

To researchers based in Switzerland who are pursuing the goal of establishing an international coordination center for topic-specific interdisciplinary research.

Berne, February 2023

Supporting a new research network: call for pre-proposals

The Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT) is supporting coordination offices of global scientific networks (hereinafter referred to as research networks; <https://research-networks.scnat.ch>). Its "Commission for Research Networks" assesses incoming project applications and thus ensures the high quality of the supported networks.

The Commission is planning to support the establishment of one additional research network with a head office located in Switzerland. For this purpose, it is opening a call for pre-proposals.

Scope of the call

The call is open for researchers active in inter-/transdisciplinary projects in collaboration with international partners. Research questions are related to complex interactions between natural, social, and technological systems. The proposed research network will provide a platform for scientific exchange between partners from different disciplines on a requested international scale.

The successful project will receive support for the establishment of an international coordinating office based in Switzerland that can provide infrastructure and services with the aim to facilitate exchange and collaboration, to focus on pertinent research questions and to overall strengthen the community.

The project duration is at least one and up to a maximum of three years, ending by 31 December 2026. SCNAT's support will be a maximum of CHF 180'000.- per year. Financial participation by partners located outside Switzerland increases the chances for a support by SCNAT.

Timeline of the call


Pre-proposals have to be submitted **before 7 May 2023**. Following an in-depth examination of the pre-proposals, the Commission will invite up to three project teams to submit a full proposal that will be subjected to a scientific evaluation, involving external referees, in addition to the Commission member's own expertise. The deadlines for processing the applications are:

7 May 2023	Submission deadline for pre-proposals.
Mid-June 2023	Communication of the result of the examination of the pre-proposals.

Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT) • Commission for Research Networks

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	Sending out the information concerning the full proposals.
12 August 2023	Deadline for submission of full proposals.
1 November 2023	Dispatch of funding decisions.
1 January 2024	Earliest start of funding.

Projects will only be supported when they meet the requirements listed below. Please note that for some of these points, the fulfillment will only have to be shown when submitting the full proposal.

A) Requirements for the research network infrastructure operators

Organizations or consortia submitting a funding request for the establishment of a research network must meet *all* of the following requirements:

- The research network must be institutionally linked to one of the following types of institutions or units thereof (parent institution):
 - a. Cantonal Swiss Universities
 - b. Institutions of the ETH Domain
 - c. Universities of Applied Sciences
- The parent institution is willing to host the research network for the entire duration of the contract (responsible legal entity) and to contribute to it (e. g. infrastructure, staff, co-financing).
- A single point of contact for all administrative procedures will be designated with SCNAT. A single responsible scientific applicant is the contact person for all technical questions.
- Responsible or co-applicants can not apply for contributions to their own salary.
- The managing person(s) are qualified in the field of the proposal; there are substitute arrangements which ensure regular continued operation in the event of loss of key personnel.
- The project can demonstrate its adherence to open-science standards.

B) Requirements for the type of research network

Funding from SCNAT is available for:

- Infrastructures for international scientific networking activities.

Funding by SCNAT is excluded for (responsibility lies with the SNSF):

- Research-driven networks for direct research purposes.
- Participation in international research institutions and financing of cost-intensive large-scale facilities.

C) Requirements for the function in the scientific system:

The following prerequisites must be met *cumulatively* for processing the funding request:

- The research network is operationally and organisationally independent of both the SNSF and SCNAT.
- The research network is – if possible institutionally – embedded in an international context.

- Equal access for all qualified researchers to the services of the research network is guaranteed¹.

In addition, at least one of the following requirements must be met for proposals being processed by SCNAT:

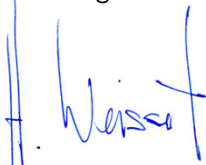
- The operation of the research network contributes to raising the profile of Switzerland as a research location.
- Switzerland has particular expertise in the field of the research network.
- The research network enables the development of special competencies in Switzerland in its field of expertise within four years.
- The research network is of particular importance for Switzerland as a research location.
- Switzerland's participation in the research network is essential.

To submit your pre-proposal, please use the enclosed form (also downloadable from <https://research-networks.scnat.ch>) and observe the format specifications for the additional documents. Submission deadline of the pre-proposal is Sunday, 7 May 2023. We plan to send you the result of the evaluation of the pre-proposals by mid-June 2023. If you have any questions concerning the call, please use the following contacts:

E-mail: fnw@scnat.ch

Phone: 031 306 93 04.

Best regards



Prof. Dr. Helmut Weissert

President

Commission for Research Networks



Dr. Stefan Nussbaum

Head

¹ Access is guaranteed on equal terms on the basis of transparent, objective and verifiable criteria. Competitive processes that meet these requirements are not excluded.