

MSCA Doctoral Networks for Swiss Participants

Overview

Switzerland is treated as a non-associated Third Country in Horizon Europe and Swiss Institutions can only participate as 'Associated Partners' in a Doctoral Network unless their contribution is deemed to be essential. This status of Switzerland can be changed at any time, but now applies for all calls with call identifier 2021 (meaning 2021 is included in the call ID on the Funding & tenders portal).

As an Associated Partner, a Swiss Institution cannot claim any cost to the EU and may thus not employ any researchers under the action. However, as long as Switzerland participates in Horizon Europe as a non-associated Third Country, the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) will fund participants in collaborative projects (www.horizon-europe.ch). This also applies to MSCA Doctoral Networks, thus, a doctoral candidate employed by a Swiss Institution would be directly financed by SERI. The doctoral candidate employed by the Swiss Partner can therefore supplement the network if the Consortium agrees. This candidate does not count towards the European Budget and will not have the status of an official MSCA fellow, In order to receive funding from SERI, the candidate needs to be employed at a Swiss Institution. Once the proposal receives a positive funding decision, the Swiss Institution can follow the SERI procedure to obtain the respective funding.

Here we provide recommendations how the Swiss Participation may be included in a Doctoral Network proposal.

Project of the Doctoral Candidate of Swiss Partner

The project of the doctoral candidate employed by the Swiss partner should be described in the proposal (for example: Section 1.1 and 3.1). It is important to specify that the candidate is financed by Switzerland's own funding.

Be careful to distinguish between the *official* MSCA fellows and the candidate of the Swiss institutions: For example Table 1.3a is about 'recruitment per beneficiary' and thus the candidate of the Swiss institution should not be listed there but rather mentioned in a core text or with a clear distinction as a candidate with own funding in the table.

For Table 3.1 d, we recommend to have the Swiss project also described. Demonstrate that the participation of the Swiss partner is important for the network and contributes to the overall scientific and training objectives of the proposal. Please make sure to list the number of fellows with the indication of the specific person-months in the description.

Secondments

While a MSCA fellow cannot be employed by the Swiss Partner and the candidate of the Swiss Partner can't be employed outside Switzerland, secondments are a way to ensure transfer of knowledge, which is crucial in any Doctoral Networks. Highlight in the proposal how the Swiss Partner contributes to the training elements of the Network by hosting secondments, and by seconding their candidates to other institutions within the consortium.

Same Rules

Be aware that the same rules apply to the candidate financed by SERI (eligibility rule, especially mobility rule). The same legal and financial obligations and rights apply to the candidates of the Swiss Partner. The recruitment of the candidate should also follow the same process. It is strongly encouraged that all the candidates have the same conditions for their fellowship.

Funding provided by SERI

SERI will provide exactly the same financial contribution as the European Commission would have given if Switzerland was associated. The Swiss partners receive the same unit contributions per person months and the living allowance is adjusted with the Swiss Country Correction Coefficient.

Letter of Commitment

A Letter of Commitment is mandatory. Euresearch provides a template for the Swiss Partners explaining the financial contribution and commitment.

In Part A of the Application, the budget of the proposal is calculated based on the number of researchers recruited by the beneficiaries and their number of person months. Since the Swiss partner is not a beneficiary and cannot claim cost, the Swiss organizations and the researchers employed there are not part of the Budget table in Part A. The financial contribution from the Swiss Partner is however specified in the Letter of Commitment.

Funding and Tenders Portal

Please be aware that Associated Partners cannot be added to the consortium list in the Funding and Tenders portal. This means, that the Swiss Partner has no access to the proposal in the portal and that the Coordinator will have to forward every project related communication by the EU/REA to the Swiss Partner. A possible solution as work-around would be that the coordinator adds the Associated Partner contacts under the coordinator's contacts.

Partnership and Consortium Agreement

We strongly encourage signing a partnership agreement between the associated partners and the beneficiaries to regulate the internal relationship between all participating organisations. The partnership agreement(s) must comply with the grant agreement and is often part of a consortium agreement. Such an agreement covers for example

- Responsibilities
- Governance structure (representation in meetings, voting rights)
- Financial provisions
- Intellectual property rights: access, ownership, exploitation and dissemination

We recommend to discuss expectations already during the proposal writing phase and to imagine the project in all its details. A helpful base is the [LERU ITN CA template](#).

FAQ

Can the Swiss Partner be involved in an Industrial or Joint Doctorate?

The two rules to consider are:

- 1) Official MSCA candidates can't be employed by a Swiss host since Switzerland is only an Associated Partner
- 2) In order to receive funding from SERI, the candidate from the Swiss Partner can only be employed at a Swiss Institution.

Based on this, the consortium has to agree upon a realistic and meaningful arrangement for the candidates.

Can a DN be coordinated by a Swiss Partner?

No, this is not possible. Only beneficiaries (who receive funding from the EU) can coordinate the collaborative projects.

Can the Swiss Partner be a Work Package leader in a DN?

Yes, entities from non-associated third countries, participating as 'associated partners', are able to lead work packages.

Can companies or SME in Switzerland participating in a DN also receive funding from SERI?

Legal entities (including companies and SME) based in Switzerland participate in DN and will receive funding via the SERI.

Further Details / Contact:

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