



## **DBT, ICMR & SNSF Joint Research Projects: Call for Proposals 2026**

Indo-Swiss Joint Research Programme (ISJRP)

Opening date: 02 February 2026

Closing date: 05 May 2026, 17:00 CEST

### **1 Introduction**

Pursuant to the “Agreement between the Swiss Federal Council and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the Fields of Science and Technology”, concluded on 10 November 2003, the Indo-Swiss Joint Research Programme (ISJRP) was initiated by the Indian and Swiss governments in order to further develop 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 call for Joint Research Projects (JRPs) is as per the Letter of Intent (LoI) signed between the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of the Republic of India and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), Switzerland and financed by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) in Switzerland, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in India based on the principles of reciprocity, parity and balanced activities. An Indo-Swiss Joint Committee on Science and Technology defines the strategic goals and orientations of the programme.

#### **Funders involved**

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), Switzerland, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in India jointly launch a call for Joint Research Projects (JRPs).

### **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 up to four years. However, proposals with a duration of less than three years will be considered as ineligible.

The joint proposal must include all the details of both Indian as well as Swiss components; failing this, the proposal will be considered as ineligible.

### **3 Research field**

The joint Indo-Swiss call aims to support interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research projects within the broad framework of One Health. The One Health approach is understood as a holistic, collaborative, multisectoral strategy that acknowledges the inseparable links between human, animal, vegetal and environmental health. Its overarching goal is to achieve a sustainable balance among these domains, thereby promoting global well-being through coordinated action across disciplines.

Research proposals may be submitted for financial support on diverse One Health topics, including:

- Disease pathogen research
- Zoonotic diseases and spillover dynamics
- Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) diagnostics
- Medical devices addressing One Health challenges
- Technology-enabled surveillance
- Development of alternatives to antibiotics and novel therapeutics
- Vector-borne diseases
- Host-pathogen interaction studies
- Environmental and ecosystem health assessments
- Climate change impacts on health

Research proposals are expected to demonstrate a clear One Health perspective. This requires meaningful integration of at least two of the three One Health domains - human, animal, ecosystem - and active collaboration across relevant sectors such as public health, veterinary medicine, environmental sciences, and agriculture. Proposals should explicitly describe how integrated concepts, data, methods, or interventions will be developed and used, while also highlighting the added value of Indo-Swiss collaboration.

### **4 Eligibility**

Each proposal for a JRP must have at least one applicant based in Switzerland and one applicant based in India; they are the contact persons on the Swiss<sup>1</sup> and the Indian side respectively. They bear the responsibility for the technical and administrative coordination as well as the timely delivery of scientific and financial reports. Each applicant can only submit one proposal. The call is open to researchers from all eligible research institutions in Switzerland and India.

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<sup>1</sup> In Switzerland referred to as the corresponding applicant according to art. 12, paragraph 4 of the SNSF Funding Regulations.

## Eligibility criteria in Switzerland

Applicants requesting funding must meet the eligibility requirements of the SNSF. The SNSF [Funding Regulations](#), the [General implementation regulations](#) and the [Regulations on Project Funding](#) are applicable or applicable mutatis mutandis where not stated otherwise.

Applicants can submit a proposal to the joint bilateral call even if they hold another SNSF grant or have applied for one. Moreover, grantees of this JRP may submit proposals to all SNSF funding schemes during the funding period of a JRP, provided that there is no substantial thematic overlap. Please note that the present call is not in conflict with the restrictions applicable to the SNSF's national project funding in accordance with Article 13 of the Regulations on Project Funding. Ambizione grantees can contact the SNSF office to check their eligibility.

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.

## Eligibility criteria in India: DBT and ICMR

- Any Indian National holding a regular position in any Indian academic and scientific research institutions (Govt./Private) may apply. This call is open to all applicants eligible for Government of the Republic of India funding. The research institutions must be recognized by DSIR as a Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (SIRO). Private R&D performing institutions and NGOs/VOs/Trust (s) should have experience of at least 3 years in scientific research, teaching, training and extension activities Private institutions/ NGOs should also be registered with Darpan Portal of NITI Aayog. There must be at least one Co-investigator from each participating institute and either one of the PI or Co-PI should have remaining service in co-terminus to the duration of the project.
- Number of proposal submission for Indian investigators as PI is limited to one proposal while they can involve as Co-PIs in maximum of two proposals.
- Public/ Private Research Organizations must have a well established research support system for basic and applied research and submission of proof of establishment under Indian statute; recognition documents and registration at Government of India's Public Finance Management System (PFMS) – <https://pfms.nic.in> shall be obligatory.
- Regulatory and ethical matters should be followed as per Govt. of India norms.

Applications involving ineligible applicants, from either India or Switzerland, will result in the whole application being withdrawn or, alternatively, its non-consideration under SNSF Regulations.

