

**NCCR Flexibility grants (previously 120% support grants):
Grants for NCCR postdocs and doctoral students with family care duties**
version of 11 December 2017, in force as of 1 January 2018

The following regulations are based on the general SNSF Flexibility grants regulations. NCCR-specific rules are highlighted in grey.

4.1 Principle and objectives

¹ The SNSF awards flexibility grants to help researchers reconcile their research activities and academic career with care duties.

² The SNSF awards grants towards the cost of hiring a support person and towards child care costs (flexibility grants) to junior researchers who can show that they are the main child care provider pursuant to the following provisions.

³ The grants are awarded within the scope of NCCR projects for the benefit of postdocs and doctoral students employed under the funded project.

⁴ The two measures "Grant towards hiring a support person" and "Grant towards child care costs" may be combined.

4.2 Grant towards hiring a support person

¹ The grant towards hiring a support person allows the recipient to reduce his/her work quota from 80%-100% to a minimum quota of 60% and to simultaneously hire a support person (scientific or technical staff member or assistant) for the research project funded by the SNSF.

² The SNSF covers part of the support person's salary. Its contribution amounts to a maximum of 20% of the gross salary of the person benefiting from the flexibility grant recalculated to the gross salary of a full-time (100%) position, augmented by the gross salary amount saved thanks to the reduction in work quota (the latter amount must not exceed 40% of the relevant gross salary of the person benefiting from the flexibility grant).

³ The grant towards hiring a support person may be applied for even if the work quota is not reduced. In such cases, the work quota of the person benefiting from the measure must be 80-100%. The grant towards hiring a support person (scientific or technical staff member or assistant) is limited to 20% of the relevant gross salary of the person benefiting from the flexibility grant.

4.3 Child care grant

¹ Grants towards child care costs allow junior researchers to continue their research activities with the shortest possible delay.

² The work quota must correspond to at least 80%.

4.4 Personal requirements: funding by an NCCR project

¹ The following junior researchers may be awarded family grants:

- a. NCCR-funded postdocs (regardless of the funding source), pursuant to Clause 7.2 paragraph 1 letter b of the General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations, who are employed at a Swiss institution;
- b. SNSF-funded doctoral students who are employed at a Swiss institution (regardless of the funding source); doctoral students are only eligible to receive child care grants.

4.5 Further personal requirements

¹ Junior researchers must meet the following additional requirements:

- a. for both types of grant: proof of child care. The junior researcher is the main carer for his/her children, or provides at least half of the child care. The grant covers children who have not yet finished primary school pursuant to Swiss law¹. The SNSF may ask for detailed evidence of these circumstances;
- b. for a grant towards hiring a support person: a work quota of at least 60% after the reduction in working hours, or of at least 80% if a support person is hired without any simultaneous reduction in the work quota. Proof of the reduction in working hours and the employment of a support person must be provided; and
- c. for a grant towards child care costs, a work quota of at least 80%.

² If the two types of grant are combined, the work quota must correspond to at least 80%.

4.6 Submission of applications and deadlines

¹ Applications may be submitted at any time within the scope of an ongoing NCCR project, but no later than four months before the end of the project.

² The grants start in the month of submission of the application to the SNSF at the earliest.

³ The junior researchers must submit the applications to the management of their NCCR. This shall also be the case if the grant is requested for the benefit of an employee pursuant to Clause 4.4 letters b and c.

⁴ The application must be submitted in electronic form (pdf file) by using the NCCR Flexibility Grants Application Form and must contain all mandatory information and enclosures mentioned in this form.

¹ The duration of primary school is defined in accordance with Article 6 of the Intercantonal Agreement on Harmonisation of Compulsory Education (HarmoS Agreement) of 14 June 2007. Canton of Ticino: applications may be submitted up to and including the 6th year.

4.7 Assessment procedure and budget

¹ Applications are assessed by the relevant NCCR management. They check if the requirements pursuant to Clauses 4.4 and 4.5 are met and whether the measures are warranted. The measures are considered warranted if they enable the researcher to achieve a better balance between his/her ongoing research activities and child care duties and if delays can be kept to a minimum.

² The NCCR management submits the supported applications to the NCCR Office of the SNSF, which checks if all formal requirements are fulfilled.

³ The SNSF issues the ruling addressed to the applying junior scientist, with copy to the concerned NCCR management. The SNSF may reject the application or lower the requested amount should the measure be deemed unwarranted or only partially warranted.

⁴ The SNSF has reserved special additional funds for the implementation of the two initiatives “Mobility Grants” and “Flexibility Grants” in the NCCRs. This arrangement will apply until these funds have been spent. Subsequently, the two initiatives would be implemented by the NCCRs within the framework of their global budget.

4.8 Award and transfer of funds

The awarded grants will be added to the contractually agreed SNSF funding of the NCCR. Funds are transferred to the NCCR management shortly after the approval of the flexibility grant application.

4.9 Eligible costs

¹ In the case of grants towards hiring a support person, the support person's salary is covered by the grant. The SNSF provisions on the employment of personnel apply. The funds saved due to the reduction in work quota are credited to the grant.

² In the case of the grant towards child care costs, only the actual costs of child care by third parties, up to a maximum of CHF 1,000/month per child, are covered by the SNSF grant. Any contributions towards child care costs which the parents receive from their employers will be deducted.

³ The SNSF offsets any reductions (Clause 4.7 paragraph 3) against the duration and/or amount of the requested grant.

⁴ The entire grant may not exceed CHF 30,000/year.

4.10 Use of the grant, modifications and extensions

¹ The grant must be drawn during the funding period of the NCCR research project.

² Grantees are obliged to inform the SNSF without delay of any circumstances that could change or influence the fulfilment of the grant conditions (Article 39 Funding Regulations). In particular, the SNSF must be informed about any changes to child care arrangements. The SNSF may modify or terminate the grant should the grant conditions no longer be met.

4.11 Reporting

¹ A separate scientific report on the Flexibility Grant is not required. Reporting shall be effected within the scope of the NCCR's annual progress report (in the section on equal opportunities).

² Financial reporting will take place within the scope of the preparation of the regular NCCR Intermediate Report and Accounting Report. Costs are recorded and statements are issued in accordance to the general NCCR principles. All costs must be documented by receipts.

³ In NIRA, the approved amount has to be added to the annual tranche of the funding source SNSF. Expenditures for the support person are entered in the individual project in which the postdoc is involved. Expenditures for child care are added to the salary of the postdoc / doctoral student.

⁴ Any unused funds arising from Flexibility Grants will accrue to the reserves of the NCCR but must in turn be used for education and training activities. If the approved grant is not used at all or if a substantial amount remains unused, the SNSF will demand refunding of the remaining amount.

4.12 Further provisions

Subject to any specific provisions in this Annex, the provisions of the Funding Regulations and the General implementation regulations for the Funding Regulations apply.