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Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER

**State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation SERI**

International Research and Innovation Programmes

Swiss participation in the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation and related programmes and initiatives

Q&A on Horizon Europe, Digital Europe Programme, Euratom Programme and ITER as well as Horizon 2020

Information as of 25 March 2024

Main changes have been made in Q&A no. 2, 3, 5.

The Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) updates the answers of the Q&A according to developments in Switzerland and the European Union (EU) with regard to the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and related programmes and initiatives.

Please note that according to the EU nomenclature, all non-EU states are referred to as third countries. Within Horizon Europe, a distinction is made between (i) associated countries and (ii) non-associated third countries. This nomenclature is also used in this document.

Among the non-associated third countries, participants from high-income third countries do normally not receive funding from the European Commission (EC), while a number of low- and middle-income third countries are automatically eligible for EC funding. Detailed information can be found here.

The Q&A document is structured along the following contents. The detailed questions are listed below.

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1 Transitional arrangements 2024 and 2025

1	Q	What does the transitional arrangement 2024 contain?
	A	With the start of the negotiations on the overall package, the EU has put the transitional arrangement 2024 into place, which enables researchers in Switzerland to participate in the ERC Advanced Grants 2024 call as 'potential beneficiary'. It is not possible for researchers and innovators in Switzerland to participate in further calls for mono-beneficiary projects of the programme year 2024. As for collaborative projects, Swiss actors will continue to participate in all calls in 2024 as 'associated partners'. Please see also the press release of the European Commission.
2	Q	What will the evaluation and funding process of the transitional arrangement 2024 look like?
	A	Proposals of researchers who apply to the ERC Advanced Grants 2024 with a host institution located in Switzerland will be evaluated by the ERC Executive Agency (ERCEA) and interviews will take place. Furthermore, these researchers will be informed of the Step 2 evaluation results. If recommended for funding by the ERCEA after step 2 of the evaluation process and if an association agreement is not in place by then, Principal Investigators from a host institution located in Switzerland will be granted the possibility to maintain the eligibility of their proposal by transferring it to a new, eligible entity. This treatment is linked to the portability of these grants: The host institution for these projects can be changed at the moment when the grant agreement is established (granting stage). If no association agreement has been concluded after stage 2 of the evaluation process, SERI will directly fund the Principal Investigators with positively evaluated proposals of the ERC Advanced Grants 2024, provided they decide to remain at a Swiss host institution. A corresponding financial guarantee can be found on the SERI website.
3	Q	In the case of direct funding by SERI: Will applications that are positively evaluated under the ERC Advanced Grants 2024 be funded by SERI according to the lump sum principle?
	A	No. A first payment instalment of 50% of the grant will be paid readily after contract signature. The next tranche of 30% after approval of the interim financial report and the last one (remaining costs up to 20%) after approval of the final financial report. The beneficiary has to issue an invoice to SERI for each payment.
4	Q	What does the transitional arrangement 2025 contain?
	A	Provided that a corresponding agreement between Switzerland and the EU has been initialled, the transitional arrangement 2024 is to be applied to all Horizon Europe and Euratom calls for proposals for the 2025 programme year. This would enable researchers in Switzerland to participate in all Horizon Europe and Euratom calls as 'potential beneficiaries' (presumably with the exception of areas of 'EU strategic autonomy' such as quantum and space).
5	Q	How will the positively evaluated projects of the transitional arrangement 2025 be funded?
	A	Swiss participants should prepare their project proposals as 'potential beneficiaries' and apply for funding from the EU. **This means that their budget must be included in the total grant amount requested by the consortium from the EU.** If, at the time of signing the grant agreement with the European Commission (EC): ▪ **an association agreement is in force**, funding for the participation of the Swiss project partners is provided by the EC (status of 'beneficiary' remains).

		▪ **no association agreement is in force**, funding is provided by SERI (status changes from 'beneficiary' to 'associated partner'). **The contribution requested in the project proposal will be relevant for the funding.** A corresponding financial guarantee can be found on the **SERI website**.

2 Horizon Europe

2.1 Generally applicable

6	**Q**	What is Switzerland's status in Horizon Europe?
	A	Switzerland is considered a non-associated third country. This status will apply until further notice. For the time being, this concerns the calls for Horizon Europe and related programmes and initiatives with call identifier 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 (meaning 2021, 2022, 2023 or 2024 is included in the call ID on the **Funding & Tenders Portal**). This includes all calls in the work programmes with their budget attributed to 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 (see **question 24**). For further information, please see '**State of play Horizon Package'** and '**Information on the Swiss participation in Horizon Europe and related programmes and initiatives**'.
7	**Q**	Is an association to Horizon Europe still possible for Switzerland?
	A	Yes, an association to Horizon Europe is possible and is subject to negotiations between Switzerland and the European Union in the context of the negotiations on the **overall package**. A full association to Horizon Europe and related programmes and initiatives as soon as possible remains the declared goal of the Federal Council. For further information, please see **chapter 2 in this document**, "**State of play Horizon Europe"** and "**Information on the Swiss participation in Horizon Europe and related programmes and initiatives**".
8	**Q**	Can Swiss entities (including companies and SME) participate in Horizon Europe?
	A	Yes, entities based in Switzerland can participate in Horizon Europe. Any legal entity, regardless of its place of establishment, including legal entities from non-associated third countries or international organisations, is eligible to participate (whether it is eligible for funding or not), provided that the conditions laid down in the **Horizon Europe Regulation** are met, along with any other conditions laid down in the specific call topic which may provide for limitations or restrictions in certain cases. Please consult the respective work programme and information on the **Funding & Tenders Portal**. However, as Switzerland is considered a non-associated third country, Swiss entities (including companies and SME) can apply only for those calls in Horizon Europe and related programmes and initiatives that are open for non-associated third country participation. Applicants must submit their proposals as participants from a non-associated third country ('associated partner', see **question 17**).
9	**Q**	In which instruments and calls can Swiss entities (including companies and SME) participate?
	A	While most collaborative projects in Horizon Europe are open to participants from non-associated third countries, the participation in mono-beneficiary instruments (individual ERC grants, MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships and EIC Accelerator) is by principle not possible as project submissions from non-associated third countries are not evaluated by the European

