



University of Geneva

Leading House for Science & Technology Cooperation

Swiss-Russian Call for Projects

Research Preparation Grants (RPG)

DEADLINE: 16 June 2020

Introduction

The University of Geneva (UNIGE) has been mandated by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) as Leading House for cooperation in Science and Technology between Switzerland and Russia for 2017-2020, in the framework of the bilateral relationship between both countries. In this role, UNIGE supports Swiss-Russian joint projects, mainly through Calls for Projects.

Purpose of the Grants

This Call for Projects is designed to provide seed funding for projects between academic actors in Switzerland and Russia. Research Preparation Grants are intended to allow first contacts and interactions between teams of Russian and Swiss researchers, leading up to joint applications for calls to be launched by the SNSF with its Russian counterparts, or other funding options. To make sure the exchanges are not limited to individuals and to warrant mid-term perspectives, applications by teams of at least two persons per country, including young researchers, are encouraged. Projects submitted must specify a timeline and objective for external follow-up funding.

Application Process

All scientists from Swiss federal and cantonal universities, universities of applied sciences and universities of teachers' education, as well as public research institutions, are eligible to apply. Applications by doctoral students and postdoctoral scientists must be submitted by their supervisors.

Collaborating partners must be affiliated with a university or a public research institute from the partner country. The collaborating partner must hold a faculty or senior scientist position or a doctoral degree (Ph.D. or equivalent) with several years of research experience.

Proposals for collaborative projects must be submitted jointly using the common application form at <http://unige-leadinghouse.ch/project-submission/>. Proposals may come from individual faculty members or a group of faculty but should have Principal Applicants (PA) from Switzerland in all cases; the co-PA shall be from the Russia institution.

Please note that this Call is disseminated mainly to academic contacts in Switzerland, without an institutional partner on the Russian side. Therefore, Swiss stakeholders are encouraged to spread it to their contacts in Russia.

Types of Grants

The maximum RPG funding per project is CHF 20'000 over two years. It may be used for traveling and accommodation (following the budget guidelines as used by SNSF for Scientific Exchange), workshops and possibly other expenses. Regular salary costs for project participants will not be considered.

Given the COVID-19 situation, maximum flexibility will be given in relation to the project's implementation. Beneficiaries are highly encouraged to shift their tasks whenever possible. For instance, tasks where physical presence is needed on the ground (e.g. experiments/lab work, workshops, conference, etc.) may be postponed after confinement measures are over and meanwhile remote work could be done instead (desk work, drafting documents, etc.).

Matching funds

Both the Swiss applicant and the Russian partner are required to make in-kind (e.g. work hours, usage of office or laboratory equipment, field visits, etc.) contributions to the proposed research project. It is recommended that the Russian partner make a financial contribution. This contribution can be funds from the affiliated institute and/or granted by Russian funding bodies.

Application documents

The project submission consists of the following:

- Short project description (500 words maximum, may be published if project selected);
- Project timeline;
- 4 questions based on the criteria in the section below (250 words max/question);
- Project budget (template provided on the web page);
- Short CVs of all participants, without publication lists, (to be uploaded in the "Supporting documentation" section of the application form);
- Other supporting documents are optional.

Selection Process and Criteria

In agreement with SERI, the Leading House will aim to fund projects that:

1. Build on mutual areas of excellence in both countries and in the institutions involved;
2. Establish a foundation for collaboration beyond the funded term, with potential to receive external support;
3. Emphasize mobility and contacts between young talents in both countries and contribute to building and reinforcing Swiss-Russian networks in Science & Technology;
4. Benefit from joint funding from their respective institution or from other sources (may also be in-kind contributions);

The projects submitted will be evaluated on a competitive basis according to the criteria above.

Funding

The LH will provide the agreed funding to the Swiss PA, to be spent over the course of the grant period on travel, accommodations, workshops, facilities use and other expenses as specified at the time of the proposal, for participants from Switzerland and/or from Russia. For travel and housing costs, the funding guidelines used by the Swiss PA's institution can serve as a reference.

Disbursement of grants

Grants will be disbursed in two instalments: 80% after signing the grant contract and 20% after approval of the final report and financial statement. Prior to the disbursement of grants, grant recipients will be required to sign a grant agreement provided to them by the Leading House Russia & CIS. Any grant money that was not spent by the grant recipient will have to be returned to the Leading House Russia & CIS.

Timeline

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| Call launched: | April 16, 2020 |
| Deadline for submission : | June 16, 2020 |
| Evaluation and funding decision : | June – August, 2020 |
| Notification : | September 2020 |
| Contract : | October 2020 |
| Project start: | October – December 2020 |
| Project duration : | 24 months maximum |

Contact for further information

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