## 5 Funding

JRP proposals contain two separate budgets: one budget in INR for the Indian applicant(s) (paid by the DBT or ICMR depending on the field of research and according to its rules) and one budget in CHF for the applicant(s) based in Switzerland (paid by the SNSF according to its rules). The available budget for this Call will enable the funding of up to 10 projects, provided that a sufficient number of scientifically sound and high-quality proposals are submitted. The funding per project must be in line with the respective regulations in India and Switzerland, respectively.

Both the Swiss and the Indian budget must be submitted in the SNF portal (a PDF is to be uploaded for the Indian budget. The relevant details can be found in the portal).

## Eligible costs in Switzerland

The maximum permissible budget for a project is CHF 400'000 for four years.

- Personnel costs (salaries within the salary ranges and rates set by the SNSF and social security contributions of scientific and technical employees); please note that the salaries of applicants are not eligible costs;
- Material costs that are directly related to the research work, namely material of enduring value, expendable items, field expenses, travel expenses, third-party charges or computing time;
- Direct costs incurred through the use of research infrastructure linked to the research work;
- Costs for granting access to research data (Open Research Data, max. CHF 10'000 per project);
- Costs for the organisation of conferences and workshops in connection with the funded research;
- Costs for national and international cooperation and networking activities carried out in connection with the funded research.

The SNSF regulations apply to the Swiss budget (see also the [guidelines](#)). However, overhead costs are not admissible. Please note that costs for open access publications can be requested separately via the OA platform of the SNSF. However, costs for Open Research Data (ORD) must be taken into account at the time of submission of the application. They cannot be covered by a supplementary grant.

## Eligibility costs in India: DBT and ICMR

The Indian side can fund equipment, manpower, consumables, contingencies, travel (local and international), overhead and other (outsourcing, meetings, workshops etc.). The proposal may be considered for funding support for 4 years with a maximum budget limit up to 25 million INR (Rs. 2.50 Crores) by DBT and ICMR. Equipment budget in the proposal should not be more than 30% of the total budget.

## Visiting costs between Switzerland and India

When budgeting visits between the Swiss and Indian partners, expenses related to international travel 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. Overseas health/medical insurance should be included in the budget of the visiting side. A maximum of one research visit per year and per person is permitted for research personnel for a short duration of up to two weeks. Travel and accommodation costs are subject to the regulations of the respective countries.

## 6 Submission

Proposals are to be jointly prepared by Swiss and Indian applicants. They must be submitted via the [SNF Portal](#). Hardcopies will not be accepted. Neither the SNSF nor the DBT or ICMR will be held responsible for non-submission of a proposal.

**Submission on the SNF Portal:** After login into the SNF Portal, the correct call must be chosen. See also the [guidelines](#) for submitting a proposal in the SNF Portal. Please note that all participating re-

searchers, including the Indian-based research team, need an account to fill in and submit the proposal.

For more details on creating a user account, see [“How do I register for the SNSF Portal?”](#). To access the SNF Portal, please note that creating the required SWITCH edu-ID and mySNF user accounts might take some additional time.

Please note that **the SNSF uses a new CV format**. Filling in the information might take some additional time. You can find all relevant information [here](#).

For specific questions related to the SNF Portal, please contact the support team via [SNF Service Portal - Jira Service Management \(atlassian.net\)](#) or telephone (+41 31 308 22 00). Please note that all participating researchers need an account in order to fill in and submit the proposal.

**Data Management Plan (DMP):** A Data Management Plan (DMP) is requested for approved grants according to the requirements issued by the SNSF. Missing or inaccurate statements in the DMP need to be added/revised within the first project year. A definitive and updated version of the DMP must be provided by the end of the project grant. For more details on the DMP format requirements and procedure see: [Data Management Plan \(DMP\) - Guidelines for researchers](#).

The submitted information must comply with the **principles of scientific integrity**. All applicants take responsibility for the correctness of their contributions. If the project plan is not written in accordance with the rules of good scientific practice, all applicants are accountable and may be asked to provide a statement; ultimately the project may not be considered. Reference is made to internationally recognised standards on good scientific practice as well as to the [SNSF's Research Integrity Regulations](#).

**Deadline for submission of applications:** 05.05.2026, 17:00:00 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

The joint call will be evaluated jointly by the SNSF, DBT and ICMR and follows the SNSF's unified evaluation procedure ([Evaluation procedure – this is how we select](#)). The evaluation process is highly competitive and only highly rated applications will be considered for funding. Peer reviewers and members of the evaluation panel must meet SNSF's, DBT's and ICMR's requirements to be evaluating experts. The process consists of the following steps:

**Peer review:** Proposals for JRPs will be reviewed according to standard international peer review procedures, jointly organised by the SNSF, DBT and ICMR, including international as well as Indian reviews. External experts conduct a peer review of the applications, evaluating the scientific quality of JRPs. In principle 2 reviews (1 nominated by the SNSF and 1 by the DBT or ICMR) should be obtained per proposal.

