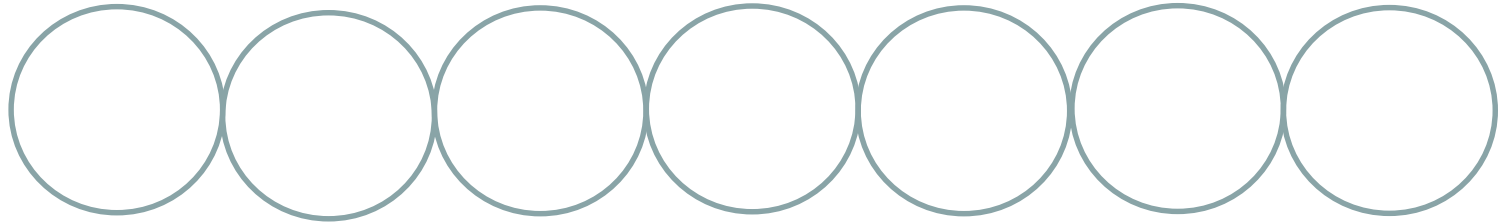
- ❑ “The PI’s track record shows some good **publications**, but **not** really **focused** on the issue this **research project** would tackle, which somehow weakens the proposal.”
- ❑ “While the PI has an excellent record of going beyond the state of the art and provides excellent evidence of independent thinking, these qualities do not transpire sufficiently in the present proposal because of the **lack of explicit and detailed attention to the practical aspects.**”
- ❑ “The **rationale** is still **too close** to the objectives of the present **post-doc advisor.**”
- ❑ “The PI has an important network of significant collaborations. These **collaborations** somehow **preclude judging** the **originality** of the PI’s thinking.”

What evaluators of ERC Starting Grants say on team and tasks

- ❑ “The proposal does **not** provide an overview of the research **organisation** (who will do what, how many PhDs/PD will be hired, etc.)”
- ❑ “**Hardly any information on** how the team will achieve the aims and how cooperation will be organised beyond the workshops.”
- ❑ “This is a high-risk project as we **are left in the dark about** who the other collaborators will be apart from the fact that they will work on the project as Postdocs or PhD students.”

A final word of advice from Euresearch Geneva

- ☐ Writing a proposal for the ERC/SNF means getting into their spirit: before you start writing, read carefully the documents available
- ☐ For ERC, you can watch the [ERC classes](#)
- ☐ Take your time to write your proposal
- ☐ No noise: no sentence that does not have a clear aim /sense
- ☐ Let it rest and read it critically against the evaluation criteria
- ☐ Have someone from your field but not your specific domain read your proposal to challenge it
- ☐ Have someone read your proposal against the ERC/SNF expectations
- ☐ Do not forget that words are not the only way to tell a message: graphs and tables can be very helpful
- ☐ Budget: Evaluators look at whether it makes sense with your project
- ☐ ... and do not forget this is also a learning experience!



SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Consolidator Grants 2023

SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Consolidator Grants

Currently, no available information on opening or closing of the next call

Applicants

- between 7 and 12 years after their PhD defence
- Independence, impact, research outputs, independent of PhD
- Substantial record of invited presentations.

Budget: 1.75 million CHF + 870'000 CHF additional funding

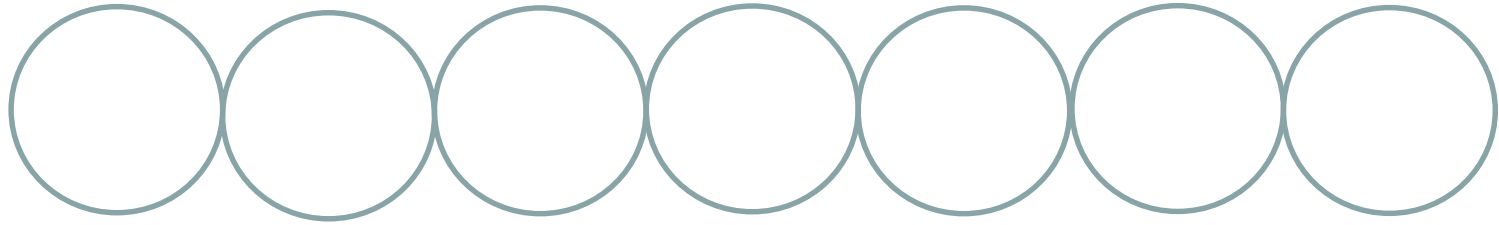
SNSF transitional measures for the ERC Consolidator Grants

Evaluation criteria: Project

- address unsolved scientific questions
- ambitious project, development of novel methodology
- high-risk/high-gain
- feasibility and appropriate methodology
- adequacy of overall organization of resources and timescale

Evaluation criteria: PI

- ability to conduct ground-breaking research
- evidence of creative independent thinking
- required scientific expertise and capacity to execute projects successfully



Practical and administrative

Letter of Support of the Host Institution

Format and content of the letter of the institution (template or suggestion) changes depending on the instrument, but all need letters need to be signed at vicerectorate level.

Content of the letter and deadlines for preparation?
Stay tuned...

E.g. Professorial Fellowship: Research Services needs information in December

Questions? Write to Euresearch

SERVICE RECHERCHE

www.unige.ch/recherche

www.euresearch.ch

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