

swissuniversities

Program 2017-2020 P-5

"Scientific information:

Access, processing and safeguarding"

Project application guidelines

Impressum

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Contents

1.	Introduction	4
1.1.	Vision and mission	4
1.2.	Framework	4
2.	Participation	4
2.1.	Authorized institutions	4
2.2.	Applicants and project partners	5
2.3.	Own funding	5
2.4.	Projects	5
2.5.	Project duration	5
3.	Project application	5
3.1.	Basis	5
3.2.	Form	6
3.3.	Language	6
3.4.	Subsidy and down funding	6
3.5.	Deadlines	6
3.6.	Submission	6
4.	Evaluation	6
4.1.	Bodies	6
4.2.	Evaluation criteria	7
5.	Implementation	7
5.1.	Roles and responsibilities	7
5.2.	Reporting	8
6.	Notes on the application form	8
6.1.	Preparation	8
6.2.	Explanation of the form	8
	Annex A Contact	11
	Annex B Website	11
	Annex C Application process	12

1. Introduction

1.1. Vision and mission

The program's mission is to combine the currently separate efforts to provide and process scientific information. The aim is to establish a reorganized system by the year 2020 that will provide researchers, teachers, and students with an extensive range of science-related digital content and the optimum tools for processing it.

These services should feature availability on a national level, stability, flexibility, and competitiveness. Through targeted funding, P-2 will initiate and control the development of this range of services and ensure its sustainable operation.

1.2. Framework

"Scientific information: Access, processing and safeguarding" is a funding program within the framework of project-related contributions in accordance with the Higher Education Act (HEdA).¹ The Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities, "swissuniversities," is tasked with carrying out the program.

On April 3, 2014, what was then the Swiss University Conference (SUC)² approved the program's national strategy. For the funding years 2014-2016, the "White Paper for a Swiss Information Provisioning and Processing Infrastructure 2020" specified the implementation actions in the four key areas of focus: publications, eScience, basis, and services. The implementation actions were adapted to the current state of the program for the funding period from 2017 to 2020. Project contributions now align with the "2017 to 2020 Implementation Strategy" and concern the implementation actions that this strategy describes.

In addition to implementation actions in the four key areas of focus, the implementation strategy proposes a number of implementation actions that support the expansion of services that match the program's goals. The priority is to promote national access to scientific information and to develop infrastructures and tools that can be used nationally and will continue to exist beyond the end of the program.

The budget for 2017 to 2020 is CHF 30 million.³

2. Participation

2.1. Authorized institutions

The following institutions are invited to apply:

- The ten cantonal universities;
- The Swiss federal institutes of technology and the four research institutes;
- The seven public universities of applied sciences;
- The universities of teacher education.

Institutions that provide services to the universities in one of the program's areas of implementation (e.g. the library associations) and institutions in which universities play a leading role (e.g. SWITCH or the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries) are also eligible to apply.

Only applications from non-commercial institutions will be considered.

1 Federal Act on the Funding and Coordination of the Higher Education Sector (Higher Education Act, HEdA), SR 414.20, of September 30, 2011 (<https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/20070429/index.html>). Chapter 8, Section 5 (Project-related contributions) shall come into force on January 1, 2017.

2 When the HEdA came into force on January 1, 2015, the SUC became the Swiss Conference of Higher Education Institutions (SCHEI).

3 All the documents mentioned are available on the program website: <http://www.swissuniversities.ch/isci>.

2.2. Applicants and project partners

Applicants must be affiliated with an institution specified in chapter **Error! Reference source not found.** and must have its express support.

Project partnerships between authorized institutions are welcome. Private sector companies may also be considered as project partners.

2.3. Own funding

In accordance with Chapter 8, Section 5 of the HEEdA, contributions provide support to be used as start-up funding: applicants must supplement the federal grant with a suitable own funding contribution ("matching funds").

Own funding in an application for funding will usually be 50% of the total project costs. When a justified request is made, a lower own funding contribution down to 0% may be approved if the applicant proves conclusively that the project predominantly serves the overall interests of the program. A portion of own funding (half, i.e. 25% of the total cost) must be provided in real money:

Virtual money refers to the value of using existing infrastructure and the output of university employees who are paid out of the university's ordinary budget.

Real money refers to the university's financial resources (including third-party resources) that are provided for the project and used to finance the additional employees and external people hired to work on the project and for any necessary project purchases.

