Swiss National Science Foundation

सत्यमेव जयते
Ministry of Earth Sciences

Indo-Swiss Joint Research Programme (ISJRP)

Joint Research Projects

Call for proposals between SNSF and MoES, 2026

Opening date: 8 January 2026

Closing date: 8 April 2026

A maximum of 10 joint projects will be funded

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 financed by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) in Switzerland and the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) in India, on the principles of reciprocity, parity and activity-matching funding. An Indo-Swiss Joint Committee on Science, Technology and Social sciences defines the strategic goals and orientations of the programme.

The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) in India jointly launch a call for Joint Research Projects (JRPs), organize the evaluation of the submitted proposals and monitor the funded projects.

2 Joint Research Projects (JRPs)

Grants for JRPs aim 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 (excluding field work). 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 **minimum 3 and maximum 4 years**. Proposals with a duration outside the respective range are not eligible and will therefore not be considered.

3 Research field

The proposal must fall under the following thematic area:

Geoscientific research for hazards in mountain regions (extreme events, flooding, landslides, cryosphere related hazards- permafrost, earthquakes and forest fires).

- Study of cloud burst events in mountainous regions and their future predictions.
- Integrated hydrological–glacial–landslide dynamics to improve flood forecasting and early warning systems in fragile mountain regions, community-based disaster preparedness, and sustainable land-use planning aiming toward risk reduction in the mountain regions.
- Comprehensive examination of slope stability: fundamental causative and triggering factors. Mapping of structural discontinuities through geospatial data and onsite real-time instrumented

measurements, numerical modelling, and AI-ML interventions towards a realistic landslide hazard scenario.

- Hazards related to thawing permafrost such as the release of greenhouse gases that accelerate climate change, and changes in hydrology of the region and destabilization of land that damages infrastructure and endangers communities. These hazards necessitate interdisciplinary approaches for regular monitoring, risk reduction and management in affected regions.

- Seismic hazard assessment tailored for mountain regions, multi-hazard interactions or earthquake induced disasters like landslides and glacial risks, and promote community-based disaster preparedness, advanced sensor technologies and comparative tectonic studies between the Himalayas and Alps can add strong scientific value.

- Temperature changes and heat wave / cold wave evolutions in the mountains of India and Switzerland and their future projections which is also linked to the forest fires and horticulture in the mountains.

Proposals outside of the thematic area defined above are not eligible.

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 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.

The project duration is **minimum 3 years and maximum 4 years.** Proposals for projects shorter than 36 months or longer than 48 months are not eligible and will not be considered for evaluation.

If the proposal does not meet the eligibility criteria of either the MoES or the SNSF, the proposal will not be considered for evaluation.

Eligibility criteria in Switzerland
Only applicants based in Switzerland are eligible, and must meet the eligibility criteria of the SNSF. The SNSF Funding Regulations, the General implementation regulations and the Regulations on Project Funding are 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 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

- Government of India supported or recognised (Public or Private) academia; research organisations and urban or other local bodies. Public and/or private universities and research organisations must have a well-established research support system, for basic or applied research. Submission of proof of establishment under Indian statue; recognition documents and registration at Government of India's Public Finance Management System (PFMS) - https://pfms.nic.in shall be obligatory.
- Government of India recognised not-for-profit, NGO(s)/ VO(s)/ Trust(s)/ Research foundations, having experience of at least 3 years in scientific research, teaching, training and extension activities; and must follow research as one of the mandates. Proof of registration at 'NGO DARPAN' of NITI Aayog (http://ngodarpan.gov.in/), Certificate of registration under Society Registration Act, Firm's Memorandum of Association, Registration at Government of India's Public Finance Management System (PFMS) (https://pfms.nic.in), Valid SIRO certificate for firm's in-house R&D recognition and audited account statements for the past three years shall be obligatory.

5 Funding

JRP proposals contain two separate budgets: one budget in INR for the Indian applicant(s) (to be paid by the MoES according to its rules) and one budget in CHF for the Swiss part (to be paid by the SNSF according to its rules). The two countries have agreed to fund up to 10 projects, provided that a sufficient number of high-quality proposals are submitted. The funding per project is sufficient for each side to support employees' salaries (PhD students, postdocs, other staff) as well as consumables, some minor equipment and mobility costs related to the project.

- The maximum budget available for the Swiss side of a project is CHF 300,000 for a 3-year project and CHF 400,000 for a 4-year project.