		Commission and therefore cannot be funded by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI). For some parts of the programme, which are not open to non-associated third countries, SERI has initiated transitional measures (see **question 15**).
10	**Q**	As Switzerland is currently considered a non-associated country, will Swiss entities (including companies and SME) be funded by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI)?
	A	The Federal Decree on the Financing of the Horizon package 2021-2027 allows for funding of entities based in Switzerland, even if Switzerland is not or only partially associated to Horizon Europe. This applies in Switzerland's current status of a non-associated third country. Swiss partners in projects, which have been positively evaluated by the European Commission (EC), but are not financed by the EC, can receive funding from SERI. (For units of the central federal administration **special conditions apply**.) A corresponding financial guarantee for the 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 calls can be found on the **SERI website**). Switzerland's association to Horizon Europe and related programmes and initiatives as soon as possible remains the declared goal of the Federal Council (see **question 24**).
11	**Q**	Which are the rules of the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) to approve the budget of participants based in Switzerland?
	A	The 'Guidelines for financial reporting' for participants based in Switzerland (including companies and SME) are accessible on the **SERI website**. Rules on funding and financial reporting that apply to beneficiaries (project partners from EU member states or associated countries) in principle also apply to participants based in Switzerland. However, there are some specific rules according to the legal base for funding of Swiss participations in Horizon Europe projects. Based on the ordinance **FIPBV** (available in German, French & Italian) there are maximum salary rates for companies, including SME, as well as non-commercial research centres and institutions outside the university sector (Article 7). Also, funding can generally only be provided for costs that are incurred in Switzerland (exceptions laid out in Article 11 paragraph 6). SERI reserves the right to impose funding cuts should the costs of the Swiss participant be disproportionally high. This includes the right to mandate an external expert panel to review the Swiss project part.
12	**Q**	How can researchers and innovators, whose projects were positively evaluated by the European Commission, submit their funding request to the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI)?
	A	To submit your funding request for a collaborative project, please check the **SERI website on transitional measures and direct funding**. All the necessary information and steps for preparing and submitting a funding application and the corresponding financial reports to SERI are provided there. In general, SERI recommends that funding requests be submitted promptly (usually within 3 months after conclusion of the Grant Agreement) so that they can be reviewed as quickly as possible. Special conditions applying to **units of the central federal administration** are also indicated on the website, as well as instruction on how to apply for funding for certain **mono-beneficiary projects** 2021. SERI highly recommends to get in touch with Euresearch concerning questions on the submission of proposals (see **question 14**).

13	**Q**	Can researchers and innovators at an institution based in an EU member state or associated country who have been awarded a grant in response to a call under Horizon Europe transfer it to Switzerland if the Grantee is appointed to a Swiss institution?
	A	Yes, this is possible (and notably applies to ERC grants). If Switzerland is an associated country by the time the grant is transferred, then the funding by the European Commission (EC) continues. If Switzerland is a non-associated third country by the time the grant is transferred, the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) would directly cover the remaining cost under the same conditions as for other projects (e.g. 25% overhead costs). This applies both to positively evaluated projects for which no grant agreement has been signed yet as well as for projects with an existing grant agreement which are transferred from an EU member state or an associated country. However, direct funding by SERI terminates in case a grant is transferred to an institution outside of Switzerland.
14	**Q**	Who can support me as a researcher or innovator in my application for R&I funding in Horizon Europe and related programmes and initiatives?
	A	The **Euresearch** network, which is mandated by SERI, continues to support applicants in the preparation of proposals, either individually or by offering courses and webinars, for free. For University or ETH domain participants, please refer to your Euresearch **Regional Office** and/or your institution's research office. For participants from other institutions or companies, please refer directly to the Euresearch **Network Office.**
15	**Q**	Are there further transitional measures beyond direct funding?
	A	Yes, SERI has initiated further transitional measures implemented by SNSF, Innosuisse and the European Space Agency (ESA), which are described at **Transitional Measures - Direct Funding**. On 24 May 2023, the Federal Council adopted **transitional measures 2023** and therewith provides the necessary funds for the 2023 execution of the subsequent instruments. The implementation of the transitional measures is subject to the approval of Parliament within the Confederations' credit and budget process.

