

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 before you reply to 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 candidates 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, usually listed in the database of “swissuniversities” www.proff.ch. 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**.
- The FCS encourages candidates to find their supervisor on their own. 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 that they are willing to supervise the PhD thesis or the (post-doctoral) research is a mandatory element of each application for a Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship.
- An application without a host professor 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 host professor, you agree to supervise the scholarship holder during their whole research stay (12 months for research fellows and post-docs or up to 36 months for PhD students).
- 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 the consent of the FCS, a supplementary salary to the scholarship grant is possible up to a certain level. Field research is possible under certain conditions and with co-financing. No co-financing though for attending conferences.
- **Major selection criteria** are the **quality of supervision** and the potential for future academic cooperation as well as the candidate’s academic profile, their research capacity, and the originality and methodological soundness of the research proposal. 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 1 September each year.

Release of Programme for 180+ Countries

Applicants go to www.sbf.admin.ch/scholarships_ENG

early August

Call for Proposals

Applicants get the application package from the Swiss representation and start searching for an academic supervisor

this September

Submission Deadline

Submission dates vary from country to country. Applications have to be submitted at the Swiss representation abroad

between September and December

Selection

Applications are transmitted to Berne. Formal check, peer reviewing and decision by the Federal Commission for Scholarships FCS

until March and May

Start of Studies

At the Swiss academic host institution with their academic supervisor/ host professor

next September

- 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 post-doc-scholarships as well as Fine Arts scholarships (for selected countries only).
- Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship are awarded for a period of **12 months**. Only PhD scholarships can be extended (up to 36 months at most).
- 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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