- The maximum budget available for the Indian side of a project is INR 2.0 Cr per project, regardless of number of Indian participating entities.

Both, the Swiss and the Indian budgets will be submitted in the SNSF Portal (Indian budget to be uploaded using the template available on the SNSF Portal).

Eligible costs in Switzerland

- 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). 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 proposal. They cannot be covered by a supplementary grant. Flexibility grants and other supplementary measures can be requested during the running time of the project.

Eligibility costs in India: MoES

MoES will fund the Indian consortium members as per requirement of the project, for the project duration, maximum up to 4 years. Budget should be commensurate with the essentiality of participation, workload and objectives of the project and cost of participation. MoES will support (Grant-in-aid) 100% of the approved budget costs (maximum to 2.0 Cr per project, regardless of number of Indian participating entities).

Eligible costs for funding are:

I. **Recurring Costs: These include project costs for which annual releases are admissible.**

- Manpower (JRF, SRF, RA, TA etc.): Salaries of the project staff employed, emoluments will be as per prevailing Gov. of India norms.
- Consumables: Costs for items that are used up and cannot be reused, such as lab supplies, printer paper and postage etc.
- Travel costs (domestic (including field work) and international): Costs for domestic travel including the field work component, if any. International travel costs of investigator(s) & project staff(s): for visit(s) and work related to the project to be undertaken by Indian investigator(s) & project staff(s) to Switzerland.
- Training and awareness/Local Hospitality and Review Meetings: For conducting training and awareness workshops in case the project has such a community or capacity building related component. For hosting the Swiss collaborator and holding project progress review meetings.

a) Contingency: Funds to cover unforeseen expenses that may arise during project execution, if any.

- Other costs: Any other cost which is not defined under above-mentioned heads and is essential for execution of the project for e.g. satellite data.

It is expected that the institution hosting the collaborating investigator(s) & project staff(s) of other consortium participants, shall provide research facility and research resources to accomplish defined objectives and if required, it can be reflected in each participant budget adequately.

- **Non-Recurring Costs:** Costs of any equipment required for achieving the project objectives. Note: Cost of equipment not to exceed 50% of the total cost of the budget.

II. **Overhead charges:** Payable to the implementing institutes for Indian partners, maximum up to 10% of the total Recurring Budget.

The Indian participant must ensure that each Indian participant follows budget format proposed by the MoES.

Visiting costs between Switzerland and India

When budgeting visits between the Swiss and Indian partners, all expenses (international travel related expenses, living expenses, Health/medical overseas insurance) are to be charged to the budget of the visiting side. The hosting side is expected to extend the required logistic and research facility support.

6 Submission

Proposals are to be jointly prepared by the Swiss and Indian applicants. They must be **submitted** via the SNSF Portal. Hard copies will not be accepted**.** The call evaluation is highly competitive; therefore, an application does not guarantee funding.

Language: All documents must be submitted in English.

Submission on the SNSF Portal: After login into the SNSF Portal, the correct call must be chosen. See also the guidelines for submitting a proposal in the SNSF Portal. Please note that all participating researchers, including the India-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 SNSF 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 the SNSF CV format. You can find all relevant information here. Please note that filling in the information might take some additional time.

Swiss researchers are asked to note that their submission falls under the SNSF Funding Regulations and Regulations on Project Funding, both of which are applicable or applicable *mutatis mutandis* where not stated otherwise.

Note for Indian researchers: All applications must be submitted via the SNSF online system, as indicated above. Applications submitted in India and not via the SNSF online system in Switzerland will not be processed. Neither the SNSF nor the MoES will be held responsible for the non-submission of applications. After the submission on the SNF Portal, the Indian applicants need to send a soft copy of the same application to MoES. Formats for mandatory certificates from the Investigator(s) and Head of Institute(s) are available on https://www.moes.gov.in/sites/default/files/Certificates-rev-27Sept2018.pdf. These need to be filled and collectively uploaded as a merged pdf in the application on SNSF portal in the section "Team".

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.

IT-support in Switzerland (SNF Portal): 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.