Implementing institution	Instrument/Initiative	Call year in EU programme
SNSF	SNSF Advanced Grants	2021, 2022, 2023
	SNSF Starting Grants	2022, 2023, 2024
	SNSF Consolidator Grants	2022, 2023, 2024
	SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowships	2021, 2022, 2023
	BRIDGE (joint programme with Innosuisse)	2021, 2022
	Quantum Transitional Call and Swiss Quantum Call 2024 (directly funded by SERI, see **question 25**)	2022, 2024
Innosuisse	Swiss Accelerator	2022, 2023
	International opportunities	2021, 2022
	Flagship Initiative	
	Innovation projects	2021

		Swiss Space Office / ESA	Additional funding for selected ESA programmes (e.g. PRODEX, ARTES, NAVISP, FLPP, GSTP)	2021, 2022, 2023
16	**Q**	How should international organisations based in Switzerland submit their proposals to participate in Horizon Europe and related programmes and initiatives? Will they be funded by SERI or the European Commission (EC)?		
	A	If not explicitly provided for in the work programme, international organisations are not automatically eligible for funding, even with headquarters in EU member states or associated countries, with the notable exception of training and mobility actions (e.g. Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions, see **EC FAQ**). In general, an international organisation either submits as an 'associated partner' and needs to bear the cost itself or it submits as a 'beneficiary' and needs to justify in the proposal why its participation is essential for implementing the action. The EC then decides, whether the organisation's contribution is essential and exceptional funding is provided by the EC. The conditions are different for international European research organisations as defined in Article 2(15) of the **Horizon Europe Regulation** (such as CERN), which are eligible for funding.		

2.2 Collaborative Projects

Please also take note of section 2.1 Generally applicable.

17	**Q**	Can legal entities (including companies and SME) based in Switzerland participate in collaborative projects?
	A	Legal entities (including companies and SME) based in Switzerland can still participate in collaborative projects open to non-associated third-country-participation and will receive funding via the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation, as long as the general eligibility criteria are fulfilled (see **question 25**). Swiss project partners participate as 'associated partners' (which is not to be confused with the term 'associated country'). This rule applies to all EU programmes (e.g. Euratom, DEP). For exceptions see **question 23**.
18	**Q**	Can Swiss entities participate in Horizon Europe collaborative projects funded according to the lump sum mechanism?
	A	Yes, organisations based in Switzerland can participate in lump sum projects and receive direct funding by SERI. However, note that SERI does not use the lump-sum funding model and will only cover the actual eligible and reported project costs. Funding (i.e. payment tranches of 50%, 30% and 20%) and reporting (in accordance with **SERI Guidelines for financial reporting**) will therefore be carried out in the same way as for other collaborative projects. For further information please refer to the website of **Euresearch**.
19	**Q**	As Switzerland is currently considered a non-associated third country, will participants based in Switzerland sign the grant agreement?
	A	No, 'associated partners' do not sign the grant agreement. The former legal status 'beneficiaries not receiving EU funding' does not exist anymore in the **Model Grant Agreement**. Participants from non-associated third countries (not eligible for funding from the European Commission) are thus no longer classified as 'beneficiaries not receiving EU funding', but as 'associated partners'.

20	**Q**	As Switzerland is currently considered a non-associated third country, are participants based in Switzerland able to coordinate projects?
	A	No. In order to be coordinator of a project (or beneficiary), a legal entity must sign the grant agreement. Only entities eligible for funding can sign the grant agreement (which is not the case for 'associated partners', see **question 19**). Thus, Swiss entities could only become coordinators (or beneficiaries) in Horizon Europe actions in the two exceptional cases laid out in **question 23**.
21	**Q**	As Switzerland is currently considered a non-associated third country, are participants based in Switzerland able to lead a work package?
	A	Yes, entities from non-associated third countries, participating as 'associated partners', are able to lead work packages. This also applies to MSCA Doctoral Networks and MSCA Staff Exchanges and has been **confirmed by the European Commission**. Associated partners can now be identified as work package leaders in the European Commission's (EC) grant management system (SyGMa). It is however not yet possible to assign milestones, even if the associated partner is a work package leader. Please note that 'associated partners' do not have edit rights in the system. For projects already submitted but still in the grant agreement preparation phase, work package leaders can be reassigned. If the grant agreement has already been signed, an amendment to the grant agreement would be necessary to update Annex I (description of the action) accordingly.
22	**Q**	As Switzerland is currently considered a non-associated third country, are participants based in Switzerland allowed to participate in Coordination and Support Actions (CSA)?
	A	Yes, according to **new guidance** by the European Commission from January 2022, entities from non-associated third countries are eligible to participate in CSA as 'associated partners' (unless the work programme or the grant agreement lays down additional conditions, which must be met to participate in the action). This rule is fully applicable under the current work programme. After the call deadline, Swiss partners can join projects as 'associated partners' at the discretion of the consortium and subject to approval by the granting authority on a case-by-case basis (see **question 27** for general conditions to subsequently join a consortium and SERI funding in this context).
23	**Q**	Is there any possibility for an institution based in a non-associated third country to participate as beneficiary in a project and therefore also being eligible for direct funding from the EU?
	A	Legal entities established in a non-associated third country are not foreseen to participate as beneficiary in a project and being eligible for direct funding from the EU (see **question 19**). However, there are some exceptions. Legal entities established in a low to middle income non-associated third country are eligible for funding. In addition, based on Article 23(2) of the **Horizon Europe Regulation,** other non-associated third countries are eligible for funding in an action if: a) the non-associated third country is identified in the work programme adopted by the European Commission; or b) the European Commission or the relevant funding body considers that the participation of the legal entity concerned is essential for implementing the action.
24	**Q**	What happens to partners based in Switzerland if the status changes from non-associated third country mode to Switzerland being an associated country?
	A	**Projects with call identifier 2021, 2022 and 2023 (**meaning 2021, 2022 or 2023 is included in the call ID on the **Funding & Tenders Portal**)**:**

