

## FAQ

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### 1. General questions about SystemsX.ch projects

**As a PI, I started an Interdisciplinary PhD Project in Biology and Computational Biology less than a year ago. Can I still apply for an IPhD within SystemsX.ch?**

Yes, certainly, you're free to submit a proposal even if you are currently part of another project.

**Can scientists from Swiss universities that are not currently members of SystemsX.ch be included on a SystemsX.ch project proposal?**

Scientists from non-SystemsX.ch partner universities can participate in a SystemsX.ch proposal, but not as main applicant. Current guidelines can be found under the link on the call for proposals under section 3.1.3 (for Transfer Projects 3.2.3).

**Where can one find the official submission forms? (I couldn't find them on the SystemsX.ch website).**

The requisite forms can be found on the platform through which the proposal must be submitted: [www.mysnf.ch](http://www.mysnf.ch). You have to register first to access the platform. The submission form can be found after choosing the project, in the left column at "information/documents". In case of a Transfer Project, please note that the main applicant must be the academic partner.

**I've been appointed as an SNSF professor at ETH Zurich, and as such I'm not eligible for SNSF project funding. Does the same rule apply to SystemsX.ch proposals? I'm expecting to hold this SNSF professorship until the middle of 2015.**

There is no rule excluding you from submitting an application to SystemsX.ch. Your proposal, of course, should not be used to fund your SNSF professor project. We are collaborating closely with the SNSF in the reviewing processes.

**What is "IPR treatment"? (see page 16 of the informational document: "Concept of IPR-treatment if the proposal is funded")**

In most cases, the question of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) arises during public-private (but also private-private) collaborations. We strongly urge applicants to discuss and agree on principle before starting the collaboration, or, even better, negotiate conditions beforehand.

**Can proposals be submitted outside the specified application deadlines?**

No.

## 2. RTD Projects

### **Who has to submit a “letter of commitment” for a RTD proposal?**

Only the PI (not the Co-PIs) has to submit a *letter of commitment* from his/her institution. An authorized representative of a SystemsX.ch partner institution must sign this letter.

### **How many research groups work on a typical RTD Project?**

It's up to the main applicant who decides on the composition of any RTD proposal. Typically, a proposal will comprise 3 to 8 research groups with complementary expertise.

### **Who is eligible to apply for an RTD Project?**

Faculty members of SystemsX.ch partners are eligible as main applicants. Experienced senior scientists from other Swiss research institutions are eligible as co-applicants, that is to say they can't be the main applicant. However, only SystemsX.ch partners and cooperating partners can receive SystemsX.ch funds (according to the revised Research Law Article 7, No. 4; cf Message p. 1448, German version, e.g. SIB and FMI). After an RTD has been approved by the SNSF, the hosting institution (institution of the PI) must become a SystemsX.ch partner before a request for funding can be initiated.

### **There's no problem if one person, as head, submits an RTD proposal and then another person joins as a partner – right?**

Yes, that's right!

### **It's understood that SyBIT can provide bioinformatics support. Could a third party institution be used instead?**

Yes, presuming that it is not funded out of SystemsX.ch funds.

### **Do we need to include modeling people from SyBIT? And do they "count" as a group?**

SyBIT is expected to cover tasks for the RTDs that are of SystemsX.ch-wide relevance. RTD specific modeling is carried out within the RTD.

### **Can we pay a consultant at a foreign university who has strong expertise and would be beneficial for our RTD Project?**

No, SystemsX.ch funds, which in fact are federal funds, should not leave the country, i.e. no salary can be paid to a professor of an institution outside of Switzerland. Should you require expertise that is not available in Switzerland, you may use SystemsX.ch funds or own contributions towards travel expenses.

## 3. Own Contribution

### **How much Own Contribution (OC) must the institutions I'm working for commit to?**

Every SystemsX.ch franc must be equalled with an OC-franc. Whether in cash, or in-kind, SystemsX.ch carries 50% of total costs and the other 50% comes from OCs.

### **So, if I understand correctly, cash contributions are not obligatory.**

No, in-kind contributions are equivalent to cash.

**For instance, the recent changes mean that investments will now also be taken into account, is that correct? And to what extent?**

This concerns "Earlier investments / Existing Infrastructure". Let's take an example: In 2012, the University of Zurich bought an MS for CHF 700k. In 2013, 50% of its capacity was used in the RTD XY.

The OC (existing infrastructure) is now credited as follows:

Depreciation (at 10 years old): 10% of initial cost = CHF 70k, remainder CHF 630k; to 50% -> OC = CHF 315k (once in year 1 of the RTD).

In comparison:

UZH is involved in RTD XY that starts in 2013. In view of this, in 2013 UZH buys an MS for CHF 700kFr and only 50% of the load is used by the RTD.

The OC (Equipment) is now credited as follows. Price: CHF 700k; to 50% -> OC = CHF 350k.

**Although I'm a professor, I'm not member of the medical faculty. I have my own SNSF grant as well as many other grants, for which I apply as PI. Can you please clarify who can apply?**

The issue here is not so much the individual position, but the "Own Contributions", which, by law, must be provided. Usually, other people, such as head assistants, senior researchers, "titular" professors, etc, have no direct access to an institute's resources. This is, however, necessary (in most cases) to provide the required level of Own Contributions, which mostly are not in cash but in-kind, for example with personnel, equipment etc.

#### **4. Industry collaboration, private partners and Transfer Projects**

**What is the exact framework of collaborations with industry or other private partners?**

The PI for each project can initiate and coordinate their contact and collaboration with the industry. The technology transfer office of the individual PIs thus serves as the platform and framework for any industry collaborations.

**As to participants, can the academic partner institution have more than one private partner?**

Yes, it's entirely possible to have more than one private partner.

**Will it be possible for one (or more) foreign PI groups to be actively involved in a research project?**

Well, it's difficult to send SystemsX.ch-money abroad. However, we've been fortunate to attract a number of international groups that collaborate in projects without receiving money. Often, it depends on the country. The BMBF in Germany, for example, supports the participation of German groups in Swiss groups from SystemsX.ch.

**Do the private partners have to be Swiss companies?**

No, the company doesn't have to be Swiss. However, companies can't receive SystemsX.ch funding.