Submission to MoES

The Indian participant(s) must submit the complete proposal (same as submitted on the SNSF Portal) as one single consolidated PDF file, at latest within seven working days after the deadline of the call by email to the following persons:

Dr Vandana Chaudhary, Scientist G, v.chaudhary@nic.in
Dr Aparna Shukla, Scientist F, aparna.shukla@gov.in

In addition, one (1) hard copy of the research proposal submitted to the SNSF Portal should be sent to MoES by Speed Post. The envelope should be superscripted with the title:

“Indo-Swiss Joint Research Call Mountain research", for attention of:

Dr. Vandana Chaudhary
Scientist-G
Ministry of Earth Sciences,
Government of India,
Prithvi Bhavan, Opp. India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110003

Please note that the proposal will be disqualified if not submitted to MoES to above indicated email ID & address by indicated date. Absence of timely submission or any discrepancy found between the proposal submitted on the SNSF Portal and to MoES will result in disqualification from consideration by MoES for funding.

Deadline for submission of applications

8 April 2026, 17:00:00 CEST

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. No request for extension of the deadline shall be considered.

7 Evaluation

The joint call will be evaluated jointly by the SNSF and the MoES and follows the SNSF's unified evaluation procedure. For more details on the SNSF's unified evaluation procedure, please see: Evaluation procedure – this is how we select.

The evaluation process is highly competitive and only highly rated proposals will be considered for funding. Peer reviewers and members of the evaluation panel must meet SNSF's and MoES'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 and the MoES, including international as well as Indian reviews. External experts conduct a peer review of the proposals, evaluating the scientific quality of JRPs. A minimum of 2 reviews (jointly nominated by the SNSF and the MoES) should be obtained per proposal.

Evaluation panel: An evaluation panel will be set up, composed of experts proposed by the SNSF and the MoES. 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. An optional preselection for rejection may be applied for proposals that are classified as significantly weaker and/or uncompetitive (up to 50% of the total number of proposals). If applied, preselected proposals for rejection will not be discussed in detail during the panel meeting.

Decision: The outcome of the joint evaluation panel should be a list of all proposals ranked from highest to lowest priority for funding based on the SNSF Bayesian Ranking procedure to take into account random fluctuations and other uncertain factors. Based on the ranking list of the joint evaluation panel and available budget, the SNSF and MoES shall decide on the final list of proposals to be funded. The 10 highest-ranked proposals will be recommended for funding, provided that a sufficient number of qualified proposals are submitted.

If the funding line (i.e., the cut-off point for funding) runs through a group of proposals that are of exactly the same scientific quality, a random selection by drawing lots might be applied in this group of proposals.

At the SNSF, the ranking list and the projects proposed for funding must be approved by the Programme Committee International Cooperation. At the MoES, it must be approved by the Secretary. Through this procedure, the projects will be considered as approved by the Indo-Swiss Joint Committee.

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 at the end of 2026. The contact person based in Switzerland will receive a decision letter from the SNSF. In case of rejection, the main reasons

leading to the decision will be given. In case of approval, the Swiss budget and the conditions will be listed. If applicable, the Swiss-based main applicant will be responsible for transmitting the decision to the other Swiss-based applicants. The decisions are not subject to appeal. The Indian contact person will be informed by the MoES.

The earliest starting date for the JRPs: 1 April 2027

8 Reporting

Swiss and Indian project partners will report separately to the SNSF and the MoES respectively.

In Switzerland:

The Swiss-based contact person 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 MoES. The MoES rules apply both for the financial and the scientific report, depending on the field of the project.

9 Payments

In Switzerland (SNSF funding):

Standard SNSF rules apply. In principle, the budgets for JRPs are transferred in annual instalments to the Swiss-based main applicant at the beginning of a project year.

In India (MoES funding):

The standard MoES rules apply.

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 occurred 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 (MoES funding)

The JRP grants are not subject to VAT or other taxes and charges.

11 Publications and intellectual property

The PIs are obliged to publish research results coming from the JRPs in appropriate form and according to SNSF and MoES standards.

Intellectual property rights belong to the respective researchers and/or their employing institutions. 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.

If necessary, an agreement should be reached in advance. It is the responsibility of both PIs to make sure such an agreement is signed before the project starts. A copy of the agreement needs to be sent to the MoES and the SNSF.

12 Further information and contacts

In Switzerland

Swiss National Science Foundation
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International Cooperation
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Website: www.snsf.ch

In India

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Annex 1: Guidelines for writing the research plan (scientific part of the proposal)

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 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 India-based 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?
- All images and figures within the research plan must be appropriately referenced.

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 India-based 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).