		Project partners based in Switzerland who participate in a collaborative project as participants from a non-associated third country (and therefore receive funding via the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation, SERI) will continue to receive funding from SERI for the entire duration of the project. **Projects with call identifier 2024 (**meaning 2024 is included in the call ID on the **Funding & Tenders Portal**)**:** Switzerland is currently treated as a non-associated third country for project submissions for Horizon Europe and related programmes and initiatives. Swiss project partners, that have been positively evaluated by the EC, but are not financed by the EC, will receive funding from SERI. However, Switzerland's status in Horizon Europe can change at any time, as Switzerland's rapid association to Horizon Europe and other related programmes and initiatives remains the Federal Council's declared goal. **Please be aware that should Switzerland be reclassified by the EC as a 'country to be associated' before the deadline of the corresponding calls (applies to calls for proposals 2025 at the earliest), Swiss participants must change their status from 'associated partner' to 'beneficiary' in the project proposal and apply for funding from the EC. This means that their budget must be included in the total grant amount requested by the consortium from the EC.**
25	**Q**	How many partners are needed in a collaborative project of Horizon Europe and how should the Swiss partner be counted in?
	A	In general, a consortium of a collaborative project requires at least three different independent legal entities (including companies and SME) of which: a) at least one independent legal entity must be established in an EU member state; and b) at least two other independent legal entities should each be established in different EU member states or associated countries. As Switzerland is considered a non-associated third country, the rule of three has to be fulfilled independent of the Swiss partner (see **question 49** for exceptions for EIC Pathfinder and Transition).
26	**Q**	Given that Switzerland is considered a non-associated third country, how should the Swiss partners prepare a budget request for the proposals?
	A	In the new generation of EU Programmes for Research and Innovation, entities from non-associated third countries participate as 'associated partners' in the collaborative projects (see **question 19**). The budget of the 'associated partner' is indicated in the project proposal, but not taken into account in the project budget. For more information, please contact **Euresearch (**see **question 14)**. In the request for funding submitted to the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), the Swiss partner's budget breakdown according to the cost categories of the European Commission will be required (see '**Guidelines for financial reporting**' and **question 12**).
27	**Q**	Can Swiss participants join projects that are already running and/or take over tasks from their partners in a consortium? Can these participants request funding from SERI?
	A	Yes, Swiss participants can join ongoing projects as long as the general eligibility criteria are fulfilled (see **question 25**). This requires an invitation by the consortium and is subject to approval of the granting authority. The same applies for redistributing tasks among the consortium members.

		If tasks are transferred to a Swiss 'associated partner' (AP), the costs to perform these tasks (as defined in the grant agreement) can be considered for direct funding by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI). This applies to both Swiss partners who are already part of the consortium or who join it. The tasks transferred to the Swiss AP must be evaluated and their costs must be defined either in the grant agreement or in a corresponding amendment issued by the European Commission.
28	**Q**	Will there be an official letter confirming the financing of the Swiss partners by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI)?
	A	Yes, the letters for the 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 calls can be found on the **SERI's website**.
29	**Q**	Can researchers and innovators based in Switzerland participate in COST Actions?
	A	Yes, Switzerland continues to be a COST Member and participation in COST Actions is open to researchers and innovators based in Switzerland. For further information please refer to the website of the **Swiss National Science Foundation**.
30	**Q**	Which transitional measures are in place for the quantum topics of the Horizon-Cluster 4 call, including the 'Quantum Technology Flagship'?
	A	The **Quantum Transitional Call 2022** intended to support quantum researchers and research entities in Switzerland who were not eligible for participation in the call 'Digital and emerging technologies for competitiveness and fit for the green deal'. Similarly, the Swiss Quantum Call 2024 targets quantum researchers based in Switzerland who are affected by the exclusion from participation in the above-mentioned quantum-related topics. The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) has assigned the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) to launch the 'Swiss Quantum Call 2024' and to evaluate the proposals in response to the call. Positively evaluated proposals are funded by SERI in the framework of the transitional measures and the Swiss Quantum Initiative (SQI). The implementation is subject to the approval of Parliament within the Confederations' credit and budget process.

2.3 Partnerships

Please also take note of sections 2.1 Generally applicable and 2.2 Collaborative projects.

31	**Q**	What type of partnerships is Switzerland eligible for? Who will finance the Swiss participation?
	A	In any case, legal entities (including companies and SME) will be able to participate in all calls open to non-associated third countries that are published in the Horizon Europe work programme financed either by the European Commission or the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), as laid out in **question 8** (all calls for co-programmed partnerships will be published as part of the main work programme). For the **co-funded partnerships**, legal entities based in Switzerland can only participate if national co-funding is provided by a Swiss funding agency or federal office. This also applies to **institutionalised partnerships** that require national co-funding. For calls launched by institutionalised partnerships that do not require national co-funding (e.g. Clean Aviation & Europe's Rail), legal entities based in Switzerland are eligible and the (non-) association determines the mode of financing. As Switzerland is now considered a non-associated third country, participants will receive funding via the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI). For units of the central federal administration **special conditions apply**.