This means that the applicant is not only permitted to make use of existing personnel resources and infrastructures as its own funding, but must also invest in new personnel and material costs, i.e. pay real money. This encourages greater commitment from the applicant.

Since the aim of the program is to benefit Switzerland and ensure the sustainability of the services funded, the best partnerships should be supported. To enable greater flexibility in forming partnerships, own funding is therefore calculated based on the total amount applied for. This means that not every partner institution involved in an application has to raise 50% of the funds, but instead that at least 50% of the funds must be contributed jointly for each project application.

2.4. Projects

Projects aim to put into practice the implementation actions outlined for funding in the "2017 to 2020 Implementation Strategy."

2.5. Project duration

The application must propose a sensible project duration. However, the project must be completed by the end of 2020 at the latest.

3. Project application

3.1. Basis

The basis for the project application is the "2017 to 2020 Implementation Strategy." Applications comply with the program's "national strategy."

A prerequisite for putting in a project application is the timely submission of a project outline to the Program Management in advance. Any information or recommendations that the Program Management provides after assessing the outline must be borne in mind in the project application.

3.2. Form

The current project application form on the program website must be used to apply.

3.3. Language

Project applications can be submitted in German, French or English.

3.4. Subsidy and own funding

When calculating the subsidy and own funding required in the form of work capacity, the applicant accounts for personnel costs according to the actual total wage costs.

"Own funding" refers to:

- Funds that the applicant's institutions and the project partners contribute directly to the project ("real money");
- The estimated cost of using existing infrastructure and employing a workforce that will not be paid out of the project funds ("virtual money").

3.5. Deadlines

Submission deadline	Awarding decision	Project start
February 19, 2017	July 2017	As of August 2017
August 2017 ⁴	December 2018	As of January 2018
February 2018	July 2018	As of August 2018
August 2018	December 2018	As of January 2019
February 2019	July 2019	As of August 2019
August 2019	December 2020	As of January 2020

3.6. Submission

Project applications must be sent by the deadline, in electronic format together with the signature sheet, to the following address:

isci-proposal@swissuniversities.ch

Receipt will be confirmed by e-mail.

4. Evaluation

4.1. Bodies

The following bodies are involved in the evaluation process:

The **Program Management** is the point of contact for applications. It is responsible for checking the format of the applications and managing the evaluation procedure. It plays an advisory role in the evaluation.

The **group of experts** evaluates the project applications. It makes recommendations to the Steering Committee on which project applications to approve, reject or return for revision.

The **Steering Committee** makes a decision on behalf of swissuniversities, based on the recommendations of the group of experts.

The **Swiss Conference of Higher Education Institutions (SCHEI)** has overall responsibility for the program. The SCHEI reserves the right to influence the course of the program if the goals change or are not fulfilled.

⁴ The precise dates will be published on the program website on an ongoing basis.

4.2. Evaluation criteria

Project applications will be evaluated according to the following three criteria:

- A. Formal correctness (eligibility to apply, completeness, etc.)
- B. Compliance with the national strategy and the 2017 to 2020 Implementation Strategy
- C. Quality

A and B will serve as filters and ensure a good standard when the quality is evaluated.

The quality of the project applications (C) will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- C.1 Benefits and strategic importance for the program:
 - Significance for the project portfolio
 - Impact
 - Quantifiable benefit (e.g. increase in efficiency)
 - International importance
- C.2 Feasibility:
 - Professional quality ("soundness of approach")
 - Chances of success
 - Project team (record of achievement/references)
 - Proximity to customers
 - Observance of legal frameworks
 - Consideration of technical conditions
- C.3 Financing model/business case:
 - Implementation costs
 - Operating costs
 - Sustainability
 - Potential users
 - Charging model

5. Implementation

5.1. Roles and responsibilities

The following table shows the roles and responsibilities in the project implementation phase:

Table 1: Roles and responsibilities

Roles	Responsibility	Description
Project manager	Implementing the project	The person on the project team who is responsible for the implementation (point of contact, project management, project administration, reporting).
Program Management	Implementing the program	Acts as a point of contact for the project manager and manages the project portfolio on behalf of the Steering Committee.
Steering Committee	Managing the program	Quality assurance and strategic management of the program. The Steering Committee makes decisions on project applications once a year.
Swiss Conference of Higher Education Institutions (SCHEI)	Overall responsibility for the program	The SCHEI reserves the right to influence the course of the program.

