

Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships for Foreign Scholars and Artists

«Will you be my supervisor?»

You are a professor at a Swiss academic institution. Foreign students and postgraduate researchers contact you to ask if you will act as their academic supervisor and host professor. The following information may be useful to you in deciding how to deal with such a request.

- The Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students FCS (abbreviated as ESKAS in German and CFBE in French) sincerely thanks all potential academic supervisors for attentively choosing their candidate for a Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship and for giving them careful support.

Scholarship applicants are looking for host professors

- All Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships are supervised by a professor. Therefore the first step in the application process for the scholarship candidate is to find a professor at a Swiss academic institution **willing to act as their supervisor** for the scholarship and support the research project.
- The FCS encourages candidates to find their supervisor on their own for their scholarship research project. There is no specific support offered in this bottom-up matching process.
- The supervisor **evaluates the academic suitability** of a candidate and **must endorse the research proposal** (including the time-frame), which is a central component of the application.
- The applicant has to reach an agreement with the supervisor. The **letter from the professor stating why she/he is willing to support and supervise** the PhD thesis or the (postdoctoral) research is a mandatory element of each application for a Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship.
- Without such support the scholarship application is not complete and will therefore be rejected.
- **The decision to act as academic supervisor or not is entirely up to you, of course.**

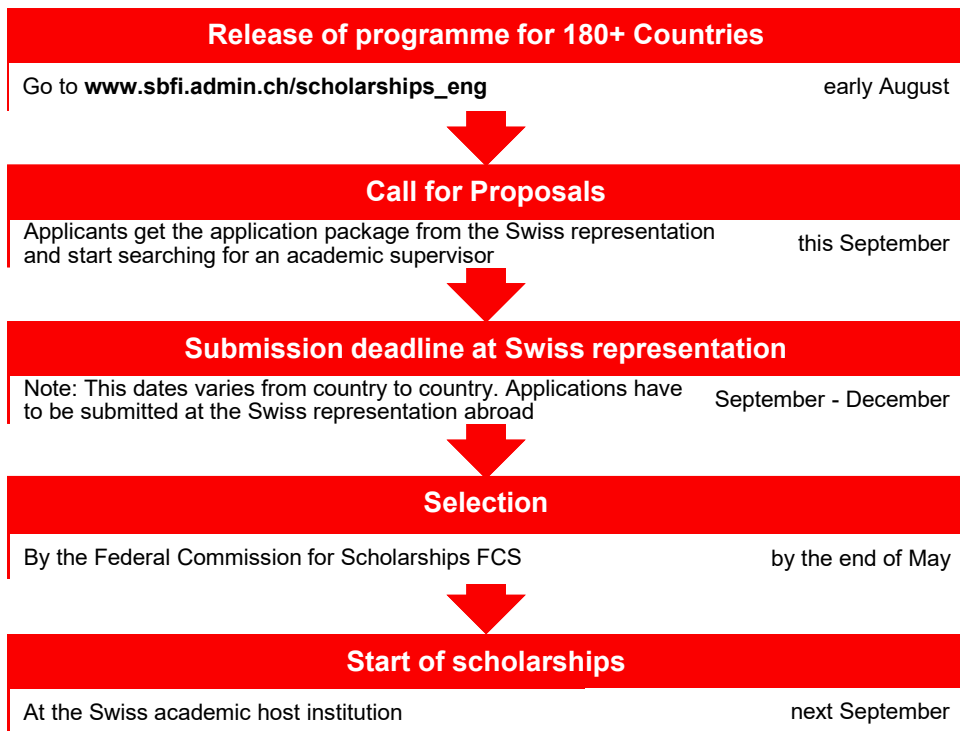
The academic supervisor:

A success factor and a role with responsibilities

- **If you agree** to act as an academic supervisor, you agree to supervise the scholarship holder during their whole research stay (12 months for research fellows and postdocs or 36 months for PhD scholarship holders). PhD thesis supervisors should do their utmost to ensure that adequate funding is available after the scholarship so that the thesis can be completed within a reasonable timeframe (1 or 2 additional years maximum).
- During the scholarship holder's stay in Switzerland, the Confederation together with the international relations office at your university and you as academic supervisor are responsible for them.
- As host professor **you agree to integrate the grantee into your team** and provide good research conditions (lab space and access to infrastructure). With consent of the FCS, a supplementary salary to the scholarship grant is possible up to a certain level.
- **Field research** is possible **for PhD scholarship holders only** and with accepted fieldwork request by FCS. No co-funding by FCS neither for fieldwork nor for attending conferences.
- Not accepted as academic supervisors for postdoctoral scholarship applicants are their previous PhD mentors and co-directors for the co-tutelle PhD at a Swiss university.
- **Major selection criteria** are the candidate's academic profile, their research capacity, and motivation plus the originality and methodological soundness of the research proposal as well as the quality and context of supervision and the potential for future academic cooperation. The FCS recommends that you **support 1 or 2 applicants per year only**.
- The Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships are prestigious and highly competitive. The expected success rate is around 15 to 20 percent.
- **A letter of sufficient scope from the host professor** should describe the research proposal, the relation to the candidate and possible future collaboration. A short CV from the host professor should be enclosed.
- Your thoughtfully drawn-up host letter **could be the decisive element in the scholarship application**.

Application procedure

- Yearly release of the call in August. Preparation of application and submission in autumn. Peer reviews of applications during winter. Selection and announcement of decision in spring. Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships run from 1st of September each year.



- Each year since 1961 the Swiss government has awarded **postgraduate scholarships** through the FCS to foreign scholars, now from over 180 countries. The following types of scholarships are offered: research fellowships, PhD- and Postdoc-scholarships as well as Fine Arts scholarships (for selected countries only).
- Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships are awarded for a period of **12 months**. Only PhD scholarships can be extended (up to 36 months at most). For PhDs lasting longer than 36 months the academic supervisors are expected to help organize a follow-up funding solution.
- Once the scholarship has come to an end, holders** are supposed to **return to their country of origin**. Finding employment in Switzerland after the end of the scholarship contradicts the intention of the Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship, which is to promote brain and talent circulation.
- For detailed eligibility and exclusion criteria please consult the information online** (see link below).

Further information

Can be found at: www.sbf.admin.ch/scholarships_eng

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