32	**Q**	Can Swiss entities participate in Eurostars calls?
	A	Eurostars is integrated in the third pillar of Horizon Europe as a so-called co-funded partnership. Innosuisse provides national co-funding and thus Swiss entities can apply for calls of this partnership. More information can be found on the **Innosuisse website**.
33	**Q**	How can Swiss entities participate in the first calls of the partnership on Key Digital Technologies?
	A	The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and Innosuisse provide funding for Swiss participants in the first KDT JU calls (*HORIZON-KDT-JU-2021-1* and *HORIZON-KDT-JU-2021-2*) with SERI covering the part that would otherwise be covered by the EU contribution and Innosuisse providing additional co-funding. Details on the funding conditions applied by Innosuisse can be found on **their website**.

2.4 European Research Council (ERC)

Please also take note of section 2.1 Generally applicable.

34	**Q**	Can entities based in Switzerland participate in the ERC calls in a non-associated third country mode?
	A	The participation in mono-beneficiary instruments of the ERC is by principle excluded as a non-associated third country. However, for the 2021 calls for the ERC Starting Grants (StG) and the ERC Consolidator Grants (CoG; both already closed calls) an exception applied: Project proposals from researchers (Principal Investigators) based at Swiss host institutions were evaluated by the European Commission. If the project proposals were positively evaluated (an application on the so-called 'main list', selected for funding if the institution were eligible for EU-funding), projects grantees are awarded a '**SERI-funded ERC Starting Grant**' or '**SERI-funded ERC Consolidator Grant**' from SERI, if they carry out their project at an institution in Switzerland (see **Mono-beneficiary projects 2021**). A transitional arrangement was agreed with the European Commission (EC) to enable researchers in Switzerland to participate in the ERC Advanced Grant (AdG) 2024 call as soon as negotiations on association to the Horizon package have begun. The negotiations on the association to the programmes are part of the negotiations on the **overall package** and will start after adoption of the negotiation mandates on both sides.
35	**Q**	Is there any possibility for a researcher based in a non-associated third country to participate as beneficiary in an ERC project and therefore also being eligible for direct funding from the European Commission (EC)?
	A	Researchers based in Switzerland are eligible for ERC Starting, Consolidator and Advanced Grant funding from the EC provided that, in addition to their affiliation with a Swiss institution, they spend at least half of their working time at an institution in an EU member state or associated country and carry out their ERC project at that institution.
36	**Q**	Can entities based in Switzerland still participate in the Synergy grant calls in a non-associated third country mode?
	A	Yes, researchers based in Switzerland can participate as part of a group of Principal Investigators (PIs) in the calls for the Synergy grant and will be funded by the European Commission. However, only one Principal Investigator per project can be hosted or engaged by an institution outside of the EU member states or associated countries.

37	**Q**	Can an ERC Grantee who has acquired a grant under any Horizon Europe ERC StG, CoG AdG and PoC call with a host institution based in an EU member state or associated country transfer it to Switzerland (either before the start of the grant or during its term) if the Grantee is appointed to a Swiss university?
	A	Yes, this is possible. If Switzerland is an associated country by the time the grant is transferred, then the funding by the European Commission continues. If Switzerland is a non-associated third country by the time the grant is transferred, then the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) would directly cover the (remaining) cost under the same conditions as the ERC (e.g. 25% overhead costs). This applies both to positively evaluated projects for which no grant agreement has been signed yet as well as for projects with an existing grant agreement which are transferred from an EU member state or an associated country. However, direct funding by SERI terminates in case a grant is transferred to an institution outside of Switzerland.
38	**Q**	Which transitional measures are in place for the ERC calls?
	A	Researchers based in Switzerland were able to submit their applications for the ERC Starting and Consolidator Grants 2021 and were evaluated by the EC. Researchers with a positively evaluated 2021 ERC StG or CoG application (an application on the so-called "main list", selected for funding if the institution were eligible for EU-funding) are funded directly by SERI. For all other closed ERC StG, CoG and AdG calls of the years 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024, SERI has assigned and funds the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) to implement transitional measures. These national instruments are aligned as closely as possible with the ERC, but with independent deadlines for submission. The implementation of the transitional measures is subject to the approval of Parliament within the Confederation's credit and budget process.

2.5 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)