5.2. Reporting

In addition to the standard final report, the Program Management is planning semi-annual status reports. A status report contains information on the project's progress (milestones, results obtained, outlook, risks) and provides details of the current state of the finances.

6. Notes on the application form

6.1. Preparation

Preliminary investigations into the feasibility of a project or service must usually be conducted by the applicant in advance. The Program Management will assist you during the preparation of project applications. Please note that a project outline must be submitted to the Program Management before the final application is submitted (chapter 3.1).

6.2. Explanation of the form

A project application must be able to be understood and evaluated by experts and reviewers. Please make sure that your application contains a clear overview of all the information and notes required for it to be evaluated. Please note the following information in particular (the numbers refer to the headings in the project application form):

1. to 3. (General information)

The program aims to raise awareness of initiatives for services and potential collaborations, and to support these. The general information may therefore also be used in communications about the program, even if the application is rejected.

2. Project classification

Project applications address the implementation actions listed in the 2017 to 2020 Implementation Strategy (chapters 4-8). This also includes the contextual information and general framework conditions of the program as laid down in the "national strategy."

If your service has already received funding from the "Scientific information" program, please indicate this in 2.1.

4.1. Background

If your project builds on a previous project, the background will be underpinned by the final report/results of that project. Please refer to heading 6.2 and take advantage of the opportunity to enclose additional documents (see 7.3).

4.4 Environment analysis

Show that you know your business area and position your plans: What arguments give your project or service an advantage over similar initiatives or alternative approaches?

4.5 Expected national benefits

Make the benefits of your plans as tangible as possible (market analysis of the future service):

- Mention any factors which indicate that your project is likely to be successful (access and user figures, reach, expressions of interest, etc.).
- Draw some conclusions from a current project or service.
- Include statements about the cost effectiveness of the future service.

This section will be extremely important for subsequent projects. (see 5.6, 5.7)

4.6 and 4.7 Milestones

Milestones are verifiable, measurable goals at the end of a work package or project phase. They help monitor success as part of project management.

4.8 Project organization

In the project organization section, the various members of the project team, their

role in the project, their place of work, their workload, and the wage rates used for calculating the costs must be made clear:

- List the members of the project team by name and include details of any new appointments that you are planning.
- Personnel costs are calculated pro rata on the basis of the total wage costs (gross wage plus employer's contributions) per year. Additional costs of CHF 20,000 per FTE per year can also be added.

The organizational chart gives information about the team dynamic (hierarchy, position of team members in relation to each other).

4.10 Operating concept

Explain as clearly as possible how the service is to be provided during normal operation after the end of the project. For example:

- Who ensures that the service will be operated and maintained?
 - Who will use the service?
 - How much will the service cost to operate? (see also 5.6)
 - Who will cover what share of the costs? (Sponsor, institution, billing model, etc.)
 - Who is responsible for marketing?
-

5.1 Project costs per project phase/work package

Here you should account for the total costs and the funding requested for each work package, and specify the cost items. The labor costs are to be shown for each person with the respective rate used for calculation.

5.2 and 5.3 Own funding contribution

Chapter 2.3 of these guidelines offers information about the definition of real and virtual money and the difference between them.

5.4 Detailed calculation for each institution

The detailed calculation breaks down the total costs under 5.1 into years of the project, own funding (real and virtual money) and subsidy funding. The various costs are to be listed transparently. Please use the examples in the tables as a guide.

Personnel:

Show the labor costs of the participating institutions for each member of the project team.

Equipment and systems:

List equipment and systems (purchase or rental costs).

Operating resources:

List operating resources such as the estimated cost of using existing infrastructure (virtual money) or operating computer systems (hosting).

Conference and travel costs:

The information you provide should make the intended use of the funds as clear as possible.

Other costs:

Please specify any other costs.

5.6 Anticipated operating costs after the end of the project

Account for the various types of costs as far as possible. Potential maintenance costs of at least 20% of the cost price are to be included in the operating costs, particularly for software developed by the project team.

5.7 Anticipated revenue after the end of the project

Indicate what revenue you expect after the end of the project or how you wish to finance the service.

6.2 Previous projects

Describe any previous projects (content and results; enclose the final report if there is one) that have a direct bearing on your application.

8. Signatures

Please provide handwritten signatures for all project participants. These include the applicant institution, the project manager and their deputy and all participating project partners. The signatories are authorized to guarantee the investment of own funding as shown.

