



SWISS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Swiss National Science Foundation  
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Switzerland



सत्यमेव जयते  
DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY  
Ministry of Science and Technology

*Indo-Swiss Joint Research Programme (ISJRP)*

**Joint Research Projects:  
Call for Proposals 2017**

Opening date: 15/01/2018

Closing date: 16/04/2018

A maximum of 12 projects will be funded for this call

## 1. Introduction

The Indo-Swiss Joint Research Programme (ISJRP) was initiated by the Indian and Swiss governments in 2005 in order to further advance the bilateral cooperation in scientific and technological areas of strategic relevance to both countries. The programme supports cutting-edge research that brings together faculty and young researchers from Switzerland and India. The current ISJRP call for Joint Research Projects (JRPs) is financed by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) in Switzerland and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) in India on the principles of reciprocity, parity and activity-matching funding.

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), mandated by the SERI, and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) in India jointly launch the call for Joint Research Projects (JRPs), organise the evaluation of the submitted proposals and monitor the funded projects.

## 2. Joint Research Projects (JRPs)

Grants for JRPs are aimed at promoting collaborative projects with clearly defined goals, involving at least one partner based in Switzerland and one based in India. Applications should describe ambitious research and propose innovative approaches. The research is to be carried out at the research facilities involved. Reciprocal visits and short stays in Switzerland for researchers from India and vice versa are also included within the scope of a JRP.

**Project duration:** the duration of the JRPs is **48 months**. Proposals with a shorter duration will not be accepted.

## 3. Research fields

In order to make targeted use of the financial resources available, the following thematic area was chosen for this call:

- Blue sky research/basic research in the life sciences which is either biotechnology-related or biotechnology-inspired; biotechnology as key enabling technology including (but not restricted to) the following sectors: agriculture, environment, energy, materials sciences, health, medicine, industry (industrial biotechnology)

Blue sky research implies a freedom to carry out flexible, curiosity-driven research that leads to outcomes not envisaged at the outset.

Proposals outside of the thematic area defined above will not be accepted.

## 4. Eligibility

Each proposal for a JRP must have at least one main applicant based in Switzerland and one main applicant based in India; they are the principal investigators on the Swiss and Indian side respectively. They bear the main responsibility for the project, including its technical and administrative coordination as well as the timely delivery of scientific and financial reports. Further applicants based in Switzerland and/or in India can also participate in the consortia.

### **Eligibility criteria in Switzerland**

Applicants requesting funding must meet the eligibility requirements of the SNSF. The SNSF Funding Regulations and the Regulations on Project Funding are applicable or applicable *mutatis mutandis* where not stated otherwise. Each applicant/further applicant may only apply for one project. Project partners as described in Article 11.2 of the SNSF Funding Regulations are not entitled to receive funds from the SNSF if their affiliated institution is located in India. During the running time of the JRP, grantees may receive grants from all SNSF funding schemes.

### **Eligibility criteria in India**

Applicants should be researchers from public and private universities, colleges, institutes, non-profit organizations (recognized by DSIR as a Scientific and Industrial Research Organization). Each applicant/further applicant may only apply for one project.

## **5. Funding**

JRP proposals contain two separate budgets: one budget in INR for the Indian applicant(s) (paid by the DBT according to the DBT's rules) and one budget in CHF for the Swiss part (paid by the SNSF according to the SNSF's rules).

- The total budget available in Switzerland is CHF 4.2 million.
- The total budget available in India is INR 27.15 crores (or a budget matching with the Swiss side).

The available budget will allow for funding of up to 12 projects. The funding per project is sufficient for each side to support salaries (PhD students, postdocs, other staff) as well as consumables, some minor equipment and mobility costs related to the project.

### **Eligible costs in Switzerland**

The maximum permissible budget for a project is CHF 350,000 for the total duration of 4 years.

Costs that are eligible:

- Personnel costs (salaries and social security contributions of scientific and technical employees)
- Material costs, if they are directly linked to the research project, in particular material of enduring value, the cost of expendable items, field expenses, travel or expenses of third parties
- The costs associated with the use of infrastructure directly linked to the implementation of the research
- Costs and fees for scientific Open Access electronic publications
- Costs for granting access to research data (Open Research Data)
- Cost of organising conferences and workshops in the context of the funded research
- Costs of national and international cooperation and networking activities directly associated with the funded research

The SNSF regulations apply to the Swiss budget. However, overhead costs are not admissible.

### **Eligible costs in India**

The maximum permissible budget for a project is INR 2.25 crores for a total duration of 4 years.