Please also take note of sections 2.1 Generally applicable and 2.2 Collaborative projects.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">39</td><td>Q</td><td>In which MSCA are entities based in Switzerland eligible for participation with Switzerland being considered a non-associated third country?</td></tr>
<tr><td>A</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Actions</th><th>As a non-associated third country</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Postdoctoral Fellowship</td><td>Global Fellowship</td><td>• Eligible for participation as 'associated partner' (for outgoing phase at institution in Switzerland).
• Funded by beneficiary (EC budget).</td></tr>
<tr><td>European Fellowship</td><td>Not eligible for participation, but Swiss transitional measure in place (see question 47).</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">MSCA COFUND</td><td>Eligible for participation as 'associated partner'* (not as 'beneficiary' nor 'implementing partner').</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Doctoral Networks</td><td>Standard Doctorates</td><td rowspan="3">Eligible for participation as 'associated partner'.*</td></tr>
<tr><td>Joint Doctorates</td></tr>
<tr><td>Industrial Doctorates</td></tr>
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		Staff Exchanges — Outgoing secondments to EU member states and/or associated countries are eligible for funding.* (Secondments between non-associated third countries are not permitted according to the European Commission's work programme and incoming mobilities from high-income countries are covered by the sending partner.) **MSCA & citizens** — Eligible for participation as 'associated partner', where possible.* ** Will be funded by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), instead of the European Commission. For MSCA COFUND this applies to the calls from 2022 onwards.*
40	**Q**	Can entities based in Switzerland participate in MSCA collaborative projects?
	A	Yes, organisations based in Switzerland can participate in MSCA Doctoral Networks (former ITN) and MSCA Staff Exchanges as 'associated partners'. The Swiss project partner will not be funded by the European Commission but by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (see **question 17**).
41	**Q**	How are the MSCA fellows who complement an MSCA action and are funded by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) officially called?
	A	As doctoral or postdoctoral fellows in MSCA COFUND or Doctoral Networks based at Swiss institutions are currently not funded by the European Commission but by SERI, they should call themselves 'SERI-funded MSCA DN Grantees' or 'SERI-funded MSCA COFUND Grantees'. They have acquired a 'SERI-funded MSCA DN Grant' or 'SERI-funded MSCA COFUND Grant' and should be employed with the same conditions and rights as the official MSCA fellows. The doctoral and postdoctoral candidates employed at Swiss institutions are not official MSCA fellows but can benefit from the training and research opportunities of the Doctoral Network and COFUND programmes.
42	**Q**	Can MSCA collaborative projects be coordinated by 'associated partners'?
	A	No, this is not possible. Only beneficiaries (who receive funding from the EU) can coordinate the collaborative projects MSCA Doctoral Networks (former ITN) and MSCA Staff Exchanges (see **question 20**).
43	**Q**	Can 'associated partners' in MSCA collaborative projects lead work packages?
	A	Yes, entities from non-associated third countries, participating as 'associated partners' are able to lead work packages. This applies to MSCA Doctoral Networks and MSCA Staff Exchanges and has been **confirmed by the European Commission** (see **question 21**).
44	**Q**	What happens to MSCA collaborative projects if Switzerland's status changes from non-associated third country mode to Switzerland being an associated country?
	A	Please see **question 24**.
45	**Q**	Can entities based in Switzerland participate in MSCA mono-beneficiary projects?
	A	Participation in MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF) is not open to non-associated third countries such as Switzerland. Swiss institutions are not eligible to host European Postdoctoral Fellowships, but they can host researchers during the outgoing phase of Global Postdoctoral Fellowships.

		European Postdoctoral Fellowships are open to researchers of all nationalities. Swiss citizens are thus eligible to apply for European Postdoctoral Fellowships as long as their host institution is located in an EU member state or associated country. In contrary, Global Postdoctoral Fellowships are restricted to citizens and long-term residents of an EU member state or associated country.
46	**Q**	What would happen to a MSCA Global Fellowship submitted from an EU member state or associated country with an outgoing phase to Switzerland being a non-associated third country, if Switzerland would become associated?
	A	For the time being, Switzerland is treated as a non-associated third country and could therefore be the place of a host institution for MSCA Global Fellows. This fellowship should also continue if Switzerland becomes associated to Horizon Europe later on. However, questions like this will be subject to negotiations between Switzerland and the European Union, which have not started yet.
47	**Q**	Which transitional measures are in place for the MSCA mono-beneficiary calls?
	A	The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) has assigned and funds the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) to implement transitional measures for the 2021, 2022 and 2023 MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF) calls. The instrument "SNSF Swiss Postdoctoral Fellowship" is aligned as closely as possible with MSCA but with independent deadlines for submission. The implementation of the transitional measures is subject to the approval of Parliament within the Confederation's credit and budget process. SERI will provide further information in due course.

2.6 European Innovation Council (EIC)

Please also take note of sections 2.1 Generally applicable and 2.2 Collaborative projects.

48	**Q**	Can Swiss SME participate in the EIC Accelerator?
	A	No, with Switzerland being considered a non-associated third country, Swiss companies cannot apply to the EIC Accelerator. Proposals will be deemed ineligible and will not be evaluated. However, for the 2021 call which has been closed, an exception applied: Project proposals from SME based in Switzerland were evaluated by the European Commission. If the project proposals were positively evaluated, projects grantees are awarded a '**SERI-funded EIC Accelerator Grant**' from SERI, if they carry out their project in Switzerland (see Mono-beneficiary projects 2021 & Results).
49	**Q**	Can Swiss entities participate as applicants in EIC Pathfinder and EIC Transition (collaborative) projects?
	A	The Federal Decree on the Financing of the Horizon package 2021-2027 allows for funding of researchers and innovators based in Switzerland, even if Switzerland is not or only partially associated. This applies in Switzerland's current status of non-associated third country. Researchers and innovators who take part in collaborative projects open to non-associated third country participation, will receive funding via the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation. This also applies to the EIC Pathfinder and EIC Transition. However, the general eligibility criteria have to be fulfilled independently of the Swiss partner (see question 25).