**Evaluation panel:** An evaluation panel will be set up, composed of experts proposed by the SNSF, DBT and ICMR. The evaluation panel will rate and rank the proposals based on the peer reviews and

the panel members' own assessment. The panel members' recommendations will include a rationale for the rating.

**Decision:** The outcome of the joint evaluation panel will result in a list of all proposals ranked from highest to lowest priority for funding. Based on the ranking list of the joint evaluation panel and available budget, the SNSF, DBT and ICMR shall decide on the final list of proposals to be funded. Up to 10 of the highest ranked proposals will be funded, depending on a sufficient number of highly qualified submissions and the available budget. Mutatis mutandis the [SNSF Unified Evaluation Procedure](#), UEP, applies.

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

- Scientific relevance, originality and topicality
- Suitability of methods and feasibility
- Applicants' scientific track record and expertise
- Collaborative research

The evaluation results will be communicated to the applicants based in Switzerland in spring 2027. The contact person in Switzerland will receive a decision letter from the SNSF, while the contact person in India will be informed by the DBT or ICMR. In case of rejection, the main reasons leading to the decision will be given to the applicant based in Switzerland. In case of approval, the Swiss budget and the conditions will be listed in the decision letter. The main applicant in Switzerland will be responsible for transmitting the decision letter to the other applicants in Switzerland. The decision letters are not subject to appeal.

**The earliest starting date for the JRPs:** 01.05.2027

## **8 Reporting**

Swiss and Indian project partners will report separately to the SNSF and the DBT or ICMR respectively.

**In Switzerland:**

The Swiss corresponding applicant will be responsible for reporting to the SNSF. Standard SNSF regulations apply both for the financial and the scientific reports.

**In India:**

The Indian main applicant will be responsible for reporting to the DBT or ICMR. The DBT or the ICMR rules apply both for the financial and the scientific report, depending on the field of the project.

## **9 Payments**

**In Switzerland (SNSF funding):** The standard SNSF rules apply. In principle, the budgets for JRPs are transferred to the Swiss corresponding grantee in annual instalments at the beginning of each project year.

**In India (DBT funding):**

The standard DBT rules apply. In principle, the budgets for JRPs will be transferred to the host Indian institute in annual instalments at the beginning of each project year, subject to submission of annual financial and technical reports.

**In India (ICMR funding):**

The standard ICMR rules apply. In principle, the budgets for JRPs will be transferred to the host Indian institute in annual instalments at the beginning of each project year according to the ICMR's rules and subject to submission of annual financial and technical reports.

## **10 VAT**

**In Switzerland (SNSF funding):**

The JRP grants are not subject to VAT or other taxes and charges. However, research expenses are not excluded from VAT. Therefore, all eligible costs incurred during a JRP (e.g. equipment, consumables, etc.) can be charged to the programme, including VAT, unless the research institution (e.g. universities, public research organisations, etc.) is able to recover VAT.

**In India:**

The standard DBT and ICMR regulations apply.

## **11 Publications and intellectual property**

The grantees are obliged to publish research results generated by the JRPs in appropriate form and according to SNSF, DBT and ICMR standards as per the existing norms of the respective country.

Intellectual property rights belong to the respective researchers and/or their employing institutions. Grantees are obliged to define such rights together with their employer by no later than the time the funded research work is completed. It is the responsibility of each research partner to ensure the efficient protection and proper distribution of any intellectual property arising from the accomplishments of the joint research projects.

## **12 Further information and contacts**

**In Switzerland, SNSF**

Swiss National Science Foundation  
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Wildhainweg 3, P.O. Box 8232  
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**In India, DBT**

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**In India, ICMR:**

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## Annex 1: Guidelines for writing the project proposal

Research plan (to be uploaded as a PDF):

The research plan must not exceed **17 pages and 68,000 characters with spaces**. The first limit reached applies. This includes the title or front page, footnotes, illustrations, formulae, tables (and, if applicable, the table of contents), but not the bibliography. At least **font size 10 and line spacing 1.5** must be used. The research plan may not contain any annexed documents.

The page and character count in the SNSF Portal is binding. Applications with research plans that are too extensive cannot be submitted. Note that the number of characters may vary slightly depending on the document format / PDF coding.

The research plan submitted to the SNSF Portal must be written in English and be structured as follows:

### 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. 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.
- Describe past collaborations that involved the Swiss and Indian partners (if applicable).

### 3. Detailed research plan

Against the background described in sections 1. and 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?

- Does the proposed project contain ethically sensitive or safety-related aspects or does it raise legal issues? If so, how will you deal with them?

#### 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).

#### 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, including new theories, methods, materials; scientific significance and potential application. Explain how you will share these findings with stakeholders and the community. Address the potential for knowledge transfer to industry (if applicable).