The signature sheet is to be submitted as a scan separate from the project application.

Annex A Contact

The Program Management issues information on the call for proposals:

Roland Dietlicher, Program Manager

Gabi Schneider, Deputy Program Manager

isci@swissuniversities.ch

Annex B Website

You can find more information and documents on the program website:

www.swissuniversities.ch/isci

You can also register for the program mailing list on this page.

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Annex C Application process

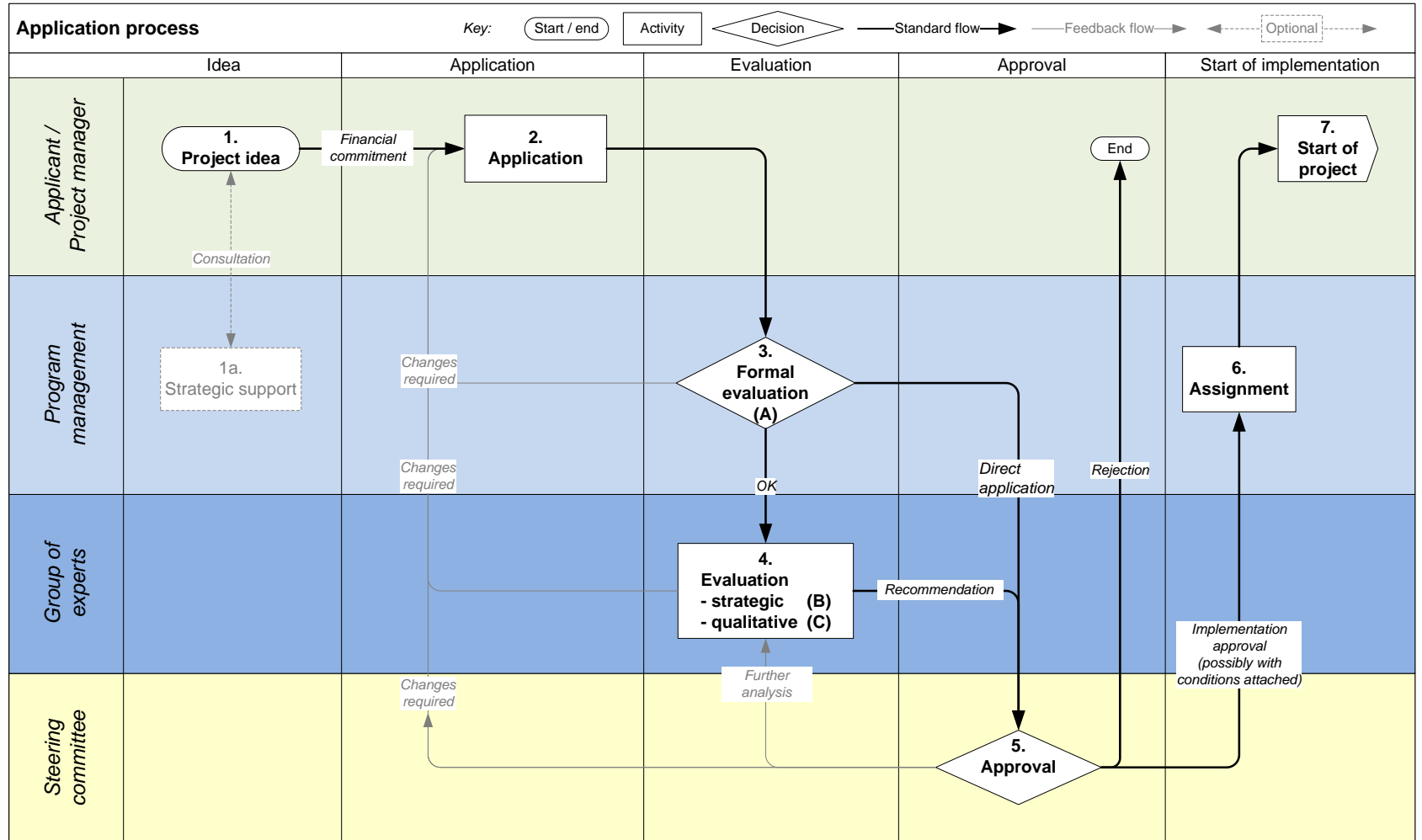


Figure 1: Graphical representation of the application process