		The EIC Pathfinder Open (see relevant EIC work programme) allows for consortia including beneficiaries of **at least three** independent legal entities, each established in a different country (e.g. consortium of FR, IT, DE + associated partner(s) from e.g. CH). For the EIC **Pathfinder Challenges** (see relevant EIC work programme) the eligibility criteria are as follows: **- Consortia** o of beneficiaries of **two** independent legal entities (established in two different EU member states or associated countries), together with associated partner(s) e.g. from Switzerland are eligible (e.g. DE, FR + associated partner CH); o of beneficiaries of **three or more** legally independent entities established in different countries, together with associated partner(s) e.g. from Switzerland are eligible (e.g. FR, IT, DE, SE + 2 associated partners CH); - **Single legal entities** established in an EU member state or an associated country; together with associated partner(s) e.g. from Switzerland are eligible (e.g. DE + associated partner CH), - All other criteria of admissibility and eligibility need to be fulfilled. For the **EIC Transition Open** (see relevant EIC work programme) and the **EIC Transition Challenges** the eligibility criteria are as follows: - **Consortia** o of beneficiaries of **two** independent legal entities (established in two different EU member states or associated countries), together with associated partner(s) e.g. from Switzerland are eligible (e.g. DE, FR + associated partner CH); o of beneficiaries **of <u>minimum three and maximum five</u>** independent legal entities established in different countries together with associated partner(s) e.g. from Switzerland are eligible (e.g. DE, DE, FR, SE, NL + associated partner CH). - **Single legal entities** established in an EU member state or associated country together with associated partner(s) e.g. from Switzerland are eligible (e.g. FR + associated partner CH). - All other criteria of admissibility and eligibility need to be fulfilled.
50	**Q**	Which transitional measures are in place for the EIC mono-beneficiary calls?
	A	The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) has assigned Innosuisse to implement transitional measures for the 2022 and 2023 EIC Accelerator calls, most recently on the 24 May 2023 for the “Swiss Accelerator Call 2023”. This measure targets SME and start-ups in Switzerland. The implementation of the transitional measures is subject to the approval of Parliament within the Confederation’s credit and budget process.

2.7 European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

Please also take note of sections 2.1 Generally applicable and 2.2 Collaborative projects.

51	**Q**	Will Swiss partners (including companies and SME) participating in activities of the EIT and its KICs receive funding from the Swiss authorities as long as Switzerland is considered a non-associated third country?
	A	In general, the financial dispatch for Horizon Europe covers a participation as a non-associated third country for all pillars and instruments. As such, Swiss partners in projects of the EIT and its KICs are eligible for funding. As the financial dispatch as such foresees funding for research and innovation projects, the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) cannot guarantee that all activities of the KICs will be eligible, notably if they lack the required research/innovation dimension.
52	**Q**	What happens to EIT projects from researchers and innovators based in Switzerland that have already been submitted and will be implemented under Horizon Europe?
	A	In general, EIT projects will continue to be evaluated. As Switzerland is considered a non-associated third country, no EIT funding will be disbursed to Swiss entities in 2021 and 2022. For projects already positively evaluated, the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation will provide direct funding. Funding requests can be submitted as detailed in question 12.
53	**Q**	Can Swiss entities coordinate projects, i.e. act as Activity Leader in projects of the EIT KICs?
	A	The rules may vary between the different KICs. However, there is no general rule that Swiss participants cannot act as Activity Leader and thus coordinate projects.
54	**Q**	Can Swiss entities join a consortium applying for the call for a new KIC in Cultural & Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI)?
	A	Yes, the call will result in the selection and designation of a new KIC, which can include Swiss participants, even if Switzerland is not associated to Horizon Europe when the new KIC is established.
55	**Q**	What further information on the budget does SERI need from the Swiss partner upon submission of an EIT project for direct funding? How will the funding rate be determined?
	A	Upon submitting a funding request (see question 12) for EIT projects, the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) requires confirmation on which part of the costs would have been covered by EIT funding, if Switzerland were associated. Ideally, this should be confirmed directly by the KIC. SERI will then apply the same funding rate.

3 Digital Europe Programme (DEP)

56	**Q**	Is Switzerland going to be associated to the Digital Europe Programme?
	A	The Digital Europe Programme is a new EU funding programme that will run in parallel and in complement to Horizon Europe. Switzerland has the intention to be fully associated to the programme and has initiated all steps on the Swiss side as part of the Horizon package, to initiate association negotiations, which have not started yet.