The funding categories are:

- Cost of equipment/accessories essential for the project.
- Cost of consumable necessary for fulfilling project activities.
- Manpower (studentship and fellowships for PhD and post-doctoral students/helpers etc.)
- Travel costs (domestic travel, international travel and local hospitality for visiting scientists)
- Joint review meetings and workshops to enhance the exchange of ideas, experience, knowledge and skills between the research teams (should be directly related to the project activities)
- Field and farm expenses as per the requirement of the project.
- Outsourcing charges (for work directly linked to the implementation of the research activities)

### **Visiting costs between Switzerland and India**

When budgeting visits between the Swiss and Indian partners, the international travel related expenses are to be charged to the budget of the visiting side and the living expenses (local hospitality etc.) to the budget of the hosting side. Health/medical overseas insurance should be included in the budget of the visiting side.

Research visits between Switzerland and India must be balanced in number and duration.

The following flat rates are to be used:

- Living expenses for visiting scientists from India to Switzerland:
  - Short-term visits (up to two weeks): CHF 160 per day
  - Long-term visits: CHF 3600 per month
- Living expenses for visiting scientists from Switzerland to India:
  - INR 2,500 per day for each person plus fully furnished institutional guest house accommodation on actuals, subject to a maximum of Rs. 4,000 per day
- Travel expenses for visiting scientists from India to Switzerland: INR 75,000 per person
- Travel expenses for visiting scientists from Switzerland to India:
  - To Delhi: CHF 1200 per person
  - To other places in India: CHF 1700 per person

## 6. Submission

**Proposals are to be prepared jointly by the Swiss and Indian applicants. They must be submitted by the Swiss main applicant to the SNSF via its electronic submission system *mySNF* ([www.mysnf.ch](http://www.mysnf.ch)).** Indian applicants can be given access to the electronic submission system through their Swiss partner. A copy of the application jointly submitted via *mySNF* should also be submitted to DBT ([vaishalip.dbt@nic.in](mailto:vaishalip.dbt@nic.in)).

**Indian researchers are asked to note** that all applications must be submitted via the SNSF online system, as indicated above. Applications submitted in India but not via the SNSF online system in Switzerland will not be processed.

No hard copies will be accepted. The call process is highly competitive, therefore an application does not guarantee funding. Only positively rated applications will be considered for funding. Neither the SNSF nor the DBT can be held responsible for non-submission of an application.

After logging in on *mySNF*, the correct funding scheme must be chosen: *Programmes (national and international) > Bilateral Co-operation (Initiatives of the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation) > Indo-Swiss Joint Research Programme.*

**Swiss researchers are asked to note** that their submission falls under the SNSF Funding Regulations and Regulations on Project Funding which are applicable or applicable *mutatis mutandis* where not stated otherwise.

The application consists of two parts:

- The administrative part, which must be completed online
  - Personal data of the Swiss main applicant
  - Personal data of the Indian main applicant
  - Personal data of further applicant(s) from Switzerland and/or India
  - Basic data on the project (e.g. title, research field, starting date, duration, summary)
  - Funding requested from the SNSF
  - Information on authorisations required in Switzerland
  - Data Management Plan (DMP)
  - Other information (e.g. whether the project is related to other SNSF projects, the name of the Swiss university/research institution at which the planned project will be implemented, statement concerning already available funds or funds requested elsewhere)
- PDF documents that are to be uploaded to *mySNF*
  - Research plan (must have the structure indicated in Annex 1) including the funding requested from DBT
  - CVs and publication lists of all applicants and other researchers involved
  - If applicable, equipment quotes
  - Details of ongoing and completed projects with DBT (for the Indian applicants).

For specific questions related to [www.mysnf.ch](http://www.mysnf.ch), please contact the support team by e-mail ([mysnf.support@snf.ch](mailto:mysnf.support@snf.ch)) or telephone (+41 31 308 22 00). Please note that you need a user account in order to submit proposals via *mySNF*. To open an account, please [register with the SNSF as a user](#). Applicants with existing user accounts need not apply for a new one.

The proposal must include a Data Management Plan (DMP) set up according to the requirements issued by the SNSF. The proposal can only be submitted once the DMP has been completed. Applicants must enter a DMP that is understandable, suits their project and meets the standards set by their research community. **At this stage, the DMP is considered a draft and excluded from the evaluation process and not shared with external reviewers.** The definitive DMP must be provided by the end of the project at the latest.