57	**Q**	Can entities based in Switzerland apply to the Digital Europe Programme (DEP) although Switzerland is not associated to the DEP?
	A	In general, countries not associated to the DEP are not eligible to participate in the projects. In exceptional cases and provided that their participation is 'necessary' to achieve the objectives of the Programme' (article 18.2 **DEP Regulation**), entities based in Switzerland can participate. This applies to all types of actions (including Coordination and Support Actions (CSA), procurement, simple grants and SME support grants) that do not have restrictions on the basis of article 12.5 or 12.6 **DEP Regulation**. The applicants/consortium have to mention and demonstrate such a 'necessity' to achieve the objectives of the Programme' during the proposal phase without knowing beforehand whether an exception can be granted. In this sense, the applicants/consortium have to justify that no equivalent partner exists in the EU to reach the same objectives. Should the proposal be positively evaluated, the entity based in Switzerland will not receive funding from the European Commission, but from the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI), unless specified otherwise in the work programmes.
58	**Q**	What are the consequences if the contribution of an entity based in a country not associated to the Programme (such as Switzerland) is not deemed 'necessary' to achieve the objectives of the Programme in the evaluation phase?
	A	In case participation of such an entity is not deemed 'necessary', the consortium is allowed to replace the partner, provided that the replacement does not modify the proposal significantly (e.g. to the point that it would have scored differently during evaluation). Consortia have about 6-8 weeks to make adjustments after the start of grant agreement preparation. This timing is indicative and can vary from one case to another due to different circumstances. The consortium could split up the task of the partner from the non-associated country. However, such a new distribution will not increase the maximum grant amount following evaluation, even if the costs for the partners increase.
59	**Q**	Is there already an indication of funding rates regarding the participation in a project in the Digital Europe Programme (DEP)?
	A	Project funding under the DEP will typically require national co-funding, which means that the costs for a project may not be fully covered by the DEP. Typically, a funding rate of 50% will apply for grants.

4 Euratom & ITER

60	**Q**	Can researchers and innovators in Switzerland participate in the current generation of the Euratom Research and Training Programme?
	A	Switzerland is currently not associated to Horizon Europe and the Euratom Research and Training Programme and is therefore considered a non-associated third country. General rules for participation for non-associated third countries described in section **2.1** and **2.2** and the provisions outlined in the Euratom work programme apply to entities and persons based in Switzerland until an association agreement between Switzerland and the EU has been concluded. Same as for Horizon Europe, researchers and innovators based in Switzerland can take part in the Euratom programme's collaborative projects open to participation of non-associated

		third countries and will receive their funding directly via the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI (see question 17).
61	Q	Does the Federal Council seek full association to the Euratom Research and Training Programme and a continuation of Switzerland's participation in ITER?
	A	Yes, in connection with a full association to Horizon Europe and the Digital Europe Programme, the Federal Council also seeks full association to the Euratom Research and Training Programme and aims to continue Switzerland's participation in ITER. Currently, however, the conditions for non-associated third countries described in section 2.1 and 2.2 apply until an association agreement between Switzerland and the EU has been concluded. As for what concerns the construction of ITER, the EU no longer considers Switzerland a participating state.

5 Other related EU programmes

62	Q	Can Switzerland participate in the European Defence Fund (EDF) programme?
	A	No, the European Defence Fund is open for association only to members of the European Economic Area.

6 Horizon 2020

63	Q	As Switzerland is currently not associated to Horizon Europe, what will happen to the Swiss partner(s) in the ongoing Horizon 2020 projects?
	A	Not being associated to Horizon Europe has no influence on ongoing Horizon 2020 projects, even after 2020. Switzerland remains associated to Horizon 2020, independently of its participation mode in Horizon Europe. This is also independent of the signature date of the grant agreement.
64	Q	As Switzerland is currently not associated to Horizon Europe, can a Swiss partner join an ongoing Horizon 2020 project (e.g. to replace a missing partner) and get EU funding? Would the Swiss partner in this case be considered as an entity from an «associated country»?
	A	Yes and yes. Switzerland pays its contribution to the EU budget upfront, i.e. to the very budget, from which the European Commission funds projects in Horizon 2020. Switzerland has thus paid its entire contribution to a call at the time any Horizon 2020 project is funded and Swiss participants are therefore eligible for funding in all Horizon 2020 projects. Not being associated to Horizon Europe has no influence on ongoing Horizon 2020 projects, even after 2020. Switzerland remains associated to Horizon 2020, independently of its participation mode in Horizon Europe.
65	Q	As Switzerland is currently not associated to Horizon Europe, can Swiss entities participate and get funding from Financial Support to third parties calls from Horizon 2020 projects?
	A	Yes. Not being associated to Horizon Europe has no influence on ongoing Horizon 2020 projects, even after 2020. Switzerland remains associated to Horizon 2020, independently of its participation mode in Horizon Europe.

66	**Q**	As Switzerland is currently not associated to Horizon Europe, is there any risk that running projects under Horizon 2020 with Principal Investigators (PIs) from Switzerland will have to be terminated or modified (PI converted to team member, projects that do not fulfil the eligibility criteria)?
	A	No, there is no risk. Switzerland is associated to Horizon 2020 and the conditions for projects running under the Horizon 2020 rules will remain the same until the end of the projects, even after 2020.
67	**Q**	As Switzerland is currently not associated to Horizon Europe, will a researcher holding a Horizon 2020 ERC grant be allowed to move this ERC project to an institution based in Switzerland?
	A	Yes, all ERC grants that were submitted when Switzerland was associated to Horizon 2020 at the time of the respective call deadline, can be moved. Not being associated to Horizon Europe has no influence on ongoing Horizon 2020 projects, even after 2020.
68	**Q**	As Switzerland is currently not associated to Horizon Europe, how would this affect the eligibility of Swiss-based researchers and innovators to participate in Horizon 2020 ERA-NET calls (including calls for proposals)?
	A	Participants of Horizon 2020 ERA-NETs are not affected. Switzerland remains associated to Horizon 2020, independently of the participation mode in Horizon Europe. As for Horizon Europe, ERA-NETs will be integrated into the partnership landscape (see section 2.3).