The content of the DMP is directly entered in the mySNF submission form. It is not possible to upload a DMP as a separate PDF file. Please keep in mind the time needed to complete the DMP during the submission procedure.

**Deadline for submission of applications:** 16.04.2018, 17:00, CEST. Incomplete applications and applications received after the deadline will not be considered. No request for extension of the deadline shall be considered.

**Language:** All documents submitted must be in English.

## 7. Evaluation

**Peer review:** Proposals for JRPs will be reviewed according to standard international peer review procedures, jointly organised by the SNSF and the DBT. The peer review experts are designated by the members of the evaluation panel and the administrative offices. These external experts will complete a peer review of the applications using a score system, assessing the scientific quality of the JRPs.

**Evaluation panel:** An ad hoc evaluation panel will be set up, composed of experts proposed by the SNSF and the DBT. Based on the peer reviews, the evaluation panel will assign each project one of six ratings. The experts' recommendations will include rationale. Priority will be given to applications with the highest ratings, regardless of the research area.

**Decision:** At the SNSF, the list of projects proposed for funding by the evaluation panel will need to be approved by the Specialised Committee for International Co-operation and the Presiding Board. At the DBT, it will be approved by the Secretary of the DBT.

### **The criteria used to evaluate the scientific quality of the proposals:**

- Scientific relevance
- Originality of the aims and objectives
- Appropriateness of the methodology and feasibility
- Track record and expertise of the researchers
- Complementarity of the research partners

The evaluation results will be communicated to the Swiss main applicants by the SNSF with a decision letter and to the Indian main applicants by the DBT in winter 2018.

**Earliest starting date for the JRPs:** 01.01.2019

## 8. Reporting

Swiss and Indian project partners will report separately to the SNSF and the DBT respectively. Scientific and financial reports are to be submitted annually. The SNSF and the DBT will prepare a common template for the scientific report, so that the consortia will only need to prepare one report to be submitted to each organisation.

### **In Switzerland:**

The Swiss main applicant will be responsible for reporting to the SNSF. Both for the financial and the scientific report, standard SNSF rules will apply, with the exception that scientific reports must be submitted annually. They include a qualitative and a quantitative part (output data).

### **In India:**

The Indian main applicant will be responsible for reporting to the DBT. Both for the financial and the scientific report, the standard DBT rules will apply. Both financial and scientific reports must be submitted annually. They include a qualitative and a quantitative part (output data).

## 9. Payments

### **In Switzerland (SNSF funding):**

The standard SNSF rules apply. In principle, the budgets for JRPs are transferred in annual instalments to the Swiss principal investigator (PI) at the beginning of a project year.

### **In India (DBT funding):**

The standard DBT rules apply. In principle, the budgets for JRPs will be transferred in annual instalments to the Indian principal investigator (PI) at the beginning of a project year, subject to submission of annual financial and technical reports.

## 10. VAT

### **In Switzerland (SNSF funding):**

JRP grants are not subject to VAT or other taxes and charges. However, research expenses are not excluded from VAT. Therefore, all costs budgeted in a JRP (e.g. equipment, consumables, etc.) can be charged to the programme, VAT included, unless the research institution (e.g. university, public research organisation, etc.) is able to recover the VAT.

## 11. Publications and intellectual property

The PIs are obliged to publish research results coming from the JRPs in appropriate form and according to SNSF and DBT standards.

Applicants must consult both the Swiss and Indian host institution concerning their internal intellectual property regulations. For market-oriented projects, it is important that an agreement be reached in advance. It is the responsibility of both PIs to make sure such an agreement is signed before the project starts.

## 12. Further information and contacts

### **In Switzerland**

Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)

#### ***Stéphanie Boder-Pasche***

International Co-operation division

Wildhainweg 3, P.O. Box 8232

CH-3001 Berne

E-mail: [stephanie.boder@snf.ch](mailto:stephanie.boder@snf.ch) or [international@snf.ch](mailto:international@snf.ch)

Website: [www.snsf.ch](http://www.snsf.ch)

### **In India**

Department of Biotechnology (DBT)

#### ***Dr Shailja V. Gupta***

Adviser,

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#### ***Dr. Vaishali Panjabi***

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## **Annex 1: Guidelines for writing the project proposal**

For your project proposal, we kindly ask you to use the section headings (points 1 to 6) indicated below. In order to ensure that the scientific content of your proposal can be assessed adequately, please provide detailed documentation which sets out clearly the aims, subject matter and methods of the project you are planning.

### **1. Summary of the research plan (max. 8,000 characters)**

This should include the most important features of your research plan and place your project in a broader scientific context. This summary must be identical with the one you have provided in the *mySNF* data container “Basic data II”.

### **2. Research plan**

**The research plan (i.e. subsections 2.1-2.5) must not exceed 20 pages and 80,000 characters** (including spaces). These upper limits include any blank space, figures, tables, formulae and references. The font size should be 10pt or larger. Unless indicated otherwise, the research plan should not contain any annexes.

#### **2.1 Current state of research in the field**

By citing the most important publications in the relevant field, please set out the scientific background and basis of the project, explain the need to perform research on the topic you propose and briefly describe important research currently being conducted internationally.

#### **2.2 Current state of own research and partnership aspect**

- Please describe briefly the work done by the different applicants in the relevant research field or in related fields and indicate the relevant publications.
- Explain how the different applicants complement each other for the proposed research project.
- If applicable, describe past collaborations between the Swiss and Indian partners.

#### **2.3 Detailed research plan**

Against the background described in sections 2.1 and 2.2, state the aims that you plan to attain during the lifetime of the project. Please consider the following points:

- Which investigations and/or experiments do you plan to carry out/are necessary to attain the stated aims?
- What is the rationale for getting the project started and how do you intend to develop the work later on?
- What is the expected added value (synergistic benefit) of the collaboration?

Information concerning the methods necessary to attain the aims:

- Which are the methods available to you?
- To which other methods do you have access and how?
- Which methods need to be developed?

Data and data collection:

- Which data are available to you and from where?
- Which data need to be collected?

#### **2.4 Work division, schedule and milestones**

- Please indicate how you plan to divide the work among the different partners.
- As far as possible, please give an approximate schedule for the work to be carried out within the project and indicate the most important milestones. In particular, please describe the major tasks of the staff to be employed within the project by the different partners.
- List the planned visits between the Swiss and Indian research groups (visiting scientist, hosting scientist, purpose of visit, date and duration of visit).

## 2.5 Importance, impact and results

### Scientific importance and impact

Please describe briefly the importance of your research for the scientific community and the impact you expect from the project on research, training and teaching in your field/discipline.

Please indicate how you will publish/communicate your results.

### Expected results and dissemination plan

Describe in detail the project outcomes you envisage. Explain how you will share these findings with stakeholders and the community. Address the potential for knowledge transfer to industry (if applicable).

### Broader impact

If your application concerns use-inspired research, please indicate whether and to what extent the proposed project will have a broader impact and what this impact will be. The following points should be addressed:

- Need for research as perceived by practitioners/industry: are there any knowledge gaps? Are innovations and improvements expected?
- Transferability of results: to what degree can research results be put into practice?
- Other potential impacts: in which spheres outside science could the implementation of the research results entail changes and what is the nature of these changes?

## 3. Ethical, safety and regulatory issues

Does your proposed work raise ethical, safety or regulatory issues? If yes, how will you deal with them? Indicate this clearly.

For the Indian side, all statutory clearances pertaining to Ethical committee clearance, Institutional Biosafety Committee, Biodiversity authority, etc. as applicable in the project should be provided as per the DBT norms.

## 4. List of ongoing and/or recent research projects between the Indian and Swiss applicants

Project title	Research area	Project duration (xx/yy/zz - xx/yy/zz)	Amount of funds & funding source

Insert additional rows into the table if required.

**5. List of ongoing and/or recent research projects with DBT (for the Indian applicants)**

Project title	Research area	Project duration (xx/yy/zz - xx/yy/zz)	Amount of funds & funding source

**6. Requested funds (India)**

(For the Swiss side, please see corresponding data container on mySNF.)

*Summary of costs in India: Please give the total cost (in Indian Rupees) of the Indian project part*

Head	Year 1	Year 2	Total
<b>A. Non-recurring</b>			
<b>1. Equipment and accessories</b>			
<b>Total A</b>			
<b>B. Recurring</b>			
<b>1. Consumables</b>			
<b>2. Manpower (Studentship and fellowships for PhD and post doctoral students/experts/helpers etc.)</b>			
<b>3. Travel a. local travel b. International travel c. Expenditure for stay of students in d. Local hospitality for visiting scientist.</b>			
<b>4. Review meeting</b>			
<b>5. Honorarium / consultancy charges</b>			
<b>6. Contingency</b>			
<b>7. Field and farm expenses</b>			
<b>8. Overheads</b>			
<b>9. Outsourcing</b>			
<b>TOTAL B (1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8)</b>			
<b>TOTAL (A+B)</b>			